UPDATE ON NEW ARRIVALS FROM THE EASTERN DRC

18 – 31 August 2025

Since January, Uganda has received 71,920 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), making up more than half of the 126,211 individuals who have entered the country this year. Despite the peace agreement signed on 27 June 2025, clashes between armed groups continue in several areas of North and South Kivu Provinces. New arrivals cite ongoing conflict and human rights violations as key reasons for fleeing. Uganda, under the leadership of the Government of Uganda, continues to uphold its open-door policy.

As of end-August 2025, Uganda has received a total of 71,920 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with 65,410 individuals already registered. New arrivals through Nyakabande in Kisoro reduced by 23% during the reporting period, an 11% drop from the previous reporting period. However, August recorded a 37% increase in arrivals compared to July. Armed groups continue to restrict civilian movement, forcing asylum seekers to use unofficial border points or cross at official ones during reduced M23 presence to reach Kisoro and Kanungu.

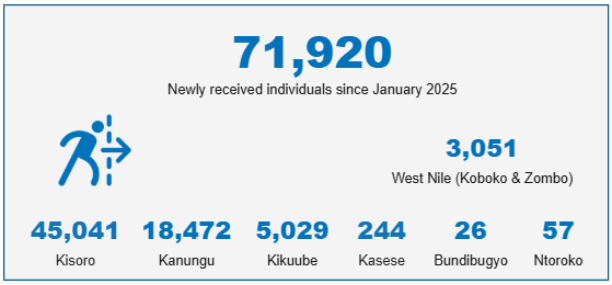
Month	New Arrivals	Registered
January	7,377	4,506
February	10,031	7,524
March	20,497	16,882
April	24,596	22,020
May	3,616	8,182
June	1,820	2,150
July	1,683	1,824
August	2,300	2,322
Total	**71,920**	**65,410**

Refugees from the DRC arriving at Kabazana Reception Center in Nakivale Refugee Settlement. Photo: Daniel Ssozi/UNHCR

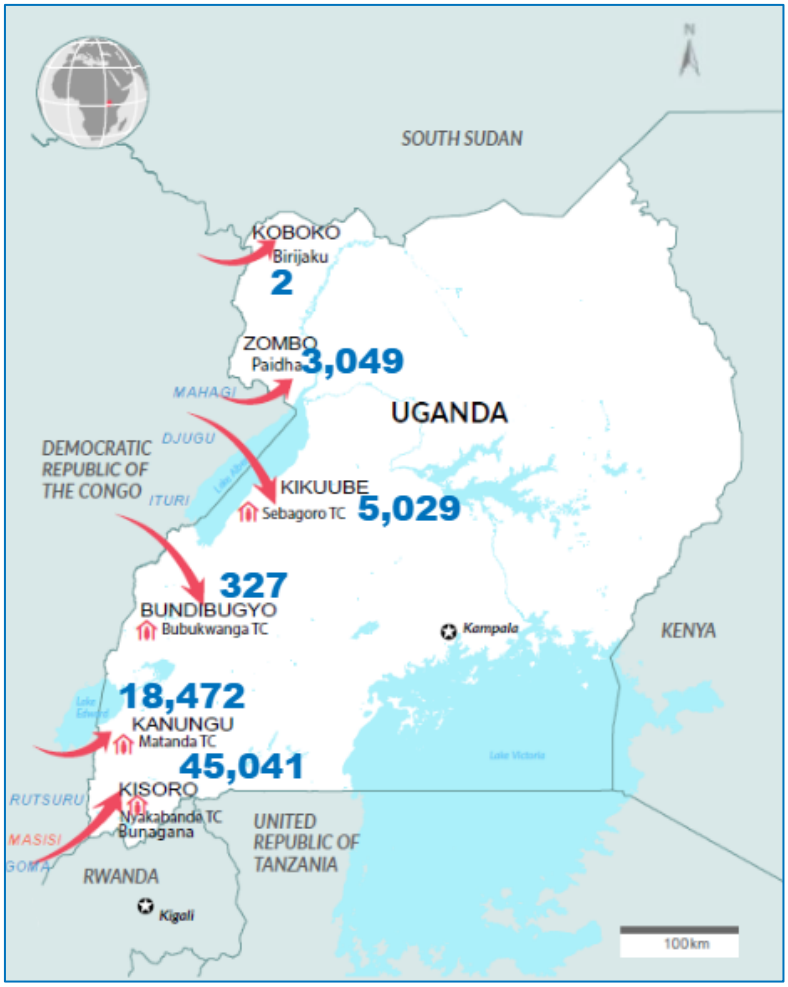
Between 1 January and 31 August 2024, Uganda received 25,614 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). During the same period in 2025, arrivals rose to 72,015 — an increase of 181%.

