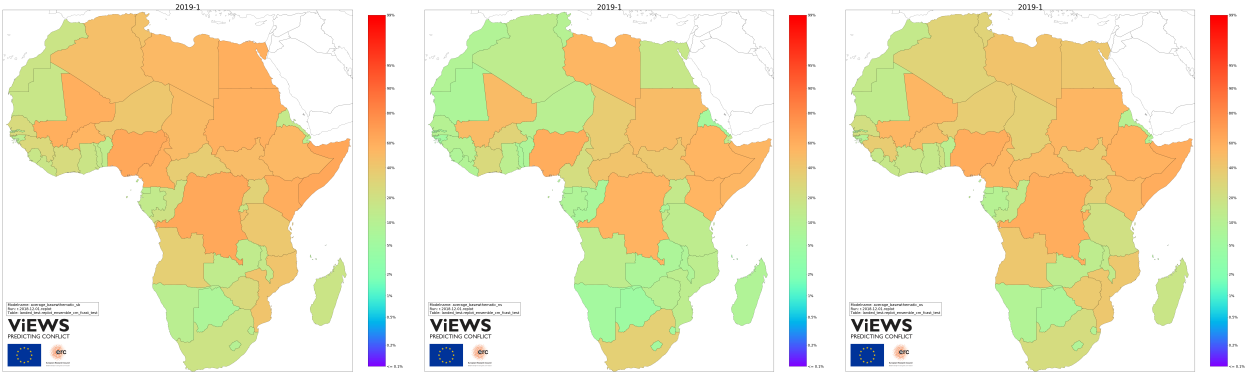
ViEWS monthly forecasts, December 2018*

Summary of forecasts

Thursday 24th January, 2019



(a) State-based conflict (sb), January 2019

(b) Non-state conflict (ns), January 2019

(c) One-sided violence (os), January 2019

Figure 1: Ensemble forecasts for January 2019

This report presents ViEWS forecasts for January 2018 as of 30 December 2018. The forecasts are based on data that are updated up to and including November 2018. The underlying conflict data were produced by the UCDP (`http://ucdp.uu.se`). The ViEWS compilation of these data and data from other sources are available at `https://www.pcr.uu.se/research/views/data/downloads/`.

We highlight developments in the most recent months. For a discussion of what underlies the forecasts in terms of slowly changing risk factors as well as methodological issues, see

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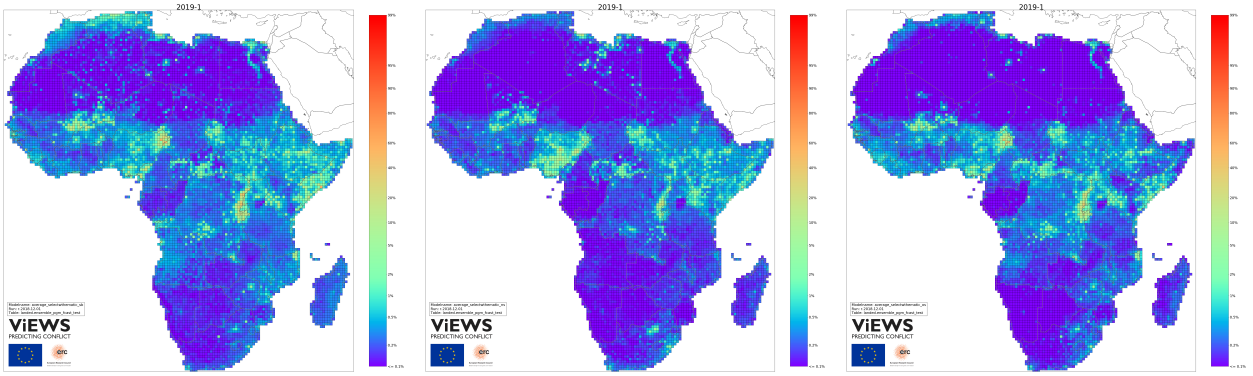
the ViEWS overview article.[1] Figure 1 shows our country-level forecasts for December 2018, Figure 2 the corresponding forecasts at detailed geographic locations, and Figure 3 shows the most recent observed conflict events. Similar reports for previous months are available at `http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/views/`, along with other information on the ViEWS project.

