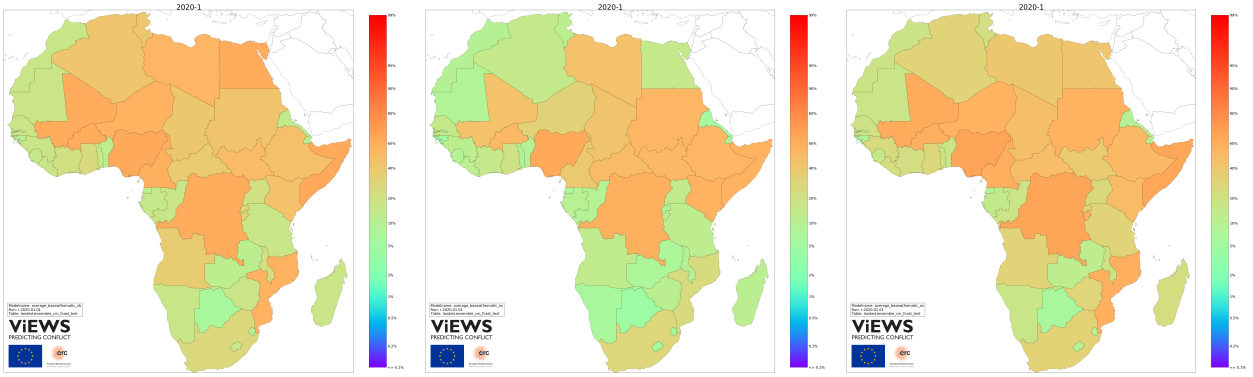
ViEWS monthly forecasts, January 2019*

Summary of forecasts

Thursday 9th January, 2020



(a) State-based conflict (sb), January 2020

(b) Non-state conflict (ns), January 2020

(c) One-sided violence (os), January 2020

Figure 1: Ensemble forecasts for January 2020

This report presents ViEWS forecasts for January 2019 as of 1 January 2019, which are based on data that are updated up to and including November 2019. 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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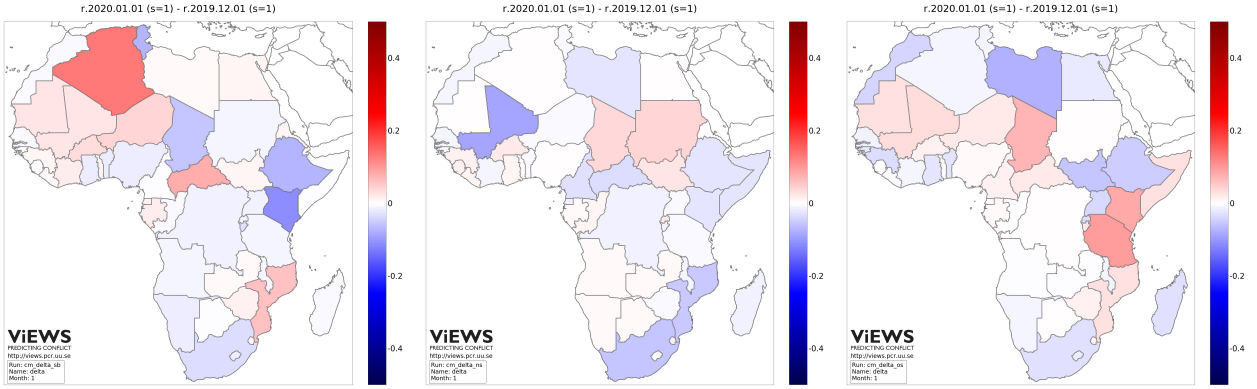


(a) State-based conflict (sb) (b) Non-state conflict (ns) (c) One-sided violence (os)

Figure 2: Change maps (cm) for December 2019 to January 2020

the ViEWS introductory article.[1] Figure 1 shows our country-level forecasts for January 2019, Figure 3 the corresponding forecasts at detailed geographic locations (PRIO-GRID level, or **pgm**)[2], and Figure 5 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.

