Child Protection Dashboard

Uganda Refugee Response Plan (RRP) 2026-2030

2026 Quarters

Quarter 1

Overview

The Uganda Inter-Agency Child Protection Strategy (2026-2030) focuses on three key objectives: strengthen national and district protection systems to inclusively serve refugees and host communities, expand access to integrated child protection, GBV, and MHPSS services delivered through government systems and ensure timely identification, case management, family tracing, and appropriate alternative care for children at heightened risk, including unaccompanied and separated children. In support of this strategy, the Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan (UCRRP) involves partners in a coordinated effort to protect refugee children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, and separation, including GBV, child labour, while ensuring access to quality child protection services. During Q1 2026, it was observed that most locations continued operating with only one to two case workers, largely due to funding constraints and delayed recruitment approvals. This significantly slowed case management processes amid persistently high caseloads and wide geographic coverage. These staffing limitations further constrained community-based case identification mechanisms, foster care and alternative care arrangements, and the overall ability to scale child protection interventions at community level, thereby affecting timely prevention, response and follow-up for children at heightened risk. Child protection programming is severely affected by funding cuts, impacting over **84,790** children with Child Protection-related specific needs. Currently there are **8,756 (3,527 UASC and 5,229 child at risk)** active child protection cases managed by 135 child protection case workers. The staff reductions have compromised service quality, with the average caseworker-to-child-at-risk ratio of **1:65**. These figures exceed the global standard of **1:25**, highlighting capacity gaps.

Result Analysis;

During the Q1 2026 reporting period, comprehensive case management services supported **8,756** active child protection cases, including **5,229** children at risk and **3,527** unaccompanied and separated children. A total of 977 cases were successfully closed after resolving protection concerns. Meanwhile, a total of **1,293** new cases were identified and received case management services, including 761 newly identified CR cases and **532** newly identified UASC cases, representing about **1.5%** of the estimated **84,790** children with specific needs. Compared to Q1 2025, when **26,810** active cases were reported, the lower caseload in 2026 reflects reduced service coverage due to staffing gaps and funding constraints, rather than a decline in protection needs. In addition, the caseworker ratio remains high at 1:65, which continues to affect follow-up and timely case closure. In the same reporting period, **1,557 (781 girls and 776 boys)** Best Interests Assessments (BIAs) were conducted only for priority cases. Additionally, **725** children had their family tracing needs initiated, of which 45 cases were successful, while 25 children were reunified with their families within Q1 2026, representing about 11.5% of the annual target of 5,000, which is lower compared to Q1 2025. The relatively low reunification numbers reflect the nature of the cases and ongoing operational and resource constraints affecting tracing and follow-up. A total of **4,820 (3,513 women and 1,307 men)** parents and caregivers participated in positive parenting sessions, which is lower compared to Q1 2025 where 7,324 caregivers were reached. In addition, **5,375** parents, caregivers, adolescents, and young people were engaged in prevention activities aimed at reducing violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children. A total of **30,950 (15,779 girls and 15,171 boys)** children aged 5–17 years participated in community-based child protection support activities, which is about 12% of the annual target and similar to Q1 2025 performance, showing limited scale-up of activities. Furthermore, **7,461 (3,611 girls and 3,850 boys)** adolescents and young people accessed child friendly and targeted life skills and multi-sectoral protection services, representing about 19% of the annual target of 40,000, while **6,068 (3,024 girls and 3,044 boys)** adolescents participated in targeted interventions, reaching about **67%** of the annual target of 9000, showing relatively stronger performance in adolescent programming. By the end of Q1 2026, **48** Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) were reported as operational across refugee settlements and urban settings, continuing to provide safe, structured and supervised environments for children despite persistent resource limitations compared to **45** CFSs in Q1 2025.