1 Forecasts for January 2018

The plots in Figure 1 show the ViEWS country-level forecasts for the immediate future – what do we forecast will happen in January 2018? We show the probability of at least one event in each country in January 2018, based on data up to and including November 2018. Countries with red color have forecast probabilities close to 1, whereas blue countries have forecasts at less than 0.01. When the forecasts indicate that no event is as likely as at least one event, countries are drawn with a light orange color.



(a) State-based conflict (sb), January 2019

(b) Non-state conflict (ns), January 2019

(c) One-sided violence (os), January 2019

Figure 2: Ensemble forecasts for January 2019

Our forecasts for January 2018 are mostly similar to last month's forecasts. The December 2018 run is using the same set of models as last month, so only changes to input variables will matter for the forecasts.

The UCDP has recorded some conflict events in November 2018 that change the forecasts for some countries (Figure 3 illustrates the most recent history of events).

We continue to forecast a high probability of conflict in countries that have a recent history of conflict or with recent protest events. In Mali, Nigeria, DR Congo, and Somalia the risk of at least one conflict event is pronounced.

[1] `http://files.webb.uu.se/uploader/1576/ViEWS-OverviewArticle-June2018.pdf`.

The forecast maps for non-state conflict (**ns**) and one-sided violence (**os**) follow partly the same patterns as **sb**, but the patterns of past events differ across conflict types (see Figure 3). Cameroon and Egypt, for instance, have not had much **ns** conflict, whereas Libya and Sudan have seen a lot.

The forecasts for **os** respond to about the same factors, but are less clearly related to protests and regime change. They also in general occur more frequently in newly independent countries. The risk of one-sided violence is pronounced in Nigeria and Cameroon (predominantly Boko Haram), DR Congo, and Somalia (predominantly Al-Shabaab).[2]

Figure 2 presents forecasts at fine-grained sub-national geographical locations for January 2018, for each of the three outcomes. The color mapping is the same as for the *cm* forecasts.

The densest risk clusters for state-based conflict are in north-eastern Nigeria, Anglophone Cameroon, the North and South Kivu provinces in DRC, Somalia, and in Darfur. The forecasted violence in Mali is also pronounced, but more spread out geographically. All of these regions have been ravaged with violence for years as shown in Figure 3. These maps reflect that countries' recent conflict history is the strongest predictor of future violence.

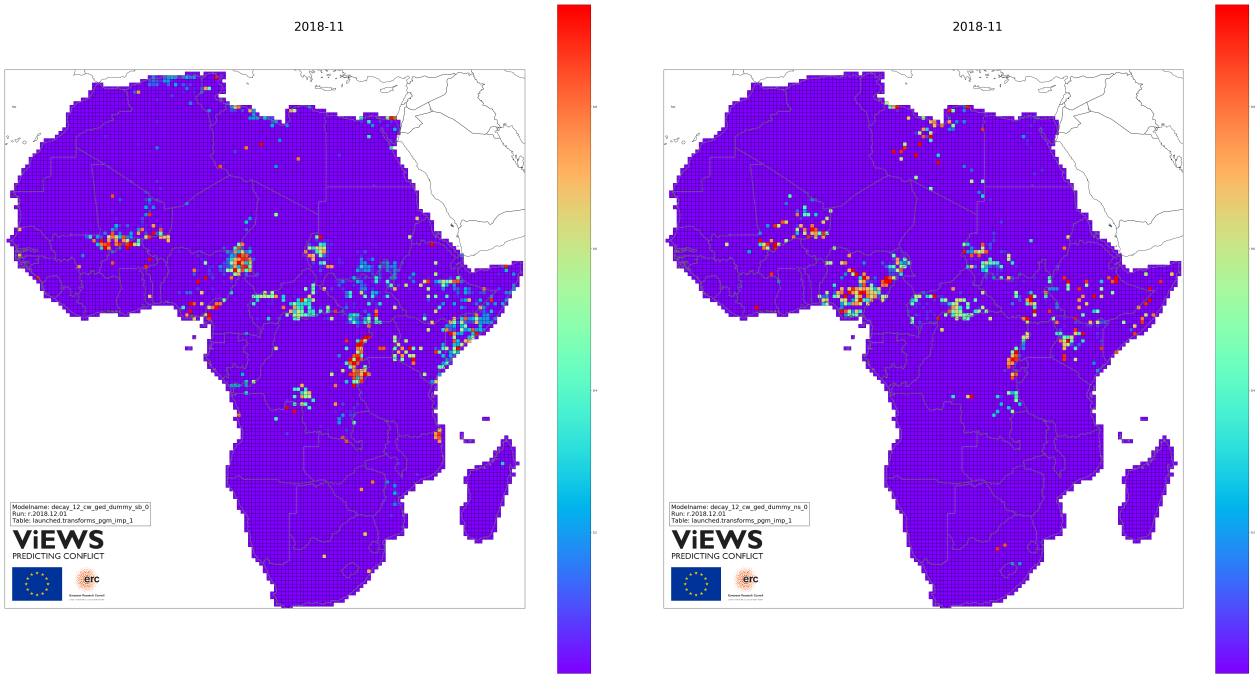
The forecasts for non-state conflict and one-sided violence depend on the same factors although with somewhat different implications. For **ns**, we forecast main clusters in central Nigeria, Central African Republic, North and South Kivu, Darfur and the Kenyan Rift Valley. For **os**, central Mali, Northeastern Nigeria, Darfur, the Kivus, Somalia (Mogadishu area), and Northeastern Mozambique are the primary hotspots.

