

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	966
Land:	Den Demokratiske Republik Congo
Kilde:	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Titel:	Escalating violence in eastern DR Congo displaces more than 230,000 since start of year
Udgivet:	17. januar 2025
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	1. april 2025

Escalating violence in eastern DR Congo displaces more than 230,000 since start of year

GENEVA – UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is alarmed by the worsening violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which has already displaced 237,000 people this year.

Escalating clashes between non-state armed groups and the Congolese army in North and South Kivu provinces are intensifying one of the world's most alarming yet under-reported humanitarian crises, marked by widespread human rights violations and massive forced displacement.

These two provinces are already home to 4.6 million internally displaced people, making the DRC one of the world's largest hosts for people uprooted within their own borders.

From 1 to 6 January, intense fighting in the Masisi and the Lubero territories of North Kivu Province forced approximately 150,000 individuals to flee their homes. Many initially sought safety in Masisi territory, northwest of Goma, the territory's main town, only to be displaced yet again as violence spread. Simultaneously, in South Kivu's Fizi territory, the local government reports that 84,000 people are now displaced and it has requested humanitarian assistance from the international community. Civilians in both regions are enduring indiscriminate bombings and sexual violence. The use of heavy weaponry in populated areas has resulted in numerous civilian casualties, including children.

The ongoing violence has severely limited humanitarian access in the short term and left displaced populations in desperate need of shelter, food, clean water, and medical care. Many are seeking refuge in overcrowded host communities, makeshift shelters, or public buildings such as hospitals. Already dire humanitarian conditions are worsening rapidly, and access to these vulnerable populations is severely restricted by insecurity, roadblocks and the presence of violent armed actors. Fighters are reportedly using people's homes as shelters, endangering residents by blurring the distinction between combatants and civilians.

Despite the volatile security situation, approximately 25,000 displaced people returned to Masisi-Center following a temporary lull in violence on 4 January. However, renewed clashes on 9 January forced many to flee once again, highlighting the fragility of the situation. The town remains engulfed in uncertainty, with civilians facing ongoing violence, including forced recruitment, and suspicion from armed actors.

As soon as access is restored, UNHCR is ready to help these populations. The agency constructed and rehabilitated shelters for more than 95,000 people in this region in 2024 and distributed critical household items such as mosquito nets, blankets, and cooking pots to 45,000 people.

UNHCR emphasizes the urgency of addressing the escalating humanitarian crisis. Safe and unimpeded access for aid workers must be guaranteed, and measures to protect civilians – particularly women and children – must be prioritized. While UNHCR remains committed to supporting displaced communities in eastern DRC, the scale of the crisis demands immediate action to scale up relief efforts. In 2025, UNHCR requires a total of \$226 million to address the protracted emergency in the DRC and to date UNHCR has received less than 10 per cent of the needed funding.

UNHCR reminds all stakeholders that it is high time peace prevails in the DRC in the best interests of the region and humanity. It urges increased investments in peacebuilding and conflict resolution to address the root causes of displacement and build a foundation for lasting stability.

For more information or media inquiries, please contact:

- In Goma: Blaise Sanyila, ngoyblai@unhcr.org , +243993189768
- In Pretoria (regional): Edward Ogolla, ogolla@unhcr.org, +27 63 548 2215
- In Geneva: Eujin Byun, byun@unhcr.org, +41 79 747 8719

Related news and stories



BRIEFING NOTES

UNHCR urges more support in Syria as 1 million displaced in north-west yearn for home



STORIES

People still being forced to flee as the war in Ukraine continues



PRESS RELEASES

News Comment: UNHCR's Grandi urges world to remember Ukraine's displaced and war-affected people

