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2. [Political developments](#)
3. [Security incidents](#)
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COI QUERY RESPONSE – Democratic Republic of the Congo

Security situation in North Kivu and South Kivu

1. Security situation

Reemergence of M23 rebel group activity in late 2021¹ worsened the security and humanitarian situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).² According to 2023 and 2024 sources, approximately 120 armed groups were operating in eastern DRC.³ Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that M23, backed by Rwandan forces, committed ‘unlawful killings, rape, and other apparent war crimes since late 2022’.⁴ Other armed groups reportedly operating in eastern DRC included Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO).⁵ Freedom House noted in 2023 that authorities did not exert effective control over security forces and there were instances of collaboration between soldiers and rebels or militia groups.⁶

In October 2023, the Congolese army, with the assistance of ‘auxiliaries known as *Wazalendo* (patriots)’, which are members of existing armed groups,⁷ attempted to push back M23 in the wake of a new offensive by that armed group.⁸ In 2022, President Tshisekedi formalised the alliance of the army with militias to combat M23.⁹ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported in February 2024 that the deterioration of the security situation, prompted by the resurgence of the M23 in North Kivu, led to a redistribution of government forces that created a ‘security vacuum in other areas’.¹⁰ This context contributed to other armed groups gaining ground to operate and ‘spread terror’ fostering an environment of heightened violence and ‘hate speech against specific ethnic groups’.¹¹ In October 2023, the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) informed that in South Kivu, the joint operation between Congolese and Burundian forces led to a change of alliances and cooperation between armed groups [informal translation] ‘in particular between the Resistance

¹ New Humanitarian (The), The humanitarian fallout of DR Congo’s M23 rebellion, 21 July 2022, [url](#)

² AI, The State of the World’s Human Rights; Democratic Republic Of The Congo 2022, 27 March 2023, [url](#); HRW, World Report 2024 - Democratic Republic of Congo, 11 January 2024, [url](#)

³ HRW, World Report 2024 - Democratic Republic of Congo, 11 January 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Five key issues at stake in the DR Congo’s crucial election, 11 December 2023, [url](#); Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 30 November 2023, [url](#)

⁴ HRW, DR Congo: Killings, Rapes by Rwanda-Backed M23 Rebels, 13 June 2023, [url](#)

⁵ Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 30 November 2023, [url](#)

⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2023 - Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2023, [url](#)

⁷ ISPI, DRC’s Elections Risk Perilous Consequences in the East, 18 December 2023, [url](#)

⁸ Le Monde with AFP, Democratic Republic of Congo rocked by new M23 rebel offensive, 26 October 2023, [url](#)

⁹ DW, DR Congo conflict pulls in more players to tackle rebels, 20 February 2024, [url](#); Le Monde, The ‘wazalendo’: Patriots at war in eastern DRC, 19 December 2023, [url](#)

¹⁰ OHCHR, UN Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights alarmed at situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

¹¹ OHCHR, UN Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights alarmed at situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

for a rule of Law in Burundi (RED Tabara, *Résistance pour un État de droit au Burundi*) and the National Liberation Forces (FNL, *Forces nationales de libération*).¹²

In October 2023, President Tshisekedi announced a gradual relaxation of the measures imposed during a 'state of siège' in May 2021 in North Kivu and Ituri provinces for more than two years since the declaration of an imposed 'state of siège' in both provinces.¹³ According to Amnesty International (AI), after the declaration of the state of siege, the security situation continued to deteriorate and human rights abuses have been reportedly committed, including the repression of journalists, human rights defenders, and political activists by authorities.¹⁴

On 15 December 2023, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC) was deployed in eastern DRC to support the government in combating armed groups.¹⁵ The mission included troops from Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania.¹⁶ However, sources indicated that the mission has not released much information about its operation and that it was difficult to assess its effectiveness.¹⁷

OHCHR noted that 5 135 human rights violations were recorded between 1 June 2022 and 31 May 2023 in DRC, with at least 89 % of these incidents being reported in conflict-affected areas.¹⁸ The same source noted that it reflects a decrease of 30 % from the previous reporting period due to a decline in human rights violations perpetrated by state actors.¹⁹ In North Kivu province, 2 541 human rights violations were recorded, 76 % of which were committed by armed groups.²⁰ In South Kivu, the number of recorded human rights violations was 440, 40 % of them committed by state agents, including arbitrary detentions and repression of demonstrations.²¹

