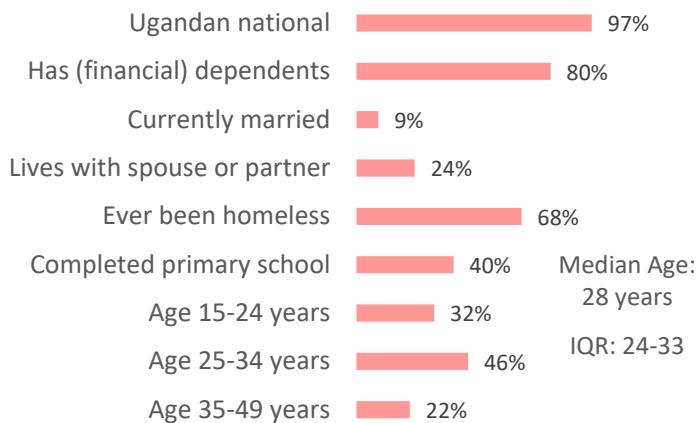


Crane 3 Survey Summary – Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Mbarara, Uganda 2022

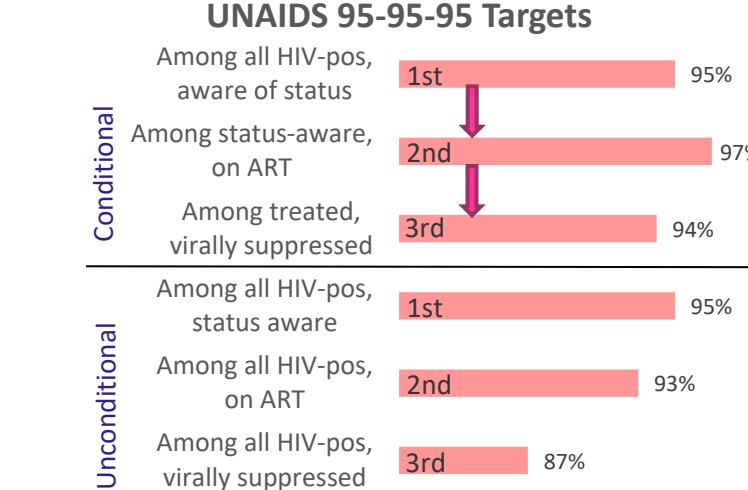


Survey methods. This respondent-driven sampling survey took place from March to June 2022 using a single survey office in Mbarara. Enrolled female sex workers (FSW, 18-49 years) and sexually exploited children (SEC, 15-17 years) resided in Mbarara and reported selling sex to men in the last 6 months. SEC were referred to social protection services by trained survey counselors and linkage followed up by programme staff. 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 607 participants; estimates are weighted unless stated otherwise. Note: Interquartile range (IQR) refers to the middle half of the ranked values.

Demographics

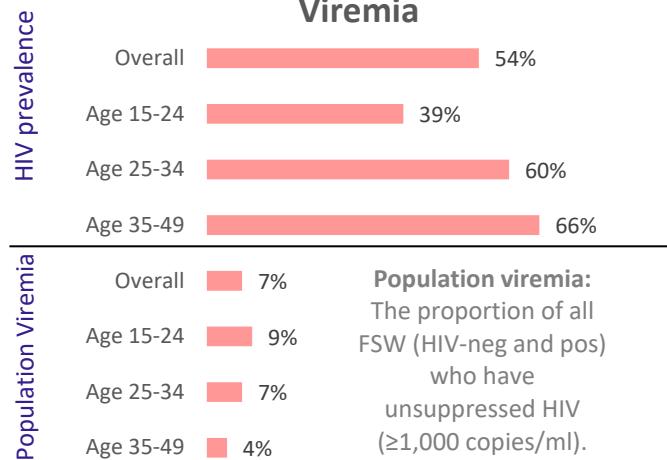


On average FSW/SEC were 28 years old; one third were 15-24 years old. Less than half had completed primary school, two-thirds reported being homeless at some point in their lives, eight out of ten had financial dependents. Nearly all were Ugandan nationals.



HIV status awareness and treatment uptake were based on self-report with adjustment for viral suppression. Most FSW/SEC living with HIV (FSWLHIV) knew about their status and were virally suppressed.

