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MONTHLY DISPLACEMENT REPORT

January 2026



CRISIS ANALYSIS

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Displacement trends, January 2026

- **A 4% decrease** in the number of displaced households in January 2026 compared to the previous month, according to alerts reported during the month, bringing the total number of displaced households in the five eastern provinces of the DRC to 218,933. North Kivu recorded 91,023 displaced households, followed by South Kivu with 87,247 households, Maniema with 21,079 households, Ituri with 12,834 households, and Tanganyika with 6,750 households.
- In December, 11% of the movements observed, or 25,124 households, corresponded to returns to their places of origin, mainly in the territories of Mahagi, Djugu (in Ituri), Rutshuru (in North Kivu), Walungu, Uvira, and Fizi (in South Kivu).
- Armed tensions persist in areas under M23 control, marked by recurrent clashes, particularly in the territories of Rutshuru, Masisi, and Walikale. Furthermore, continued fighting between the FARDC and its allies in South Kivu continues to cause new population movements.
- The province of North Kivu has been the most severely affected by displacement, with the territories of Rutshuru, Masisi, and Walikale heavily impacted by recurring fighting between the M23 and the FARDC allied with the VDP and Wazalendo. These clashes, combined with air strikes and intensified M23 operations against the FDLR and Nyatura CMC, have caused massive displacement of civilians, particularly in the health zones of Kibirizi, Rutshuru, Mweso, Masisi, Kirotshe, Pinga, and Kibua. Although a relative lull has allowed some households to return to Rutshuru territory, the overall trend remains dominated by recent displacement and high security instability. In addition, an intensification of the ADF threat in Greater North Kivu has caused displacement of populations in Beni territory.
- In January 2026, displacement in South Kivu remained high, mainly due to ongoing clashes between the M23, the FARDC and their allies, as well as violence involving other local armed groups. The territories of Mwenga, Walungu, Uvira, and Fizi were the most affected. The situation was also marked by limited returns, often motivated by deteriorating living conditions in host areas and localized security lulls, against a backdrop of growing humanitarian needs and continued access constraints.
- In Ituri, displacement continued to be fueled by the activities of armed groups, notably the CRP/Zaire and the ADF, leading to further displacement in Mahagi and Mambasa. The period was also marked by localized returns, facilitated by relative lulls in security and a reduction in humanitarian assistance, against a backdrop of continuing high needs.
- In Tanganyika, population movements were marked by the spread of conflict in South Kivu, particularly the advance of the M23 towards Fizi after the capture of Uvira in December. This dynamic led to the arrival of displaced households from Uvira and Fizi to Kalemie and the localities on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, in a context of seeking security and increasing pressure on host areas.
- In Maniema province, displacement was mainly linked to security dynamics, particularly tensions between Mai-Mai groups and the FARDC, as well as the spillover effects of the M23 crisis from South Kivu. The period was also marked by displacement caused by climatic hazards in Kindu, exacerbating the vulnerability of populations and pressure on host areas.

Overview of displacement

In January 2026, a total of 218,933 displaced households were recorded in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a decrease of 4% compared to the previous month. The province of North Kivu was the most affected in terms of population movements, with 91,023 displaced households, followed by South Kivu with 87,247 households, Maniema with 21,079 households, Ituri with 12,834 households, and Tanganyika with 6,750 households.

The general trend shows a notable decrease in displacement in Tanganyika (-61%), South Kivu (-48%), and Ituri (-37%) compared to the previous month, while a significant increase is observed in Maniema (532%) and North Kivu (375%).

The territories of Masisi, Rutshuru, Lubero (North Kivu), Uvira, and Fizi (South Kivu) account for the largest number of displaced households (more than 50,000 households) that have moved and/or returned between October 2025 and January 2026. These displacement dynamics are mainly linked to the M23 crisis in North and South Kivu.

In January, return movements accounted for 11% (25,124 households) of the total displaced population, particularly in Fizi (12,280 households), Mahagi (11,016 households), Uvira (3,700 households), Walungu (2,714 households), Djugu (1,458 households), and Rutshuru (772 households). These returns were facilitated by localized security lulls in certain areas of origin, a significant reduction in humanitarian assistance in displacement sites due to declining funding, and deteriorating living conditions in host areas. They were also facilitated by the proximity of the areas of return and by community and family dynamics, in a context where the perception of a relative improvement in security encouraged some households to return to their places of origin despite the persistence of security risks in several areas. The humanitarian needs of populations returning to their places of origin are immense. Returnees also remain highly exposed to protection risks, including gender-based violence (GBV), forced recruitment, land expropriation, and exposure to improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Eastern DRC has experienced sustained population displacement, mainly fueled by intensified clashes involving the M23, the FARDC and their allies, as well as persistent activism by other armed groups, particularly in Ituri. The provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu were the most affected, with significant displacement in the territories of Rutshuru, Masisi, Walikale, Mwenga, Walungu, Uvira, and Fizi, accompanied by localized returns facilitated by temporary lulls in security and the deterioration of living conditions in host areas. In Ituri, violence involving the CRP/Zaire militia and the ADF continued to fuel displacement and fragile returns.

