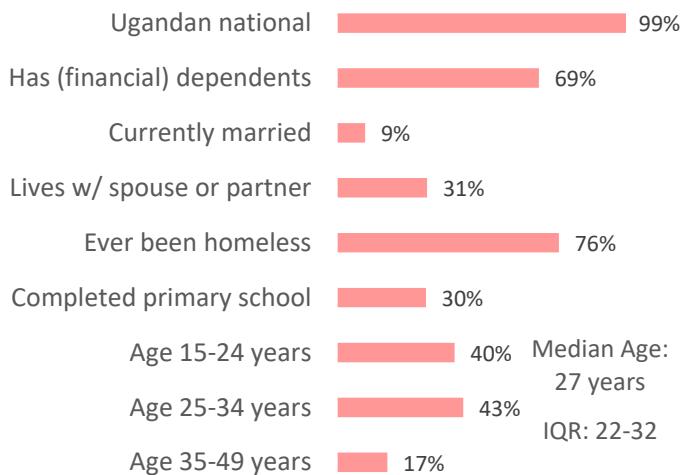


# Crane 3 Survey Summary – Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Arua, Uganda 2022



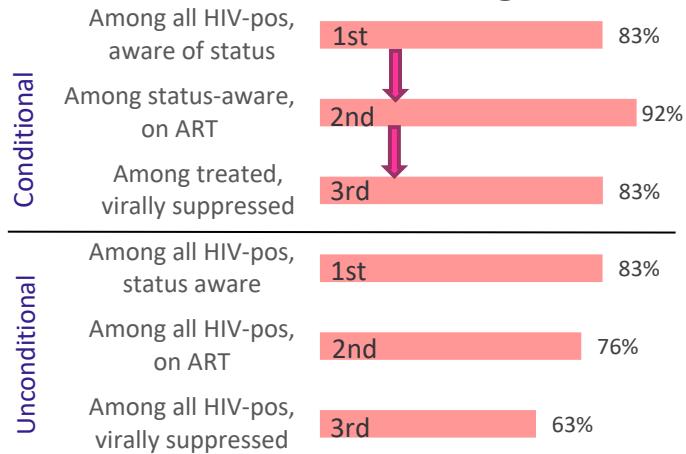
**Survey methods.** This respondent-driven sampling survey took place from August to December 2022 using a single survey office in Arua. Participants were consented females who sold sex to men in Arua in the past six months and were aged 18-49 years (female sex workers, FSW) or 15-17 years (sexually exploited children, SEC). SEC were referred to social protection services. Data were collected through audio computer-assisted self-interviews; blood was tested for HIV, viral load, and active syphilis; cervicovaginal swabs were tested for human papilloma virus (HPV). Sample size was 651 participants; estimates are weighted unless stated otherwise. *Note: Interquartile range (IQR) refers to the middle half of those who responded.*

## Demographics



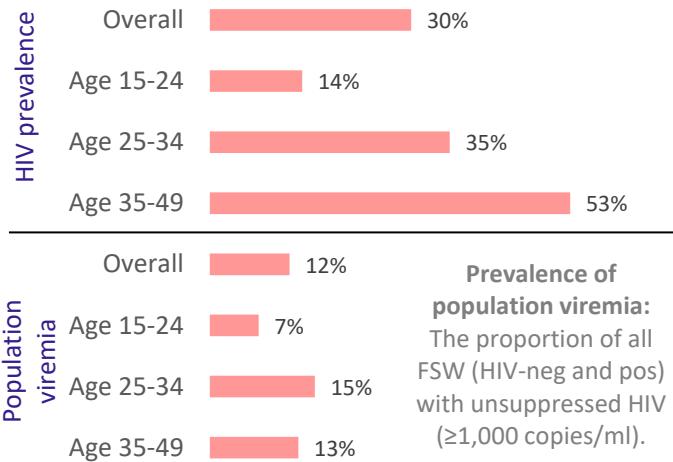
The median age of FSW/SEC was 27 years; about two-fifths were 15-24 years old and about one-third lived with a partner or spouse. Three-quarters had ever been homeless, and most had financial dependents.

