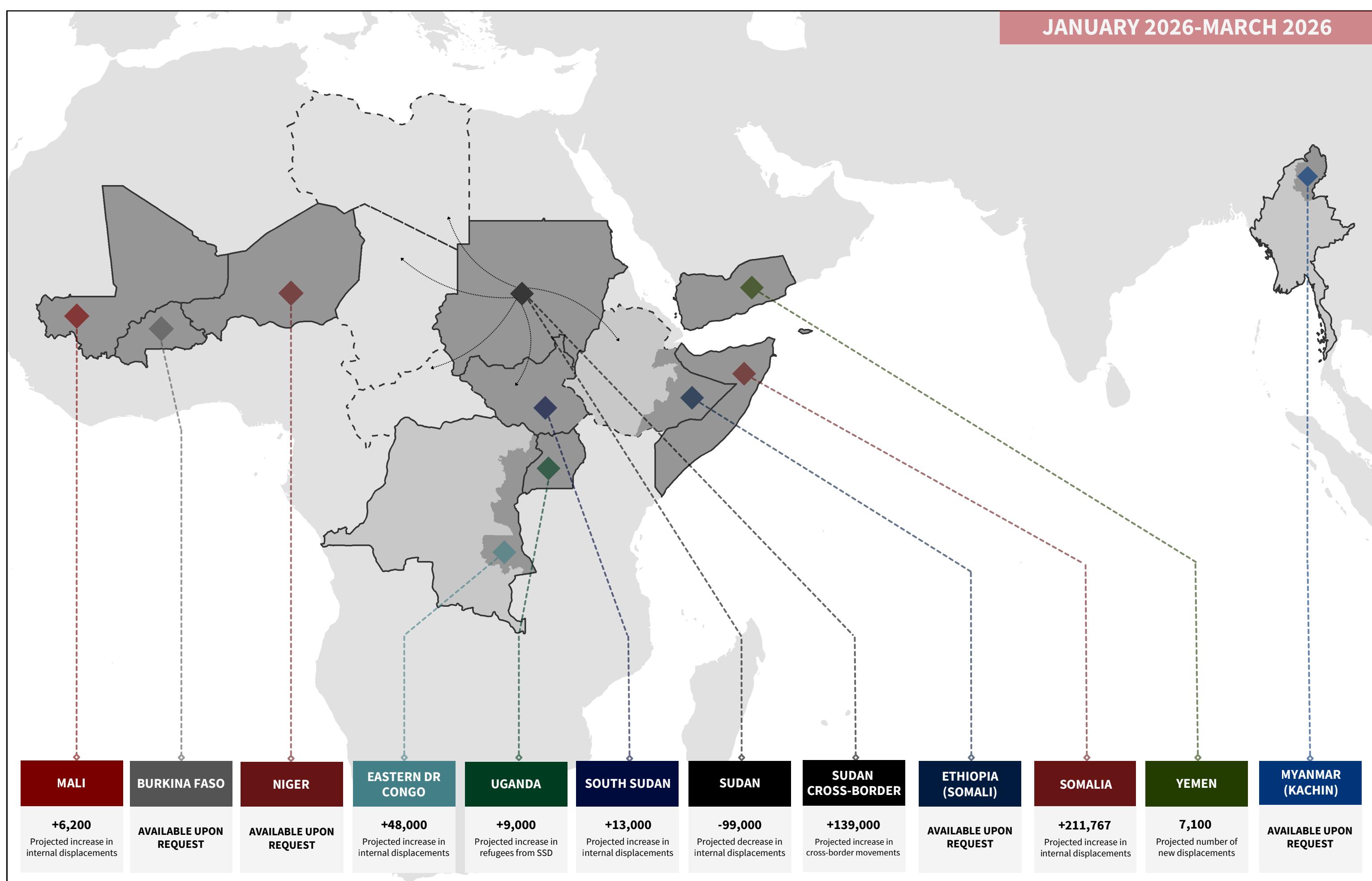


OVERVIEW

AHEAD's global snapshot #9 presents displacement forecasts for the period **January to March 2026**, providing early warnings on where displacement figures may rise or fall. This edition covers eleven countries: **Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Yemen, as well as Myanmar (Kachin state), Ethiopia (Somali region), Niger and Burkina Faso (all four available upon request)**. In addition, the snapshot includes a dedicated analysis of cross-border displacement movements from **Sudan into neighbouring countries**. Forecasts draw on recent displacement trends, conflict dynamics, food insecurity and seasonal factors. As displacement data can be highly uncertain or missing, the AHEAD model attempts to impute missing values and estimate current displacement levels before projecting three months ahead.



Dashed borders highlight countries included in the modelling of cross-border movements from Sudan

GLOBAL OUTLOOK

In Somalia, displacement is anticipated to climb by over 200,000, and particularly large increases in the coming months are expected in terms of the total number of drought-induced IDPs.

In Sudan, the total number of IDPs is expected to decrease by 99,000, following earlier declines driven by increased return movements. Meanwhile, cross-border flows from Sudan, particularly into the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Libya, South Sudan and Chad, are projected to rise by over 139,000.

Internal displacement is anticipated to climb by roughly 13,000 in South Sudan, with some of the largest increases expected in Juba. **In Uganda, the AHEAD model projects an increase of more than 9,000 refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan across nine settlements.**

Forecasts for eastern DR Congo indicate that the number of IDPs will increase by roughly 48,000 by March 2026, following the recent escalation of violence in South Kivu. **In Mali it is anticipated that the number of IDPs across the country will increase by 6,200 by the end of the first quarter of 2026.**

In Yemen, the number of new displacements in the coming quarter is expected to be above 7,000, with large increases anticipated in both Ma'rib and Ma'rib City.

For more information about AHEAD, please visit: <https://drc.ngo/what-we-do/innovation/anticipatory-action/ahead/>

Disclaimer: the maps shown here are for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by DRC. The forecasts presented in this snapshot are based on available data from relevant sources at the time of analysis. Work on the forecasting model is ongoing, and updates are made regularly as new information becomes available.

Internal displacement in Mali is almost entirely conflict-related. Displacement in Mali is driven by a protracted and complex conflict involving state forces, allied paramilitaries, and a patchwork of non-state armed groups, further exacerbated by intercommunal violence. The displacement is primarily concentrated in the central regions of Bandiagara, Mopti and Ségou, and the northern regions of Gao, Menaka, and Tombouctou.

HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

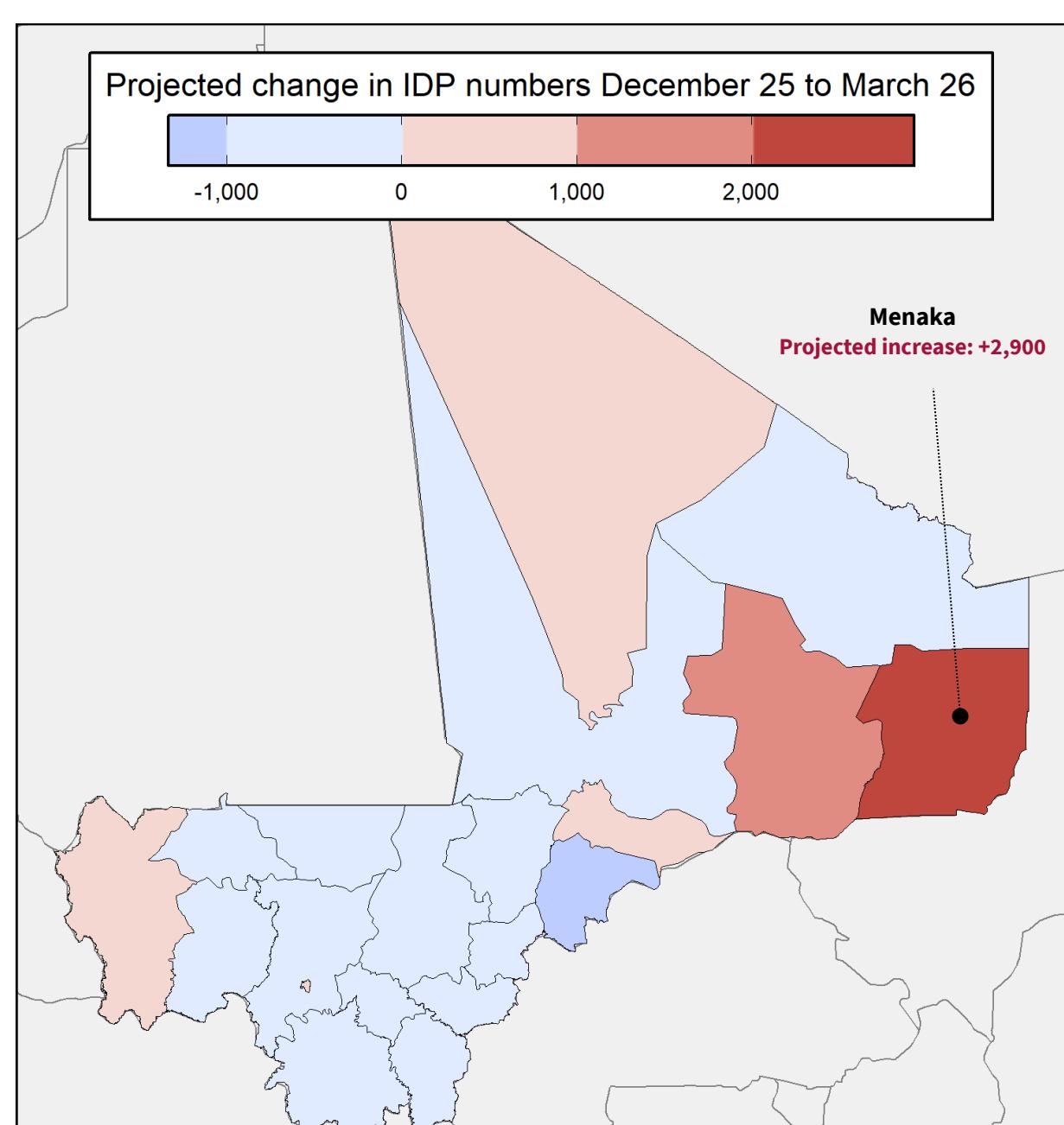
By March 2026, AHEAD projects the largest displaced population in Mali to be in **Bandiagara, Gao, Menaka, Mopti and Ségou**.

Projections for January, February and March indicate the highest risk of large scale displacement in the eastern part of the country. **In Menaka, the number of IDPs is expected to increase by approximately 2,900 by March, compared to estimates from December 2025.**

In Gao, displacement is projected to increase by approximately 1,500 individuals. Smaller increases are anticipated in Taoudenni and Bamako. Although no major changes are projected for Tombouctou, November 2025 was the deadliest month in the region in two years. If this trend continues, displacement could exceed current projections.