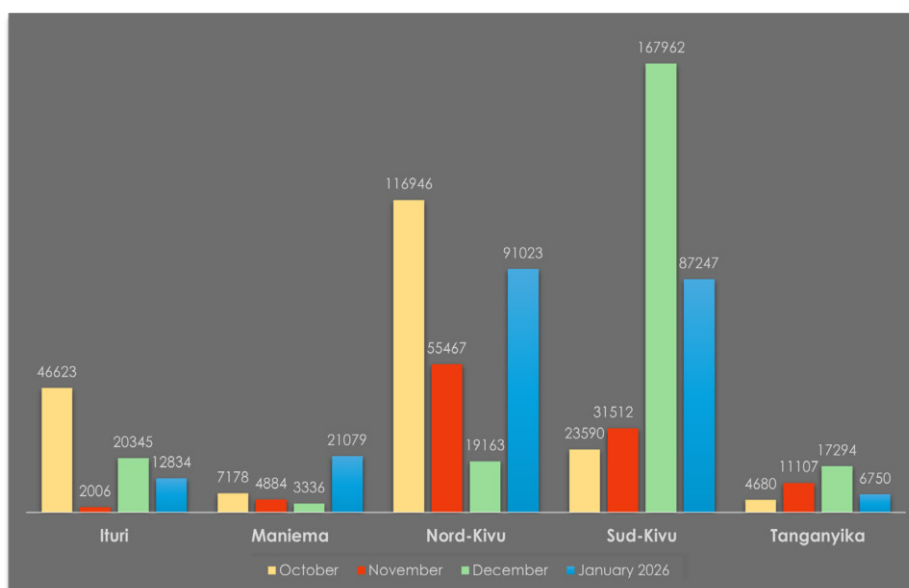
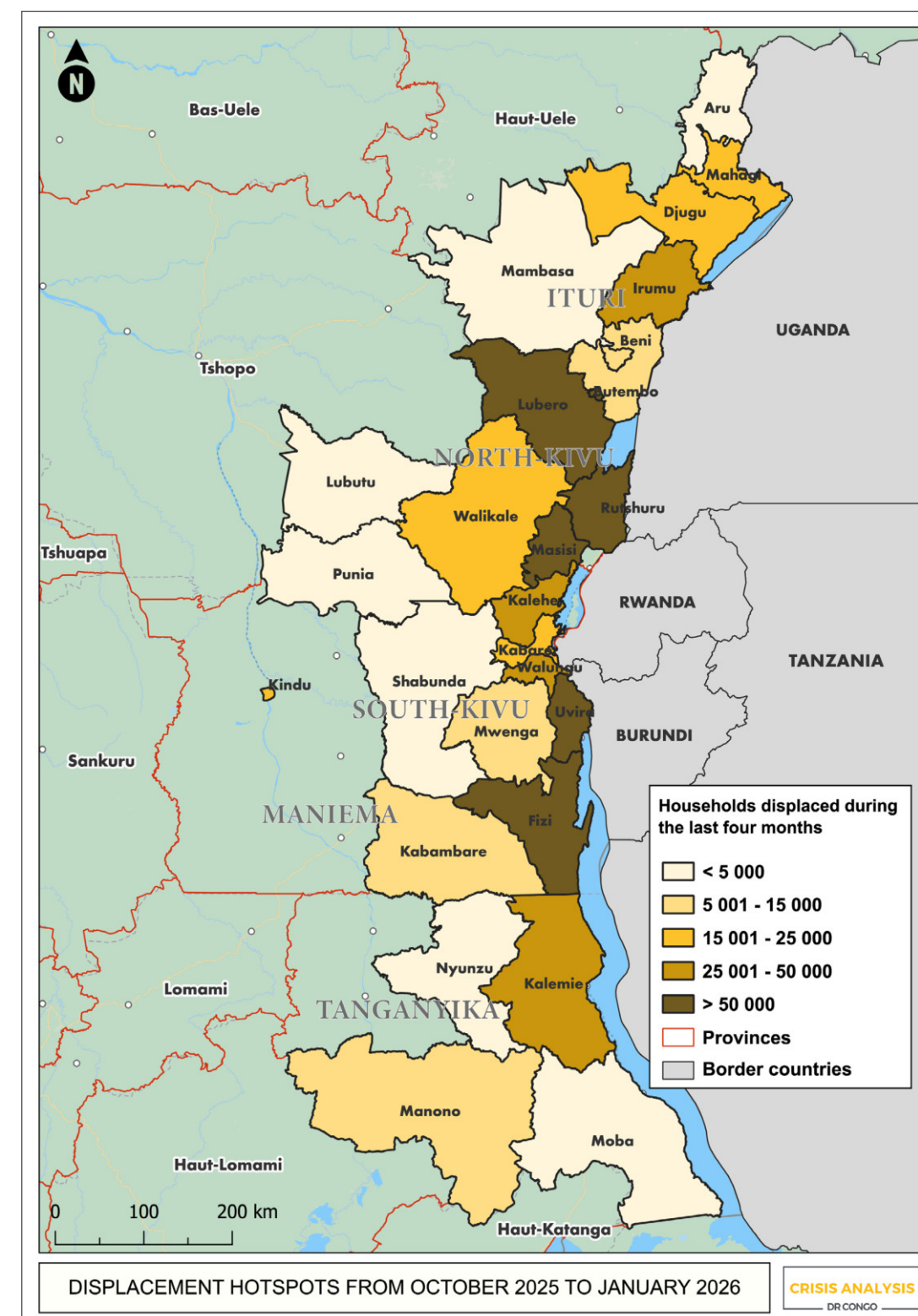


Figure 1. Number of displaced households by province of destination from October to January 2026.

At the end of the month, 36 displacement alerts were reported. However, none had yet been subject to a detailed assessment of humanitarian needs, according to OCHA's EH Tool.



Map 1. Displacement hotspots in eastern DRC, October to January 2026.

Ituri province

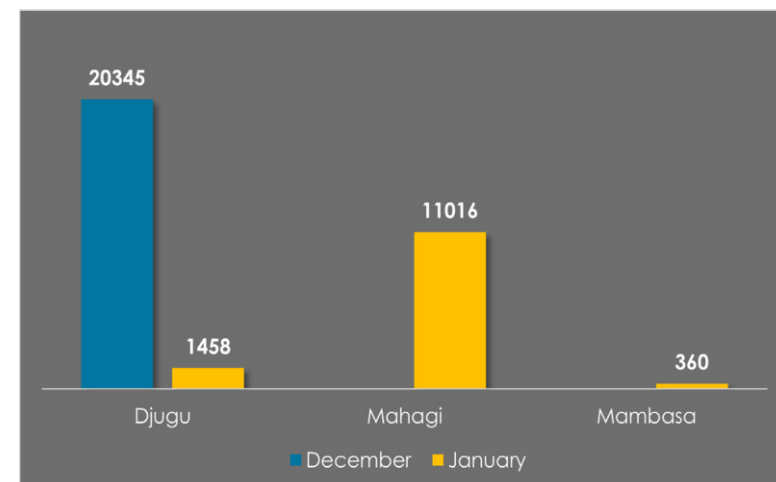


Figure 2. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in Ituri province.

Mahagi territory

A total of 11,016 households have been affected by population movements in the Kambala and Angumu health zones. Of these, 7,416 households are newly displaced, while 3,600 households are returnees from the Logo health zone.