On 21 November 2023, the UN and DRC agreed on a plan to withdraw the activities of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) in the country.²² The Congolese government had called for MONUSCO's withdrawal due to its failure to protect civilians.²³ On 19 December 2023, MONUSCO's mandate in the DRC was extended until 20

¹² UNSC, Mise en œuvre de l'Accord-cadre pour la paix, la sécurité et la coopération pour la République démocratique du Congo et la région - Rapport du Secrétaire général, 3 October 2023, [url](#)

¹³ Africa News, DRC president eases restrictions in conflict-hit east ahead of elections, 13 October 2023, [url](#); Jeune Afrique, En RDC, Tshisekedi annonce un allègement de l'état de siège dans l'Est, 13 October 2023, [url](#)

¹⁴ AI, DRC: Authorities must lift 'state of siege' now, 6 May 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵ SADC, Deployment of the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 4 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁶ SADC, Deployment of the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 4 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁷ ISS, Once more into the breach: SADC troops in DRC, 9 February 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Could a Southern African military force help bring stability to DRC?, 15 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁸ OHCHR, Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 25 August 2023, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁹ OHCHR, Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 25 August 2023, [url](#), p. 2

²⁰ OHCHR, Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 25 August 2023, [url](#), p. 6

²¹ OHCHR, Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 25 August 2023, [url](#), p. 7

²² MONUSCO, Press Release - The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO sign a disengagement plan for the withdrawal of the Mission, 22 November 2023, [url](#)

²³ Al Jazeera, All UN peacekeepers to leave DR Congo by end of 2024, 13 January 2024, [url](#)

December 2024,²⁴ with the exception of South Kivu, which would end in April 2024.²⁵ The mission would limit its operations to the provinces of Ituri and North Kivu from May 2024 until the termination of the mandate.²⁶

In 2023, DRC submitted a referral to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and asked for an investigation into the alleged crimes perpetrated in North Kivu from 1 January 2022 to date by armed forces and armed groups alike.²⁷ Additional information could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

2. Political developments

In December 2023, President Felix Tshisekedi was reelected for a second term.²⁸ Elections were preceded by reported instances of political violence,²⁹ including the repression and detention of leaders of the opposition.³⁰ Radio France Internationale (RFI) reported that during the political campaign in eastern DRC, one member of the opposition party was killed.³¹ According to ACLED, political party leaders serving the government were also targeted in 2023, particularly in eastern DRC, where 75 % of attacks against them took place.³²

According to the International Crisis Group, in North Kivu battles persisted both before and after the elections, but in areas of the province without fighting, voting could take place 'with little interference'.³³ Sources reported that in the areas controlled by M23 in North Kivu, over a million of eligible voters could not register to vote.³⁴ According to ACLED, the offices of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI, *Commission Électorale Nationale Indépendante*), polling material, and workers were targeted by 'rioters and political party supporters' and armed groups ahead of the elections.³⁵

²⁴ UNSC, Resolution 2717 (2023) Adopted by the Security Council at its 9512th meeting, on 19 December 2023, 19 December 2023, [url](#), p. 10

²⁵ UNSC, Resolution 2717 (2023) Adopted by the Security Council at its 9512th meeting, on 19 December 2023, 19 December 2023, [url](#), p. 9

²⁶ UNSC, Resolution 2717 (2023) Adopted by the Security Council at its 9512th meeting, on 19 December 2023, 19 December 2023, [url](#), p. 9

²⁷ ICC, Statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Karim A.A. Khan KC, on the referral by the Democratic Republic of the Congo regarding the situation in its territory, 15 June 2023, [url](#)

²⁸ France 24, DR Congo constitutional court confirms Tshisekedi won election, 9 January 2024, [url](#)

²⁹ HRW, DR Congo: Electoral Violence Threatens Vote, 16 December 2023, [url](#)

³⁰ HRW, DR Congo: Crackdown on Opposition Ahead of Elections, 22 August 2023, [url](#); OHCHR, Human rights situation and the activities of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 25 August 2023, [url](#), p. 4

³¹ RFI, Élections en RDC: un cadre du parti du candidat Moïse Katumbi meurt lors d'un déplacement dans l'est du pays, 29 November 2024, [url](#)