## UNAIDS 95-95-95 Targets



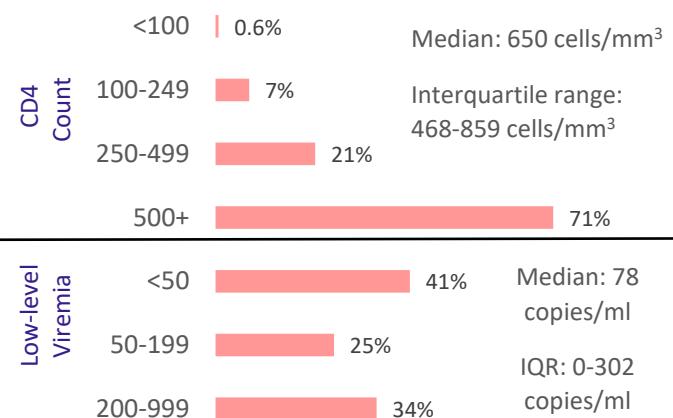
HIV status awareness and treatment uptake were based on self-report with adjustment for viral suppression. More than eight in ten FSW/SEC living with HIV knew about their positive status and about three in five of all persons living with HIV (PLHIV) FSW/SEC were virally suppressed.

## HIV Prevalence and Population Viremia Prevalence



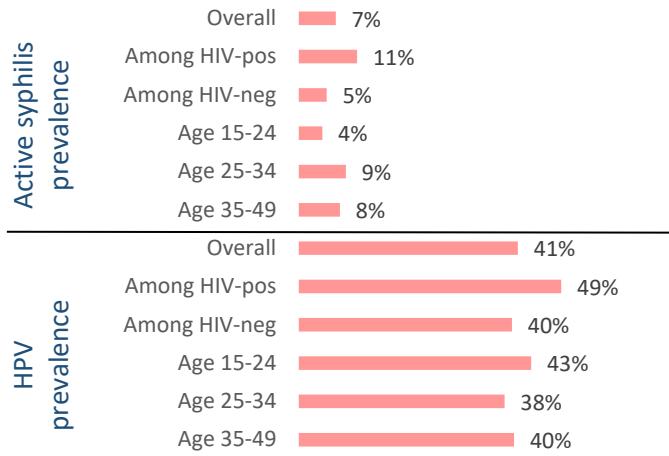
About one in three FSW/SEC were living with HIV. HIV prevalence increased with age, peaking with 35-49-year-olds. The overall prevalence of population HIV viremia was substantially higher than the target  $\leq 5\%$  in all age groups.

## CD4 Counts & Low-level Viremia



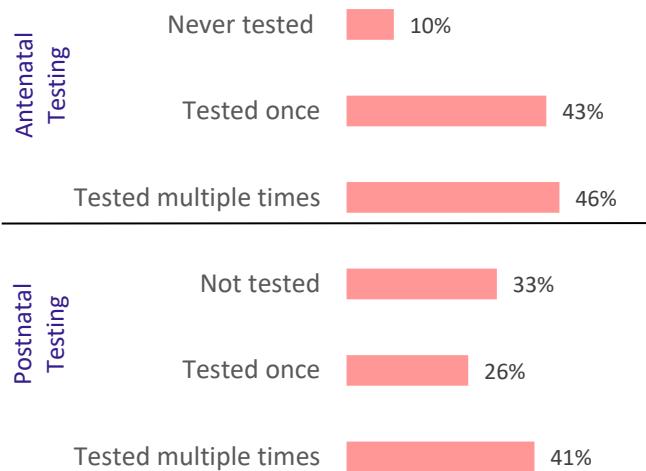
All PLHIV participants had their CD4+ count measured. About seven in ten FSW/SEC living with HIV had CD4 counts of 500 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> or more, suggesting good immune status. Among virally suppressed FSW/SEC (<1,000 copies/ml), one third had viral loads of 200 copies or more.

## Active Syphilis & HPV Prevalence



Syphilis prevalence was low and more common among HIV-positive FSW/SEC. About two in five had high-risk HPV infection putting them at risk for developing cervical cancer. HPV peaked among 15-24-year-olds.

## Maternal Health: Ante- and Postnatal HIV Testing

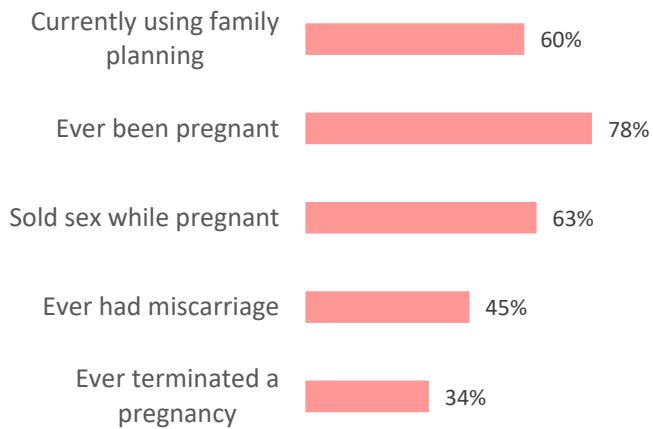


One in ten pregnant FSW/SEC were not HIV-tested while pregnant; one-third were not tested for HIV while breastfeeding.