455,000
Projected total IDP numbers by March 2026

+ 6,200
Projected IDP increase between December 25 and March 26

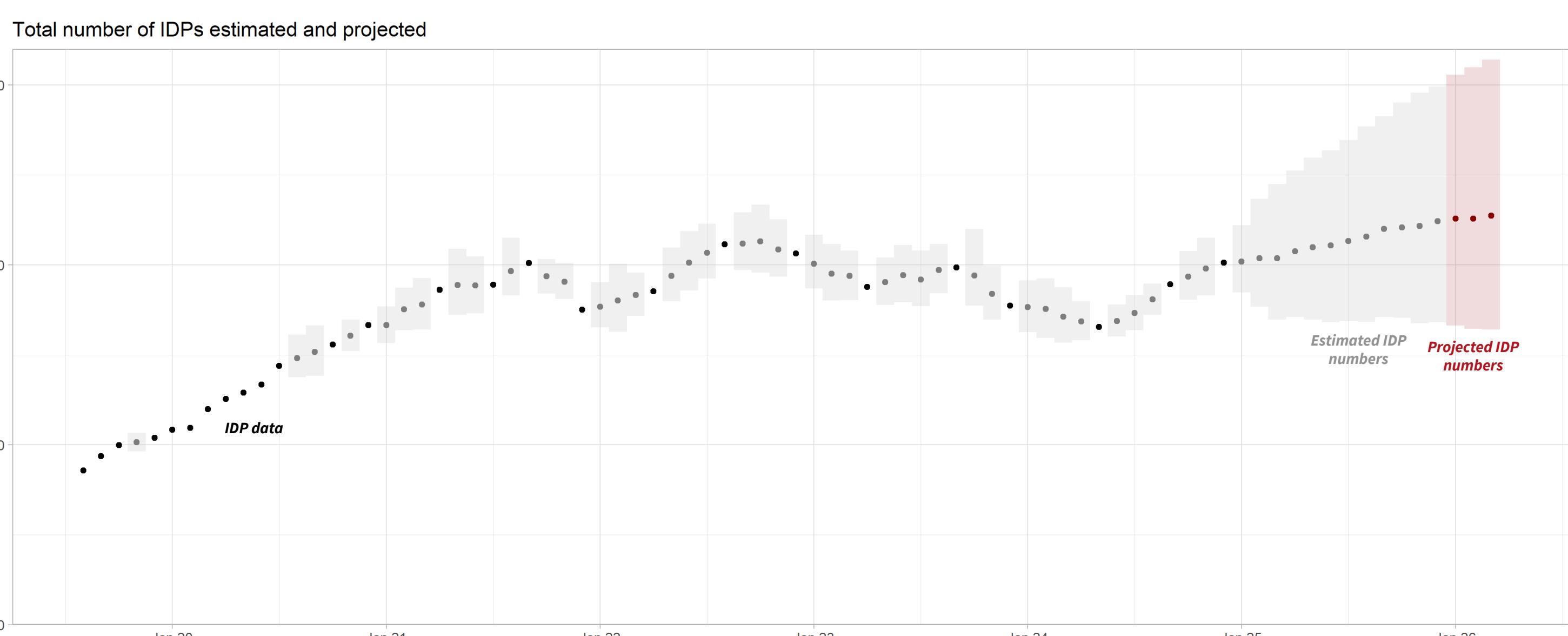


PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

Following a brief lull in late 2024, the first half of 2025 has witnessed a resurgence in violence, particularly following the consolidation of state control over Kidal. According to ACLED, 512 violent events were recorded from January to June 2025, a 25% increase compared to the preceding six months. Associated fatalities have risen by over 40% in the same period, driven by clashes between the Malian army and allied forces against non-state armed groups, as well as an increase in attacks involving improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In recent months, non-state actors have imposed blockades on cities in the west and have caused fuel shortages even in the capital of Bamako.

This intensification of conflict directly fuels new and secondary displacements. Military operations in the Menaka and Gao regions, in particular, have triggered population movements in the first and second quarters of 2025. But certain data on internal displacement in Mali in 2025 is limited.

Mali is also a host country, with recent influxes of over 23,000 refugees from Burkina Faso into the Bandiagara region, straining already limited local resources and making the Danish Refugee Council declare a small emergency there. Mali is further hosting more than 157,000 Burkinabe and Nigeriens refugees, with over 16,000 new arrivals registered in November 2025.



EASTERN DR CONGO

Since January 2025, renewed M23 offensives in eastern DR Congo have driven new displacements. Between 4th of January and 19th of March, M23 fighters entered into Masisi, Sake, Goma, Bukavu and Walikale. These advances have led to hundreds of thousands of new displacements, while millions have also been forced back toward their places of origin. In eastern DR Congo, AHEAD's displacement forecasts cover 28 territories across North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Tanganyika provinces.

HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

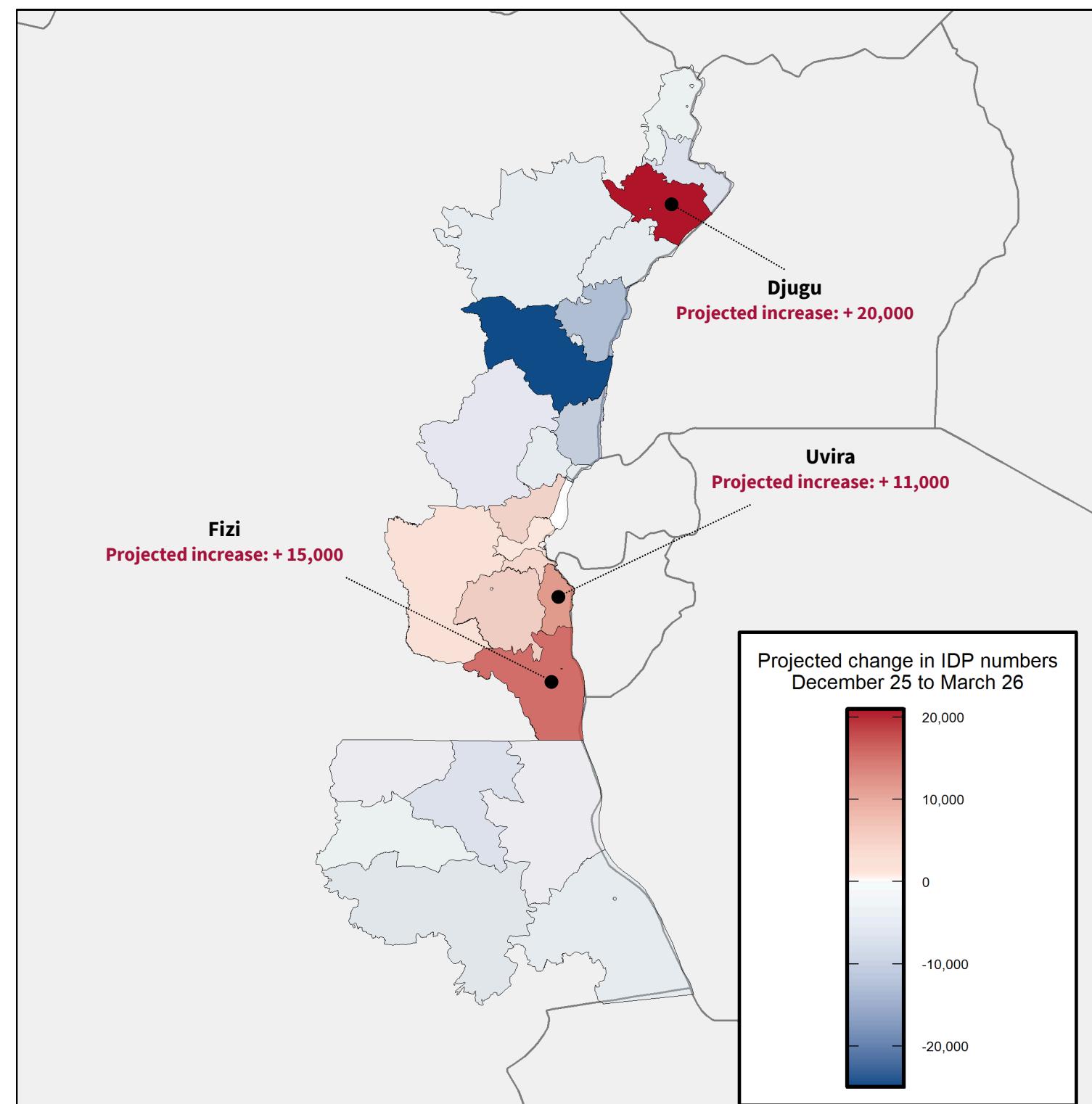
By March 2026, AHEAD forecasts suggest that several territories across Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu will continue to host very large displaced populations, with Djugu, Kalehe and Masisi among those with the highest totals.

Displacement is expected to increase across several territories in South Kivu province. **In Fizi, the number of IDPs is projected to rise by more than 15,000 by March 2026; in Uvira, by over 11,000; and in Mwenga and Kalehe, by approximately 4,000.** Given the recent surge in violence in South Kivu, displacement across the region could exceed current projections and approach the upper bounds of these estimates.

Djugu territory is projected to record an increase of over 20,000 IDPs by March 2026. In December, more than 25 conflict incidents were reported. Clashes in early December displaced nearly 45,000 people across the health zones of Damas, Fataki, Mangala and Bambu.