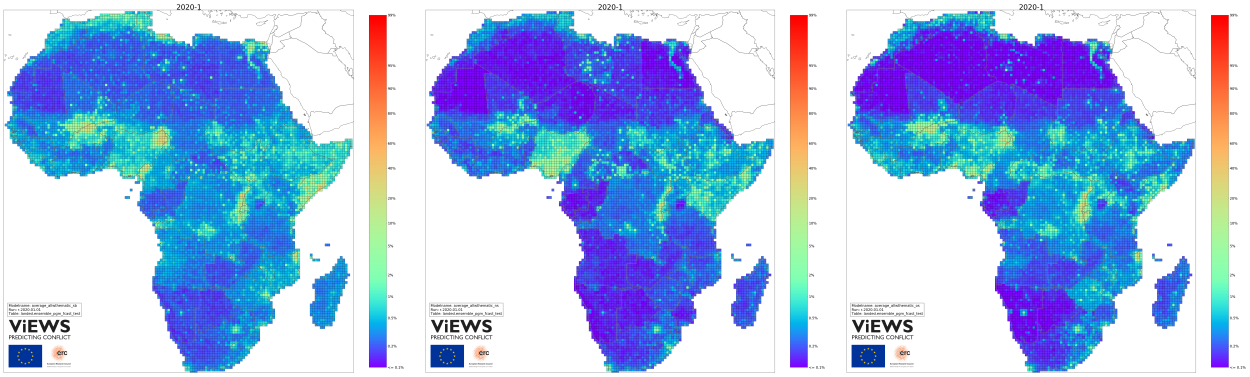
1 Country-month forecasts for January 2019

The plots in Figure 1 show the ViEWS country-level forecasts for the immediate future – what will happen in January 2019 according to our forecasts? We show the probability of at least one event in each country in January 2019, based on data up to and including November 2019. Countries with a red color have been assigned with a forecast probability close to 1, whereas purple countries have been assigned with a probability of less than 0.1. When the forecasts indicate that no event is as likely as at least one event, countries are drawn with a light orange color.

Our forecasts for January 2019 are mostly similar to last month's forecasts. The January 2019 run is using the same set of models as last month, so only changes to input variables will matter for the forecasts.

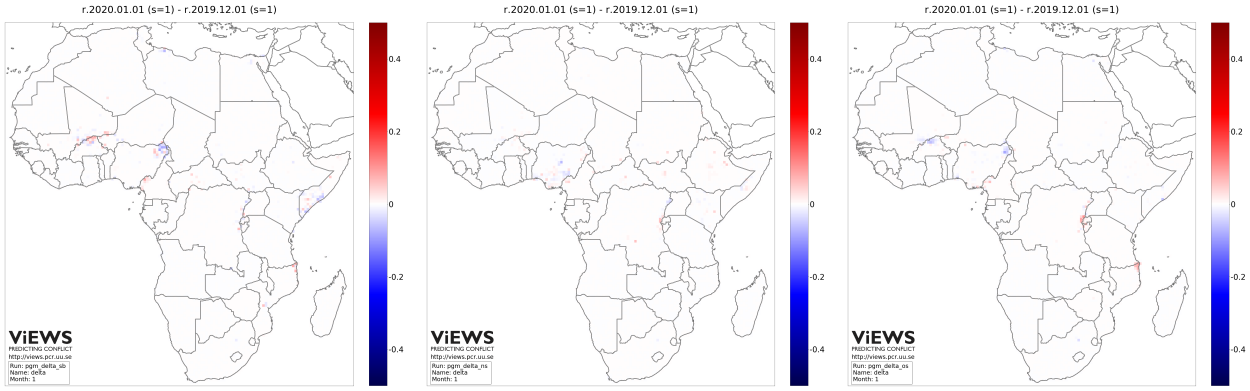
[1] `https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022343319823860`.