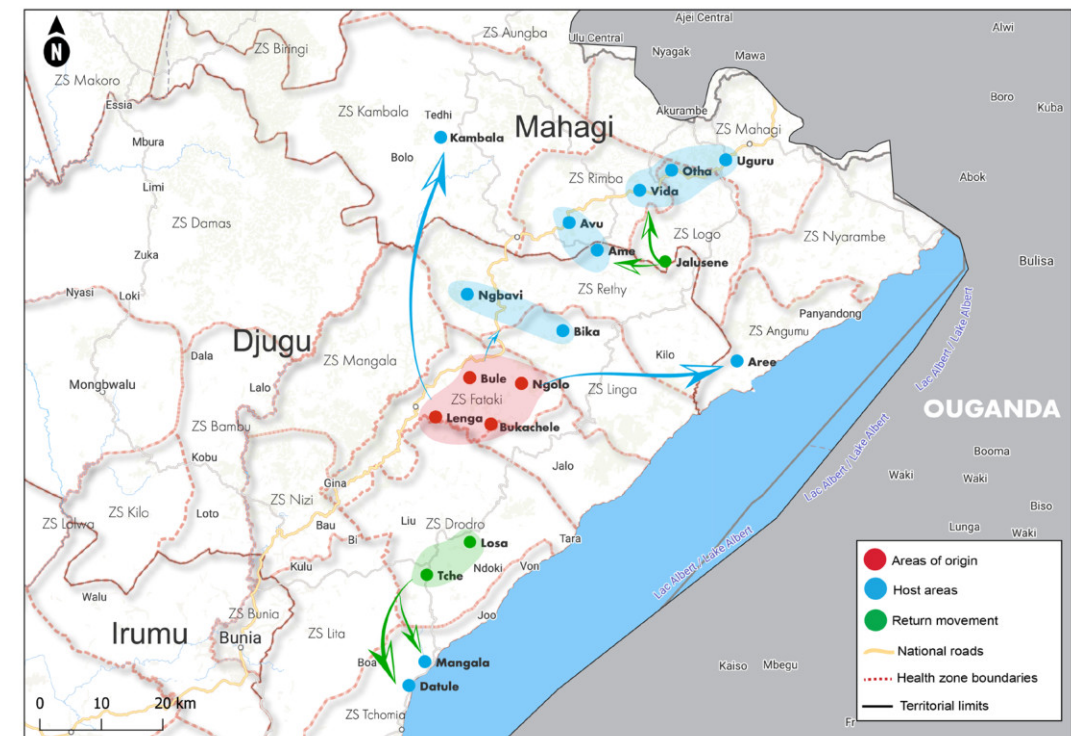
The recent displacements are mainly linked to intense clashes between the FARDC and CRP/Zaire militias in the Fataki health zone.

The returnees are households that had fled recurrent attacks by CODECO in the Logo health zone. These families are gradually returning to their villages, due to the combined effect of a significant reduction in multisectoral assistance for displaced persons living in sites as a result of declining funding, and a relative lull in the areas of origin linked to a gradual improvement in security conditions. However, CODECO elements continue to control a large part of the areas of return.

Djugu territory

Approximately 1,458 households have returned to their places of origin (Bukpa, Ngbavi, Bele, Nyanga, Mangala, and Datule), located in the Tchomia health zone in the Djugu territory. These populations had fled violent clashes between the FARDC and CRP/Zaire militiamen between February and July 2025, moving to the Tchomia and Drodro health zones, while others had sought refuge in Uganda.

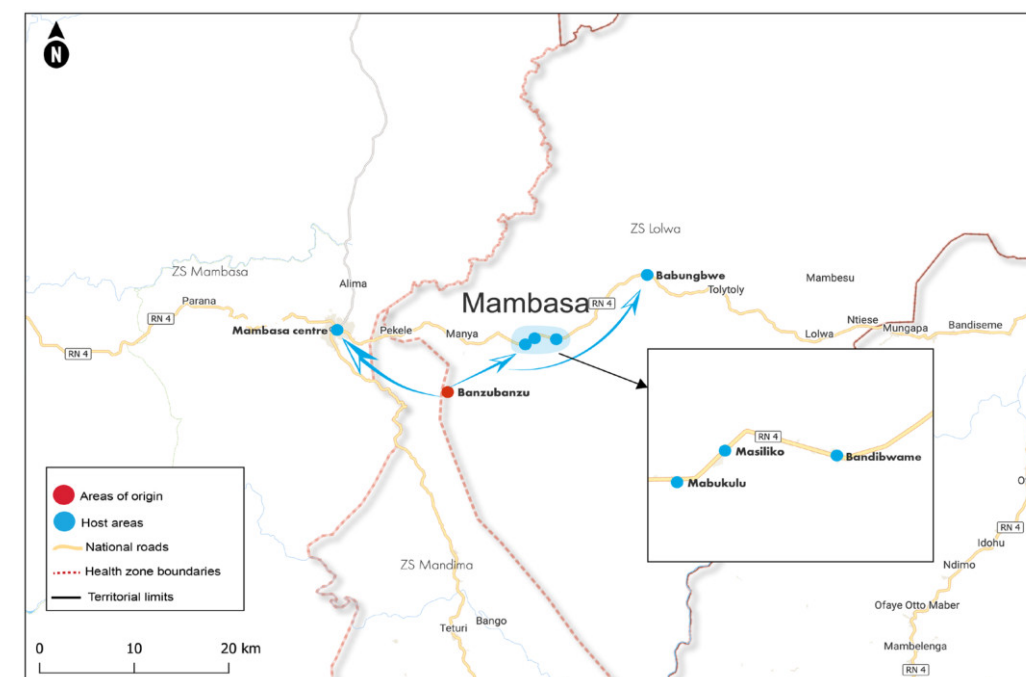
These returns can be explained by the relative improvement in the security situation since October 2025, following operations carried out by the FARDC and efforts by provincial and local authorities.



Map 2. Population movement in Mahagi and Djugu territories, January 2026.

Mambasa territory

Persistent insecurity linked to ADF activism, including attacks on civilians and ambushes targeting the FARDC in the Lolwa health zone, has led to the displacement of approximately 360 households. These households have moved to Bandibwame, Masiliko, Babungbwe, Mabukuku, and Mambasa Center, all within the Lolwa health zone.



Map 3. Population movement in Mambasa territory, Jan 2026.

North Kivu Province

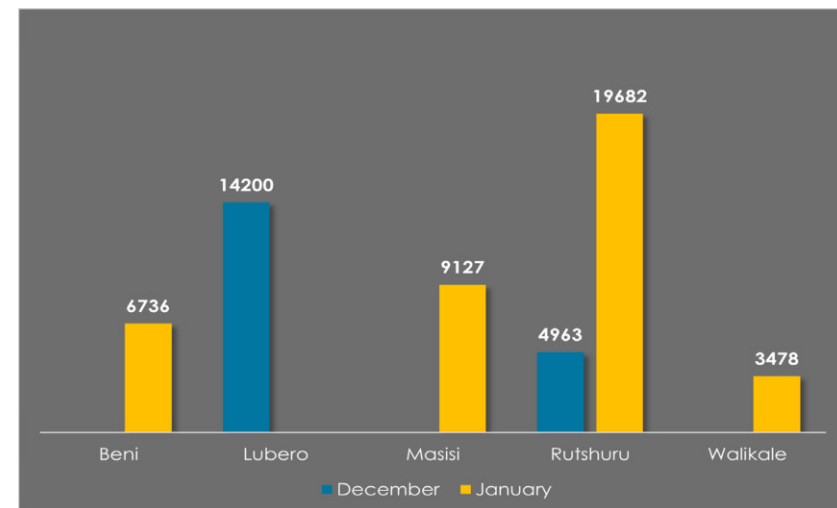


Figure 3. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in North Kivu province.