3.93 MILLION
Projected total IDP numbers by March 2026

+48,000
Projected IDP increase between December 25 and March 26

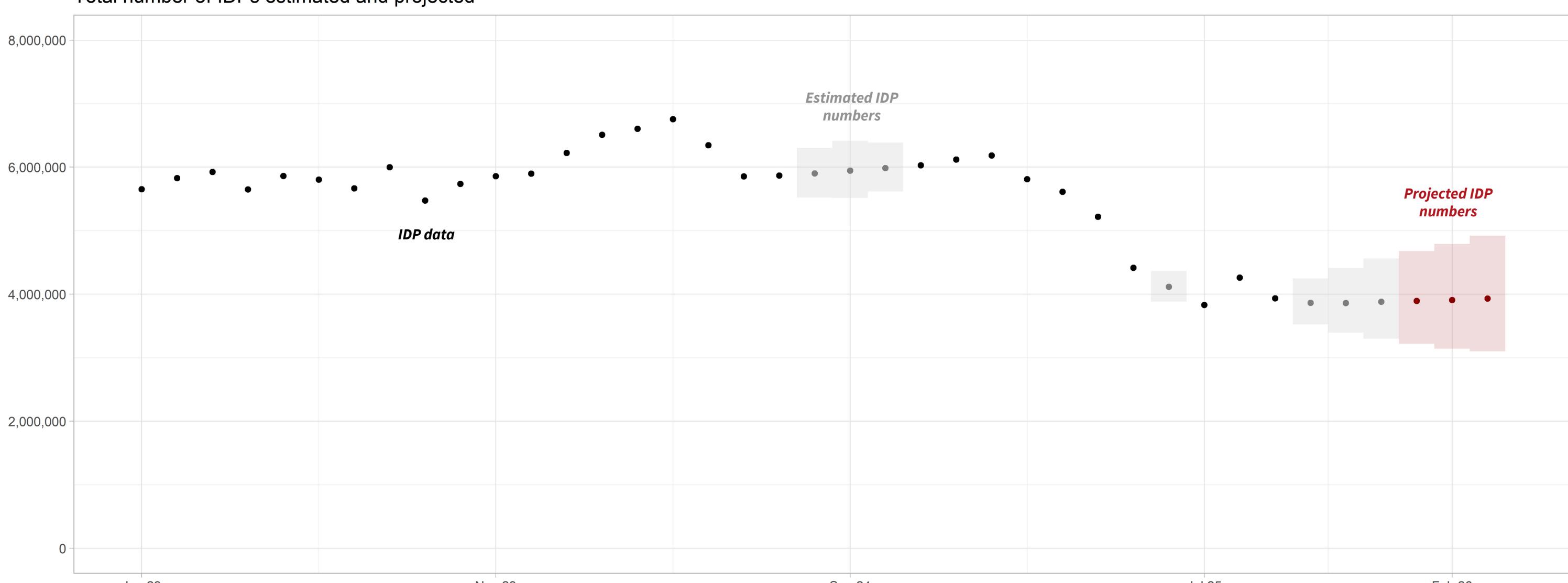


PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

In eastern DR Congo, displacement figures are projected to increase by roughly 48,000 over the next three months, bringing the total to around 3.93 million IDPs across the four provinces by March 2026. Data from August 2025 showed a sharp increase compared to July, with IDP numbers exceeding 4.2 million. However, September figures reflected a significant decline, with approximately 3.84 million IDPs reported across the four provinces. Given the escalation of violence in South Kivu, displacement is now expected to rise again through March 2026.

The latest Mobility Tracking assessments from IOM showed a small decrease in IDP figures (-2%) and an increase in returnees (+4%). However, since early December, security conditions in South Kivu have worsened dramatically, with intense fighting reported across several territories, including Uvira, Walungu, Mwenga, Shabunda, Kabare, Fizi and Kalehe. Uvira was reportedly seized by M23 weeks ago. According to OCHA, more than 500,000 people have been displaced in just over a week, with tens of thousands fleeing to Tanganyika and over 50,000 crossing into Burundi. In light of these developments, displacement projections for eastern DR Congo over the next three months may shift toward the upper end of the forecast range.

Total number of IDPs estimated and projected



Since the conflict between SAF and RSF began, Sudan has seen a sharp rise in displacement, reaching nearly 11.6 million IDPs by January 2025. In recent months, figures have declined, largely due to increasing returns. The AHEAD model covers 18 states and includes cross-border flows into Ethiopia, South Sudan, Chad, the Central African Republic and Libya.

HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

In North Kordofan, displacement is projected to increase by approximately 26,000 individuals over the next three months compared to December 2025. South Kordofan and West Kordofan may also experience further increases, with projected rises of over 36,000 and 23,000 IDPs respectively. Between 25 October and 30 December 2025, DTM estimates that around 64,900 individuals were displaced across the Kordofan region, mainly from North Kordofan and South Kordofan, following increased insecurity and clashes between RSF and SAF. Most of these movements took place within the same localities and involved people who had already been displaced, so they may result in limited growth in the total number of IDPs across the region.

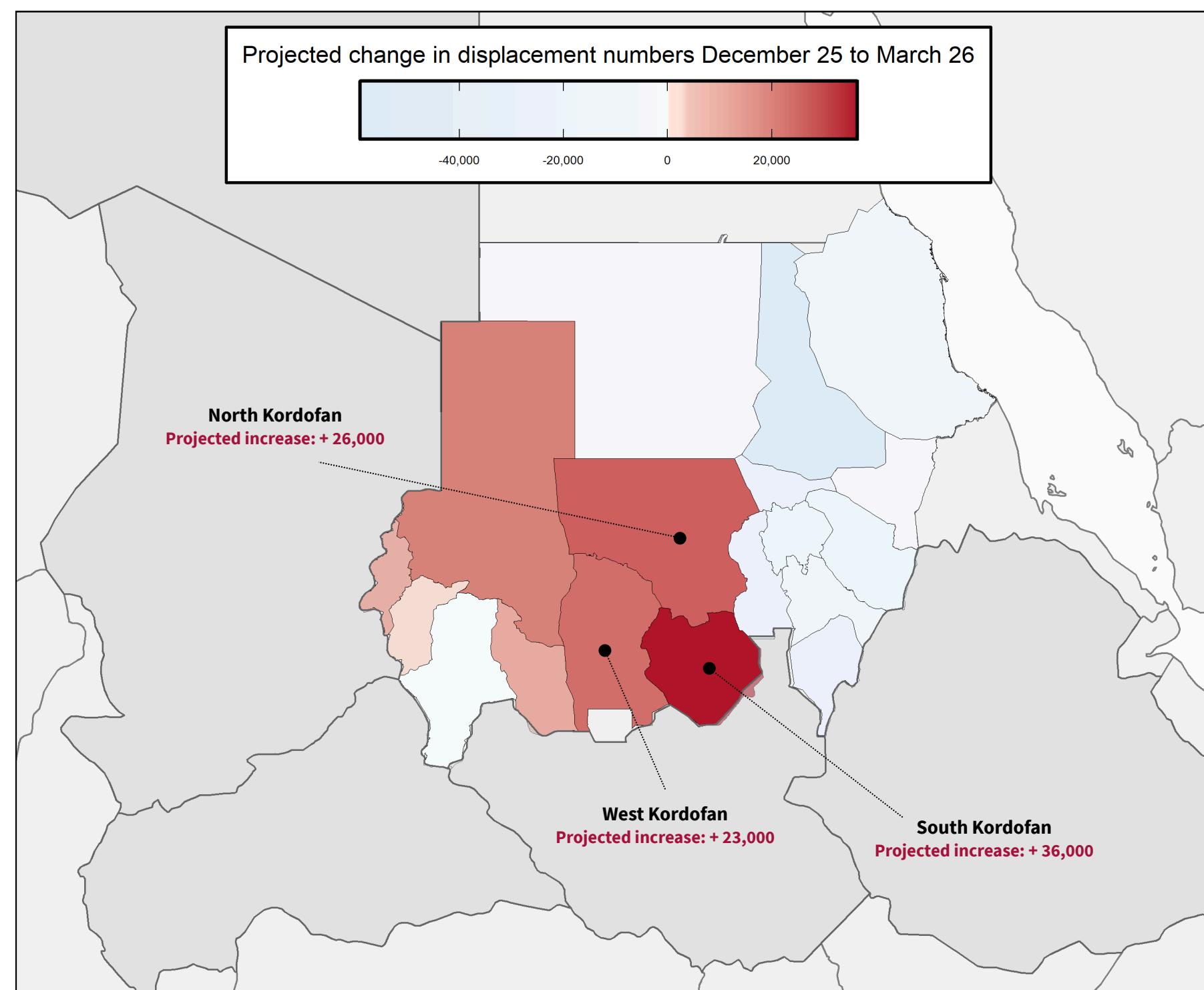
In contrast, several states, including River Nile, Khartoum, Aj Jazirah, Gedaref and White Nile, are projected to see continued declines.

9.10 MILLION

Projected total IDPs numbers by March 2026

-99,000

Projected IDP decrease between December 25 and March 26



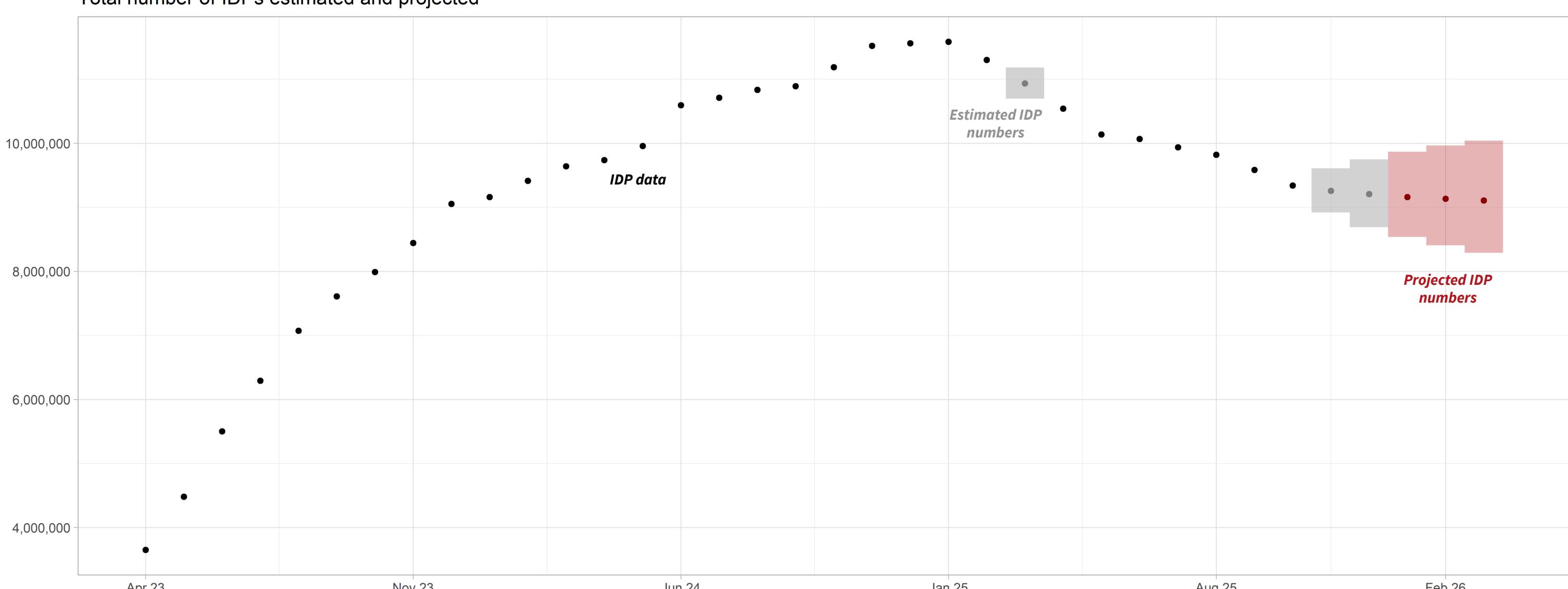
PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

Over the next three months, the AHEAD model anticipates an overall decline in displacement in Sudan. By March 2026, the number of IDPs is projected at around 9.10 million, about 99,000 fewer than in December. This decrease follows recent trends captured by DTM Sudan: Mobility Update 22 (September 2025) reports about 9.58 million IDPs nationwide, down by over 480,000 since late June and more than 2.0 million below the peak recorded earlier in the year. More recently, the October 2025 Displacement and Return Overview reported around 9.3 million IDPs across the country, which is over 245,000 fewer than reported in Mobility Update 22, reflecting a continued increase in returns.