Key challenges/ Opportunities

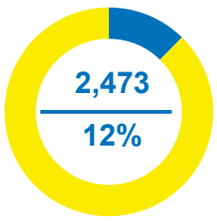
Child Protection service delivery in Q1 2026 continued to face significant capacity and resource constraints, affecting the timely and quality of case management interventions. Despite a high caseload of 8,756 active child protection cases, the number and availability of caseworkers remained limited across several operations. While 135 caseworkers were reported, field-level feedback indicates uneven presence in some settlements, with some locations operating with few or no dedicated caseworkers for extended periods during the quarter. High caseloads and staffing gaps constrained partners' ability to conduct regular follow-up, case monitoring, and timely case closure, contributing to the accumulation of active cases. These constraints also affected the identification, assessment and sustained support of alternative care arrangements for Unaccompanied and Separated Children, particularly in locations with limited caseworker presence. Resource limitations also continued to impact the scale and continuity of child protection services, including structured activities for children and adolescents. Despite these challenges, prospects for improvement remain. Continued investment in strengthening national child protection systems, including social service workforce development and case management digitalization, offers a pathway for sustained progress. The Government's commitment to child protection reforms, alongside efforts to expand prevention and early identification mechanisms, presents opportunities to improve reporting, prevention, and respond to child protection concerns.

Sector priorities

UNHCR and partners will prioritize mandate-critical child protection interventions, including the application of Best Interests Procedures (Best Interests Assessments and Determinations), to safeguard refugees and stateless children from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and separation. In line with the Inter-Agency Child Protection Strategy (2026–2030), partners continued to operationalize these priorities during Q1 2026. These priorities were reflected in the identification of **1,293** new child protection cases. Partners conducted **1,557** Best Interests Assessments for children at heightened risk, as well as initiating family tracing for 725 unaccompanied and separated children, including those in alternative care arrangements. Efforts also focused on strengthening community-based prevention and response mechanisms through community-based child protection activities, reaching over **30,950** children and **5,375** individuals through prevention interventions, contributing to early identification, referral, and response. These priorities are informed by protection risk analysis in refugee-hosting contexts and support the progressive strengthening of inclusive, government-led child protection systems.

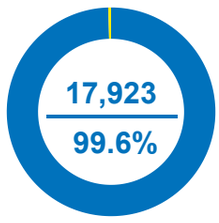
Key Indicators

Actual Achievements ***Gap***



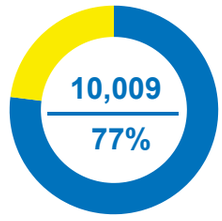
Children at heightened risk and Unaccompanied and Separated Child (UASC) for whom BIP was initiated

Target: 20,000



Parents / caregivers, adolescents and young people engaged in prevention of violence, abuse and exploitation of children and vulnerable groups

Target: 18,000



Children of concern between 4-17 years who participate in community based child protection programs

Target: 13,000

Achievements data: ActivityInfo **Author:** UNHCR Representation in Uganda **Feedback:** ugakaimug@unhcr.org **For more info:** https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/uga

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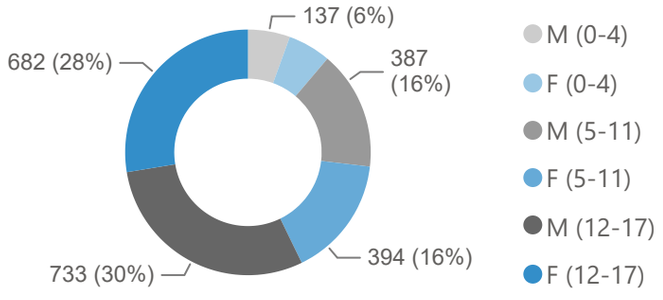
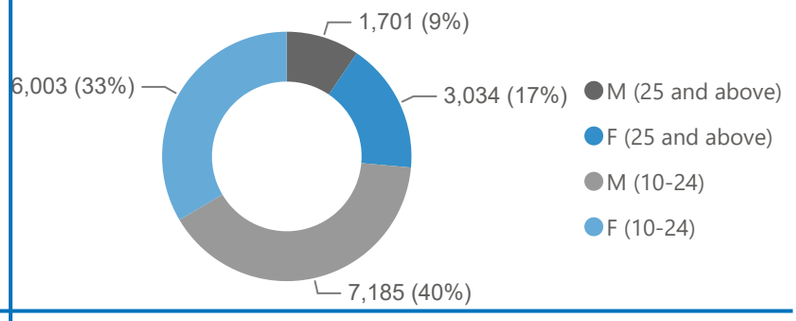
OUTCOME: Refugee and host communities receive inclusive protection services (CP/GBV/MHPSS) delivered through national systems