**Population size estimate:** Using this survey and two separate rounds of sampling at hotspots (three source capture recapture), we estimated the Arua FSW/SEC population size at about 1,400 (95% CI: 1,100-2,800) or 1.4% of the adult female population aged 15-49.

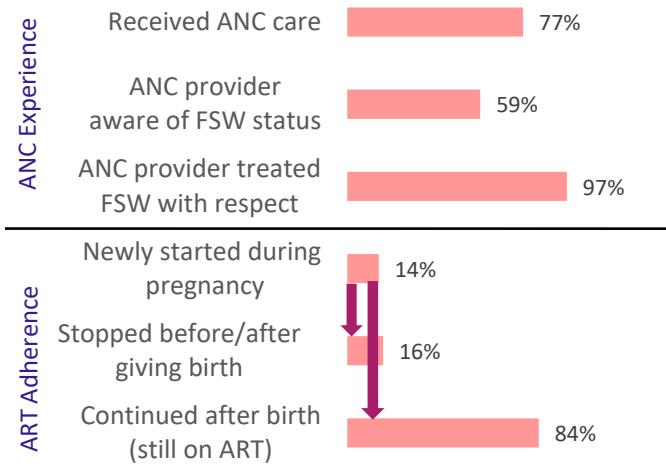
**Pediatric HIV prevalence:** The survey also sampled children of enrolled FSW/SEC. Out of 37 eligible children aged 0-17 years, 21 (57%) tested for HIV during the survey. Of these, 1 (5%) tested positive (unweighted).

## Maternal Health: Pregnancy



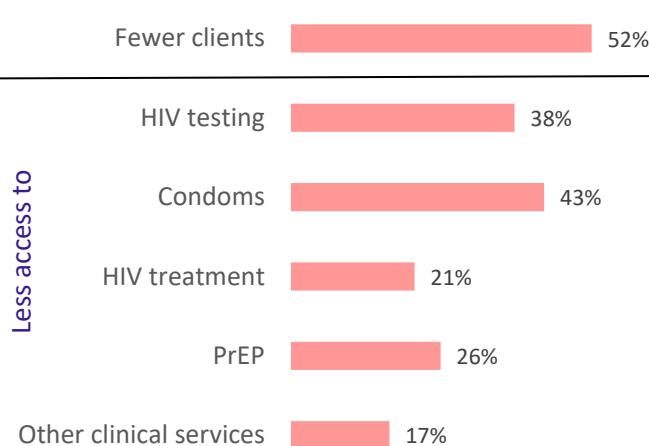
Among FSW/SEC, three out of five reported currently using family planning. Most FSW/SEC had been pregnant in the past, and more than three-fifths had sold sex while pregnant.

## Maternal Health: Antenatal Care (ANC) and ART



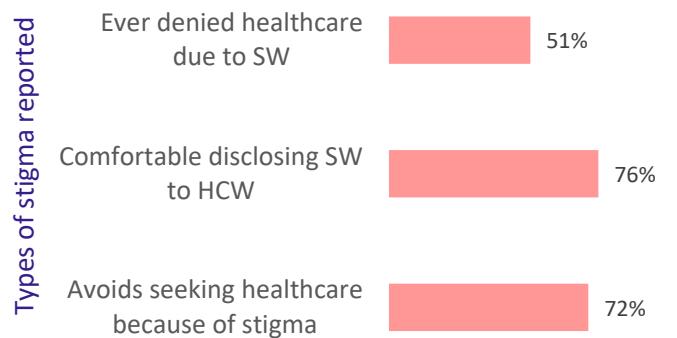
While pregnant, three-quarters of FSW/SEC received ANC. Three in five ANC providers knew about their sex work. Of those receiving ANC care, about one in seven newly started ART during pregnancy, and more than 4 out of 5 continued after giving birth.

