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KIN ATLAS · 02

Internal Displacement in Africa: When Evidence Must Travel with the Number

Conflict, violence and disasters reshape lives inside national borders. This paper keeps the figures — and the limits that travel with them — in view.

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1 Reading the data

Every number has a face. Every number also has a date, a definition, a source and a limit.

This paper distinguishes People still internally displaced (People still displaced) from Movements registered during the year (New displacements). It also makes the Limit of the available evidence (Coverage limit) visible before figures are compared or cited.

2 Suggested citation

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2.1 Leaving home without leaving the country

For millions of people across Sub-Saharan Africa, displacement does not begin at a border. It begins when home is no longer safe, habitable or reachable — and when a family must move while remaining inside its own country.

At the end of 2025, 31.7 million people were living in internal displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa. During the same year, 17.3 million internal displacements were recorded in the region: 14.456 million were associated with conflict and violence and 2.857 million with disasters. A movement during a year is not the same as a person still living in displacement at year end [3].

2.2 Two comparable records, never one artificial total

This Atlas follows ten priority countries through two separate GIDD records. In 2025, they recorded 14.261 million displacements associated with conflict and violence and 2.255 million associated with disasters. These are reported movements during one year. A person can be forced to move more than once, including in response to different shocks [1] [2].

At year end, the same ten countries had 27.657 million people still displaced by conflict and violence. GIDD also published disaster-related year-end stocks for seven of them, totalling 2.410 million people. Sudan, Somalia and the Central African Republic had no published disaster stock in this extraction. The 2.410 million is therefore not a total for the ten-country selection, and neither stock column should be added to the other [1] [2].

> *Every number has a face. But every number also has a date, a definition, a source and a limit. Keeping those conditions visible is part of responsible public information.*

2.3 Women and children: what the evidence can say

IDMC's 2025 sex-and-age estimates for the ten-country conflict-and-violence stock represent 13.886 million women, or 50.2%, and 13.431 million children aged 0–17, or 48.6%. This is a demographic estimate for a defined population. It is not a survey-based average for all Sub-Saharan Africa [1] [2].

Separate country evidence can make children visible in immediate ways, but it should not be mechanically merged with the regional estimate. UNICEF reported that more than 100,000 children were among more

than 500,000 people displaced in South Kivu after 1 December 2025. In Mozambique, IOM's June 2024 mobility assessment of more than 716,000 IDPs reported 52% children and 28% adult women. Both sources use populations and dates different from the 2025 GIDD stock [4] [5].

> *When the source gives a date, population and denominator, women and children can be shown separately. When those conditions differ, the figures must stay in separate evidence cards.*

2.4 Acute hunger: a pressure card, not a displacement column

Acute food insecurity can make displacement last, repeat or become harder to end. It is not, however, a comparable GIDD cause of displacement. The IPC measures the severity and magnitude of acute food insecurity in an analysed population. It does not count people displaced by hunger, and its figures must not be added to the Atlas displacement figures.

The four country cards are deliberately separate and time-bound. IPC estimated that 19.5 million people in Sudan faced Phase 3 or worse acute food insecurity from February to May 2026; in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 26.5 million were projected to face Phase 3 or worse from January to June; in Somalia, 6.0 million were projected to face Phase 3 or worse from April to June; and in South Sudan, 7.835 million were projected to face Phase 3 or worse from April to July. Each estimate refers to its own analysed population, period and evidence conditions. There is no regional total in this Atlas [6] [7] [8] [9].

> *Hunger is not a third displacement total. It is a documented pressure that can make return, safety and recovery more difficult.*

2.5 Three places to read beyond a single number

Country notes are not footnotes to the chart. They are part of what each recorded figure means.

Sudan — scale with two visible gaps

[GIDD recorded 1.733 million conflict-and-violence movements and 30,175 disaster movements in 2025. It published 9.117 million people still displaced by conflict and violence, but no separate disaster stock. IPC's national February–May 2026 analysis estimated 19.5 million people in Phase 3 or worse acute food insecurity; it is a pressure indicator, not a displacement count [1] [6].]

Democratic Republic of the Congo — movement is not a census

[The 9.771 million conflict-and-violence movements and 312,852 disaster movements recorded in 2025 may include repeated movement. At year end, GIDD recorded 4.276 million people still displaced by conflict and violence and 629,672 by disasters. IPC's January–June 2026 projection of 26.5 million people in Phase 3 or worse has a different universe and must remain separate [1] [7].]

Mozambique — two routes, two dates

[GIDD recorded 338,679 conflict-and-violence movements and 668,789 disaster movements in 2025, with separate year-end stocks of 497,409 and 164,511. IOM's June 2024 assessment can illuminate

children and women, but cannot be merged with 2025 GIDD data because its operational population and date differ [1] [5].]

3 References

1. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). Global Internal Displacement Database (GIDD), annual data through 2025.
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6. IPC. Sudan Special Report: Major food and nutrition crisis persists in Sudan as conflict enters fourth year and the risk of Famine looms, 3 June 2026.
7. IPC. Democratic Republic of the Congo: Acute Food Insecurity Projection Update for January–June 2026, 12 May 2026.
8. IPC. Somalia: Acute Food Insecurity Projection Update April–June 2026, 14 May 2026.
9. IPC. South Sudan: Acute Food Insecurity and Malnutrition Analysis, April–July 2026, 28 April 2026.

4 Key terms

Coverage limit **– Limit of the available evidence**: A geographic, temporal or methodological boundary on what a figure can establish.

New displacements **– Movements registered during the year**: Movements or episodes registered during a year; the same person may appear more than once.

People still displaced **– People still internally displaced**: People who remained internally displaced at the end of the reference period.