Indicator	*Actual*	*Target*	*Actual*	*Gap*
Children at heightened risk and Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) for whom BIP was initiated				
- Congolese Refugees	1,361	6,000	23%	77%
- South Sudanese Refugees	1,104	8,000	14%	86%
- Sudanese refugees	0	2,000		100%
- Other refugees	8	2,000		99.6%
- Host Community	0	2,000		
Total	2,473	20,000		
Parents / caregivers, adolescents and young people engaged in prevention of violence, abuse and exploitation of children				
- Congolese Refugees	10,923	5,400		
- South Sudanese Refugees	6,599	7,200	92%	8%
- Sudanese Refugees	0	1,800		100%
- Other refugees	0	1,800		100%
Total	17,522	16,200		
Children of concern between 4-17 years who participate in community based child protection programs				
- Congolese Refugees	2,935	3,900	75%	25%
- South Sudanese Refugees	6,042	5,200	100%	
- Sudanese Refugees	0	1,300		100%
- Other refugees	0	1,300		100%
- Host Community	1,032	1,300	79%	21%
Total	10,009	13,000		

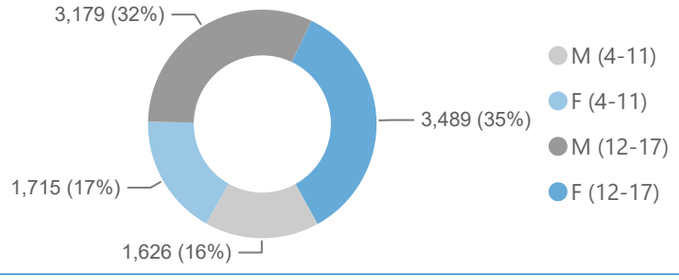
Children at Heightened Risk Age, Gender Breakdown



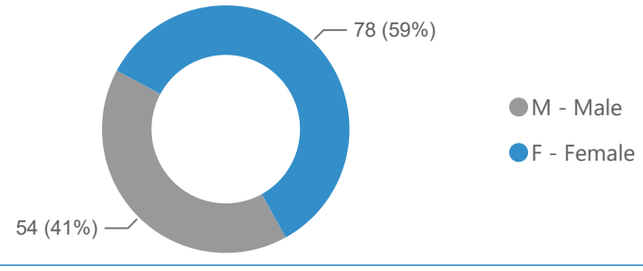
People engaged in Prevention of Violence Age, Gender Breakdown



Children between 4-17 years engaged in community based CP programs Age, Gender Breakdown



Children with Disability between 4-17 years engaged in community based CP programs Gender Breakdown



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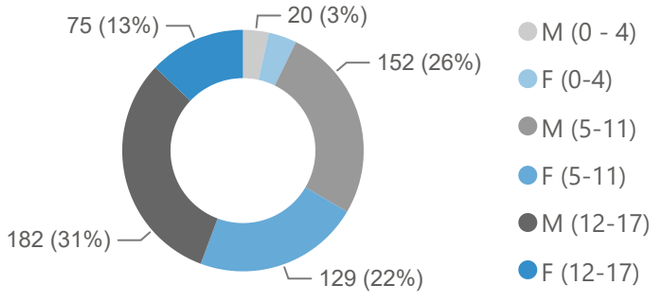
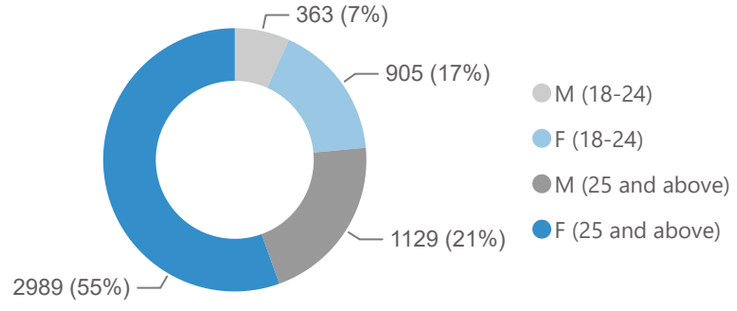
OUTCOME: Refugee and host communities receive inclusive protection services (CP/GBV/MHPSS) delivered through national systems