## COVID-19 Impact



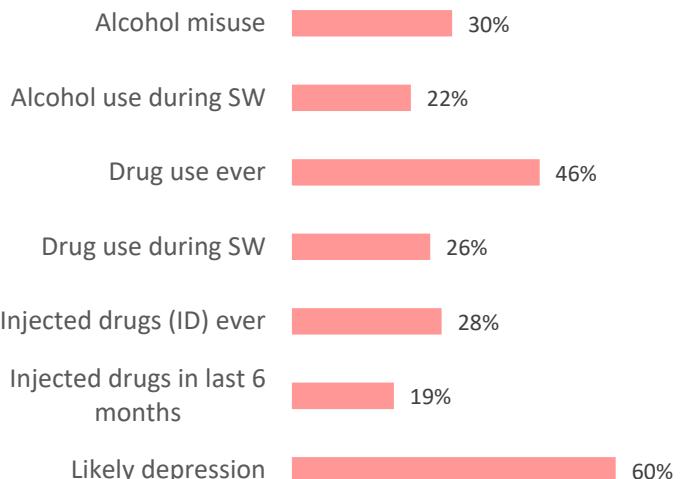
More than half of FSW/SEC had fewer clients due to COVID-19 during lockdown. Nearly two-fifths reported decreased access to HIV testing, and more than two-fifths reported decreased access to condoms.

## Sex Work (SW) Related Stigma



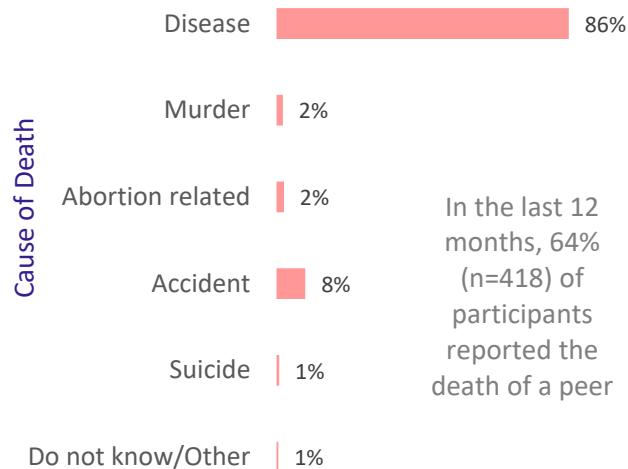
About 9 in 10 FSW/SEC had ever experienced SW-related stigma, and over half had been denied health care due to their SW. Although most felt comfortable disclosing their SW to a health care worker (HCW), about three in four avoided seeking healthcare for fear of stigma.

## Alcohol, Drug Use, Depression



Three in ten FSW/SEC screened positive for ever misusing alcohol and three in five screened positive for likely depression. More than one in five used alcohol during sex work. One in five injected drugs recently.

## Mortality among Peers

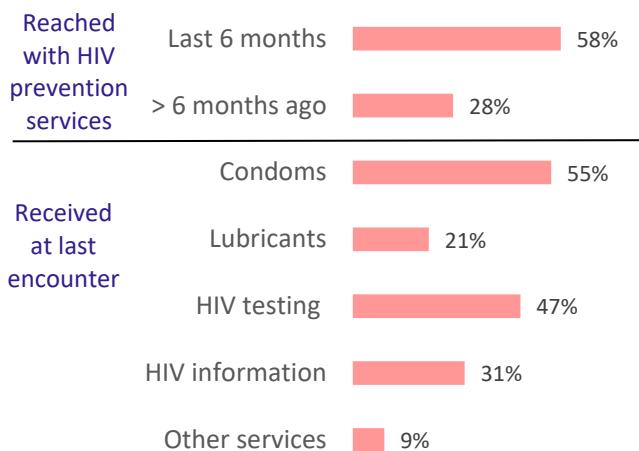


Enrolled FSW/SEC reported on deaths among their known peers in the last 12 months. Disease in general was the most frequent reported cause of death followed by accidents (one in twelve deaths).

# Crane 3 Survey Summary: HIV Prevention

## Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Arua, Uganda 2022

### Outreach Services



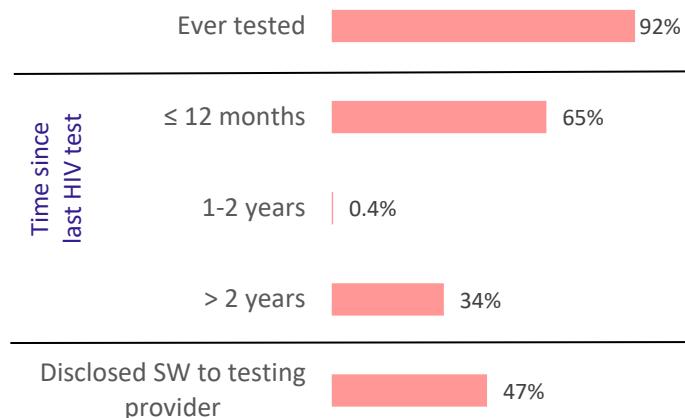
Nearly nine in ten FSW/SEC had ever been reached with outreach services; more than half within the last six months. Condoms and HIV testing were most frequently received at the last encounter.

