UPDATE ON NEW ARRIVALS FROM THE EASTERN DRC

19 - 25 May 2025

Since January, Uganda has received 65,595 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), making up the majority of the 107,083 individuals who have entered the country this year. Ongoing clashes between M23 and other armed groups continue to be reported across multiple areas in North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces. The protection situation for civilians in Goma city as well as Nyiragongo and Masisi Territory remains extremely precarious.

As of January 2025, Uganda has received a total of 65,595 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with 57,627 individuals already registered. Last week saw a 21% decrease in new arrivals through Kisoro, but an overall 20% decrease compared to the last reporting period. The decline from Kisoro is attributed to increased control by non-state actors along the border and in areas affected by recent conflict and insecurity.

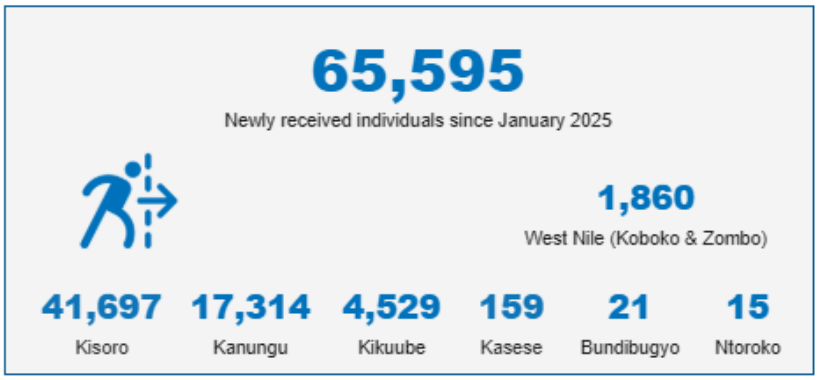
Month	New Arrivals	Registered
January	7,377	4,499
February	10,031	7,524
March	20,572	16,871
April	24,411	22,007
May (as of 25 May)	3,204	6,726
Total	**65,595**	**57,627**

During the same period last year (1 January to 25 May 2024), Uganda received 10,805 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); i.e. 2025 has seen a 507% increase compared to the same period in 2024.

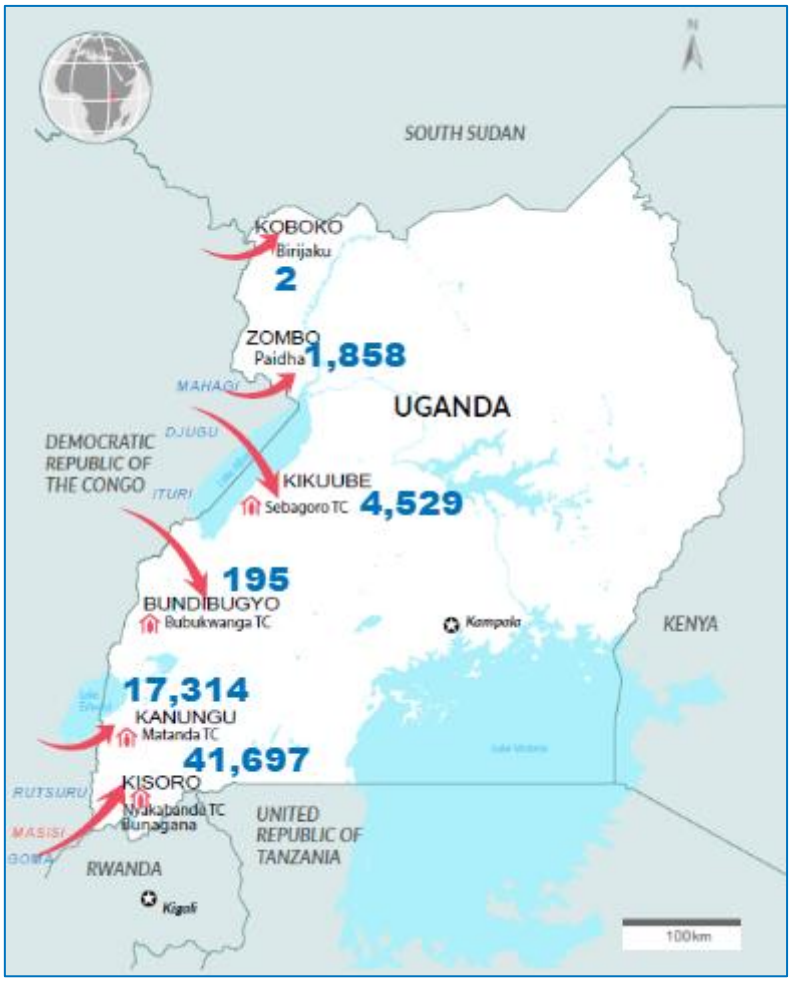
Child Protection case workers hold a meeting with protection staff from Alight, at Nyakabande Transit Centre. Photo ©ALIGHT