Recent developments are adding pressure to existing displacement trends and may influence how figures evolve in the coming months. Following the escalation on 26 October, when the RSF took control of the SAF 6th Infantry Division headquarters in Al Fasher, IOM DTM recorded significant new movements. Between 26 October and early December 2025, an estimated 107,294 people fled Al Fasher town and nearby villages. Most of these individuals remained within Al Fasher locality. Three-quarters of those displaced were already living in displacement prior to this latest surge. The AHEAD model estimates that the number of IDPs in North Darfur will rise by over 19,000 over the first quarter of 2026.

After the RSF took control of Al Fasher, fighting intensified in the Kordofan region. While violence and conflict-related fatalities declined nationally in November, Kordofan saw a significant rise in violence, with incidents increasing by 59%, according to ACLED. Between 25 October and late December 2025, DTM teams recorded 56 incidents in the region that led to displacement. Projections for North, West and South Kordofan indicate that displacement is expected to continue rising through March 2026.

Total number of IDPs estimated and projected



SUDAN CROSS-BORDER

Since the start of the conflict between the SAF and the RSF in April 2023, Sudan has experienced large-scale cross-border displacement. IOM DTM estimates indicate that more than 4.3 million people had crossed borders as of the latest reporting period. Approximately 70% of those displaced were Sudanese nationals, while 30% were non-Sudanese nationals. DTM tracks cumulative cross-border movements from Sudan since 15 April 2023, and the AHEAD model builds on this data to project future movements into Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic and Libya.

HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

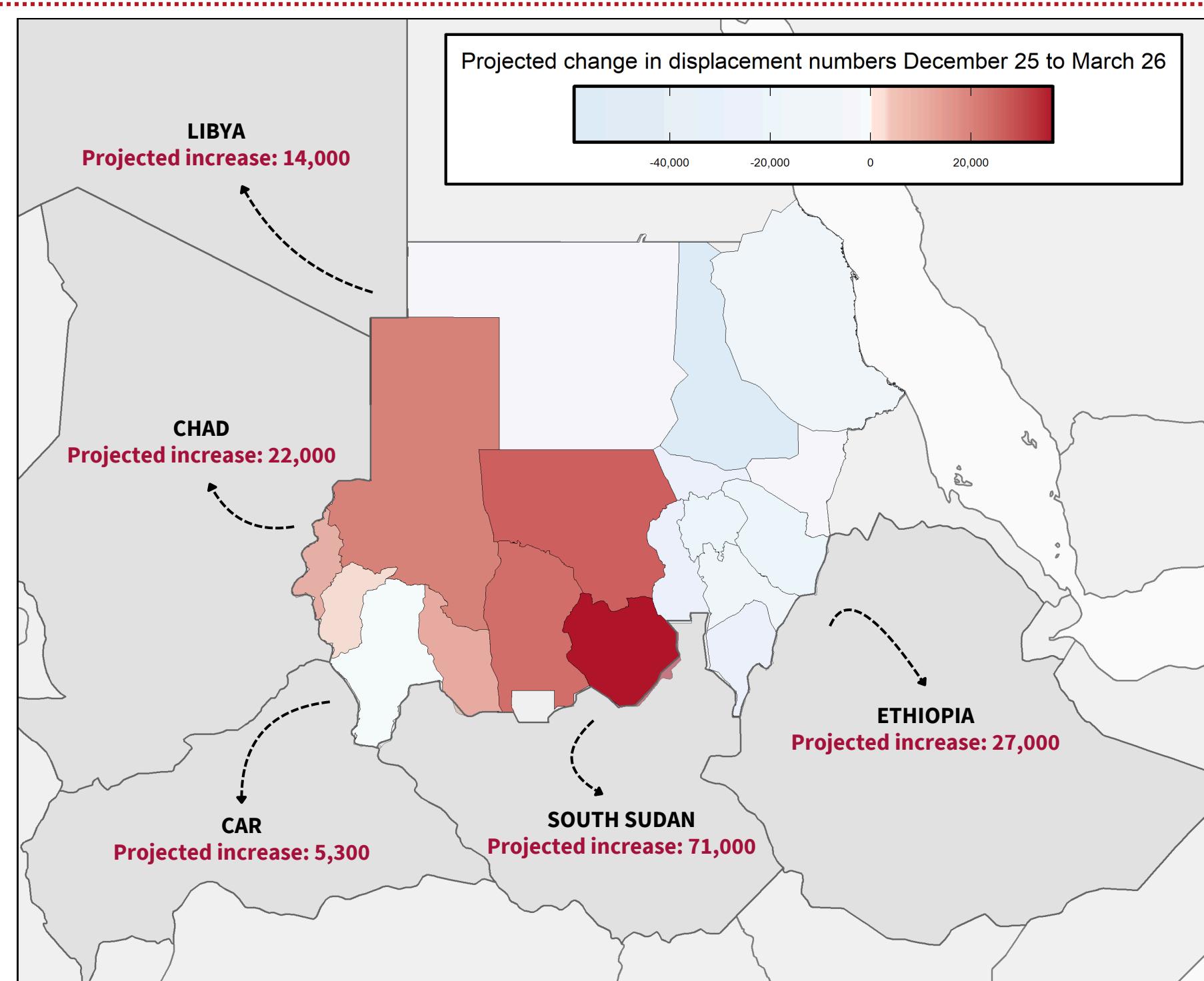
The largest projected increases in cross-border movements are expected into South Sudan. Over the next three months, the AHEAD model estimates **an additional 71,000 cross-border movements into South Sudan**. **Movements into Chad are also projected to rise, with an estimated increase of approximately 22,000** over the same period.

Cross-border movements into Ethiopia are expected to continue increasing, with an estimated rise of 27,000 by March 2026 compared to December 2025 estimates.

Movements into Libya are projected to rise by approximately 14,000. Smaller increases are projected for the Central African Republic. Cross-border movements into CAR are expected to increase by around 5,300.

+139,000

Projected increase in cross-border movements between December 25 and March 26



PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

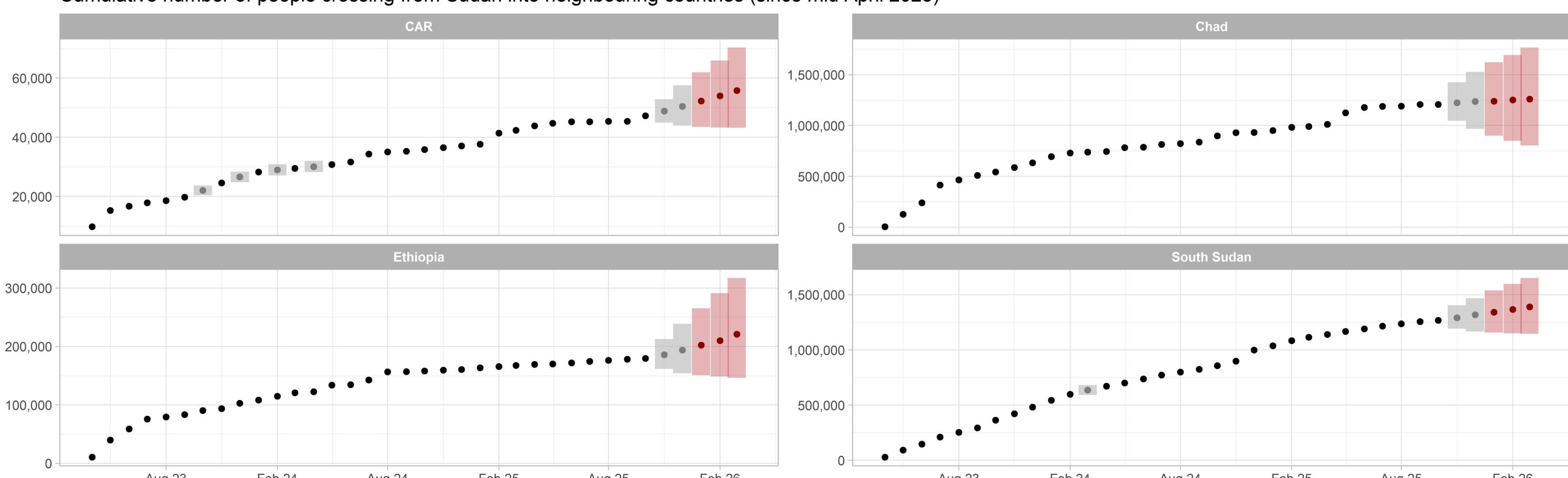
Over the next three months, the AHEAD model projects a continued increase in cross-border displacement from Sudan into neighbouring countries. **By March 2026, total cross-border movements into Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic and Libya are expected to increase by more than 139,000 compared to December 2025 estimates.** In South Sudan, DTM Mobility Update 22 reported that approximately 1.25 million people had crossed from Sudan since April 2023 as of mid October. Based on current projections, additional movements over the next three months are expected to increase the cumulative total to more than 1.38 million by March 2026.

Movements from Sudan into Chad, Libya, and Egypt have continued since the start of the conflict. [UNHCR reporting from late November 2025 indicates that more than 500,000 Sudanese refugees have arrived in Libya since April 2023](#), nearly 300,000 more than estimates published in early January 2025; however, the evolving context and data limitations make it difficult to determine a precise cumulative number of crossings. For Egypt, which is not currently covered by the AHEAD model, [available estimates published by DTM suggest that approximately 1,514,827 individuals crossed from Sudan into Egypt between April 2023 and October 2025](#), while an estimated 403,305 individuals were reported to have returned from Egypt to Sudan between January 2024 and October 2025.

[Figures indicate that approximately 1,207,896 individuals, primarily Sudanese nationals, crossed from Sudan into Chad between April 2023 and October 2025. During the period from August to October 2025, an estimated 33,436 individuals were reported to have moved from Chad back into Sudan.](#) AHEAD projections suggest that cross-border movements into Chad may continue to increase through March 2026.

The AHEAD model is being further developed to better reflect cross-border return movements. Projections of cross-border displacement are regularly updated as new data become available.