### Reason for Not Testing for HIV in the Last 12 months



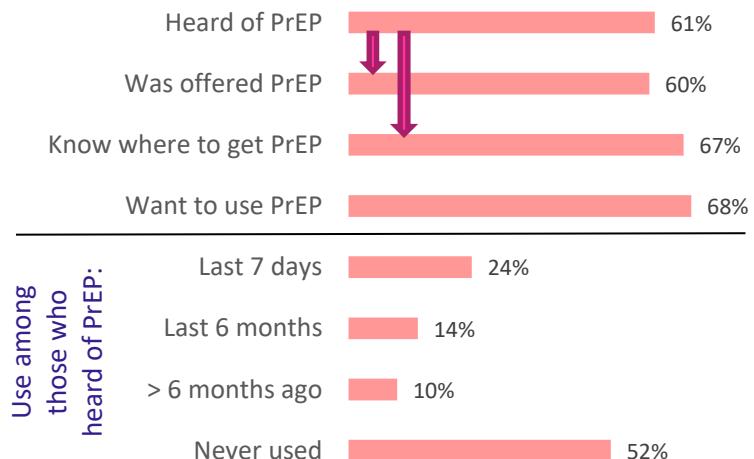
Among FSW/SEC who did not know their positive HIV status and had not tested in the past 12 months, a quarter did not feel at risk. About 1 in 6 feared testing positive. Other reasons included fear of others learning their result and fear of being stigmatized.

### HIV Testing



Among FSW/SEC surveyed, more than nine in ten had ever tested for HIV. Among those ever tested, about two-thirds had tested in the last 12 months but a third had tested more than two years ago. Fewer than half disclosed their SW to their testing provider.

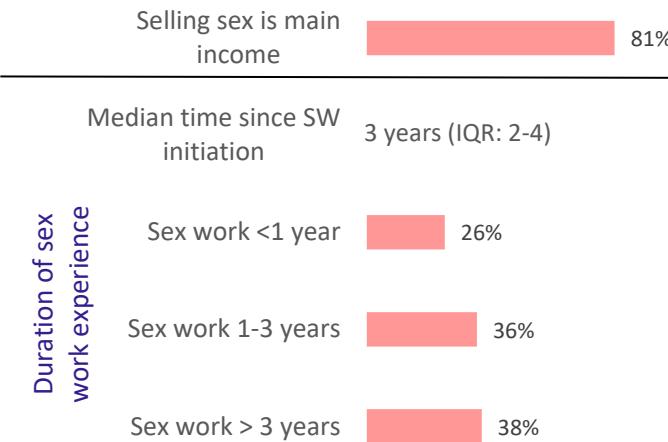
### Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)



Three in five HIV-negative FSW/SEC had heard of PrEP; of these, three in five were offered PrEP. Over two-thirds wanted to use PrEP. Less than one-quarter of FSW/SEC who had heard of PrEP had used it in the last 7 days.

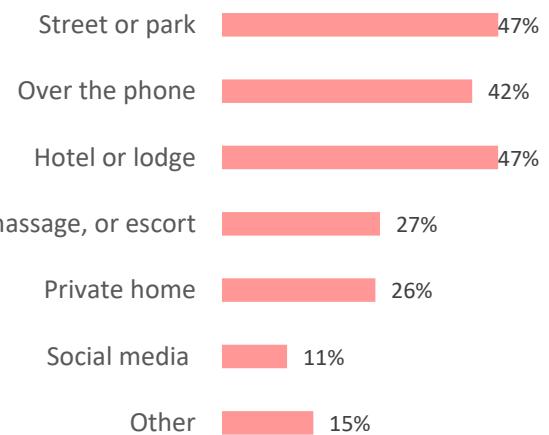
**Non-Paying Partners (NPP):** A NPP is a sexual partner who does not pay the FSW/SEC for sex, for example, a spouse or boyfriend. Over two-thirds (69%) of FSW/SEC had sex with an NPP in the last 12 months. About three quarters (72%) of FSW/SEC reported to have used a condom at least once during the last three sex acts with a NPP.