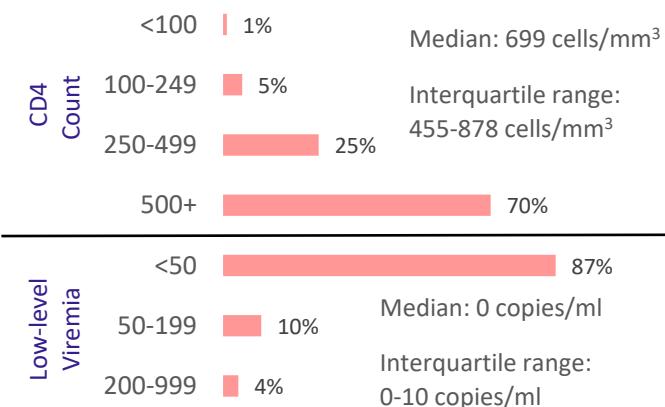
HIV Prevalence and Population Viremia



Population viremia:
The proportion of all FSW (HIV-neg and pos) who have unsuppressed HIV ($\geq 1,000$ copies/ml).

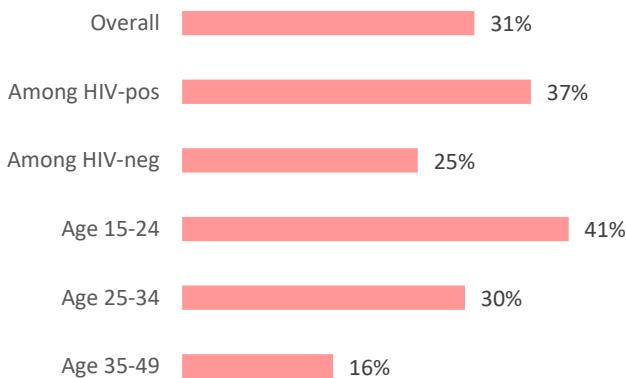
Over half of FSW/SEC were living with HIV. HIV prevalence was highest among 35-49-year-olds. Thanks to availability of treatment the population prevalence of viremia among all FSW/SEC (HIV-neg and HIV-pos) is substantially lower.

CD4 Count & Low-level Viremia Distribution



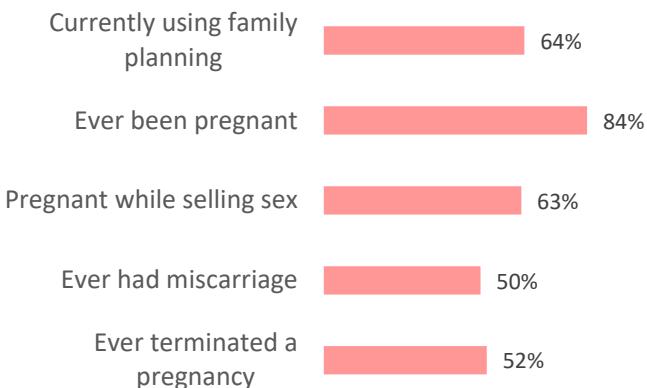
Among FSWLHIV, seven in ten had CD4 counts of 500 cells/mm³ or more, suggesting good immune status. Among virally suppressed FSW/SEC (<1000 copies/ml), most had viral loads less than 50 copies.

HPV Prevalence



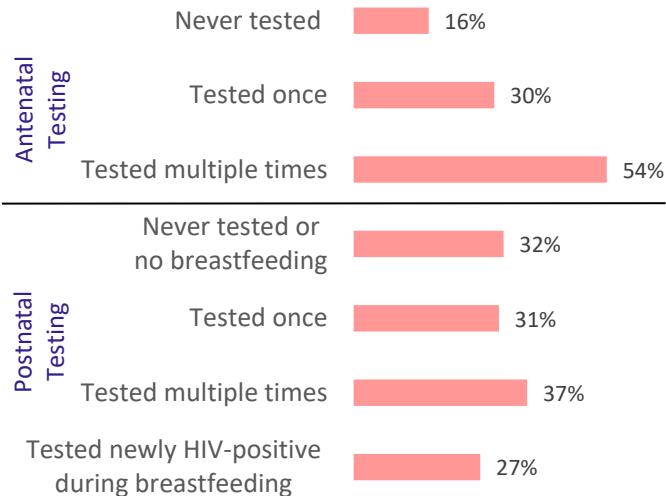
About 2 in 5 of FSWLHIV had HPV/HIV co-infection putting them at risk for developing cervical cancer. HPV was more common among HIV positives and among 15–24-year-olds.