Cumulative number of people crossing from Sudan into neighbouring countries (since mid April 2023)



Internal displacements in South Sudan is caused by a wide range of factors, such as communal clashes, land disputes, violence, natural disasters and cross-border movements. In recent months conflict has escalated at a more broader level with especially high intensity in Upper Nile State. This comes on top of major displacement caused by flooding in 2025 and a high number of returns of South Sudanese fleeing the conflict in Sudan.

HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

Large increases are projected in Juba county, where the number of IDPs is expected to rise by over 5,000 during the coming three months.

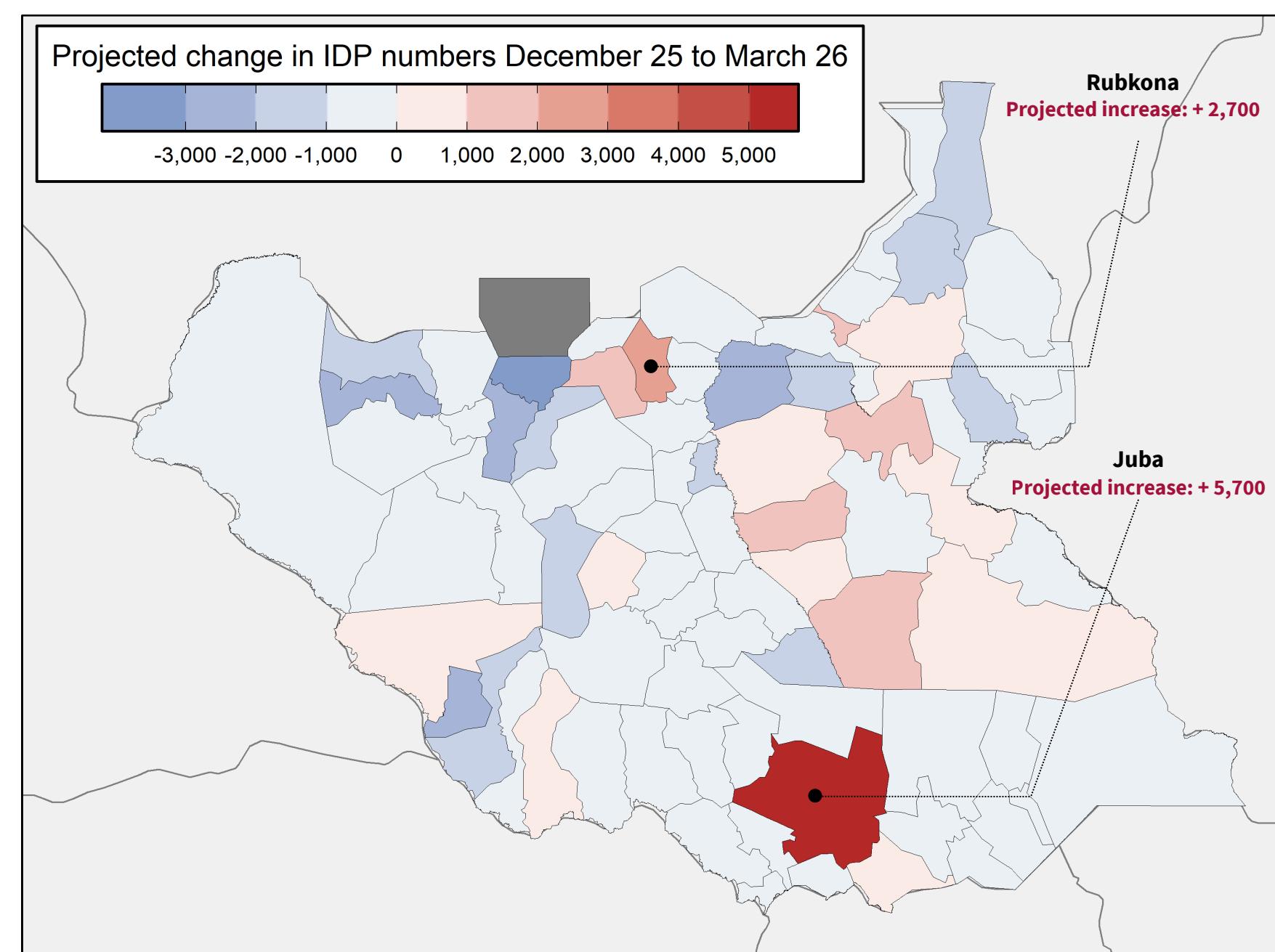
In Rubkona, the number of IDPs is anticipated to rise by approximately 2,700 individuals. In Jonglei State, smaller increases are expected in Bor South, Nyirol and Duk, where over 1,000 additional individuals are projected to be displaced by the end of the first quarter of the year.

Some increases are projected in Malakal (approximately 1,400) and Mayom (around 1,000). The exact counties to see displacement are, however, very dependent on the spatial distribution of the conflict and floods in the coming months.

2.57 MILLION
Projected total IDP numbers by March 2026

+ 13,000

Projected IDP increase between December 25 and March 26

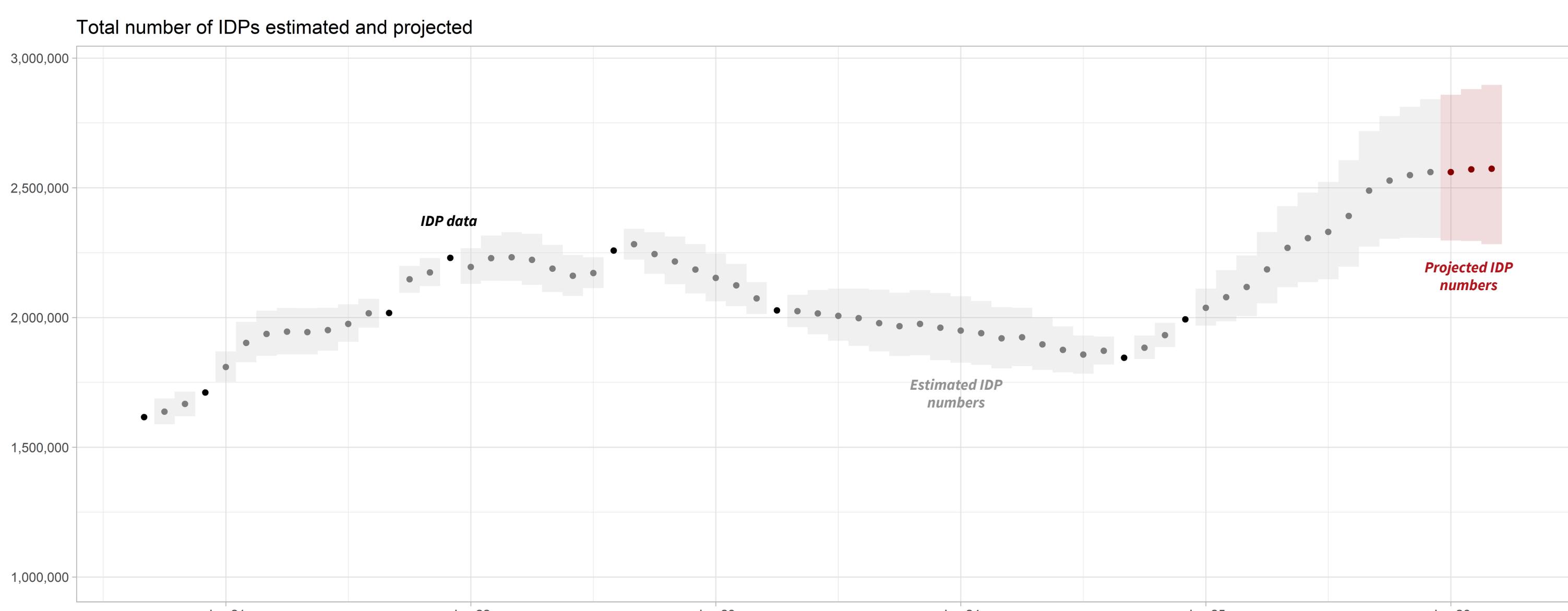


PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

Over the next three months, the AHEAD model projects an overall increase in displacement in South Sudan. **By March, the number of individuals living in displacement is expected to rise by roughly 13,000 compared to estimates from December, bringing the total to around 2.57 million.**

In November and December, the number of conflict events recorded by ACLED was lower than in the first half of 2025, which may help explain the more limited increase in IDPs anticipated in the coming months. Yet, in November 2025, conflict continued to drive displacement across several states. [According to DTM's November Event Tracking Report](#), conflict in Western Equatoria State displaced over 37,000 individuals, while localized conflict also led to significant displacement in Upper Nile State.

As of early **December**, flooding had affected more than 1.35 million people, with over 376,000 reportedly displaced. [From August to September 2025, extensive flooding in Fangak displaced over 38,000 individuals. By the end of November 2025, DTM had identified more than 9,000 individuals displaced by flooding in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area. Terekeka and Awerial counties also experienced significant flood-induced displacement in the final months of 2025.](#) The current AHEAD model for South Sudan does not have a flood-component for the future outlook, but a number of areas are also expected to see returns of the people affected by floods, which means a decrease in overall displacement.



SOMALIA

Conflict and climate-related hazards continue to drive widespread internal displacement in Somalia. Drought, floods and insecurity have left millions displaced, with 3.8 million people recorded at the end of 2022. IOM and DRC developed a multi-hazard model to produce quarterly forecasts estimating the number of people displaced by conflict, drought and floods. As projections are made on a quarterly basis, the forecasts presented here are the same as in Snapshot #8. Figures for early 2026 are also available here: [Somalia Movement Projections Dashboard](#).

HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

Banadir is expected to see the highest increase in displacement in the coming months, with an additional 48,698 people anticipated to be displaced, pushing the total to over 1.17 million by March 2026. 11% of those displaced are projected to move within Banadir and 89% arriving from other districts.

In Luuq, displacement is also projected to rise, with around 15,544 new displacements, mainly due to conflict. Of these, 58% are expected to remain within the district, while 42% are anticipated to come from other areas.