Entry Points:

There are three major entry points for the new arrivals from DRC: Kisoro, Kanungu and Kikuube. Of the arrivals, 63.5% arrived via Kisoro (Bunagana, Nteko, Busanza), 26.3% via Kanungu (Butogota, Kahenyi, Kyeshero), 6.9% via Kikuube (Sebagoro), 2.8% via Zombo, Arua and Koboko (Padha, Birijaku), and 0.5% via Kasese, Bundibugyo and Ntoroko.



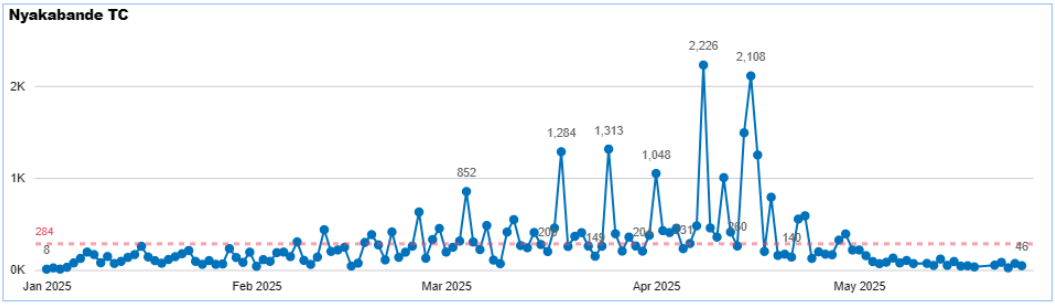
Among the new arrivals from the DRC, nearly 60% are aged 18-59; there is an equal split between men and women. About 40% are below 18, including 33% being children below 12 years. Most of the refugees are from North Kivu (Giseguru, Gisahru, Binza, Gisigari, Bweza, Giseguro, Rutchuru, Masisi, and Goma City), South Kivu (Bukavu and Uvira), as well Ituri region (Joo, Nyamamba and Tchomia). Refugees report they are fleeing due to forced recruitment, rape, kidnapping, hunger, armed civilians, militia, and disrupted social services. The majority of those arriving (81%) have no education and 4% have primary as their highest level of education, with some having a secondary education (2.2%), few university graduates (0.5%) and the rest not stated.



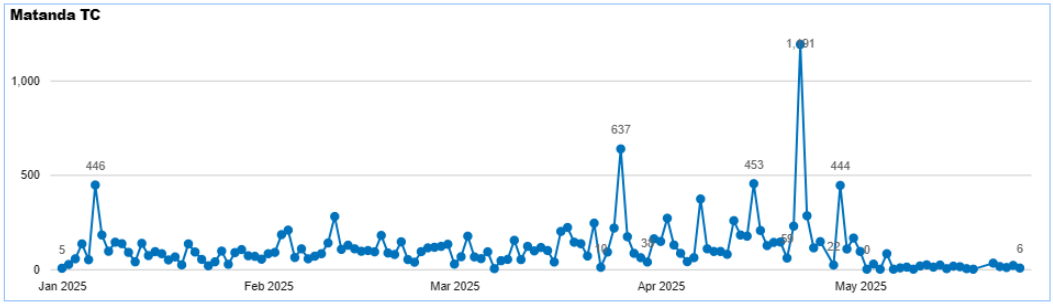
Arrival Trends:

During the reporting period, 738 individuals arrived from the DRC, a 20% overall decrease from the previous period. The daily average for this reporting period was 105, and the weekly average since January was 735.