Walikale territory

In January, approximately 3,478 households were displaced in Walikale territory. These movements are mainly attributed to clashes between the M23 and the VDP in the health zones of Pinga and Kibua (Walikale territory), as well as in the health zone of Mweso (Masisi territory).

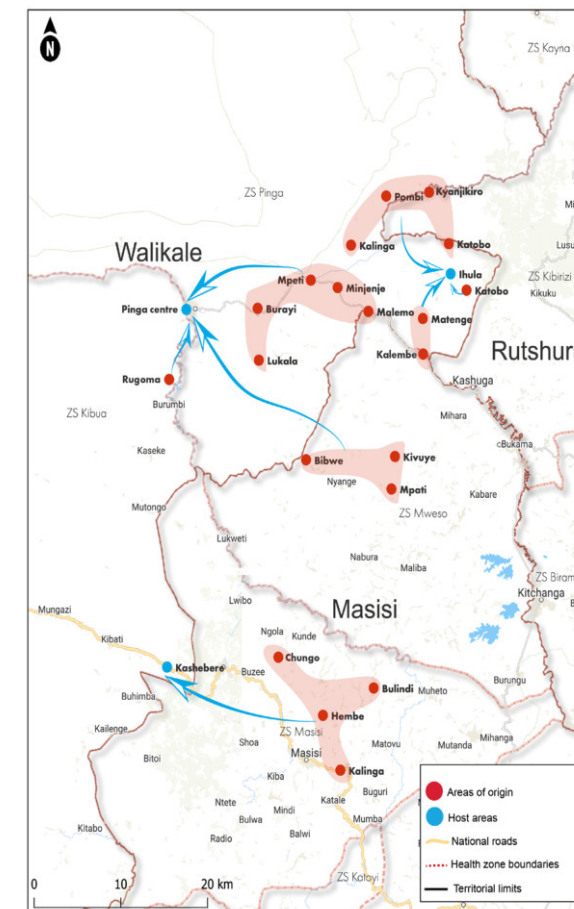
They are also linked to a landslide in Kashebere, in the Kibua health zone.

Masisi territory

A total of 9,127 households have been displaced in the Mweso health zones. These newly displaced populations are fleeing ongoing clashes between the M23, VDP, and Wazalendo in the Bashali Mokoto group. Other households come from the Bwito chiefdom in Rutshutu territory.

In addition, a landslide at the Rubaya coltan mine killed 200 people and left at least 100 missing¹.

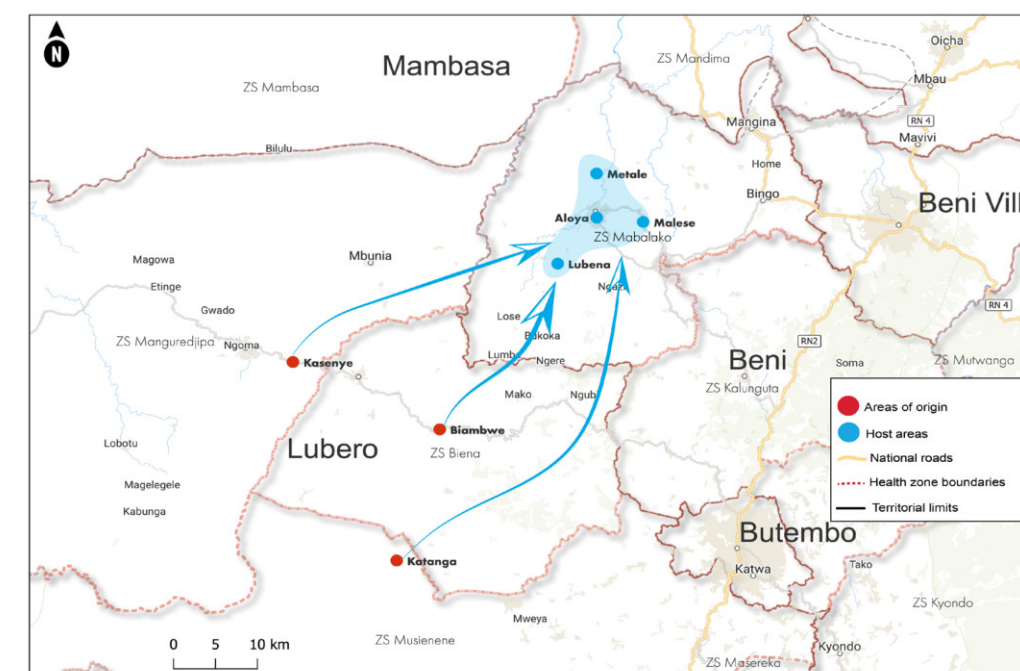
¹ EHtools, alerte du 29 janvier 2026



Map 4. Population movement in Walikale and Masisi territories, Jan 2026.

Beni territory

ADF attacks against civilians in villages and towns in Katanga, Biambwe, and Kasenye (in Lubero territory) have caused 6,736 households to flee to Aloya, Malese, Lubena, and Metale (in the Mabalako health zone).



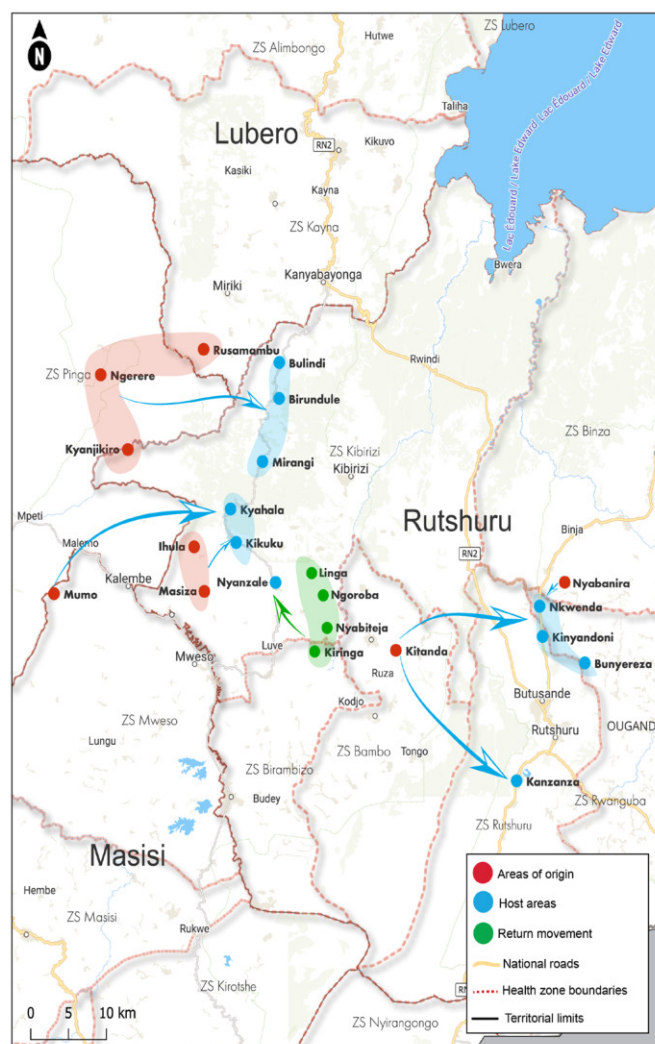
Map 5. Population movement in Beni territory, Jan 2026.