## Sex Work Characteristics



On average, FSW/SEC had started selling sex three years ago. Four out of five FSW/SEC saw sex work as their main income.

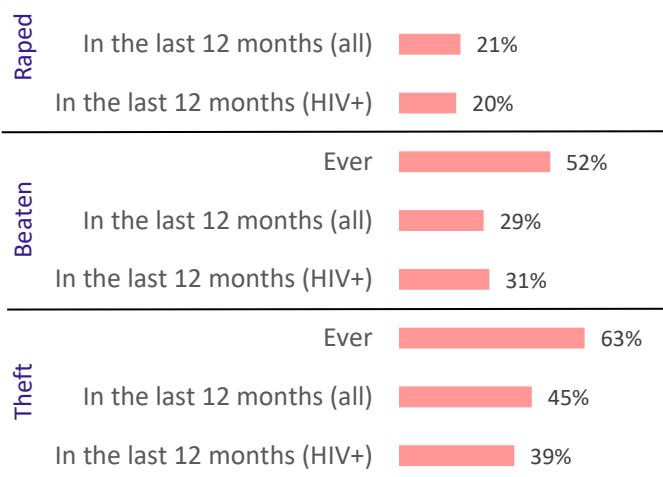
## Where Sex Workers Meet Clients †



Most FSW/SEC met their clients at hotels, lodges, on the streets, in parks, or over the phone.

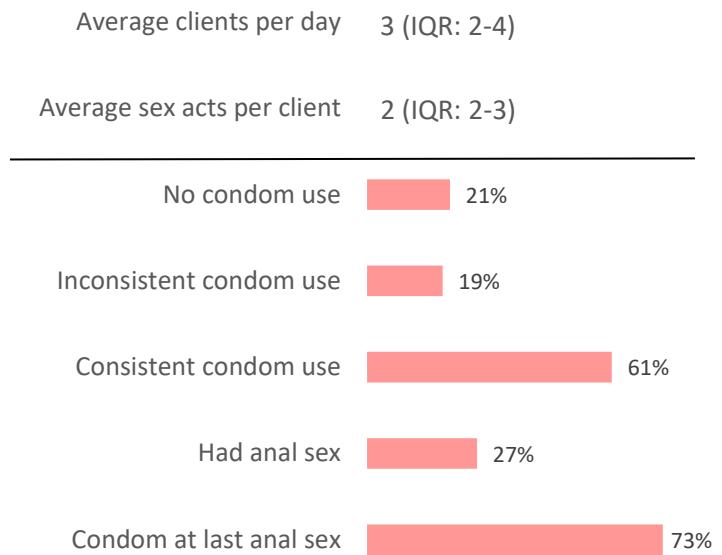
† More than one response could be selected.

## Experienced Violence



About two in five FSW/SEC reported ever having been raped, one-fifth were raped in the past 12 months. More than half had ever been beaten. Theft was reported frequently.

## Sex Acts & Condom Use



On average, FSW/SEC reported three clients per day and two sex acts with each client; one in five did not use condoms in last sex encounter. Over a quarter ever had anal sex with a client; three in four used condoms during the last act of anal sex.

# Crane 3 Survey Summary: Care and Treatment

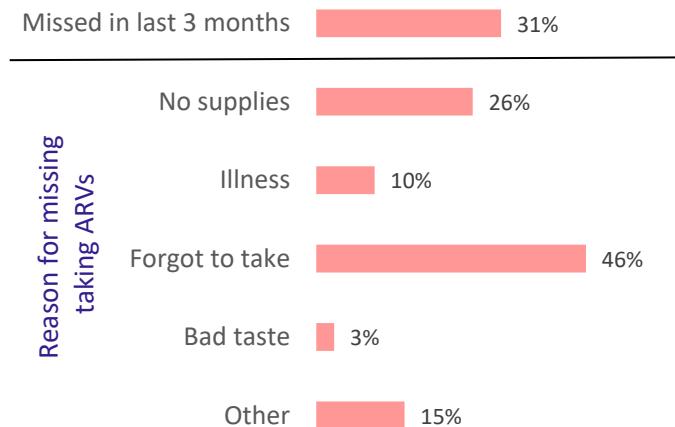
## Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Arua, Uganda 2022

**Viral load testing:** Among FSW/SEC aware of their HIV positive status, 53% stated that their VL had been measured in the preceding 12 months. Of these, 64% had received and understood their result.