Maternal Health: Pregnancy



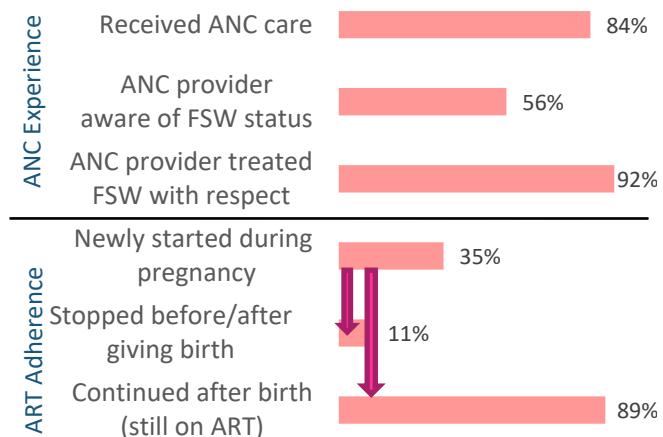
About two-thirds reported using family planning. Most had been pregnant in the past and two-thirds had sold sex while pregnant. About half reported having had a miscarriage and terminating a pregnancy.

Maternal Health: Ante- and Postnatal HIV Testing



One in six FSW/SEC were not tested while pregnant, but more than a half had multiple antenatal HIV tests. One in three never tested after giving birth and about one in four reported newly testing HIV-positive after giving birth.

Maternal Health: Antenatal Care (ANC) and ART

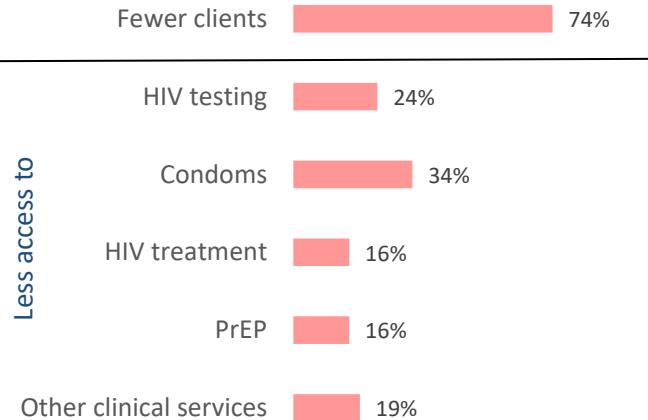


While pregnant, most FSW/SEC received ANC, and nearly all reported being treated with respect by the provider. Among those living with HIV and newly starting ART during pregnancy, most continued ART after giving birth.

Population size estimate: Using this survey and two separate rounds of sampling at hotspots (three source capture recapture) we estimated the Mbarara FSW/SEC population size at 2,600 or 2% of the adult female population (95% credible interval: 770-11,870).

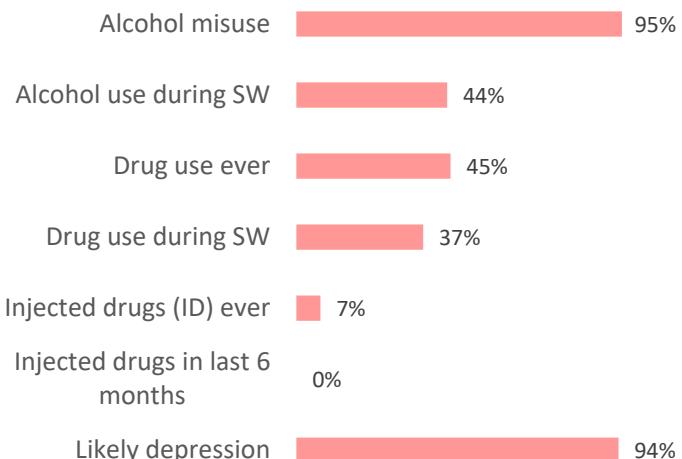
Pediatric HIV prevalence: The survey also sampled children of enrolled FSW/SEC. Out of 64 eligible children aged 0-17 years, 53 (83%) were tested for HIV. Of these, 4 (8%) tested HIV-positive (unweighted).