[2] PRIO-GRID is a grid structure that divides the terrestrial world into squares of approximately 55 by 55 kilometers. See `http://grid.prio.org/`



(a) State-based conflict (sb), January 2020 (b) Non-state conflict (ns), January 2020 (c) One-sided violence (os), January 2020

Figure 3: Ensemble forecasts for January 2020



(a) State-based conflict (sb) (b) Non-state conflict (ns) (c) One-sided violence (os)

Figure 4: Change maps (pgm) for December 2019 to January 2020

1.1 State-based conflict (sb)

We continue to forecast a high probability of state-based conflict in countries that have a recent history of conflict or protest events. Particularly in Egypt, Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Cameroon, DR Congo, Somalia and Mozambique, the risk of at least one state-based conflict event is high and over 50%.

Figure 2a shows that compared to last month's forecast, the greatest increase of the risk of a state-based conflict is in Algeria, where on 18 November clashes between IS and the Government of Algeria in the southern province of Tamanrasset (bordering Mali) led to at least two people dead.

Risk also increased in Central African Republic, where clashes between government security forces and the Patriotic Movement for the Central African Republic (MPC) in Kaga-Bandoro led to five rebel casualties. The government additionally clashed with the UPC on 21 and 27 November, leading to a yet unknown number of casualties, while in the capital of

Bangui, clashes with ex-Seleka members on 19 November left around ten people dead.

We also find a slight but relevant increase for Mozambique this month, where in November operations against islamist militants in Cabo Delgado province continued. Numerous militants, soldiers, and civilians passed as a result of different events throughout the month. On 6 November, moreover, an ambush perpetrated by a suspected Renamo splinter group in the country's central province of Manica left three dead.

Conversely, the risk significantly decreased for Kenya, Ethiopia, and Chad as no candidate state-based events were recorded by the UCDP in these countries for the month of November.

1.2 Non-state conflict (ns)

The forecast maps for non-state conflict follow partly the same patterns as **sb**, but the patterns of past events do differ across conflict types (see Figure 5). Nigeria, DR Congo, Kenya, and Somalia remain at particularly high risk of non-state violence this month.

Compared to last month's forecast, we find no significant increase in the risk of non-state violence. The risk does notably decrease for Mali: despite numerous state-based conflict events recorded in November, no non-state conflict event was recorded in the UCDP's candidate event data for that month. The risk remains of future non-state violence remains moderately high, however.

Risk has also relevantly decreased in South Africa and Mozambique, as for these countries too, no new non-state conflict events were recorded in November 2019.

1.3 One-sided violence (os)

The probability of one-sided violence events remains especially pronounced this month in Mali and Burkina Faso, Nigeria (predominantly given Boko Haram/IS), DR Congo, Mozambique, and Somalia (predominantly given Al-Shabaab).

Compared to our December forecast (figure 2c) the model ensemble responds strongly to the case of Tanzania in particular, where on 12 November attackers presumed to be IS coming from Mozambique killed six civilians in Ngongo village, Mtwara region. Nonetheless, the risk of future one-sided violence in Tanzania remains comparatively low.

Kenya also shows a relevant increase in the risk of one-sided violence, caused by a presumed Al-Shabaab attack on university workers, leading to two civilian casualties. In Chad, finally, IS attackers killed five civilians in the western Lac region in the week of 16 November.

2 PRIO-GRID-month forecasts for January 2019

Figure 3 presents forecasts at fine-grained sub-national geographical locations for January 2019, for each of the three outcomes. The color mapping is the same as for the country-month forecasts.

2.1 State-based conflict (sb)

The densest risk clusters at **pgm** level for state-based conflict continue to be in northeastern Nigeria, the Anglophone region of Cameroon, Ituri and the North and South Kivu provinces in DR Congo, Somalia (its southern states in particular), Egypt's Sinai, Libya's Tripoli, and the northeastern Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique where an Islamist insurgency emerged at the end of 2017.[3] The risk of violence in Mali also remains high but is more spread out geographically, while as of recent, the risk of state-based violence has become particularly pronounced in northern Burkina Faso. Mozambique's center province has additionally recently emerged as a new cluster of risk, given continued political violence in response to contested presidential elections last October.[4]

Compared to last month (see Figure 4a), we again find a strong increase in the risk of state-based violence in Burkina Faso's Centre-North, where the prevalence of clashes between Islamist militants (JNIM, Ansaroul Islam) and security forces continued to escalate during the month of November. In Cameroon, clashes between government security forces and the Anglophone separatist insurgency in the South West and North West regions continued to escalate in November, leading to a uniform increase of risk of state-based violence there. Additionally of note is a strong increase of risk in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province given the government's execution of eight suspected militants in Macomia district on 16 November, the IS-claimed killing of five soldiers in Chitunda district a day after, and the killing of two government soldiers in Nangade district on 27 November.