³² ACLED, Disorder and Distrust Ahead of the 2023 Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 13 December 2023, [url](#)

³³ International Crisis Group, DR Congo: A Full Plate of Challenges after a Turbulent Vote, 26 January 2024, [url](#)

³⁴ International Crisis Group, Elections in DR Congo: Reducing the Risk of Violence, Crisis Group Africa Report N°312, 30 October 2023, [url](#), p. 9; ISPI, DRC's Elections Risk Perilous Consequences in the East, 18 December 2023, [url](#)

³⁵ ACLED, Disorder and Distrust Ahead of the 2023 Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 13 December 2023, [url](#)

In early 2024 President Tshisekedi stated that he would not engage in talks with the M23 but would be willing to negotiate with Rwanda, which supports the M23.³⁶

According to the Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, in 2023, DRC ranked 162 out of 180.³⁷ Corruption in the country was described as ‘endemic’,³⁸ and in 2022, government officials ‘frequently engaged in corrupt practices with impunity’.³⁹

3. Security incidents

Security incidents, as reported by sources, include:

- On 21 February 2024, Synergy of young people for civic education (SAJECEK, *Synergie des jeunes pour l'éducation civique*), a local human rights organisation, reported that in January 2024, 31 people were killed and 24 kidnapped by ‘armed criminals’ in South Kivu province.⁴⁰
- On 19 February 2024, authorities reported the killing of eight people, including three women, in Mayimoya, Beni territory, North Kivu, by Islamic State affiliated group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).⁴¹
- In February 2024, sources reported that M23 surrounded and attacked Sake, North Kivu, leading to combats with Congolese soldiers⁴² and the displacement of ‘thousands’ of people.⁴³
- On 25 January 2024, around 20 people were killed in the town of Mweso, Masisi territory, North Kivu.⁴⁴ M23 fighters and the Congolese army accused each other of the attack.⁴⁵ On 7 February 2024, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported that since the escalation of violence increase of 22 January 2024, approximately 10 000 people ‘in and around Mweso’ left their homes.⁴⁶
- On 8 December 2023, clashes between the Congolese army and a coalition of militias comprising the Yakutumba, Bilozebishambuke, and Red Tabara caused the

³⁶ ACP, Félix Tshisekedi rejette toutes discussions avec le M23, 23 February 2024, [url](#)

³⁷ Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2023, n.d., [url](#)

³⁸ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2023 - Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2023, [url](#)

³⁹ USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 March 2023, [url](#), p. 30

⁴⁰ Radio Okapi, Sud-Kivu : environ 30 personnes tuées en janvier 2024 par des bandits armés (SAJECEK), 21 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴¹ AFP, 8 Killed in DRC by Suspected ADF Rebels, 20 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴² Al Jazeera, Thousands flee in eastern DR Congo as M23 rebels advance near Goma, 7 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴³ Al Jazeera, Thousands flee in eastern DR Congo as M23 rebels advance near Goma, 7 February 2024, [url](#); BBC, DR Congo violence: Panic in Goma as M23 rebels advance, 11 February 2024, [url](#); UNHCR, UNHCR urges protection of civilians and aid access amid surging violence in eastern DR Congo, 14 February 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁴ Reuters, Around 20 civilians killed in Congo attack, army and rebels trade blame, 25 January 2024, [url](#); AOAV, DRC: At least 19 civilians killed in clashes between the army and M23 rebels in Mweso, North Kivu, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁵ Reuters, Around 20 civilians killed in Congo attack, army and rebels trade blame, 25 January 2024, [url](#)

⁴⁶ MSF, People and medical facilities caught in crossfire as violence escalates in North Kivu, 7 February 2024, [url](#)

displacement of civilians in the area surrounding Minembwe, South Kivu.⁴⁷ Civilian casualties could not be confirmed, but the army reported seven casualties on the militias' side.⁴⁸