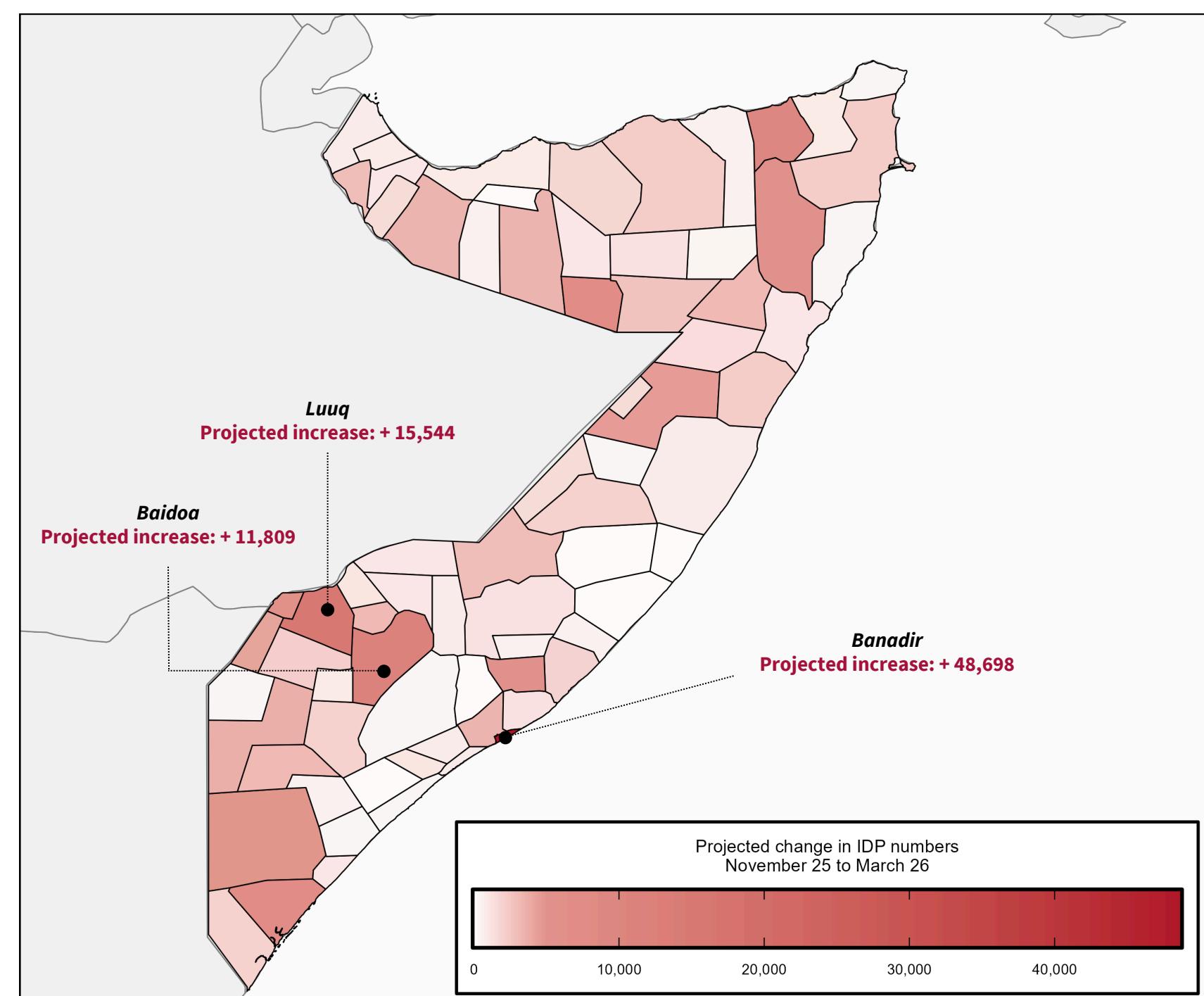
In the Lower Juba region, displacement is forecasted to increase by more than 15,000, with **notable rises in Kismaayo (+7,200)**. The Bay region is also projected to see a significant increase, with the **largest rise in Baidoa (+11,809)**.

3.69 MILLION

Projected total IDPs numbers by March 2026

+ 211,767

Projected IDP increase between November 2025 and March 2026



PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

Over the next four months, Somalia's displaced population is expected to increase by more than 211,000 people compared to November estimates, pushing the total number of people living in displacement to over 3.69 million by March 2026. Conflict remains a key driver of this increase, accounting for roughly 36% of the projected rise. Conflict is mainly anticipated in Middle Shabelle and Hiraan, with most displacements projected to occur to Banadir and Luuq. In Banadir and Luuq alone, the number of conflict-induced IDPs is expected to grow by almost 33,000 combined.

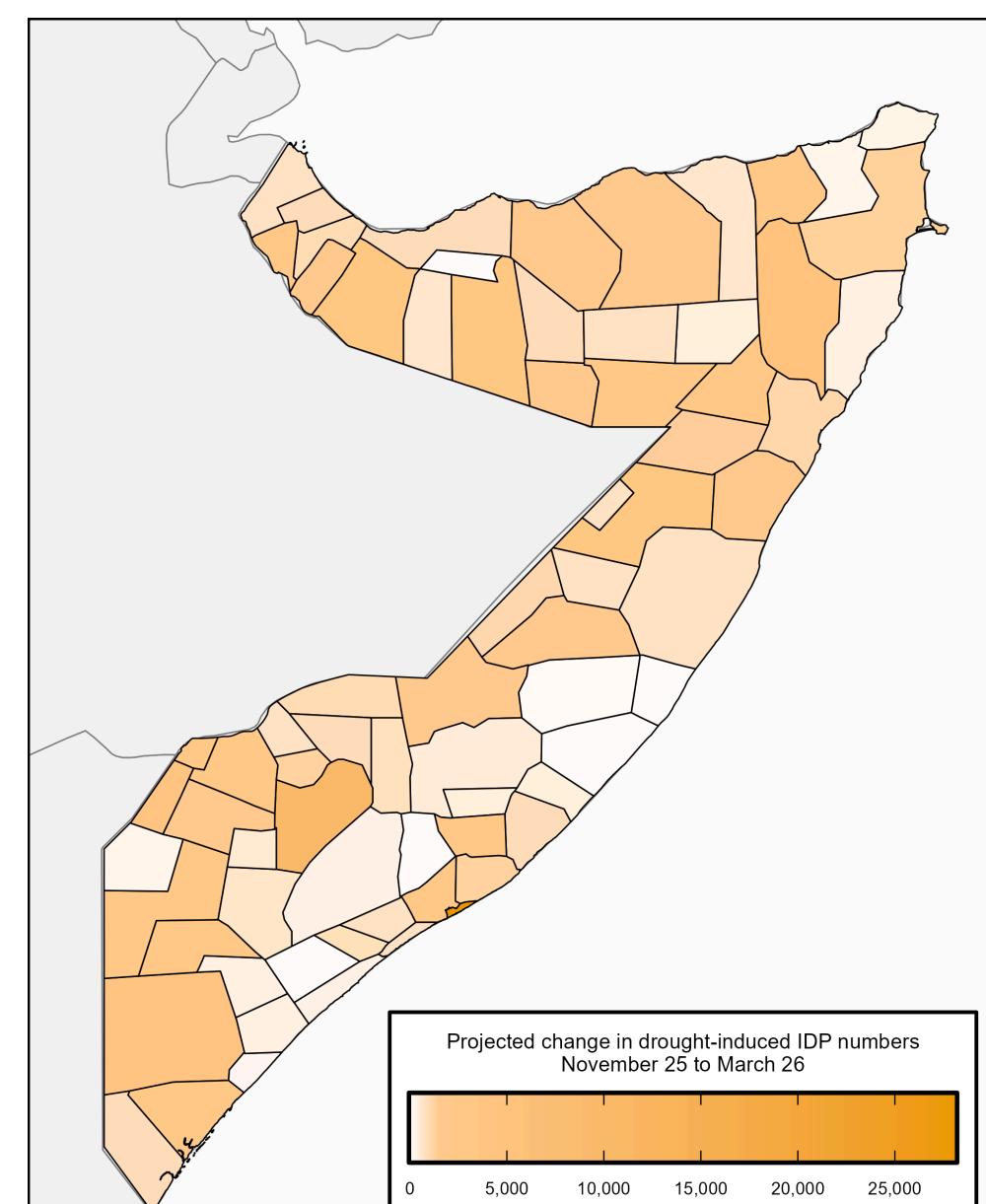
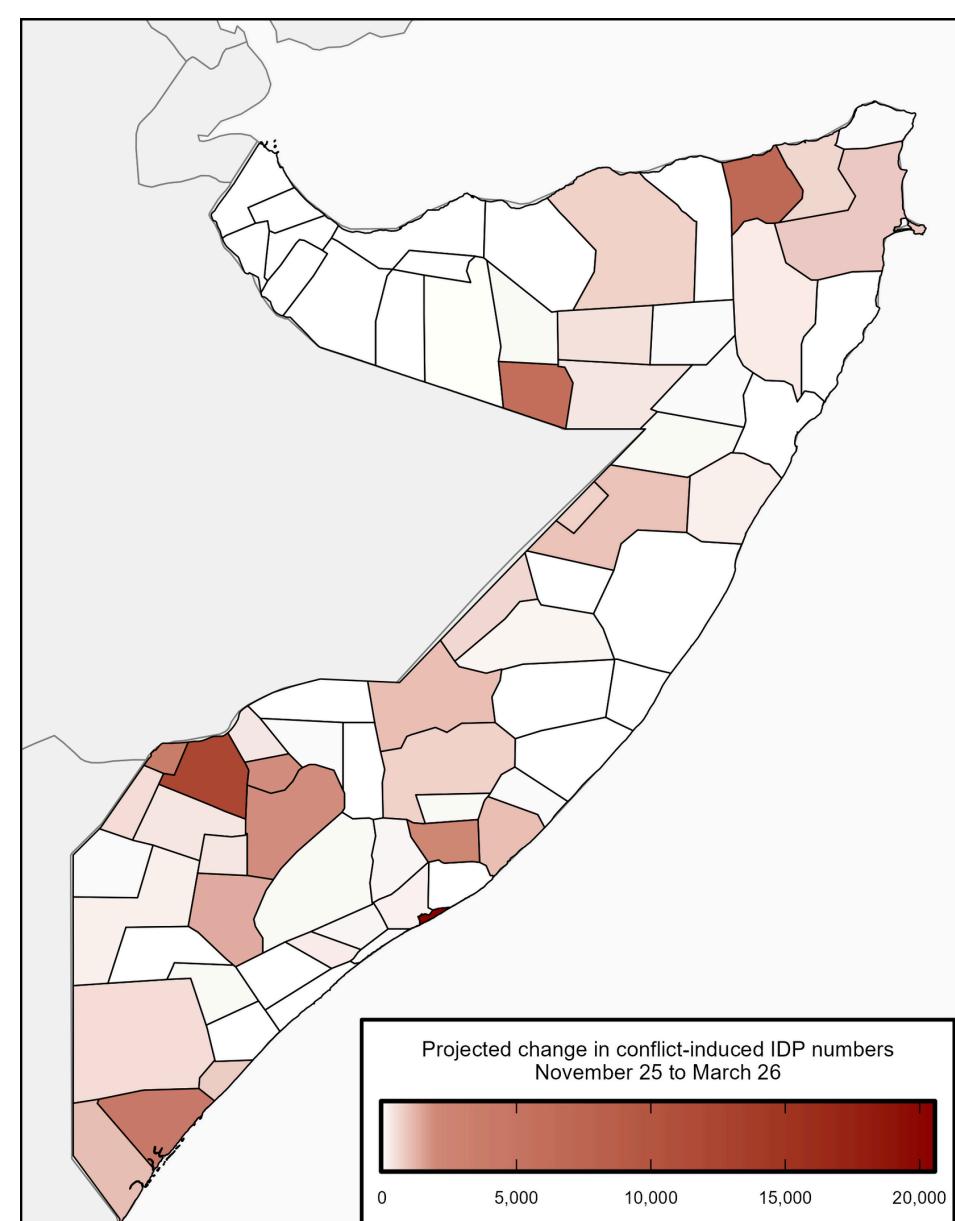
Rainfall during the 2025 Deyr season (October-December) remained below average, following similarly dry conditions during the preceding Hagga season (June-September) and ahead of the forecasted Jilaal dry season (mid-December to mid-March). Consecutive seasons of reduced rainfall have contributed to worsening drought conditions across the country and increasing displacement pressure.