Indicator	*Actual*	*Target*	*Actual* / *Gap*
Unaccompanied Children who are Placed in Appropriate Interim or Long-Term Alternative Care			
- Congolese Refugees	350	500	77%
- South Sudanese Refugees	230	2,000	86%
- Sudanese refugees	0	1,500	61%
- Other refugees	0	500	99.6%
- Host Community	0	500	
Total	580	5,000	
Parents Participating in Positive Parenting Sessions			
- Congolese Refugees	2,494	0	
- South Sudanese Refugees	2,472	0	8%
- Sudanese Refugees	0	0	100%
- Other refugees	0	0	100%
Total	4,966	0	
Children benefitting from family tracing and reunification			
- Congolese Refugees	25	290	75% / 25%
- South Sudanese Refugees	696	320	100%
- Sudanese Refugees	0	80	100%
- Other refugees	4	100	96%
Total	725	800	

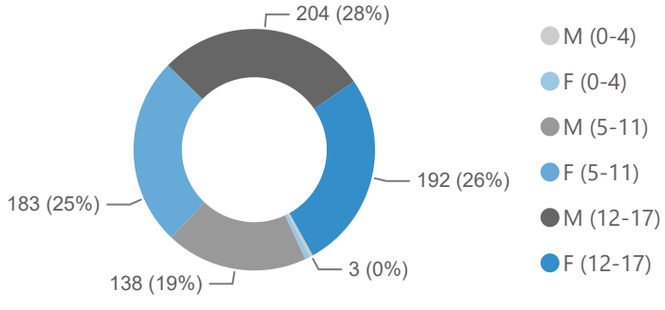
Unaccompanied children in alternative care Age Gender Breakdown



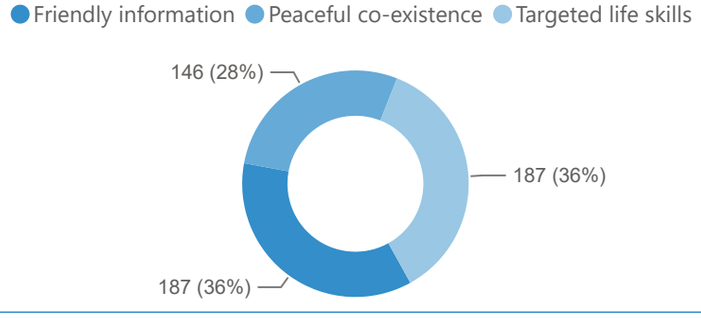
Parents in positive parenting sessions Age and Gender Breakdown



Children benefitting from family tracing and reunification Age, Gender Breakdown



Adolescents and young people with Disability receiving targeted multi-sectoral services



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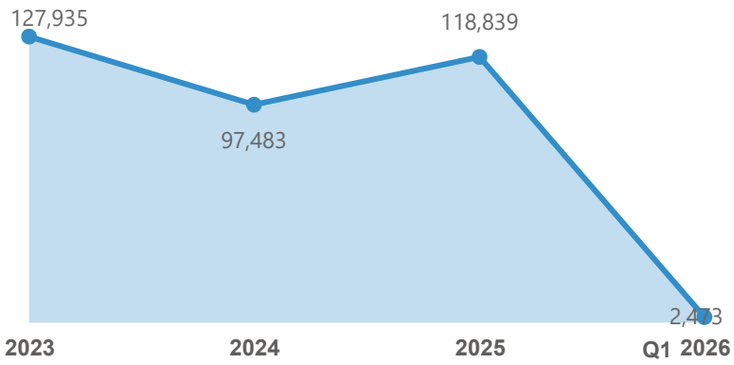
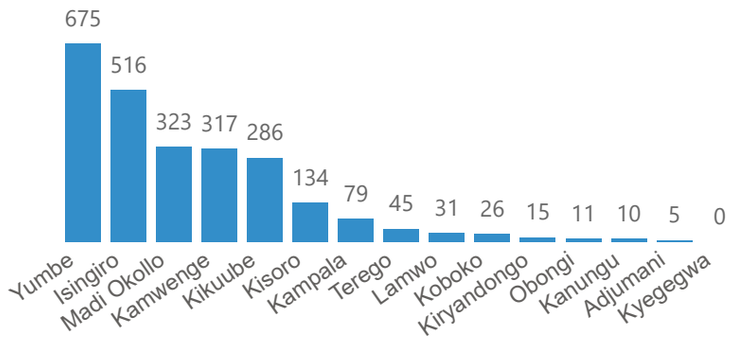
SETTLEMENT COMPARISON & TRENDS ANALYSIS