Rutshuru territory

A total of 19,682 households have been affected by population movements in the health zones of Kibirizi (18,910 households) and Rutshuru (772 households). Of these, 18,910 households are newly displaced, while 772 households are returnees from the village of Nyarubande, located in the Kibirizi health zone.

The recent displacements are mainly linked to the continuing insecurity in the Binza health zone, which is currently marked by military operations between the M23 and the VDP and FDLR, as well as fighting between the M23 and the VDP in the Kisimba and Ikobo groups in Walikale territory.

The returnees are households that had fled fighting between the M23 and the VDP in the Kibirizi health zone. These families are gradually returning to their villages thanks to a relative lull in the center of Nyanzale.



South Kivu Province

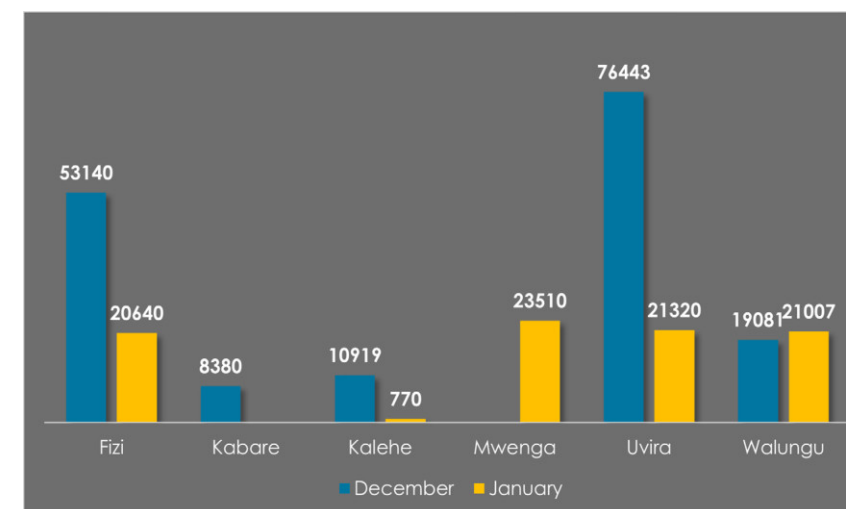


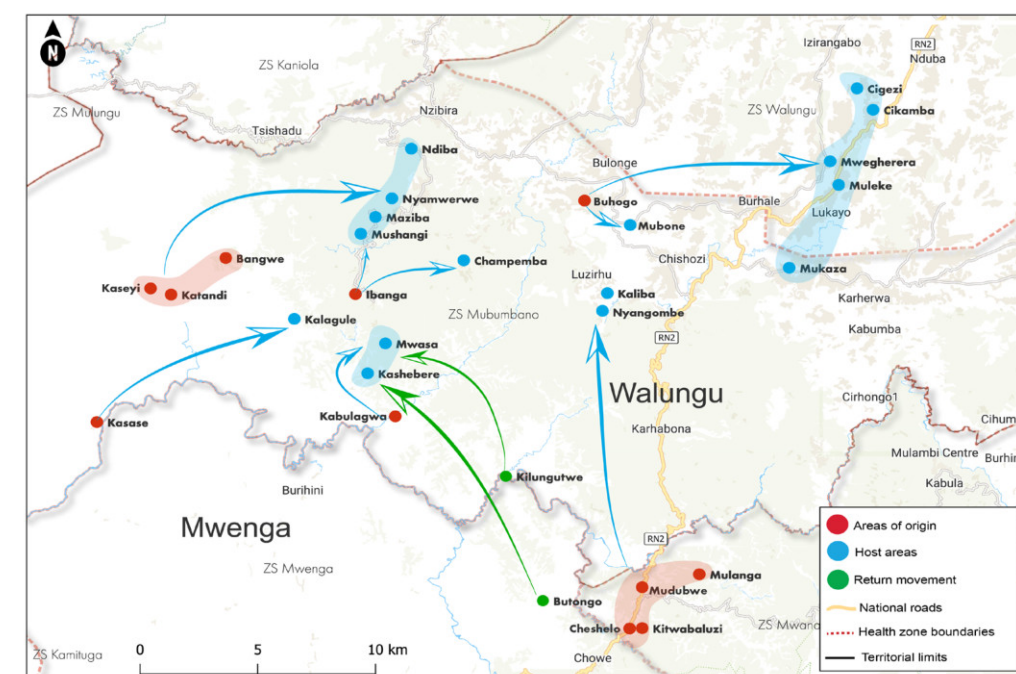
Figure 4. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in South Kivu province.

Walungu territory

In Walungu territory, an estimated 21,007 households were displaced in January. This includes 18,293 newly displaced households in the health zones of Kaniola, Nyangezi, Mubumbano, and Walungu, while 2,714 households returned to the Mubumbano health zone.

The new displacements are mainly linked to clashes between the M23 and the FARDC, supported by the VDP, in the Ngweshe chiefdom (Walungu territory) and in the Mwana health zone (Mwenga territory).