- On 24 November 2023, the Mamove village in North Kivu was attacked by the ADF killing 14 farmers.⁴⁹
- On 12 November 2023, killings and kidnappings took place in the village of Kitsanga, North Kivu, allegedly by the ADF.⁵⁰
- Mining sites in South Kivu were attacked in September 2023⁵¹ and October 2023,⁵² killing four people in each incident, including four Chinese nationals: two in September⁵³ and two in October.⁵⁴
- On 5 July 2023, at least eight people were killed in Bungushu, North Kivu, by unknown armed men.⁵⁵
- On 9 March 2023, in the village of Mukondi, North Kivu, between 35 to 36 people were killed in an attack by the ADF, according to an army spokesperson.⁵⁶
- On February 2023, the Congolese army withdrew its forces when M23 took control of the town of Kitshanga.⁵⁷
- On 15 January 2023, a church in Kansidi, North Kivu, was attacked by the ADF, killing around 10 people.⁵⁸

4. Humanitarian situation

According to a 2023 press release published by the European Commission, '[h]umanitarian needs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are among the highest in the world.'⁵⁹

⁴⁷ Actualite.cd, Sud-Kivu : affrontements entre l'armée et une coalition des milices à Minembwe, au moins sept assaillants tués, 9 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁸ Actualite.cd, Sud-Kivu : affrontements entre l'armée et une coalition des milices à Minembwe, au moins sept assaillants tués, 9 December 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁹ AP, Militants with ties to the Islamic State group kill at least 14 farmers in an attack in east Congo, 25 November 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁰ AA, Suspected ADF terrorists kill 19 civilians in eastern DRC: Civil society official, 13 November 2023, [url](#)

⁵¹ AP, An attack on a Chinese mining convoy carrying gold in Congo leaves 4 dead, authorities say, 2 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵² Crisis 24, DRC: Two Chinese nationals killed in attack on gold mining facility in Misisi, South Kivu, early Oct. 9, 10 October 2023, [url](#)

⁵³ AP, An attack on a Chinese mining convoy carrying gold in Congo leaves 4 dead, authorities say, 2 September 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁴ Crisis 24, DRC: Two Chinese nationals killed in attack on gold mining facility in Misisi, South Kivu, early Oct. 9, 10 October 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵ AFP, At least 8 dead in village attack in eastern DR Congo, 5 July 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁶ Reuters, Islamist militants kill at least 35 in east Congo village, army says, 10 March 2023, [url](#); Associated Press, Extremists Kill at Least 36 People in Eastern Congo, Military Says, 9 March 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁷ Al Jazeera, M23 rebels take control of Kitshanga in eastern DR Congo, 1 February 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸ France 24, IS group claims deadly bombing of church in eastern DR Congo, 15 January 2023, [url](#); France, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Democratic Republic of the Congo – France condemns the bomb attack in a church in Kasindi (15 January 2023), n.d., [url](#)

⁵⁹ EU, European Commission, Democratic Republic of Congo: EU allocates over €32 million in additional humanitarian funding, 26 April 2023, [url](#)

In January 2024, the United Nations (UN) reported that 25.4 million people in DRC required humanitarian assistance,⁶⁰ ‘with the most urgent humanitarian needs concentrated in the eastern provinces’.⁶¹ In an article on the needs of the population in eastern DRC, MSF indicated that due to violence and displacement, ‘the humanitarian crisis has reached dramatic heights in 2023’ and that aid was limited.⁶² Lack of clean water and hygiene led to increased cases of diarrhea, leading to the death of some people.⁶³ According to the World Bank, around 62 % of the population lived on less than USD 2.15 [EUR 1.99] a day in 2022, placing DRC ‘among the five poorest nations in the world’.⁶⁴

Since January 2024, increasing clashes between the Congolese national forces and the M23 armed group⁶⁵ and flooding⁶⁶ worsened the humanitarian crisis.⁶⁷ Sources indicated that around 133 000 people⁶⁸ who escaped the conflict in North Kivu lived without access to basic sanitation, clean water,⁶⁹ food, shelter, and healthcare.⁷⁰ The situation was reported as ‘particularly dire’ for women, who must travel long distances to fetch water, exposing them to violence from armed groups.⁷¹

In May 2023, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) indicated that DRC hosted ‘the largest number of acutely food insecure people worldwide’.⁷² Driven by conflict and internal displacement, acute food insecurity was estimated to affect a quarter of the country’s population, or around 26.4 million people.⁷³ In the 2024 Humanitarian Action for Children

⁶⁰ UNHCR, Emergency Appeal - DR Congo Emergency, January 2024, [url](#); UNOCHA, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Overview, 2024, [url](#)

⁶¹ UNOCHA, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Overview, 2024, [url](#)