As a result, drought is expected to be the primary driver of displacement during the current quarter. **The number of people displaced by drought is projected to increase by more than 135,000, accounting for approximately 64% of the total projected rise in displacement.** Significant increases in drought-related displacement are anticipated in Banadir (+28,163) and Baidoa (+9,919), with additional increases of over 4,000 individuals projected in Qardho and Afmadow.

Current conditions indicate that drought-related displacement may trend toward the higher end of projected ranges. On 10 November, the Federal Government of Somalia declared a national drought emergency.

In Puntland, water sources have become increasingly scarce and vegetation conditions have deteriorated. These developments are occurring in the context of severe humanitarian needs. An estimated 4.4 million people were projected to experience acute food insecurity through December, and approximately 1.85 million children under five are expected to face acute malnutrition through mid-2026.

Flood-induced displacement is not projected to change over the coming months. By March 2026, it is expected that the total number of flood-induced IDPs will remain at roughly 325,000.



UGANDA

By the end of December 2025, Uganda hosted more than 1.97 million refugees and asylum seekers across various settlements. Over half originated from South Sudan, while roughly one-third came from DR Congo. Nakivale hosted the largest share, followed by Adjumani, Bidibidi and Rhino. In Uganda, the AHEAD model projects how the population of refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan may evolve across nine settlements.

HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

In **Bidibidi settlement**, the active population of refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan is projected to **increase by approximately 1,400 over the next three months**. In **Adjumani**, where recent growth has been moderate, the AHEAD model forecasts an increase of **more than 1,400 individuals**.

Figures in Imvepi rose by roughly 1200 between September and December, and the population of refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan is now projected to grow by roughly 530 by March 2026.

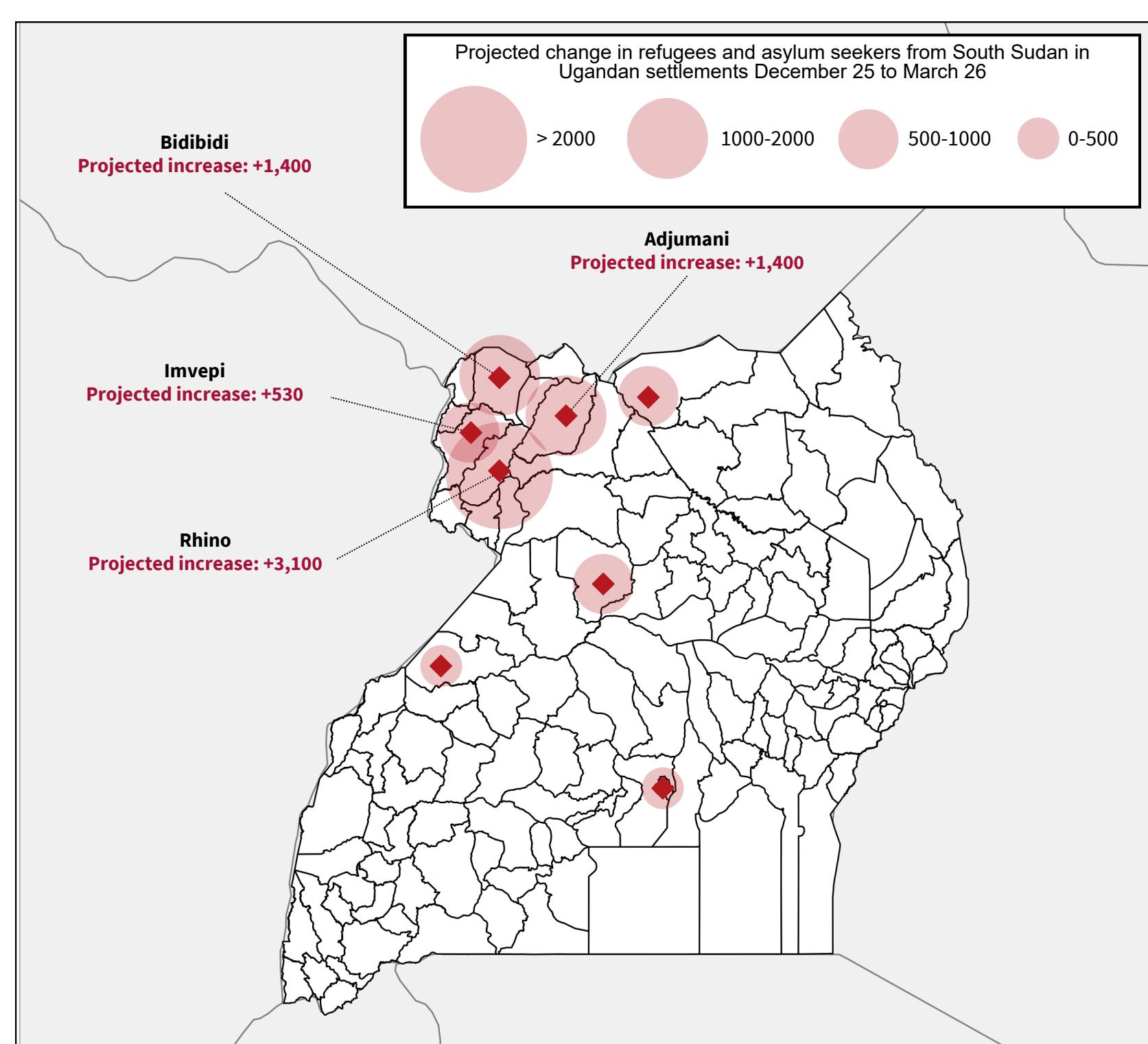
The largest projected increase is in Rhino settlement, with an expected rise of over 3,100 individuals. Between September and December, the population increased by more than 2,400.

1.04 MILLION

Projected South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers by March 2026

+ 9,000

Projected increase in South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers between December 25 and March 26



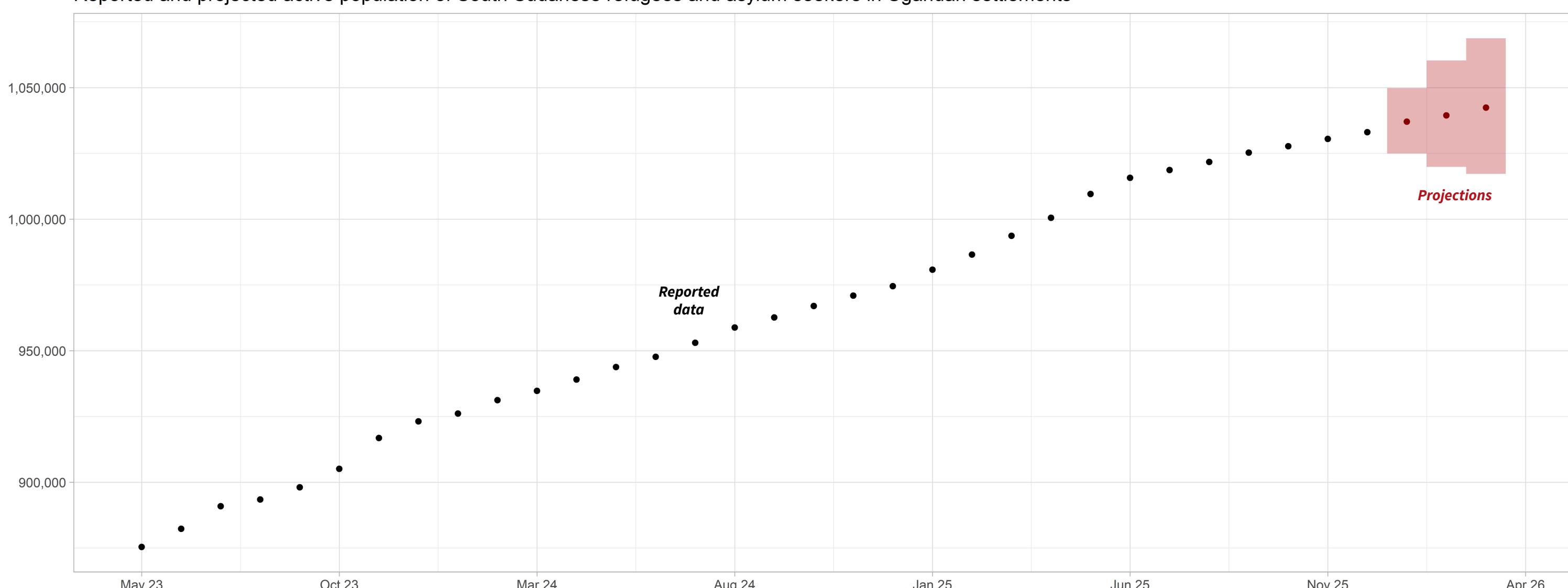
PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

Over the next three months, the AHEAD model projects an increase in the number of refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan across nine settlements in Uganda. **By March 2026, the population is expected to rise by more than 9,000, reaching more than 1.04 million.**

Between September and December, the South Sudanese refugee and asylum seeker population across the nine settlements covered by the AHEAD model grew by more than 7,800, with the largest increases recorded in Rhino settlement, which now hosts over 187,000 South Sudanese. Increases in Rhino appear to have slowed compared to earlier in 2025. For example, in May 2025 alone, the population increased by just over 5,700 compared to April estimates.

According to a recent [UNHCR external update](#), Uganda has also received around 30,000 South Sudanese refugees since the escalation of violence in South Sudan in late February, mainly from Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, Central Equatoria and Eastern Equatoria states. This brings total new arrivals of South Sudanese between January and late November to more than 46,000.

