

### HIGHLIGHTS



**6.1 million** individuals displaced in North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, and Tanganyika<sup>1</sup>

**590,786** individuals displaced by the M23 crisis<sup>2</sup>



**5,442** individuals relocated to planned sites



**899** emergency shelters constructed  
**526** NFI kits distributed



**4,416** individuals benefited from WASH assistance



**143** individuals participated in MHPSS focus group discussions

### Funding Overview (USD)



58%

RECEIVED: \$36 M

REQUESTED: \$63 M



IOM constructed shelters in Rusayo II displacement site, Nyiragongo territory. / © IOM 2023

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continues to face multiple conflicts that have created one of the world's most complex and persistent crises. The declaration of the IASC humanitarian system-wide Level 3 scale up, in parallel with the internal scale-up by IOM, has facilitated the mobilization of greater resources to provide urgent multisectoral assistance to displaced persons, returnees, and other affected communities.

In August 2023, the security situation continued to deteriorate in the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri, leading to a deterioration of the already acute humanitarian crisis. The Cooperative for Development of the Congo (CODECO) armed group intensified targeted attacks against civilians around displacement sites and agricultural roads in Djugu and Mahagi territories in Ituri province, resulting in loss of life, injuries, and the destruction of several houses. Clashes between CODECO and the 'Zaire' self-defense group in several localities of Ituri have also led to population movements. During the same period, new waves of violence resurfaced in North Kivu province, pitting the March 23 Movement (M23) against local armed groups in Rutshuru, Masisi, and Nyiragongo territories.

This constant threat of violence and insecurity, as well as the recent resurgence of armed conflicts in North Kivu and Ituri provinces, have

led to a substantial increase in the displacement of populations since mid-2022. According to an assessment conducted by IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), 6.1 million people are displaced in the four eastern provinces (Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, and Tanganyika), as of May 2023.<sup>1</sup> More recently, there has been a significant increase in return movements with 818,266 returnees (151,695 households) identified by DTM from 23 July to 24 August.<sup>2</sup>

In August, the Emergency Directors Group, including IOM's Director of Operations and Emergency, visited eastern DRC to advise and follow up on strategic and operational issues requiring urgent collective action, system-wide resource mobilization, and targeted field support to sustain or scale up the humanitarian response.

Despite the challenges linked to the security context, the underfunding of the response plan, and access limitations, humanitarian efforts are starting to bear positive impacts. The system-wide scale up since June has enabled the provision of assistance to 1.4 million out of the 5.46 million people affected by the violence in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, IOM has strengthened its capacities to deliver and expanded its operations in North Kivu, Ituri, and South Kivu provinces with plans to reach an addition of over 50,000 people (10,000 households) in the next three months.

### CONTACT

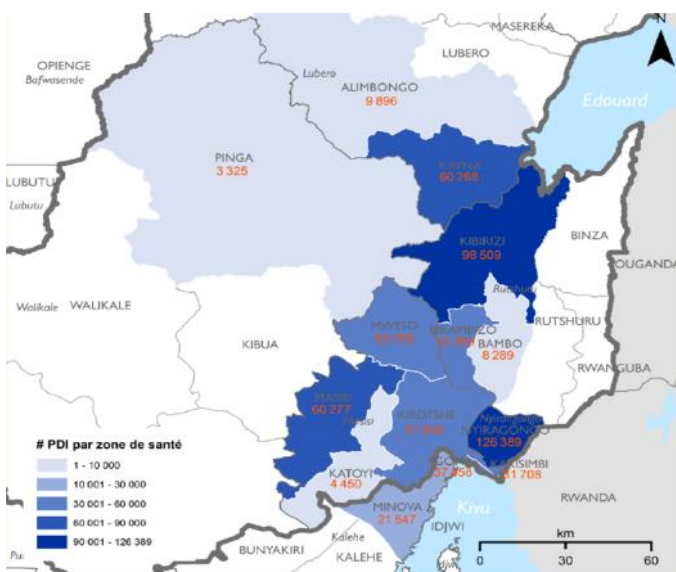
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IOM continues to conduct regular assessments to capture displacement trends and the needs of displaced populations. During the month of August, DTM recorded a decrease in the number of internally displaced persons affected by the M23 crisis, with 590,786 people in displacement identified this month compared to 613,073 people in July (4% decrease). Ninety-six per cent of these displaced individuals are located in North Kivu province and 4% in South Kivu, residing in host families, collective centers, spontaneous sites, and planned sites. In North Kivu, Masisi territory is the most affected by displacement as it hosts 25 per cent of displaced individuals in the province, followed by Rutshuru (24%), Nyiragongo (21%), and Lubero and Goma (13% each).

IOM also identified a total of 818,266 returnees (151,695 households) since November 2022. The trend of returns increased by 10% during this assessment cycle (July–August 2023), with an additional 75,367 individuals returning in addition to the 742,899 registered in the previous assessment covering the period from 26 June to 23 July 2023. This increase in the number of returnees is attributed to a decrease in hostilities in densely populated areas of Rutshuru, North Kivu province. However, return movement remains very limited in the Bwito chieftaincy, Tongo, and Shonyi in Rutshuru where clashes regularly erupt between armed groups.