COVID-19 Impact



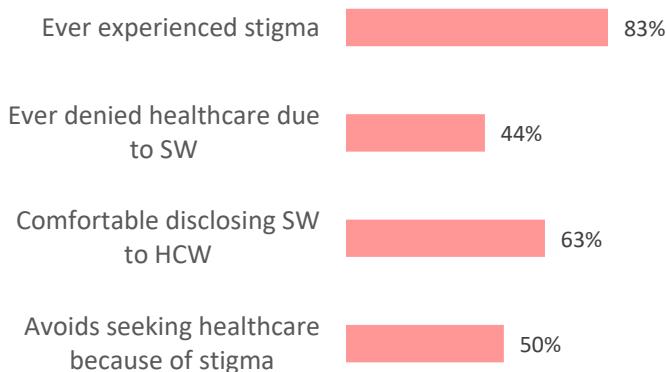
About three-quarter of FSW/SEC had fewer clients due to COVID-19. One-quarter had reduced access to HIV testing and more than a third reported decreased access to condoms.

Alcohol, Drug Use, Depression



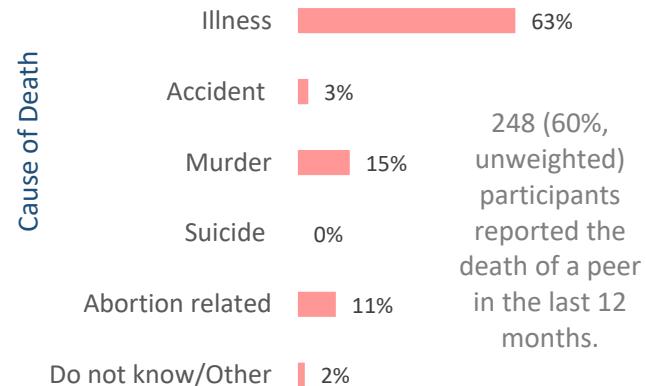
Nearly all of FSW/SEC screened positive for alcohol misuse, and most were likely experiencing depression. Almost half reported using alcohol or drugs during sex work, and 1 in 15 reported ever injecting drugs.

Sex Work (SW) Related Stigma



Most FSW/SEC reported experiencing stigma in some form related to their SW. Less than half had been denied healthcare because of their SW, and half avoided healthcare because of stigma. Two-thirds felt comfortable disclosing their SW to healthcare workers.

Mortality among Peers



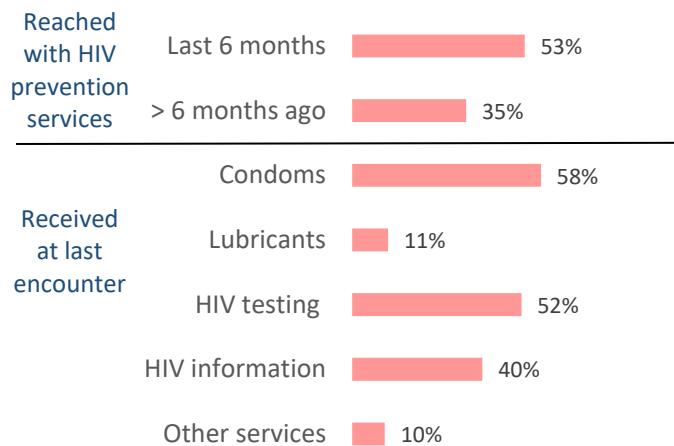
About 3 in 5 FSW/SEC reported deaths among their known peers. "Illness" accounted for two-thirds of reported deaths followed by murders and abortion-related deaths. Fatal accidents and -suicides were rare.