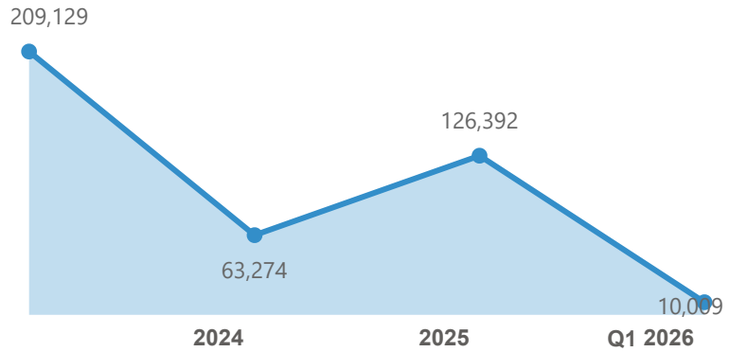
Children at heightened risk over the years



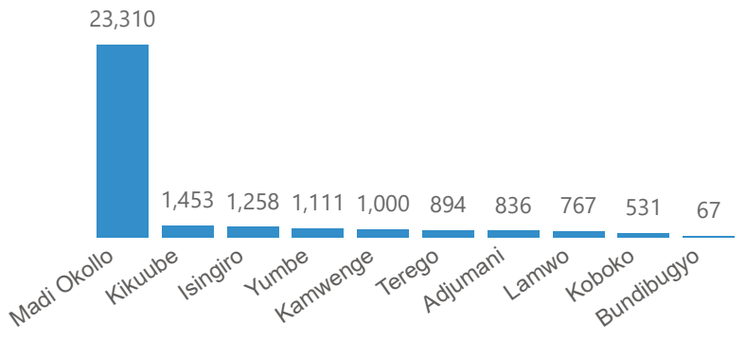
Children at heightened risk in Q1 2026 by location



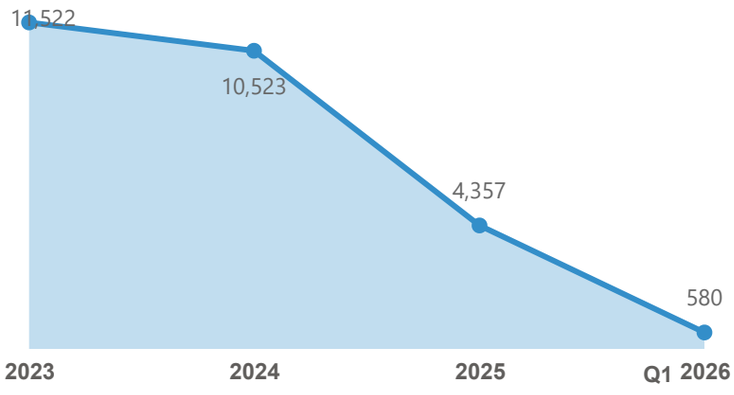
Children between 4-17 years participating in community based CP programs over the years



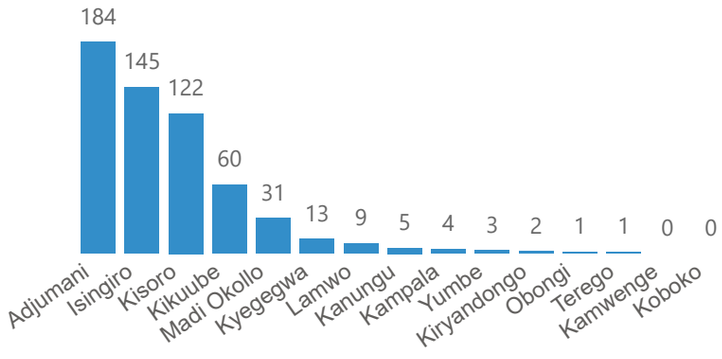
Children between 4-17 participating in community based CP programs in Q1 2026 by location