Entry Points:

There are three major entry points for the new arrivals from DRC: Kisoro, Kanungu and Kikuube. Of the arrivals, 62.6% arrived via Kisoro (Bunagana, Nteko, Busanza), 25.7% via Kanungu (Butogota, Kahenyi, Kyeshero), 6.9% via Kikuube (Sebagoro), 4.2% via Zombo, Arua and Koboko (Padha, Birijaku), and 0.3% via Kasese, Bundibugyo and Ntoroko.



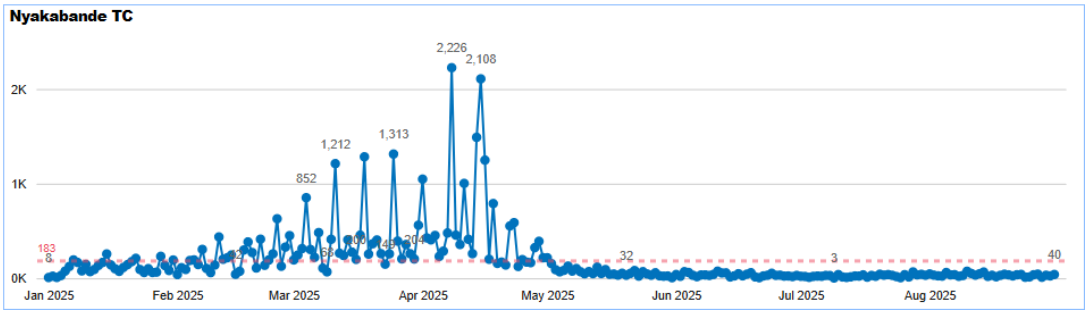
Among newly registered arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), 70% are women and children, with 41% under the age of 18. Refugees aged 18–59 years constitute the largest group 37,372 individuals). The majority originate from North Kivu (52,429), followed by Ituri (6,007) and South Kivu (2,935). They report fleeing due to forced recruitment, sexual violence, kidnapping, hunger, armed groups, and disruption of essential services. Education levels remain low, with only 4.4% having primary education, 3% secondary education, and 0.85% university education.



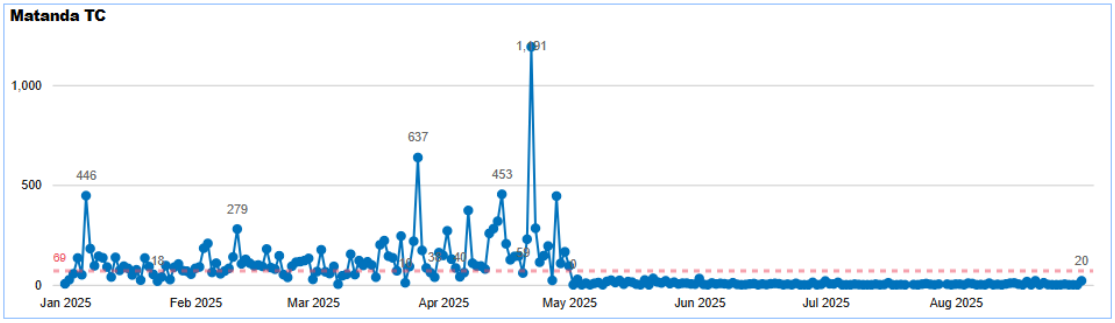
Arrival Trends:

During the reporting period, 1,014 individuals arrived from the DRC, an 11% overall decrease from the previous period. The daily average for this reporting period was 72, and the weekly average since January was 1,998.

