Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID 2018)

Conflict displacement
Figures analysis
Following the violent insurrection of Kamuina Nsapu militia against the government in Kasai Central province in August 2016, simmering inter-communal tensions escalated and fighting spread to the entire Greater Kasai region of Kasai, Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental, Lomami and Sankuru provinces. The crisis has continued in full force until around May of 2017, calming down in the second half of the year.

In the East, particularly in Nord- and Sud-Kivu, a volatile security situation has been ongoing for over ten years. An increase in violence in those to provinces was noted in 2017, with clashes between armed groups cause regular displacements.

In Tanganyika, the number of IDPs has increased significantly as a result of inter-communal conflict that has intensified since July 2016.
DR CONGO - Map of major displacement events in 2017

Intercommunal violence as well as clashes between armed groups caused a total of 388,000 new displacements during the year, with a surge of displacement noted between September and December.
Location: Tanganyika
Source: OCHA

Intercommunal violence in the first part of the year caused about 602,000 new displacements in the Grand Kasai region.
Location: Kasai, Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental, Lomami, Sankuru
Source: OCHA

Ongoing clashes between armed groups caused a stream of new displacements throughout the year, with more than 737,000 new displacements recorded in North and South Kivu.
Location: North Kivu, South Kivu
Source: OCHA

Sources: Displacement data (IDMC); map (OCHA, Reliefweb) created in Sep 2013. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations and IDMC.
**Sources and methodologies**
The estimates on stock figures come from OCHA, through its population movement alert system. In the east of the country, the alert system has been running for a couple of years. Alerts about new caseloads of people are regularly relayed to OCHA by humanitarian partners and government authorities. Through a group of NGOs called the Commission de Mouvement de Population (CMP), these alerts are verified every couple of months, and confirmed as population movements, forming part of the overall country stock figure. This information is then published by OCHA in quarterly reports.

**Main caveats and specific monitoring challenges**
The difficult terrain, size of the country, constant insecurity and patterns of displacements make it challenging to accurately identify IDP populations. Many displacements are pendular, and people often stay with host families or hide in the bush. There is no system of IDP registration, with a reliance instead on reports from organisations present on the ground. This poses a particular problem when considering returns. Lack of access to some areas of origin means that it is difficult to assess whether people have been able to return home, and whether those returns were sustainable. The result is that return movements cannot be accounted for in the overall stock figure, which is thus likely to be an overestimation.

**IDMC figure, methodology and rationale**
IDMC uses the stock figure as of 31/12/2017 given by OCHA, which is composed of the sum of new displacements each year from 2009 to 2017.

**Significant changes from last year: methodological and contextual changes**
No major changes in the methodology since last year's figures, which also came from OCHA, verified by the CMP. However, the scale of conflict has increased substantially, with Grand Kasai region, North and South Kivu, Maniema and Tanganyika the worst affected.
DR CONGO - New Displacements: 2,166,000

This corresponds to the estimated number of internal displacement movements to have taken place during the year.

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Main caveats and specific monitoring challenges
The difficult terrain, size of the country, constant insecurity and patterns of displacements make it challenging to accurately identify IDP populations. Many displacements are pendular, and people often stay with host families or hide in the bush. There is no system of IDP registration, with a reliance instead on reports from organisations present on the ground. Many new population movements cannot be verified, due to access constraints. The figure of 2,166,000 therefore only includes verified caseloads, and is likely to be an underestimation of the total number of new displacements that took place during the 2017 calendar year. Due to problems of access, there is also a time lag from when a displacement flow happens to when it is verified by CMP, and subsequently reported on by OCHA, also potentially affecting the total figure.

IDMC figure, methodology and rationale
IDMC uses the new displacement figures published by OCHA, covering the entire year of 2017.

Significant changes from last year: methodological and contextual changes
No major changes in methodology since last year's figures, which also came from OCHA, verified by the CMP. However, the scale of conflict in many provinces increased substantially, driving up the new displacement figure. In addition, many displacements that took place in late 2016 due to the onset of the Grand Kasai crisis were only accounted for in 2017, also increasing the new displacement figure.
IDMC did not record any returns in DRC in 2017. Most return movements were reported under the ‘Provisional Solutions’ category because they can not be considered to be durable yet.
Specific challenges in accounting for Returns

Through its population movement alert mechanism, OCHA reports on yearly return flows, which indicate when IDPs have reportedly returned to their areas of origin.

OCHA reports that a total of about 1,498,000 returned to their own homes in 2017 and 2016 based on news that they receive from community leaders in the various affected villages and towns. However, OCHA does not not have the resources to verify if people who have reportedly returned to their homes have done so durably. But it is clear from humanitarian assessments that many people who have temporarily returned may become displaced again during a flare up of conflict, and often return to damaged houses and destroyed crops. These cases can therefore not be considered as durable returns, placing them in the provisional solutions category.

At the same time, a total of about 632,000 people have returned to their areas of origin in 2016 and 2017 but are staying in makeshift shelters, IDP sites or with host families. While this qualifies as still being displaced, these cases have not been added to the overall stock figure due to risks of double counting.