⁶² MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières), Press release; Massive needs everywhere as displacement reaches unprecedented levels in DRC, 20 December 2023, [url](#)

⁶³ Oxfam International, Conflict in DRC: over a hundred thousand people without clean water live in disastrous conditions, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁴ World Bank (The), The World Bank in DRC - Overview, 25 September 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁵ UN Security Council, Escalating Violence in Democratic Republic of Congo Exacerbating Humanitarian Crisis, Special Representative Warns Security Council, Urging Durable Political Solution, 20 February 2024, [url](#);

Care International, Humanitarian crisis escalates in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo due to renewed clashes and flooding, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁶ Care International, Humanitarian crisis escalates in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo due to renewed clashes and flooding, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁷ UN Security Council, Escalating Violence in Democratic Republic of Congo Exacerbating Humanitarian Crisis, Special Representative Warns Security Council, Urging Durable Political Solution, 20 February 2024, [url](#);

Care International, Humanitarian crisis escalates in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo due to renewed clashes and flooding, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁸ Oxfam International, Conflict in DRC: over a hundred thousand people without clean water live in disastrous conditions, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

⁶⁹ Oxfam International, Conflict in DRC: over a hundred thousand people without clean water live in disastrous conditions, 22 February 2024, [url](#); IOM, DRC —North Kivu: M23 Crisis Analysis (January 2024), 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁰ IOM, DRC —North Kivu: M23 Crisis Analysis (January 2024), 6 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁷¹ Oxfam International, Conflict in DRC: over a hundred thousand people without clean water live in disastrous conditions, 22 February 2024, [url](#); New Humanitarian (The), Sexual violence plagues women displaced by DR Congo’s M23 conflict, 12 July 2023, [url](#)

⁷² IDMC, Country Profile - Congo, Democratic Republic of, 24 May 2023, [url](#)

⁷³ IDMC, Country Profile - Congo, Democratic Republic of, 24 May 2023, [url](#)

report, UNICEF indicated that in DRC, ‘more than 1.2 million under 5 years of age require treatment for severe wasting; 4 million women/children need protection services; 6.6 million children require emergency water and sanitation; and 1.6 million children require emergency education.’⁷⁴ As of 31 January 2024, around 270 000 children aged below five years faced ‘global acute malnutrition’ and needed immediate humanitarian assistance in Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu.⁷⁵ Among the causes of malnutrition were the lack of drinking water, poor child-feeding practices, food insecurity, and childhood illnesses.⁷⁶

Since 2022, DRC dealt with various epidemics, including cholera, Ebola, measles, monkey pox, plague, yellow fever, vaccine-derived polio, and COVID-19.⁷⁷ According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), DRC was particularly affected by cholera in 2023, recording the worst situation since 2017.⁷⁸ In 2023, the province most impacted by cholera was North Kivu, with over 65 % of all cases recorded in the DRC, including 41 % occurring in children under 18 years old and over 25 % in children under 5 years old.⁷⁹ USAID reported that a spike in cholera cases was observed across eastern DRC in November and December 2023 due to the influx of IDPs fleeing M23-related conflict since October 2023.⁸⁰ Most cholera cases recorded in North Kivu occurred in IDP camps, according to health officials.⁸¹ UN News noted that between January and June 2023, approximately 136 000 measles cases were recorded in DRC, resulting in 3 000 deaths; 82 % of these cases occurred in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces.⁸² An article by Radio Okapi⁸³ mentioned that the National Malaria Control Program (PNLP) in South Kivu registered 335 279 malaria cases in the first quarter of 2023, with 316 118 individuals receiving treatment and 176 fatalities.⁸⁴

Conflicts across the country ‘have impeded access to healthcare for over 8.9 million people’, particularly in remote and conflict-affected regions, resulting in limited availability of critical medical services.⁸⁵ The influx of IDPs from North Kivu to South Kivu, particularly in South Kivu’s Kalehe Territory, ‘has strained the already limited health and WASH [water, sanitation, and hygiene] services’, with Minova Health Zone reporting nearly 100 cases of cholera in the first two weeks of December 2023.⁸⁶ Similarly, in North Kivu’s Kirotshu Health Zone, armed clashes in the Masisi territory since January 2024 led to an increase in IDPs, exacerbating existing gaps in WASH infrastructure.⁸⁷