Unaccompanied children in interim care over the years



Unaccompanied children in interim care in Q1 2026 by location



Partners

ADRA, AVSI, AWYAD, CFI, DRC, HADS, HAF Uganda, IsraAID, JRS, KRC, LWF, NRC, Plan, RICE-WN, RLP, SCI, Similar Ground, SOS, URCS, URDMC, WVI, YSAT

FUNDING

22 Partners

28M Total funding required

$5.4M — **19%** Received

$22.6M — **81%** Gap

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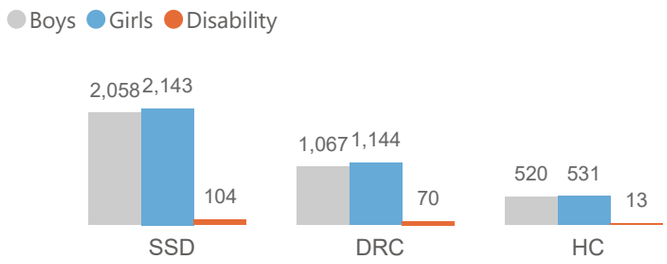
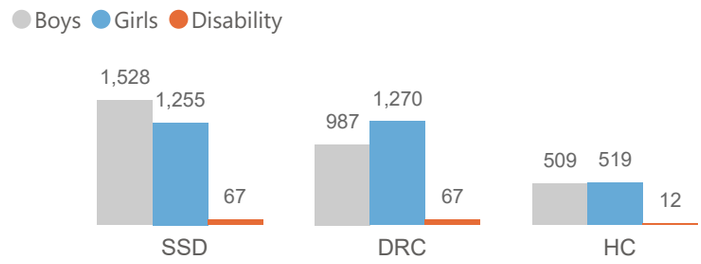
Performance Indicator summary

Output 1.5: Targeted multi-sectoral services for adolescents and young people in refugee and host communities are strengthened including promoting their active participation

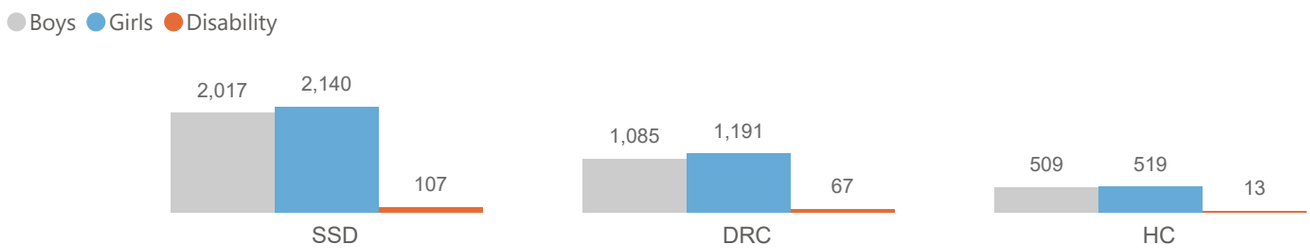
Adolescents and young people accessing adolescent-friendly information



Adolescents and young people actively participating in peaceful co-existence interventions

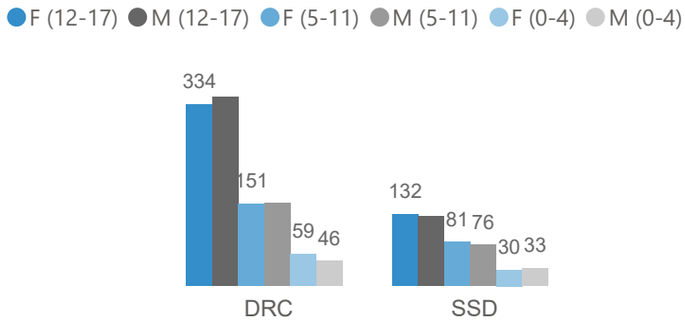


Adolescents and young people accessing friendly and targeted life skills, livelihoods opportunities and multi-sectoral protection services