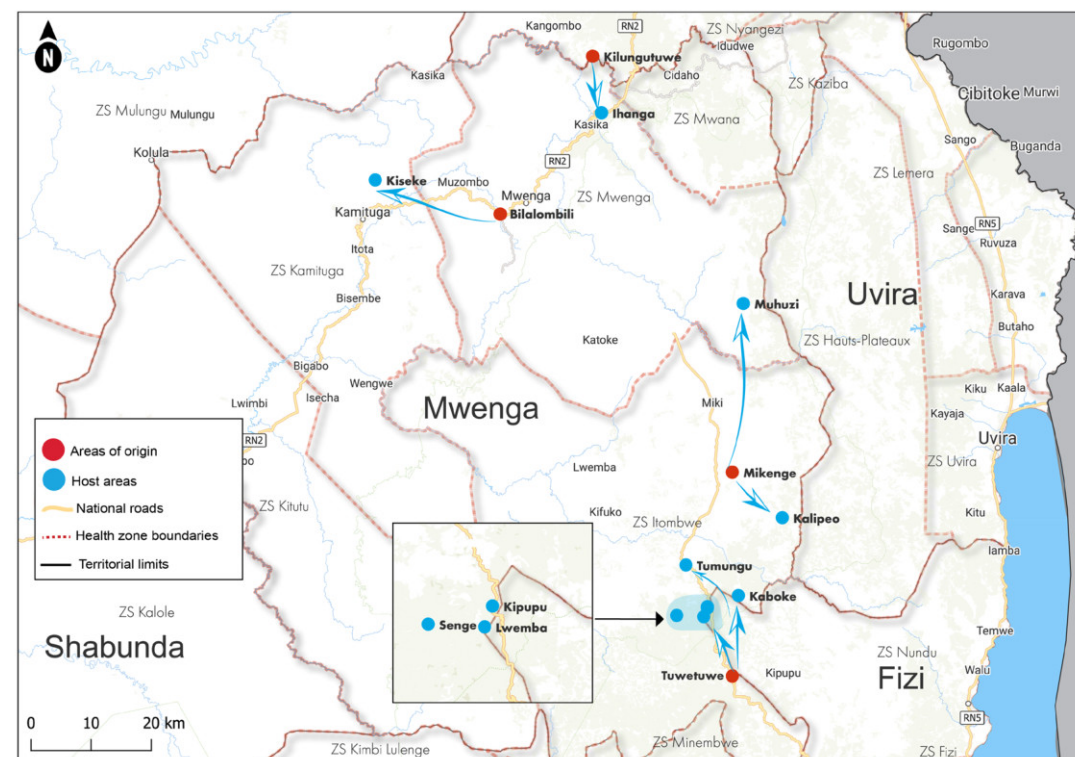
The return movements involve households that fled the fighting between M23 and Wazalendo allied with the FARDC in the Mwenga health zone. Upon their return, these households found refuge with host families and in spontaneous sites, including churches and sc



Mwenga territory

The Mwenga territory recorded the displacement of approximately 23,510 households in January, including 9,750 households in the Mwenga health zone and 13,760 households in the Itombwe health zone.

These displacements were caused, on the one hand, by clashes between the M23 and the Wazalendo/FARDC in the Lwindi chiefdom and, on the other hand, by fighting between the Wazalendo and the Gumino Twirwaneho in the villages of Mikenge, Bilalo Mbili, Tuwetuwe, and Ngezi, located in the Itombwe health zone.



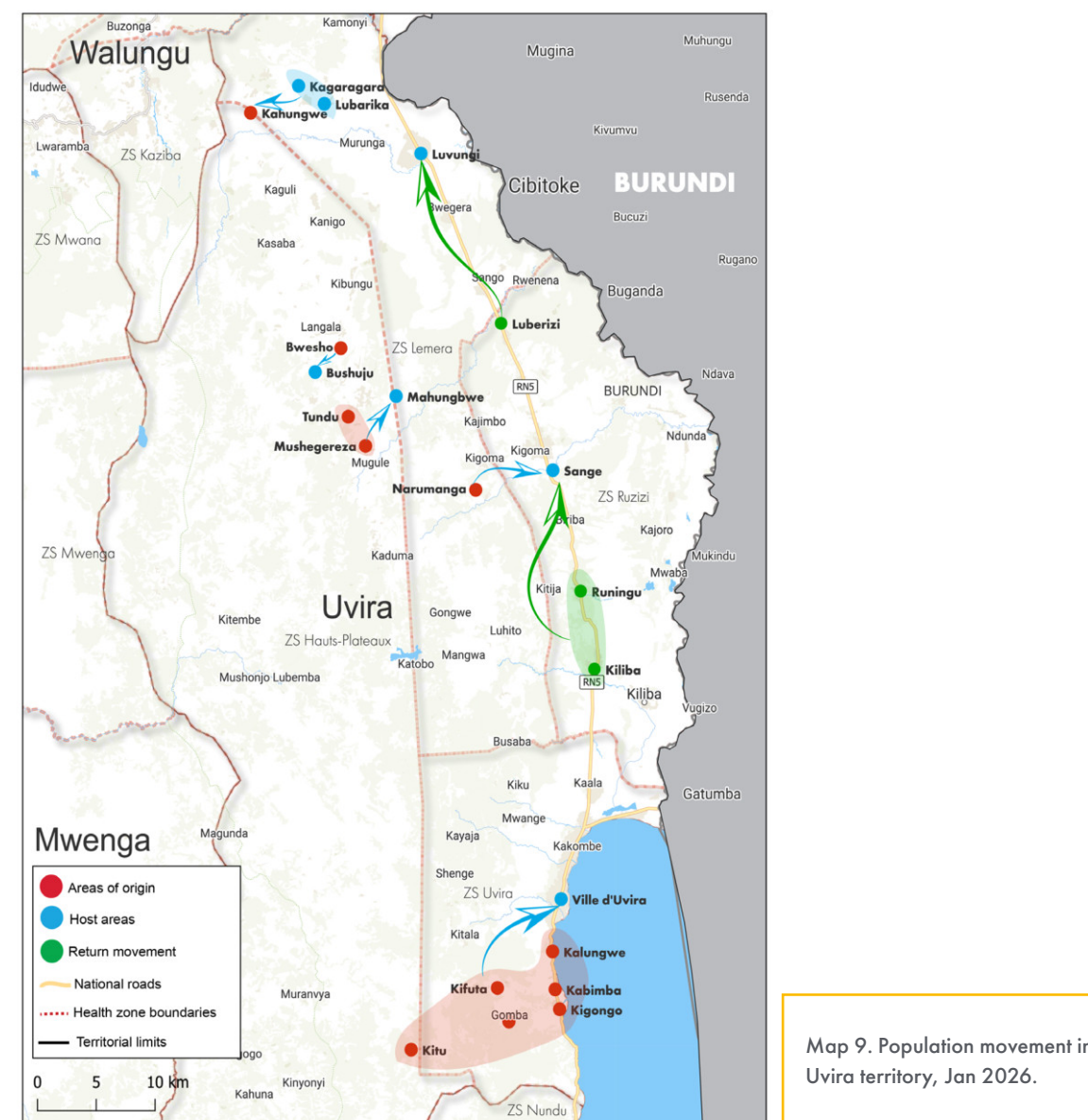
Map 8. Population movement in Mwenga territory, Jan 2026.

Uvira territory

A total of 21,320 households have been affected by population movements in the health zones of Uvira, Lemera, and Ruzizi. Of these, 17,620 households are newly displaced, while 3,700 households are returnees from Luberizi, Runingu, Kiliba, and Uvira.

The recent displacements are mainly linked to clashes between the FARDC and their Wazalendo allies against the M23 in the Kalungwe and Lemera groupings in Uvira territory.