⁷⁴ UNICEF, Humanitarian Action for Children – Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁵ WFP, WFP Democratic Republic of the Congo: Situation Report #54 - 31 January 2024, 15 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁷⁶ WFP, WFP Democratic Republic of the Congo: Situation Report #54 - 31 January 2024, 15 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁷⁷ ECHO, Democratic Republic of Congo – Epidemics (DG ECHO, WHO, authorities) (ECHO Daily Flash of 20 May 2022), 20 May 2022, [url](#); WHO, Democratic Republic of the Congo - WHO 2024 Health Emergency Appeal, 15 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

⁷⁸ UNOCHA, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Overview, 2024, [url](#)

⁷⁹ UNICEF, Humanitarian Action for Children – Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁸⁰ USAID, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁸¹ USAID, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁸² UN News, RDC: le système de santé dans l’est du pays au bord de la rupture, prévient l’OMS, 30 June 2023, [url](#)

⁸³ Radio Okapi is the United Nations radio station in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Radio Okapi, À propos, 10 December 2019, [url](#)

⁸⁴ Radio Okapi, Sud-Kivu: près de 335 300 cas de paludisme enregistrés en 3 mois, 25 April 2024, [url](#)

⁸⁵ Care International, Health sector in DRC crumbles amidst conflict negatively impacting survivors of sexual assault, 14 November 2023, [url](#)

⁸⁶ USAID, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁸⁷ USAID, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 3

MSF reported in February 2024 that due to the ongoing fighting blocking the road between Goma and Shasha, health centres in southern North Kivu were redirecting patients to facilities in South Kivu.⁸⁸ According to MSF, the influx ‘overwhelmed these facilities’, leading to shortages of essential medicines, including those for treating malaria, diarrheal diseases, malnutrition, and respiratory infections.⁸⁹

UNOCHA reported that heavy rains and river floodings in DRC between mid-November 2023 and January 2024 affected 2.1 million people, resulting in 300 deaths.⁹⁰ Floods ‘have reportedly destroyed or damaged almost 100 000 households, 1 325 schools, and 267 health facilities’ across the country.⁹¹ In eastern DRC, flooding and landslides, due to heavy torrential rains, between 2 and 5 May 2023 caused more than 400 deaths, thousands of missing people and ‘huge losses in livelihoods, infrastructure and materials’ in Kalehe, South Kivu Province.⁹² On 16 January 2024, media reported that 500 families were left homeless by the floods in the city of Shabunda, South Kivu.⁹³ Flooding also affected Ruzizi Health Zone in South Kivu’s Uvira territory, resulting in the destruction of 1 600 residences and submerging nearly 250 acres of crops, as reported by USAID.⁹⁴

UNICEF reported that, as a result of the conflict, the education of 750 000 children was disrupted from January 2022 to March 2023.⁹⁵ The Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict also indicated that children are being recruited by M23 and other armed groups in North Kivu.⁹⁶

For information on sexual violence in North and South Kivu, see [EUAA, DRC, Sexual and Gender Based Violence against Women](#), published on 7 February 2024.

5. Humanitarian access

Since June 2022, the M23 rebel group has controlled several localities along the northern and western roads that connect with Goma.⁹⁷ Similarly, the UN Security Council (UNSC) reported a rise in incidents targeting humanitarian actors during the last quarter of 2023 and limited

⁸⁸ MSF, Press release; People and medical facilities caught in crossfire as violence escalates in North Kivu, 7 February 2024, [url](#)

⁸⁹ MSF, Press release; People and medical facilities caught in crossfire as violence escalates in North Kivu, 7 February 2024, [url](#)

⁹⁰ UNOCHA, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Overview, 2024, [url](#)

⁹¹ UNICEF, UNICEF strengthens response to DRC’s worst floods in 60 years and growing cholera outbreak, 7 Feb 2024, [url](#)

⁹² IFRC, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – Flood Sud Kivu/Kalehe, 2022, [url](#), p. 2

⁹³ Factshimetre, Floods in Shabunda: an urgent call for help to rebuild and support affected families, 16 January 2024, [url](#); Digital Congo, South Kivu: over 500 families displaced following the floods in Shabunda, 16 January 2024, [url](#)