Reported and projected active population of South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers in Ugandan settlements



Internal displacement has been ongoing across Yemen since the outbreak of conflict in 2015. In July 2015, IOM recorded 1.27 million IDPs across multiple districts. The latest IOM figures on the total number of IDPs indicate over 3 million people in accessible areas within 13 assessed governorates. Through its Rapid Displacement Tracking (RDT) tool, DTM monitors the estimated number of households forced to flee their locations of origin or displacement on a daily basis. The AHEAD model builds on these data to generate forecasts of new displacement across more than 40 districts in the governorates of Abyan, Ad Dali', Al Hodeidah, Al Jawf, Hadramawt, Lahj, Ma'rib, Shabwah and Ta'iz, assuming an average household size of six individuals, in line with IOM DTM approach.

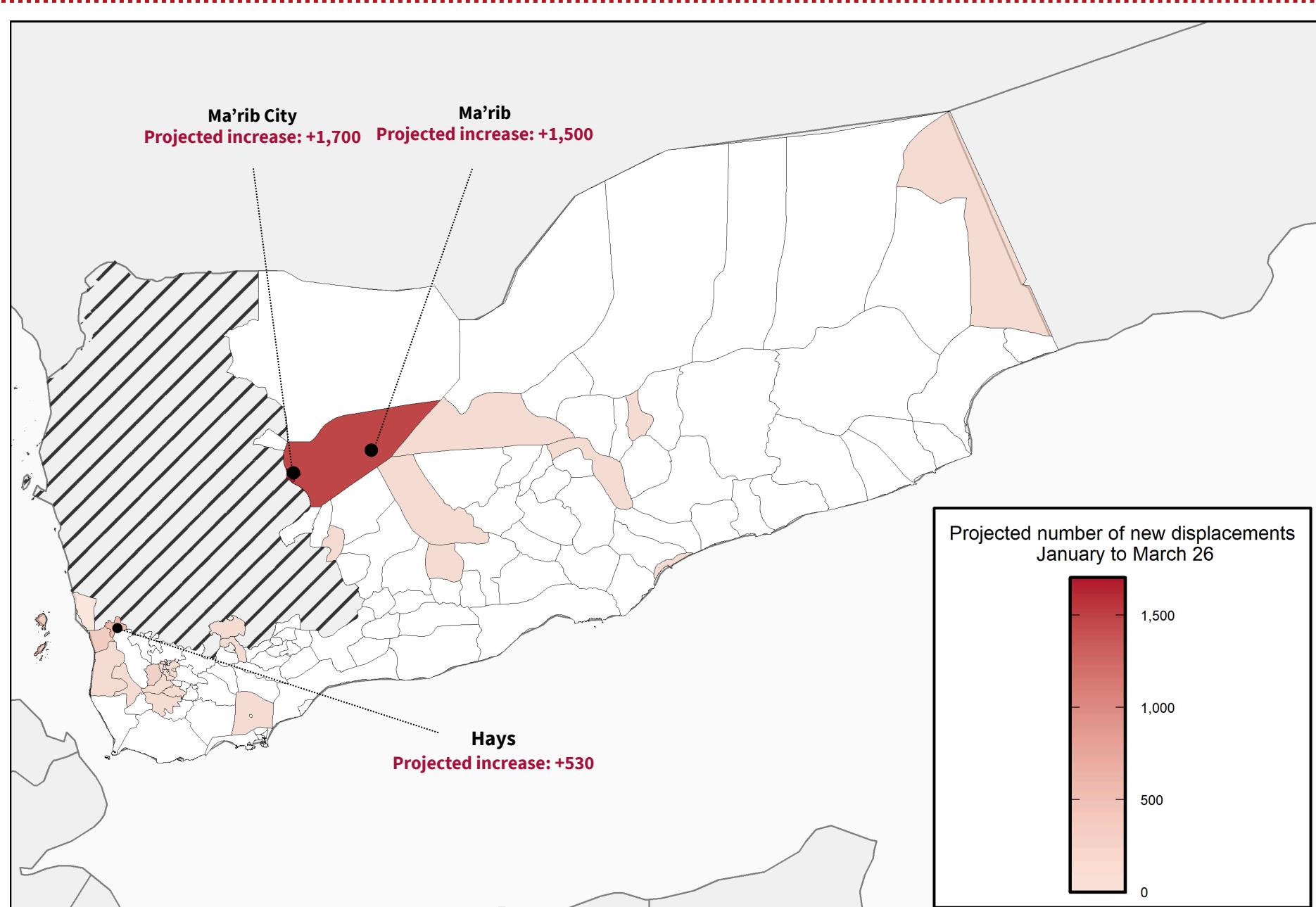
HOTSPOTS & KEY FIGURES

In Al Khukhah, the AHEAD model projects over 280 individuals may be displaced into or within the district over the next three months, potentially rising to around 1,000. DTM recorded 61 households (366 individuals) between October and December.

Large numbers of arrivals are projected in both Ma'rib (+1,500) and Ma'rib City (+1,700). The Ma'rib governorate recorded over 1,000 arriving households during the October-December period (approximately 6,400 individuals).

Around 530 new displacements are anticipated In Hays, while in Mawza, where recent movements have been limited, no significant changes are being projected for the coming months.

+ 7,100
Projected new displacements between January and March



PROJECTED TRENDS & DRIVERS

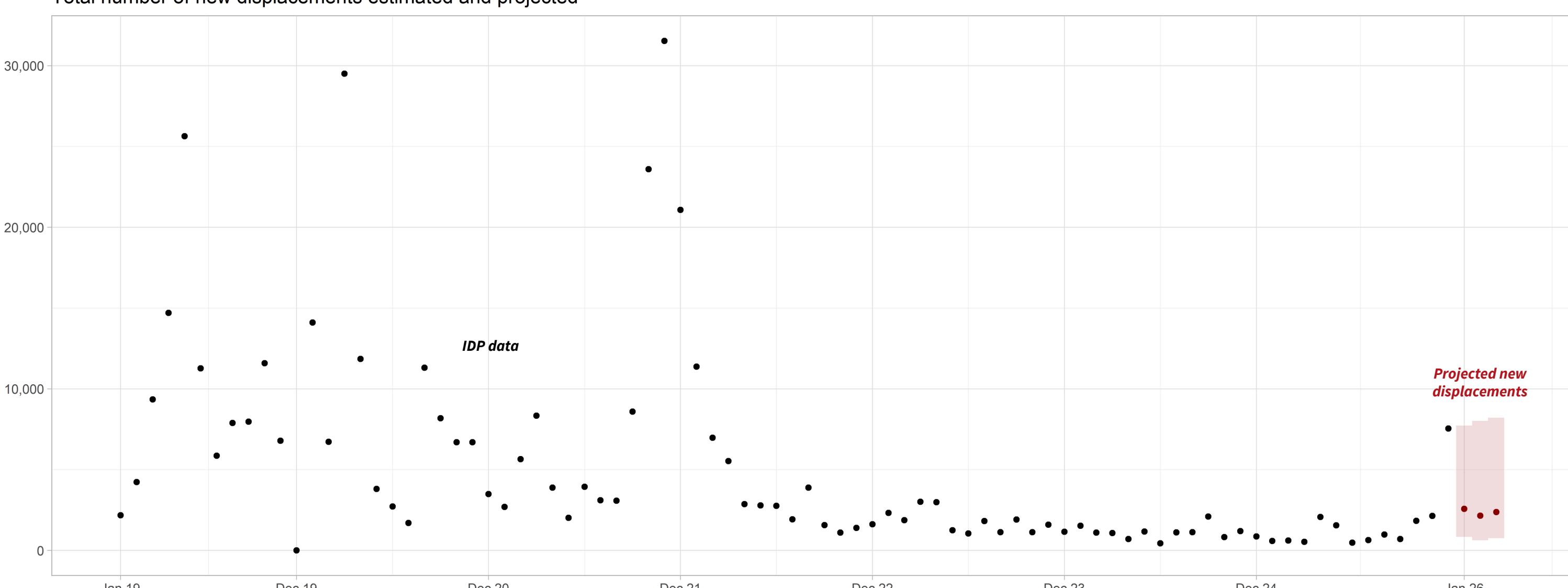
Over the next three months, the AHEAD model projects more than 7,000 new displacements due to conflict across 46 districts. Throughout 2025, most increases in the number of new displacements were relatively moderate. Between 1 January and 6 December 2025, IOM Yemen DTM recorded 3,578 households (21,468 individuals) displaced at least once as a result of conflict, health, economic or natural disaster factors, of which over 50% were conflict-related. The situation changed in December as security tensions escalated in parts of Hadramawt, triggering new displacement from Hadramawt to Ma'rib. In December alone, over 900 households arrived in Ma'rib and Ma'rib City, from Hadramawt. Between 28 December and 3 January, a further 93 newly displaced households were identified in the governorate. This trend is expected to continue, with more than 3,000 additional arrivals projected in Ma'rib governorate (including Ma'rib City) by the end of the quarter.

Other anticipated increases are linked to ongoing conflict dynamics. Between early December and early January, ACLED recorded over 800 events across Yemen, resulting in more than 150 fatalities. Around 120 events occurred in Hadramawt and more than 45 in both Al Hodeidah and Ta'iz. If conflict activity in the coming months intensify beyond recent levels, including in Hadramawt, new displacement figures could approach the upper range of AHEAD projections.

Beyond conflict, flooding and food insecurity continue to drive displacement and exacerbate conditions for IDPs. [Food security projections for September 2025–February 2026 indicate that more than 18 million people will face IPC Phase 3+ levels of acute food insecurity.](#)

The Yemen predictive model is being expanded to include new predictors and to provide estimates of displacement occurring within districts and from other districts.

Total number of new displacements estimated and projected





The AHEAD Program: Scaling Conflict-Induced Displacement Anticipation to Diverse Settings

The Anticipatory Humanitarian Action for Displacement (AHEAD) project, supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is dedicated to advancing anticipatory action for conflict-induced displacement. Across Burkina Faso, Niger, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, Yemen, and Myanmar, AHEAD focuses on developing national conflict-relevant anticipatory action frameworks, ensuring they are inclusive and shaped by multiple stakeholders, alongside in-country pilots. A strong monitoring, evaluation and learning approach supports the project by generating evidence from in-country pilots to inform advocacy efforts at the national, regional and global levels.

The project uses a statistical model developed by DRC to predict displacement 3-4 months in advance and helps inform more cost effective and smart humanitarian responses. Ultimately, AHEAD seeks to elevate the role of anticipatory action connected to conflict-induced displacement, positioning it as a key strategy for humanitarian action. Thanks to collaborations with WFP and IOM, the model is also used to forecast displacement in Sudan and Somalia. The AHEAD model is being scaled to 19 countries by the end of 2026.

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