Crane 3 Survey Summary: HIV Prevention

Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Mbarara, Uganda 2022

Non-Paying Partners (NPP): An NPP is a sexual partner who does not pay for sex, for example, a spouse or boyfriend. Over half (56%) of FSW/SEC had sex with an NPP in the last 12 months. Four in ten (40%) of FSW/SEC reported their last NPP was living with HIV, and about two-thirds (58%) reported having used a condom at least once during the last three sex acts with an NPP. About half (51%) of FSW/SEC reported that their HIV status was known to their most recent NPP.

Outreach Services



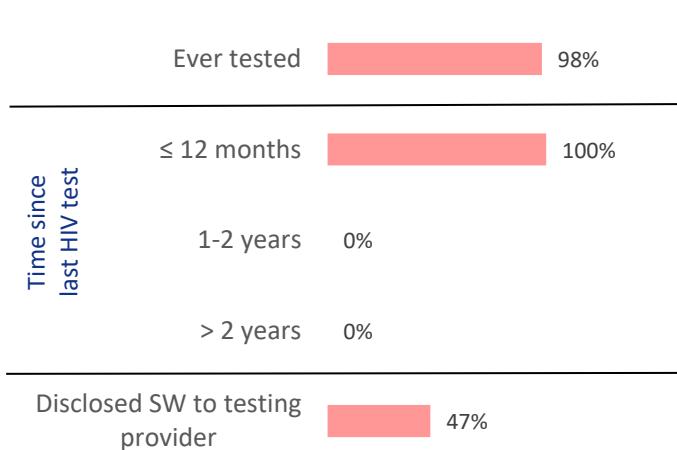
Nine out of ten FSW/SEC had been reached with outreach services, about half within the last six months. Condoms and HIV testing were most frequently received, followed by HIV information and lubricants.

Reason for Not Testing for HIV in the Last 12 months



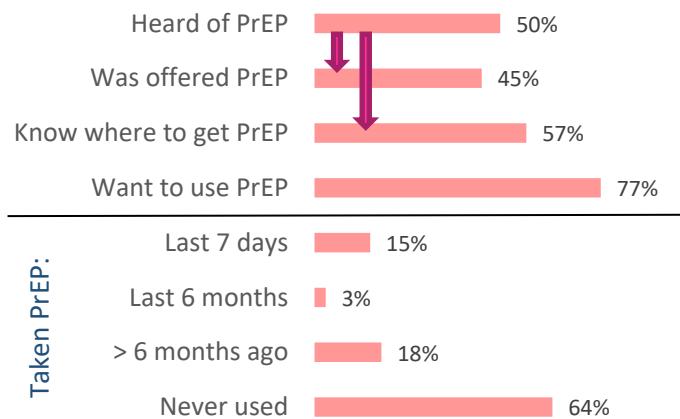
Of FSW/SEC who were not aware of their positive HIV status and had not tested in the past 12 months, over half did not feel at risk. Other reasons included fear of testing positive or other people learning their result.

HIV Testing



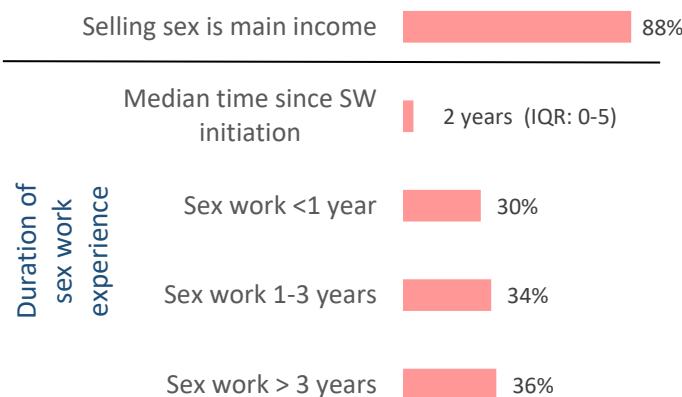
Among FSW/SEC surveyed who tested HIV-negative, almost all had been tested for HIV, of those, all had tested in the last 12 months. Less than half of FSW/SEC disclosed their sex work (SW) to their testing provider.