⁹⁴ USAID, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 3

⁹⁵ UNICEF, Conflict in eastern DRC is having a devastating impact on children’s education, 29 March 2023, [url](#)

⁹⁶ UNSC, Conclusions on children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 19 December 2022, [url](#), p. 15

⁹⁷ Crisis 24, DRC: Clashes between M23 rebels and security forces continue in North Kivu Province as of Feb. 27 /update 3, 27 February 2023, [url](#)

access to M23-controlled territories, which isolated Goma from inland territories and disrupted food production and supply chains.⁹⁸ As of 3 February 2024, M23 rebels blocked four main roads in North Kivu: the Goma Bakavu road, the Goma-Rutsuru Road, the Sake-Kitshanga-Mweso road, and the Sake-Masisi road.⁹⁹ MSF reported in February 2024 that ‘the road between North Kivu’s capital, Goma, and the town of Shasha, 27 kilometres to the west, currently impassable due to the fighting’.¹⁰⁰ In a press release of 22 February 2024, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) indicated that due to insecurity and logistical obstacles, humanitarian access to displaced population in DRC remains ‘poor’.¹⁰¹ According to the UNHCR press release of 14 February 2024, conflicts restricted access of humanitarian agencies to Masisi territory and Rutshuru, further complicating their efforts to deliver ‘essential assistance’.¹⁰² Similarly, clashes along the Sake-Bweremana axis, the primary humanitarian route from South Kivu to Minova via Goma, have hindered humanitarian access in Minova, South Kivu.¹⁰³ The conflict has impeded the delivery of life-saving assistance by road, forcing reliance on boat access.¹⁰⁴

In addition to security issues, the World Food Programme (WFP) reported in May 2023 that due to the floods in Kalehe, the main supply route between Bukavu and Goma was closed, preventing humanitarian assistance from reaching the region.¹⁰⁵

6. Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

According to UN sources, the IDP population in the DRC is the largest in Africa,¹⁰⁶ with over 80 % of displacements attributed to attacks and armed clashes.¹⁰⁷ As of October 2023, IOM reported that DRC had around 6.9 million of IDPs, ‘primarily concentrated in the four eastern provinces of North Kivu (2,300,163 individuals), Ituri (1,630,535), South Kivu (1,356,376), and Tanganyika (350,462)’.¹⁰⁸ On 23 February 2023, UNHCR indicated in a briefing note that there were more than 7 million IDPs in DRC, including half a million refugees.¹⁰⁹ Internally displaced

⁹⁸ UNSC, Escalating Violence in Democratic Republic of Congo Exacerbating Humanitarian Crisis, Special Representative Warns Security Council, Urging Durable Political Solution, 20 February 2024, [url](#)

⁹⁹ IOM DTM, Democratic Republic Of The Congo; M23 Crisis Analysis –Report #13 North Kivu province, 14 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁰⁰ MSF, Press release; Massive needs everywhere as displacement reaches unprecedented levels in DRC, 20 December 2023, [url](#)

¹⁰¹ IRC, Press release - Poor humanitarian access to displaced populations puts thousands at risk in DRC, warns IRC, 22 February 2023, [url](#)

¹⁰² UN News, Massive displacement as fighting surges in eastern DR Congo, 14 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰³ UNICEF, UNICEF DR Congo Flash Update (Upsurge of violence in Masisi territory) as of 19 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴ UNICEF, UNICEF DR Congo Flash Update (Upsurge of violence in Masisi territory) as of 19 February 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵ WFP, WFP’s emergency response to the Kalehe floods, South Kivu - Flash Report (11 May 2023), 11 May 2023, [url](#), p. 3

¹⁰⁶ UNOCHA, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Overview, 2024, [url](#); UNHCR, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷ UNOCHA, République Démocratique Du Congo Personnes Déplacées Internes Et Retournées, December 2023, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁰⁸ IOM, Displacement Tracking Matrix, Mobility Tracking - Country Displacement Overview Democratic Republic of the Congo, October 2023, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹ UNHCR, UN Refugee Agency expresses alarm over escalating humanitarian crisis in eastern DR Congo, 23 February 2024, [url](#)

people in eastern DRC suffered targeted attacks by armed groups, in which hundreds were killed and injured and further displacement of civilians took place.¹¹⁰