2.2 Non-state conflict (ns) and one-sided violence (os)

Cells with the highest risk of non-state violence are found in Libya, Mali, southern and central Nigeria, southern-central Central African Republic, eastern DR Congo, and Somalia. For one-sided violence, we find strong and persistent clusters in Mali and Burkina Faso, northeastern Nigeria as well as the Lagos and Delta states, Anglophone Cameroon, the eastern DR Congo,

[3] See `https://ucdp.uu.se/#/actor/7032`.

[4] `http://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20191227-mozambique-escalation-violence-looming-post-election-frelimo-renamo-jihadist`

around Mogadishu in Somalia, the Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique, and Johannesburg in South Africa.

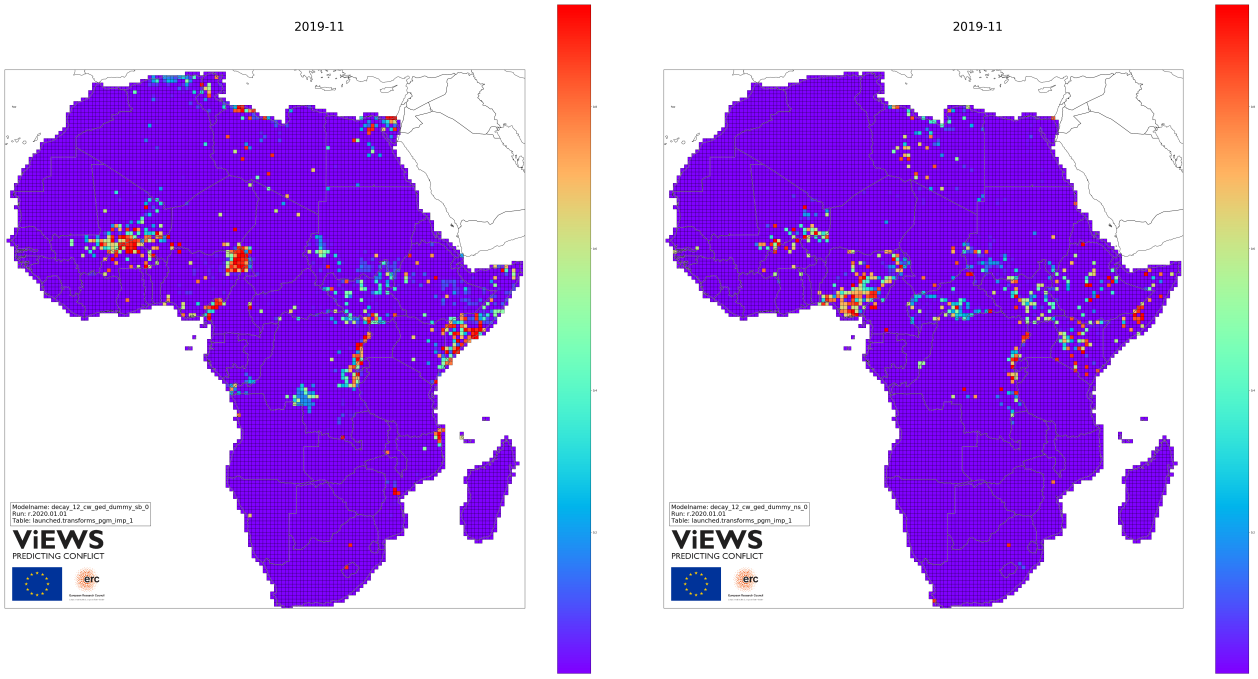
Compared to last month (see Figure 4b), we find no strong increases in the risk of non-state violence of note, though the uniform increase of risk in the Kivu provinces is of note. The UCDP Candidate Event data records 23 casualties as a consequence of non-state violence in these two provinces in November.