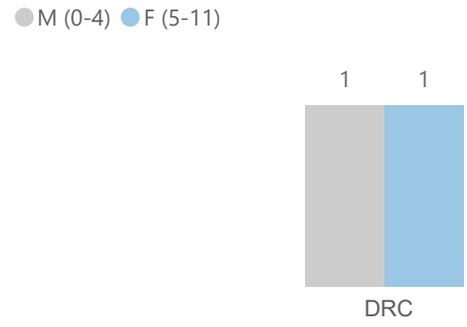


Output 1.2: National protection systems are strengthened to integrate refugees in the delivery of service

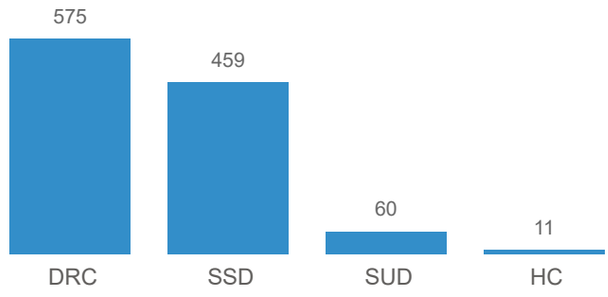
BIAs conducted Age Gender Breakdown



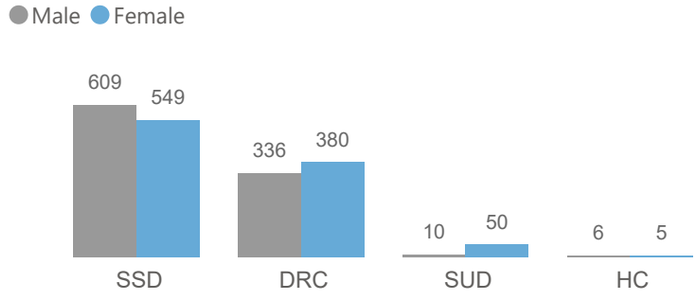
BIDs conducted Age Gender Breakdown



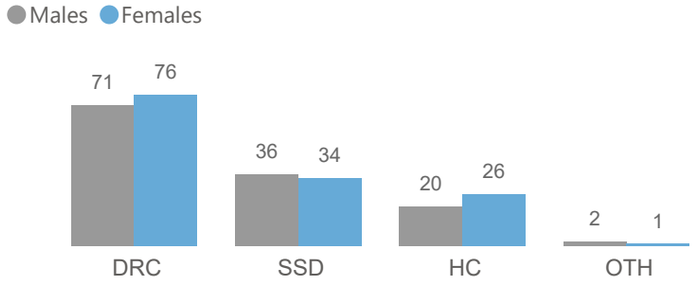
Child Protection Committees



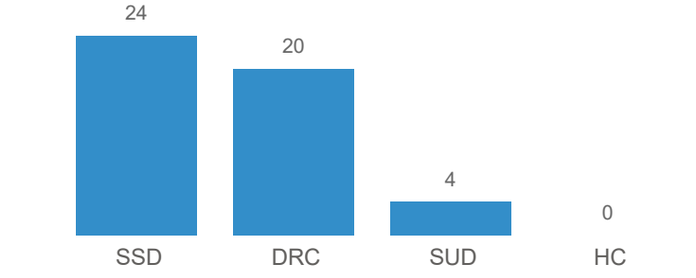
Child Protection committee members



Case workers



Functional Child Friendly Spaces



Operational presence

HADS, URDMC

ADRA, DRC, HADS, Plan, Similar Ground, URDMC

HADS, JRS, Plan, SCI, WVI

DRC, KRC, RICE-WN, SCI, URDMC, YSAT

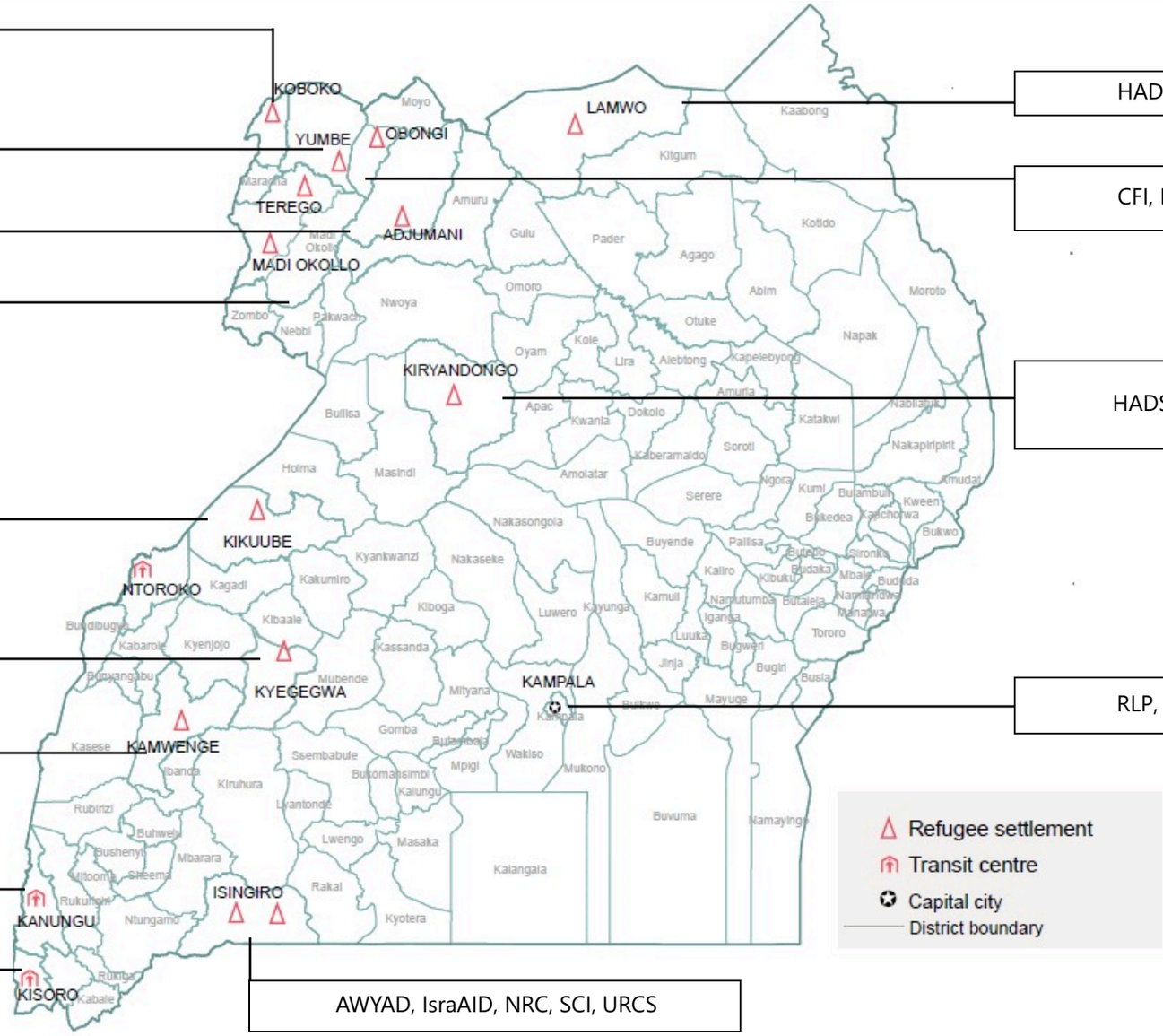
AVSI, HADS, HAF Uganda, NRC, Plan, URCS

NRC, URCS

AVSI, HADS, NRC, SOS, URCS

NRC

NRC



HADS, SCI

CFI, HADS

HADS, LWF

RLP, URCS

AWYAD, IsraAID, NRC, SCI, URCS

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List of Donors

Australian Aid/ Australia NGO Corporation (ANCP), Austria, CARE, Directorate General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, European Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), European Union, Internal Funds, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands - (MoFA-NL), Missio Munich, Norwegian Relief & Development Agency (NORAD), Olympic Refuge Foundation, Sweden, UK, UNAIDS, UNHCR, War Child Canada, Warchild Alliance, WV Korea