The returnees are households that have fled the fighting between the FARDC, their allies, and elements associated with the M23 and the VDP in the Ruzizi health zone (Uvira) health zone. These families are returning to the town of Luvungi and the villages of Lubarika, Kagaragara, and Katogota (Lemera health zone) due to the difficult living conditions in the reception areas.



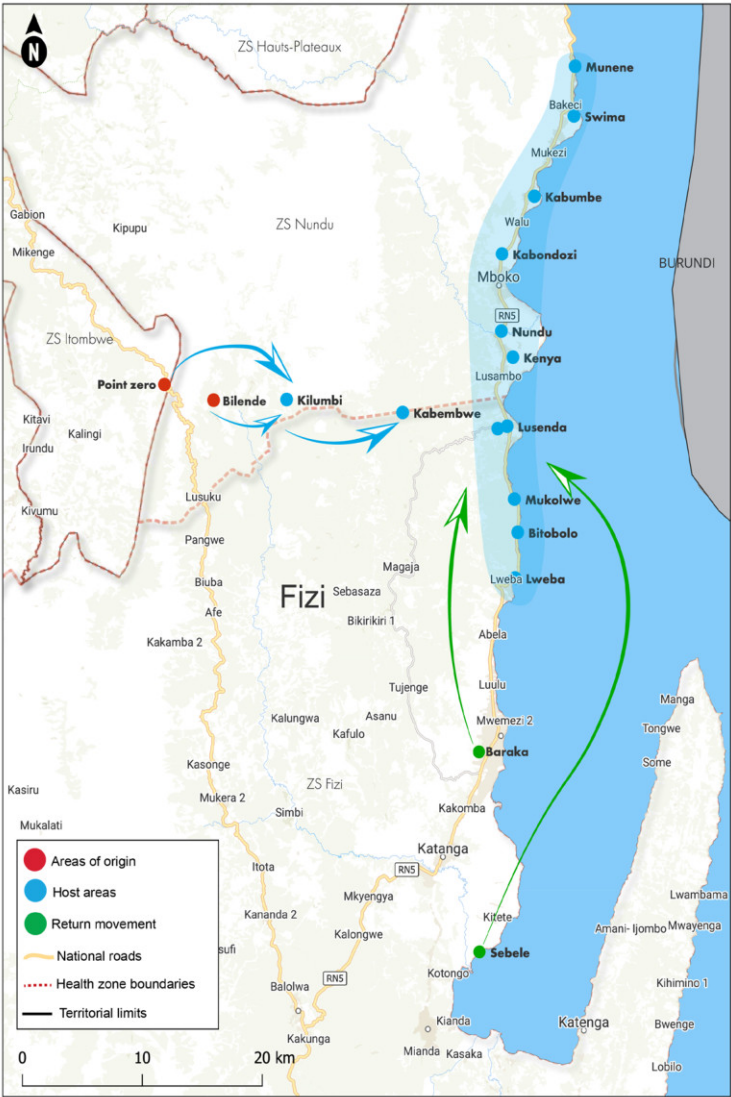
Map 9. Population movement in Uvira territory, Jan 2026.

Fizi territory

In the Fizi territory, an estimated 20,640 households were reported to have been displaced in January. This includes new displacements to the Nundu health zone (8,360 households) as well as returns to the same zone (12,280 households).

The new displacements are mainly linked to clashes between the Gumino Twirwaneho and the Mai-Mai groups of the Ebwela faction, supported by the FARDC, in the villages of Point Zero, Bilende, Bikyaka, and Kanguli, located in the Basimukindie I group (Mwenga territory, Itombwe sector).

The returnees are mainly households that had fled their localities following the M23 advance towards Fizi territory in December 2025. Back in the Babungwe Nord group, most of these households are finding refuge with host families, as their homes were destroyed or looted during the violence.



Map 10. Population movement in Fizi territory, Jan 2026.

Maniema Province

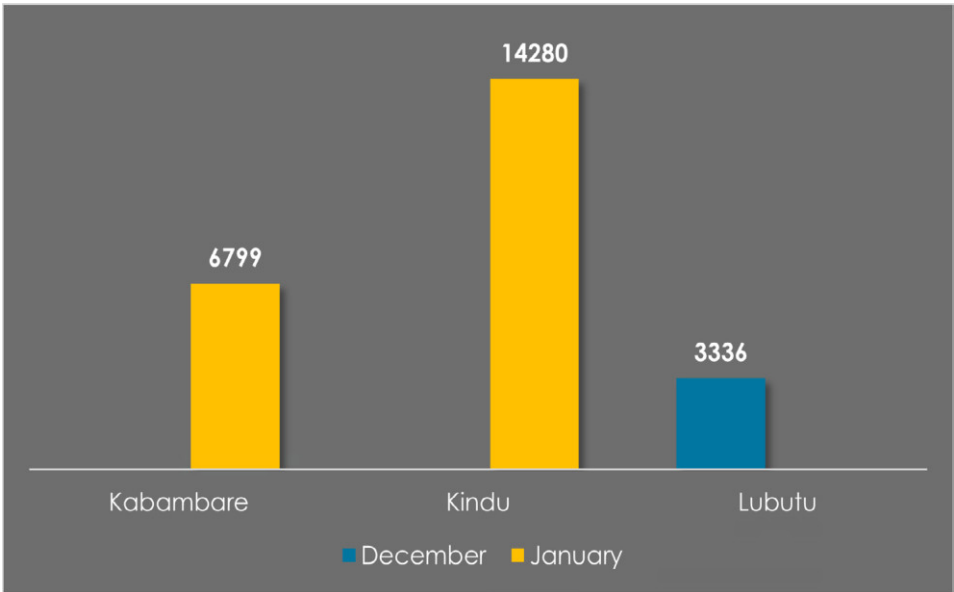


Figure 5. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in Maniema province.