In Nyakabande, 375 forcibly displaced persons were received during the reporting period, 21 per cent lower than from the previous week. In 2025, the daily average was 284 and weekly average was1,988.



In Matanda, 219 new arrivals were received, a 71 per cent increase from the previous week. In 2025, the daily average is 112 and weekly is 784.



The number of new arrivals into Sebagoro, Kikuube district stands at 32 during the reporting period, having decreased by 41 per cent from the previous week. Bubukwanga transit centre has relatively low numbers, with the highest daily figure being 39 individuals since the year started.

Population at Transit and Reception Centres:

The total population at the transit and reception centres impacted by the DRC emergency was 4,167 individuals as of 25 May 2025.

Top Locations	Capacity	Population on ground		Status
		Past week ending 18 May	Current reporting week ending 27 May	
Kabazana RC	1,500	3,170	1,669	111% occupancy
Matanda TC	900	548	654	Within capacity
Nyakabande TC	1,420	762	713	Within capacity
Kagoma RC	1,230	400	420	Within capacity
Bubukwanga TC	650	230	359	Within capacity
Sweswe RC	800	287	308	Within capacity
Mahani RC	500	276	29	Within capacity
Sebagoro TC	300	0	15	Within capacity

Response by UNHCR and Partners:

Health and Nutrition

In respect to nutrition among new arrivals, at Nyakabande transit centre, Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) levels remain critical at 16.1 per cent for children under five years (U5), a slight reduction from 17.1 per cent, and 17.6 per cent for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women (PBW).

At Matanda transit centre, GAM levels are: 16.1 per cent for children U5, a reduction from 18 per cent, and 18.8 per cent among PBW, an increase from 14.8 per cent last week.

GAM levels at Kabazana Reception Center are: 17.2 per cent for children U5, a slight reduction from 19.2%, and 15.3% for PBW, a reduction from 19%.

In Nakivale, there were four new cases of measles during the reporting period bringing the total to 46 cases (41 refugees and 5 nationals). The situation is contained, and refugees have been treated with no deaths registered. No new cases have been reported at Matanda or Nyakabande Transit Centre.

Child Protection:
During the reporting period, partners identified and assessed 25 children with protection concerns (20 in Nyakabande and 5 in Matanda Transit Centres). The most pressing concerns were identified as alternative care, medical services, tracing, material support and case-management.

In Nakivale settlement, the number of Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) continues to increase due to the influx of new arrivals, family separation cases, and a growing trend of caregivers leaving the settlement in search of livelihood opportunities. Some children are left behind without adequate care and protection, thus increasing their vulnerability. UNHCR in coordination with child protection partners have been mobilized to provide support to the most critical cases.

WASH and Sanitation:
At the Nyakabande transit centre, the total quantity of water available per person per day was 30 litres, while Matanda transit centre had 35 litres per person per day (l/p/d); this exceeds the emergency thresholds and has been achieved due to the decrease in population at both Transit Centres. The receiving zones in Nakivale refugee settlement have low water supply of 7 lpd in Juru and 6 lpd in Rubondo zones, with an overall average of 10 lpd. They are far below the emergency standard of 15 lpd.

At Nyakabande Transit Centre, the latrine stance ratio was 1:49 individuals, while at Matanda Transit Centre it was 1:31. Matanda requires an additional 6 latrine stances to align with the standard ratio of 1:50. There was a 5% decrease in the number of individuals per stance compared to the previous week which was 1:84.

Critical Gaps in the DRC Emergency

- Additional funding is urgently needed to support the **treatment of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)**, which is currently limited to transit and reception centres. Once children leave these centres, there is no continuity of care within the settlements. To reinstate and expand this support, more nutrition commodities and trained personnel are required.
- **Support** to increase health and education of staff in settlements receiving new arrivals.
- **Purchase and distribution** of in-kind Core Relief Items for new arrivals at the transit centre and support to provide cash assistance for new arrival packages upon relocation to the settlement.

The EMERGENCY APPEAL: DRC Refugee Situation in Uganda - April 2025, covering the needs of 80,000 new arrivals has been issued. It requires $21M in additional funding and $23M reprogrammed under the UCRRP, involving 7 UN agencies, 15 International NGOs, and 2 National NGOs.