2 History of UCDP organized violence

Figure 3 presents the the recent history of violence in each PRIO-GRID cell. Red cells had conflict in November 2018, and purple ones have not seen conflict in many years.

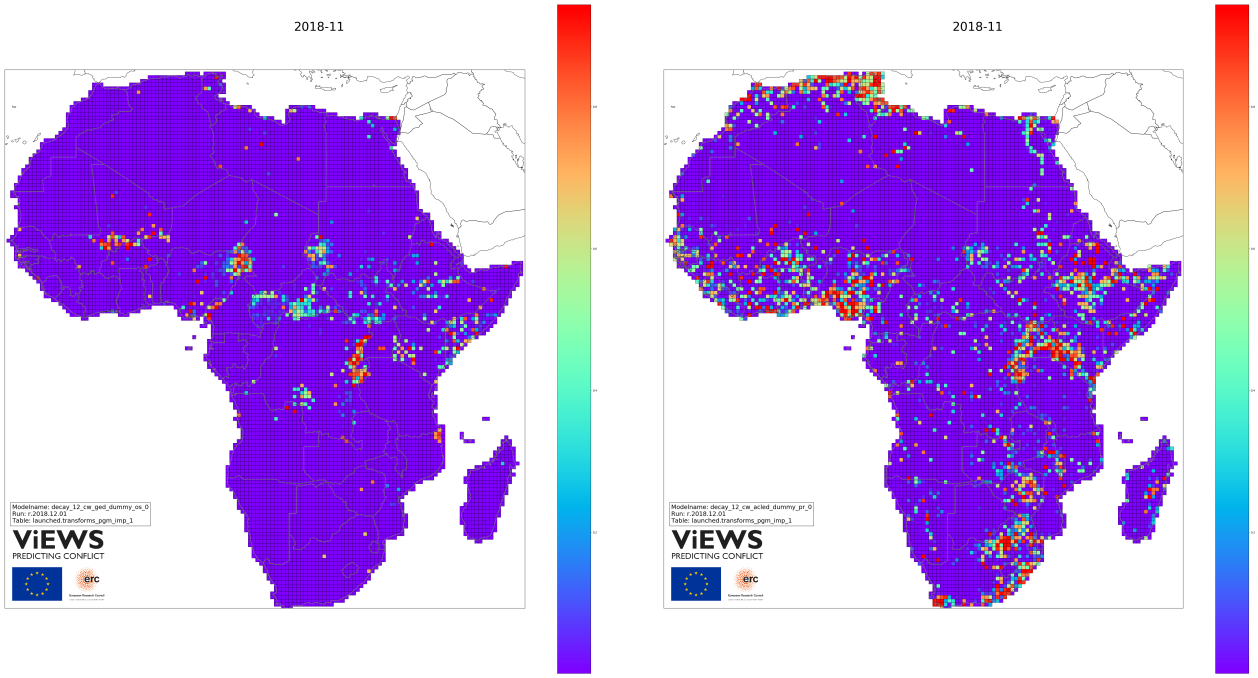
Figures 3a, 3b, 3c show state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence respectively from the UCDP. Figure 3d shows data on protests from ACLED (`https://www.acleddata.com`).

[2]See Figure 3c and `http://ucdp.uu.se/#/onesided/1071`.



(a) State-based conflict (sb), November 2018

(b) Non-state conflict (ns), November 2018



(c) One-sided violence (os), November 2018

(d) Protests (pr), November 2018

Figure 3: Decay function maps of observed conflict for November 2018