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) noted that in Rutshuru, North Kivu, ‘hundreds of thousands of people’ were displaced within North Kivu and to South Kivu as fighting between M23, FARDC and other armed groups started to take place since March 2022.¹¹¹

IDPs in North Kivu

IOM reported on 14 February 2024 that the majority of IDPs in North Kivu lived in host communities, while the remaining 44 % resided in displacement sites, which are often overcrowded and ‘struggle to provide basic services such as security, drinking water, food and sanitation.’¹¹²

Since the escalation of the conflict in Sake, Masisi territory, North Kivu, on 7 February 2024, 144 000 people fled to the outskirts of Goma.¹¹³ In addition, between 2 and 3 February 2024, at least 26 000 displaced individuals from the nearby villages of Shasha, Kiotshe, and Bweremana, sought refuge in Sake but, following the attack on 7 February 2024, were also displaced to Goma.¹¹⁴ According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in February 2023 approximately 300 000 people fled Rutshuru and Masisi territories in North Kivu Province due to ‘clashes between non-state armed groups and government forces’.¹¹⁵ In November 2023, a joint declaration by UNHCR and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) indicated that in North Kivu, specifically in Rutshuru and Masisi territories, ‘more than 450 000 people’ were displaced in the period of six weeks due to ‘violent clashes between non-state armed groups and government forces’.¹¹⁶ UNHCR and IRC reported security issues and lack of adequate shelters.¹¹⁷ The Provincial Humanitarian Coordination (COHP) of North Kivu indicated that IDPs lacked proper food, water, shelter, hygiene and sanitation, and essential household items.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁰ AI, The State of the World's Human Rights; Democratic Republic Of The Congo 2022, 27 March 2023, [url](#)

¹¹¹ USAID, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #3, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 6

¹¹² IOM DTM, Democratic Republic Of The Congo; M23 Crisis Analysis –Report #13 North Kivu province, 14 February 2024, [url](#), p.1

¹¹³ UNHCR, UN Refugee Agency expresses alarm over escalating humanitarian crisis in eastern DR Congo, 23 February 2024, [url](#)

¹¹⁴ UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), Democratic Republic of Congo – North Kivu; Flash Update #1: New surge of violence in Masisi forced displacement to Goma, 8 February 2024, [url](#), p. 1

¹¹⁵ UNHCR, UNHCR concerned by conflict's toll on hundreds of thousands displaced in eastern DR Congo, 10 March 2023, [url](#)

¹¹⁶ UNICEF, UNHCR and UNICEF express grave concern over the humanitarian toll on civilians in eastern DR Congo, 24 November 2023, [url](#)

¹¹⁷ UNHCR, UN Refugee Agency expresses alarm over escalating humanitarian crisis in eastern DR Congo, 23 February 2024, [url](#); IRC, Press release - Poor humanitarian access to displaced populations puts thousands at risk in DRC, warns IRC, 22 February 2023, [url](#)

¹¹⁸ UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), Democratic Republic of Congo – North Kivu; Flash Update #1: New surge of violence in Masisi forced displacement to Goma, 8 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

IDPs in South Kivu

Since 2 February 2024, humanitarian sources indicated that over 60 000 displaced people have relocated from Masisi to Minova and Bunyakiri, Kalehe territory, South Kivu.¹¹⁹ Prior to these events, South Kivu had over 156 000 IDPs from armed conflicts in neighbouring North Kivu between December 2022 and January 2024.¹²⁰ USAID noted in January 2024 that health and water, sanitation, and hygiene services in South Kivu, which were already strained, faced additional limitations due to the arrival of IDPs from North Kivu due to M23-related violence.¹²¹

IFRC estimated that approximately 8 873 people were relocated to Bushushu and Nyamukubi, Kalele, due to floodings that took place between 2 and 5 May 2023.¹²²

¹¹⁹ UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), Democratic Republic of Congo – North Kivu; Flash Update #1: New surge of violence in Masisi forced displacement to Goma, 8 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

¹²⁰ UNOCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), Democratic Republic of Congo – North Kivu; Flash Update #1: New surge of violence in Masisi forced displacement to Goma, 8 February 2024, [url](#), p. 2

¹²¹ USAID, Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #3, 25 January 2024, [url](#), p. 3

¹²² IFRC, Dref Operational Update; Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - Flood Sud Kivu/Kalehe, 23 May 2023, [url](#), p. 9

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