Simultaneously, new displacements have been recorded in the territories of Masisi, Rutshuru, Nyiragongo, Lubero, Goma, Walikale (North Kivu), and Kalehe (South Kivu) following clashes involving the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), self-defense groups, and the M23. IOM is currently evaluating data on these new displacement movements, which could once again impact the figures of people displaced by the M23 crisis.



M23 displacement mapping, as of August 2023 / © IOM 2023.



Meeting between IOM and IDP committees in Bushagara displacement site, Nyiragongo, North Kivu province / ©IOM August 2023.

During the reporting period, a total of 5,442 individuals (1,555 households) affected by the M23 crisis were relocated from spontaneous to planned sites in North Kivu. Among them, 1,150 displaced households who had taken refuge in two schools were relocated in the planned site of Bushagara, allowing these schools to become operational for the start of the new academic year. Additionally, 1,418 individuals (405 HHs) were transferred from spontaneous sites at Lac Vert/Bulengo and Rusayo I to the new planned site of Rusayo II. This relocation was preceded by a series of activities, including awareness-raising, beneficiary targeting, and the distribution of relocation vouchers to identified households.

During the same period, IOM conducted registrations in seven sites in North Kivu that host IDPs who fled violence caused by the M23 crisis in Goma and its surroundings. These sites mainly included Lac-Vert/Bulengo, Rusayo 1, Rusayo 2, Mudja, Lushagala, Bushagara, and Axe Kanyaruchinya. The purpose of this registration was to update data on the displaced population living in these displacement sites and to define the priorities and immediate needs of the IDPs. This registration exercise indicated a decrease in the population living in these sites from 121,590 to 120,940 individuals.

Furthermore, IOM facilitated a visit by the EDG to Bushagara and spontaneous displacement sites jointly managed by IOM and AIDES in Lac Vert/Bulengo. IOM organized community meetings and focus group discussions with IDPs for the EDG.

In the continued effort to strengthen capacity to respond to the crisis and as part of the L3 scale up, 65 individuals (18 women and 47 men) including IOM staff and its implementing partner AIDES, received information and training sessions on the use of the Zite Manager application in preparation for its upcoming roll out in the country. The training also covered complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFM), site monitoring, and service mapping.



## SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)



IOM constructed shelters in Rusayo II displacement site, Nyiragongo territory. / © IOM May 2023

In August 2023, a total of 827 emergency shelters were constructed and 526 NFI kits were distributed in North Kivu, Ituri and Tanganyika provinces. Out of the 827 emergency shelters provided, 40 were distributed to vulnerable households with specific needs. IOM engaged community members through cash

for work to support the construction of these emergency shelters, ensuring the involvement of the receiving community in IOM activities while also creating temporary jobs and sources of income for IDPs.

With the support of the administration of Nyiragongo territory and provincial authorities of North Kivu, IOM continued construction work of emergency shelters at the Bushagara site, where work has been frequently interrupted by host communities. IOM works to raise awareness among authorities and potential landowners about the need to establish ensure the continued implementation of Shelter activities.

The Organization also continues to advocate with provincial authorities for improved land access and enhanced security in Goma and Nyiragongo, North Kivu province, to provide an adequate shelter response at displacement sites.



## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

IOM WASH activities in the DRC benefited 7,820 people (51% female, 49% male), including 2,900 in North Kivu, 4,500 in Ituri, and 420 in Tanganyika.

This assistance included the construction of 82 emergency sanitation facilities, with 68 located in North Kivu, specifically at the Rusayo 2 and Bushagara sites, and 14 in Tanganyika. During the month, 58 emergency showers were also constructed in North Kivu, along with nine water points in Ituri. Between July and August, a total of 136 emergency latrines and 90 showers were built in the three provinces.

Despite the efforts made by partners and humanitarian actors to address vital water, hygiene, and sanitation needs, significant gaps remain in this sector. There is a shortage of latrines, showers, and water points to provide safe drinking water to displaced individuals, especially in the displacement sites of Rusayo 2, Lusagara, and Bushagara in the Nyiragongo territories and in Goma, North Kivu. With the support of its partners, IOM aims to meet the water needs of over 10,945 households in the next three months and continues to call for increased support from partners.



## MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

IOM continues to create safe spaces through group discussions, counselling and emotional support sessions. In addition to individual clinical interviews in an effort to alleviate the mental and psychosocial impact of the ongoing challenges faced by people in displacement and affected by the crisis.

From 9-14 August, IOM with the Provincial Health Division (DPS) conducted a joint mental health needs assessment for IDPs at five displacement sites located in the Angumu and Mahagi health zones, Ituri province. In total, 143 people participated in this evaluation through group discussions, including 70 adults (40 male, 30 female) and 73 young people (40 boys and 33 girls). The evaluation indicated most issues faced by young people are linked to sexual and reproductive health, including unwanted pregnancies; alcoholism; substance use; among others. Displaced communities also experience psychological distress, including symptoms such as stress, insomnia, depression, and post-traumatic stress in relation to a lack of access to health care and livelihood opportunities, loss of loved ones and material possessions, unresolved grief, a lack of hope for the future, and challenges with social cohesion with members of the host community.

### IOM IN DRC ARE SUPPORTED BY