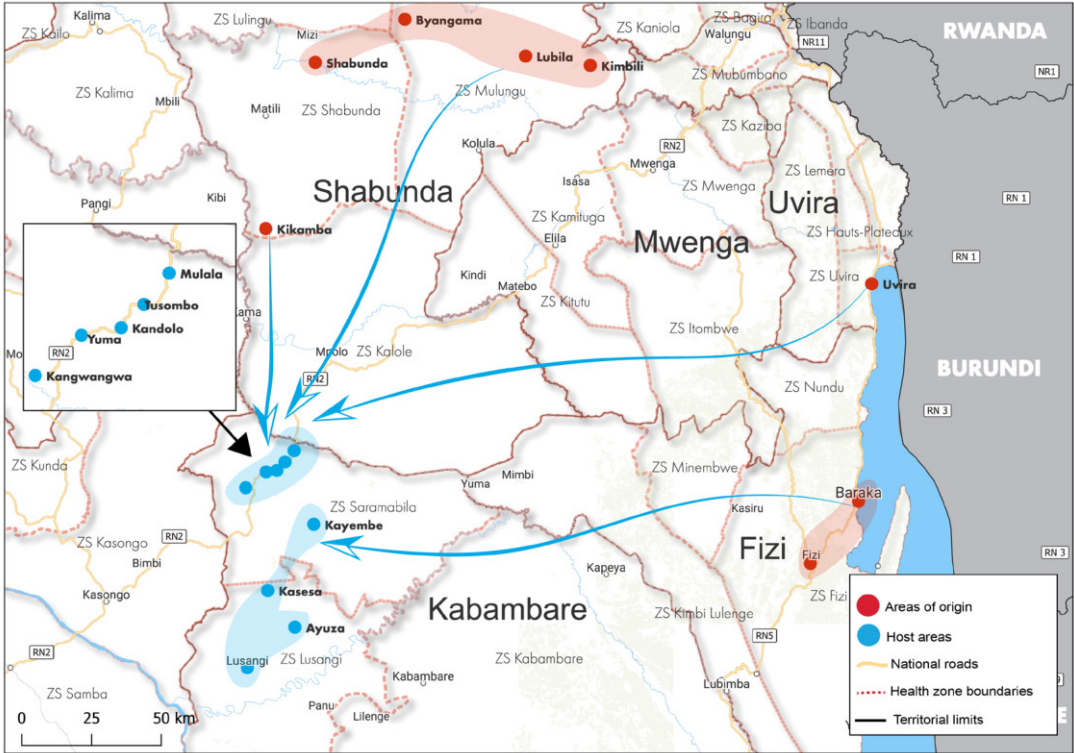
City of Kindu

In January, the city of Kindu recorded the displacement of approximately 14,280 households, divided between the Alunguli health zone (11,520 households) and the Kindu health zone (2,760 households). These population movements are mainly linked to fears of imminent clashes between Mai-Mai groups and the FARDC along the Kasongo–Kindu axis. In addition, heavy rains on January 27 in the town of Kindu caused several rivers to overflow, resulting in significant material damage and loss of life in the communes of Kasuku, Mikelenge, and Alunguli.

Kabambare territory

In the Kabambare territory, population movements estimated at around 6,799 households have been recorded. The displaced persons arrived mainly in the health zones of Lusangi (3,599 households) and Salamabila (3,200 households).

These displacements are attributable, on the one hand, to violence between two rival factions of Mai-Mai groups in the Shabunda territory of South Kivu. On the other hand, they can be explained by the arrival of waves of displaced persons from Uvira, Fizi, Baraka, and Shabunda, fleeing the violence linked to clashes between the FARDC and AFC/M23 rebels, which led to the capture of the town of Uvira.



Map 11. Population movement in Kabambare territory, Jan 2026.

Tanganyika Province

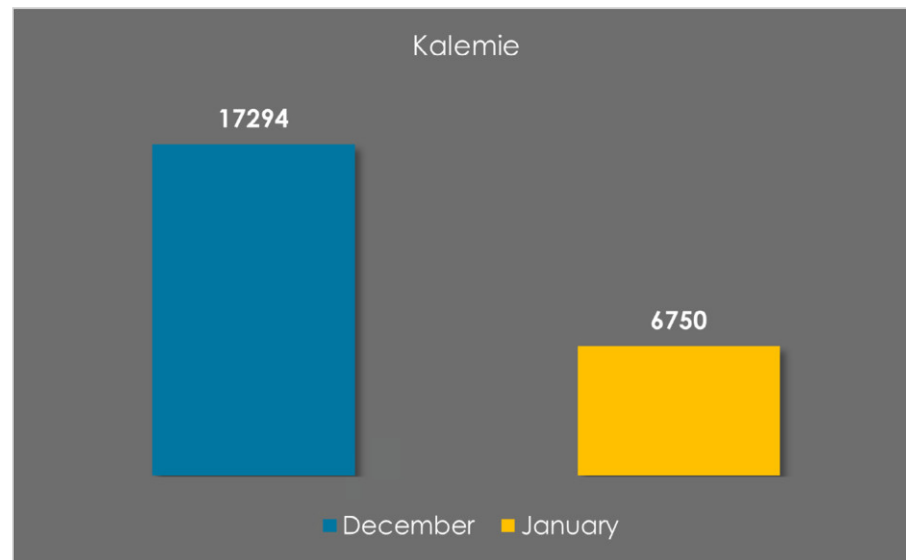


Figure 6. Number of newly displaced households by destination territory in Tanganyika province.

Kalemie territory

A total of 6,750 households have been affected by population movements in the Nyemba and Kalemie health zones. These displacements are linked to the advance of the M23 in Fizi territory, following the capture of the town of Uvira in December, which forced the populations of Uvira and several villages and localities in the territories of Uvira and Fizi to flee to Tanganyika province for safety reasons. These households have found refuge mainly in the city of Kabimba, Kasambondo, and other villages located on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, as well as in the city of Kalemie (Kahite, Moni, and Mukuku neighborhoods).



Map 10. Population movement in Kalemly territory, Jan 2026.

Methodological approach

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

Each week, researchers conduct interviews with key informants to better understand the events contributing to the humanitarian crisis in eastern DRC (violent incidents, epidemics, natural disasters, etc.) and analyze their potential impact on humanitarian operations. CAT-DRC also uses several secondary sources provided by humanitarian partners (e.g., OCHA, INSO) and the community. For this monthly report, OCHA alerts (EH Tool) mentioning displacement are used. All information undergoes a triangulation process before analysis and dissemination. However, the information presented in this report is subject to change at the time of publication due to the rapidly evolving situation in the region.

The analysis of displacement aims, on the one hand, to (i) document and understand new population movements, i.e. those that occurred during the month covered by this report, and, on the other hand, to (ii) assess and map the areas that have received the most waves 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.

CRP (Convention Populaire pour la Révolution): is an armed movement created by Thomas Lubanga, a former warlord convicted by the International Criminal Court in 2012, who claims to want to liberate Ituri from Kinshasa's rule and end socio-political inequalities.

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.

Nyatura CMC (Coalition of Movements for Change): A movement that groups together mainly Nyatura 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, also known as Wazalendo (meaning "patriots" in Swahili), refer to a loose constellation of non-state armed groups encouraged by the Congolese government to support the FARDC in securing certain areas, particularly against the M23. In September 2023, the government formalized the creation of the Volontaires pour la Défense de la patrie by integrating selected fighters from Wazalendo groups in North Kivu, turning them into an "official auxiliary force" distinct from other Congolese armed groups. However, in practice, the terms "VDP" and "Wazalendo" continue to be used interchangeably by actors on the ground.

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. Zaire exercises territorial control in certain areas of Djugu, imposing rebel governance and maintaining order through the use of force.



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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.

Email: cat-drc@mercycorps.org

Website: www.rdc-analyse.org