In Nyakabande, 463 forcibly displaced persons were received during the reporting period, 23 per cent higher than from the previous week. In 2025, the daily average was 183 and weekly average was 1,281.



In Matanda, 143 new arrivals were received, a 3% per cent decrease from the previous week. In 2025, the daily average is 69 and weekly is 483.



The number of new arrivals into Sebagoro, Kikuube district stands at 111 during the reporting period, having increased by 9 per cent from the previous week. Bubukwanga transit centre has relatively low numbers, with the highest daily figure being 43 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 2,284 individuals as of 31 August 2025.

Top Locations	Capacity	Population on ground		Status
		Past week ending 17 Aug	Current reporting week ending 31 Aug	
Kabazana RC	1,500	857	691	Within capacity
Kagoma RC	1,230	275	380	Within capacity
Sweswe RC	800	231	227	Within capacity
Bubukwanga TC	650	349	111	Within capacity
Nyakabande TC	1,420	235	379	Within capacity
Matanda TC	900	38	106	Within capacity
Mahani RC	500	29	374	Within capacity
Sebagoro TC	300	19	16	Within capacity

Response and Critical Gaps in the DRC Emergency

Nutrition

The nutrition situation among new arrivals has deteriorated in some locations but improved in others. Overall, conditions across Reception and Transit Centers have shown improvement compared to the peak malnutrition levels recorded between March and May 2025.

- **Nyakabande Transit Center (Kisoro):** Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) among children has improved from 10.5% to 9.6%, with 5 children identified with malnutrition and enrolled out of 52 screened. However, GAM among Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women (PBWs) has worsened, increasing from 17.6% to 21.7%, with 5 women identified and enrolled out of 23 screened.

- **Kabazana Reception Center (Nakivale Refugee Settlement):** GAM among children increased slightly from 9.8% to 10.5%, with 24 malnourished children identified and enrolled for treatment out of 229 screened. GAM among PBWs showed no significant change (12.3% to 12.5%), with 8 out of 64 women identified and enrolled for treatment.
- **Matanda Reception Center**: GAM among children increased from 14.3% to 15.8%, with 3 out of 19 children identified and enrolled for treatment.

- **Treatment services and Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFP):** Treatment for acute malnutrition among children and PBWs is ongoing across all new arrival sites. BSFP remains active at Nyakabande, Kabazana, and Matanda in the southwest.

- While progress is noted among children in some areas, the overall nutrition status of new arrivals remains concerning. Persistently high rates, especially among PBWs, highlight the need for stronger screening, sustained treatment, and closer links between health and food security interventions at entry points, reception centers, and settlements.

- Host community pressure: Reduced land access for farming, overstretched health and education services, and rising tensions between host and refugee communities remain key concerns. In Juru, Nakivale, for instance, conflicts arose after local council leaders (LCs) reported that refugees were being settled on host community land without prior consultation. In response, RDO, UNHCR, OPM, partners, and host community representatives held discussions, which led to the creation of a settlement committee to strengthen collaboration and ease tensions. Going forward, closer engagement of local leaders and joint planning with host communities will be essential to prevent similar disputes and promote peaceful coexistence.

- Healthcare: Severe funding shortfalls have disrupted healthcare in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, which is also receiving new arrivals in Ntenungi Zone. By July 2025, Medical Teams International (MTI) had lost over 35 health workers previously supported by PRM, causing major service gaps. Only 14% of staff are government-deployed, leaving critical departments understaffed. MTI has introduced short-term stopgaps, but these are unsustainable. Efforts to contract anesthetic services externally failed, leading to high-risk referrals and a recent patient death during surgery.

- Education**:** By the end of August, schools in Nakivale reported exceptionally high enrolment, forcing double-shift teaching that strained infrastructure and reduced instructional quality, worsened by teacher shortfalls. The classroom–pupil ratio stands at 89, far above the national standard of 53. Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is only 73%, compared to the 83% national average, leaving many learners out of school. Without more classrooms, teachers, and learning materials, the situation is likely to worsen in the third term.

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.