Regarding one-sided violence (see Figure 4c), of particular note is a uniform and strong increase in DR Congo's Nord and Sud Kivu province. Around 100 civilians were killed by members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) around Beni throughout November, while in Sud Kivu the Ngumino killed at least eight civilians in November. Interestingly, however, the increase of risk is concentrated in the Rutshuru and Masisi areas of Nord Kivu where the FDLR and NDC-R killed numerous civilians in November, while the risk in Beni area did not alter much despite the high number of casualties. We finally find a unform and strong increase in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province, where around 65 civilians were killed by either Ansar al-Sunnah or IS during November.

3 History of UCDP organized violence

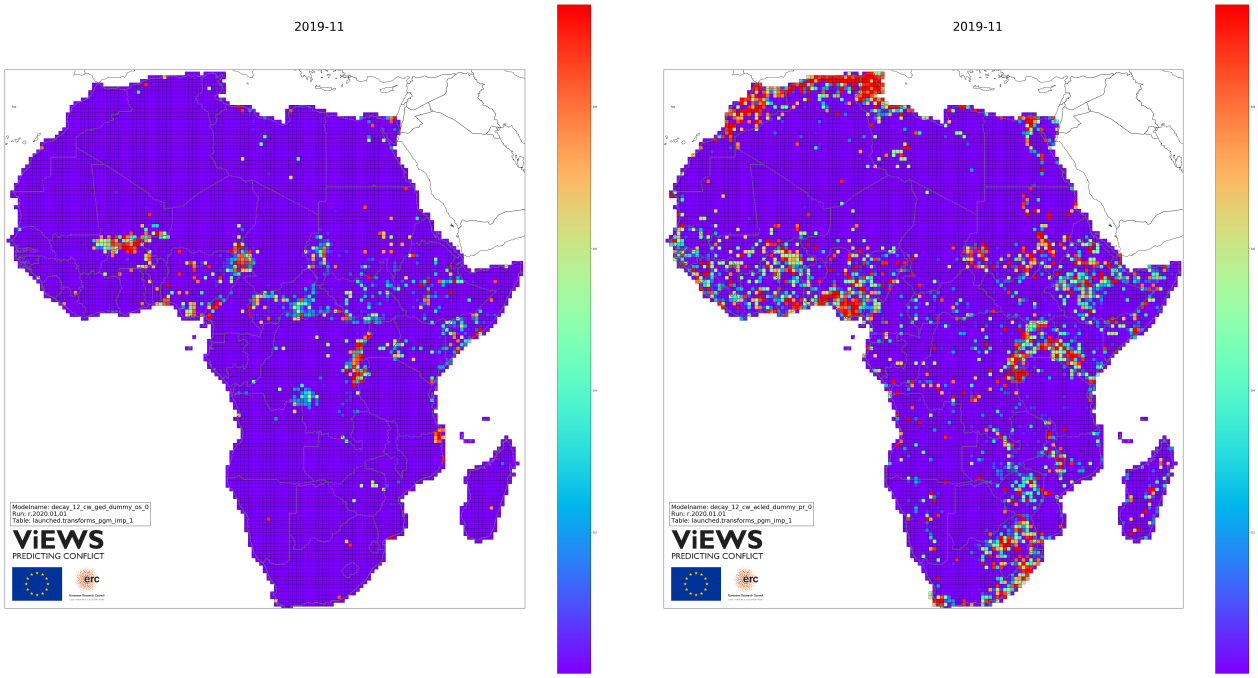
Figure 5 presents the the recent history of violence in each PRIO-GRID cell. Red cells experienced violence in November 2019, and purple ones have not seen armed conflict in many years.

Figures 5a, 5b, 5c show state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence respectively from the UCDP. Figure 5d shows data on protests from ACLED (`https://www.acleddata.com`).



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

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



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

(d) Protests (pr), November 2019

Figure 5: Decay function maps of observed conflict for November 2019