**U=U:** More than half (56%) of FSW/SEC living with HIV in Arua had heard about *Undetectable=Untransmittable*. After learning the meaning of U=U, about half (49%) stated that they believed U=U was true.

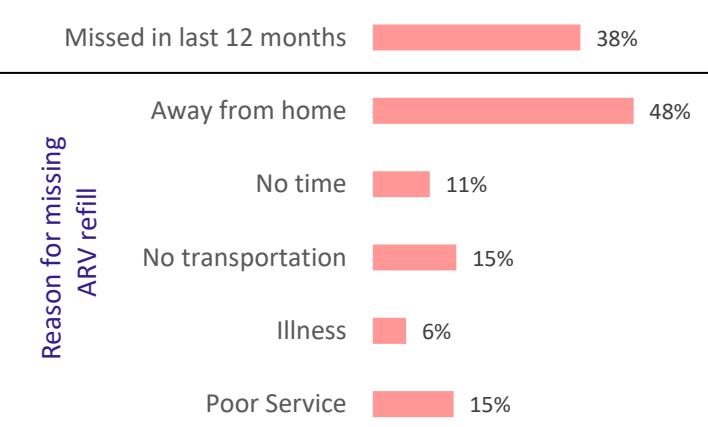
**Food security:** Nearly three in five (57%) of FSW/SEC living with HIV reported they do not usually have enough food.

### Missed ARV Dose(s)



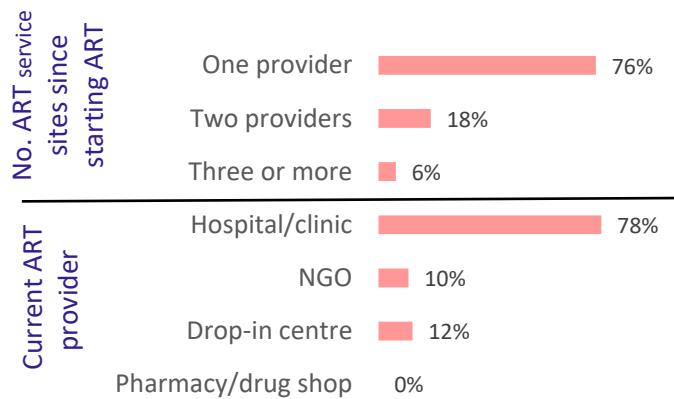
About one-third of FSW/SEC on ART missed taking their ARVs in the last 3 months; the most frequent reason was forgetfulness.

### Missed ARV Refill



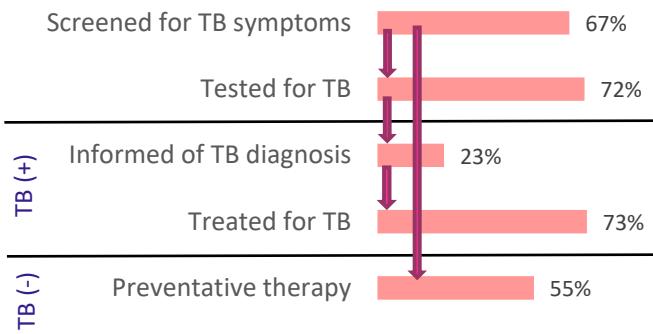
More than one-third of FSW/SEC on ART missed refilling their ARVs in the preceding 12 months, mostly due to being away from home.

### Select ART Characteristics



Among FSW/SEC on ART, one-quarter had switched ART service sites at least once. More than three-quarters received ART from a hospital or clinic.

### Tuberculosis (TB) Among FSW/SEC Living with HIV



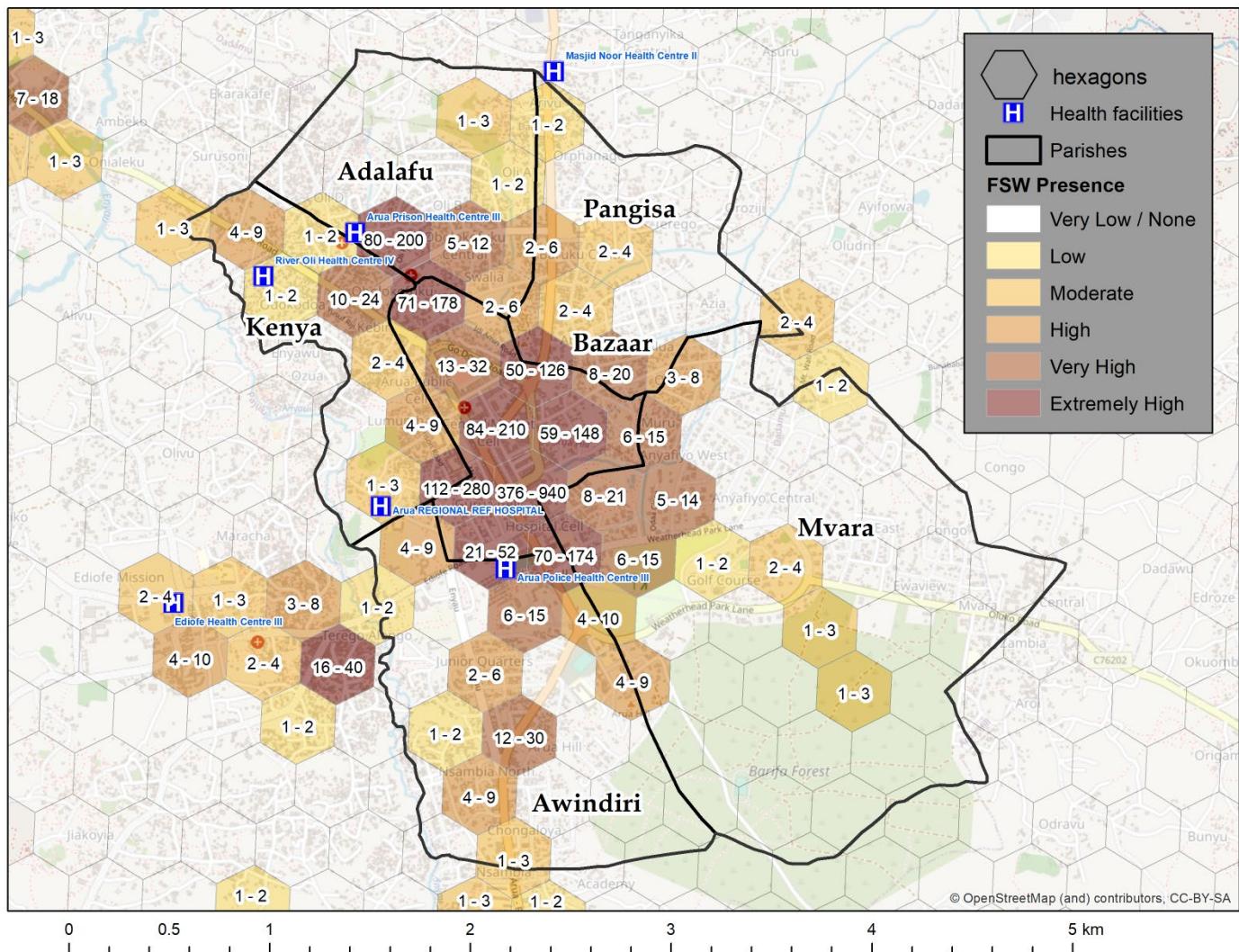
Among FSW/SEC living with HIV, about two-thirds were screened for TB symptoms at first HIV-positive result; out of which, 7 in 10 were tested for TB. Of these, more than 1 in 5 received a TB diagnosis. Among those diagnosed with active TB, three-quarters received treatment. Half of TB negatives received TB preventive treatment.

# Crane 3 Survey Summary: Sex Work Distribution in Arua

## Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children, Arua, Uganda 2022

Arua includes 6 parishes, and coloring in the map below indicates where sex work is more common: Dark areas indicate areas with a high presence of FSW/SEC and white areas indicate no to very low presence of FSW/SEC. Range values shown indicate crude estimates about the possible number of FSW/SEC in each area over time, also accounting for multiple sex work locations for each FSW/SEC. Only publicly accessible sex work locations were asked about, such as bars, lodges, intersections, etc. The parish of Bazaar had the highest presence of FSW/SEC.

**Figure 1.** Distribution of sex work in Arua, 2022.



The **Crane Survey** is a collaboration of Makerere University/School of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Ministry of Health.

**Funding:** This survey has been supported by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the CDC under the terms of #GH002127.

**Disclaimer:** The mark "CDC" is owned by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS), is used with permission and is not an endorsement by HHS or CDC. The findings and conclusions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the funding agencies.

**Version Date:** 8-May-2023.