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)



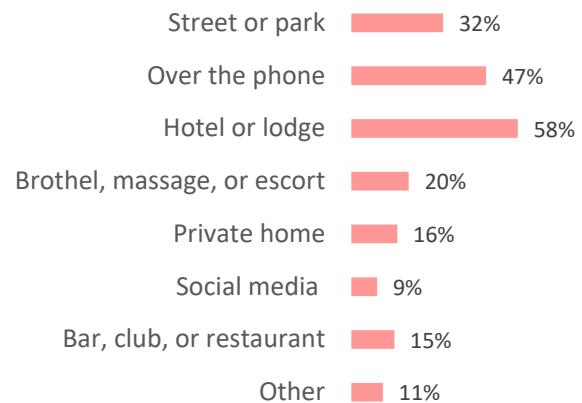
Half of the FSW/SEC had heard of PrEP; of these, less than half were offered PrEP, but the majority of HIV-FSW/SEC reported wanting PrEP. One in seven had used PrEP in the last 7 days and almost two-thirds had never used PrEP.

Sex Work Characteristics



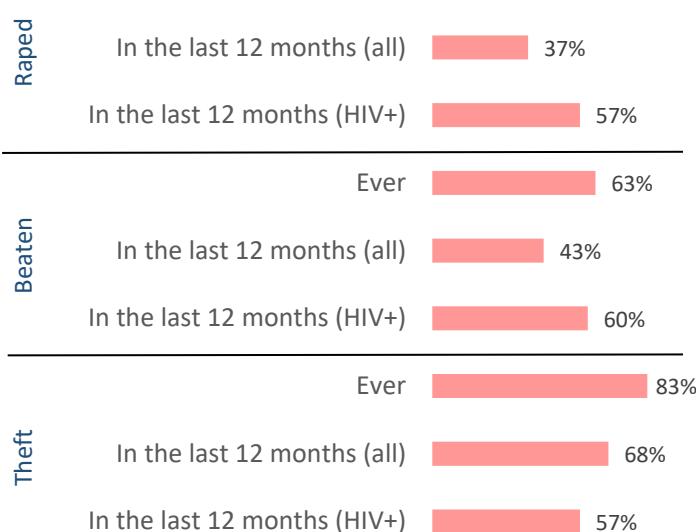
Nearly all FSW/SEC saw sex work as their main income. On average, FSW/SEC started selling sex two years ago and two-thirds began SW within the last three years.

Where Sex Workers Meet Clients



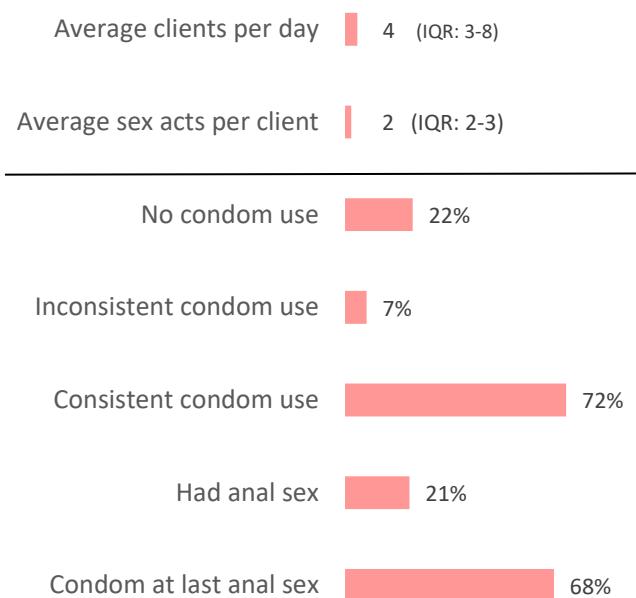
More than half of FSW/SEC met their clients at hotels or lodges, one-third met clients on the street, in parks, massage places, as escorts or in bars, and about half met clients over the phone.

Experienced Violence



About half of the FSW/SEC have ever been raped, over a third were raped in the last 12 months. Almost two-thirds had ever been beaten, two in five were beaten in the last 12 months. Theft was reported frequently.

Sex Acts & Condom Use



On average, FSW/SEC reported four clients per day and two sex acts with each client. Condoms were used most of the time. One-fifth reported anal sex with clients; condoms were used for two-thirds of anal sex acts.

Crane 3 Survey Summary: Care and Treatment

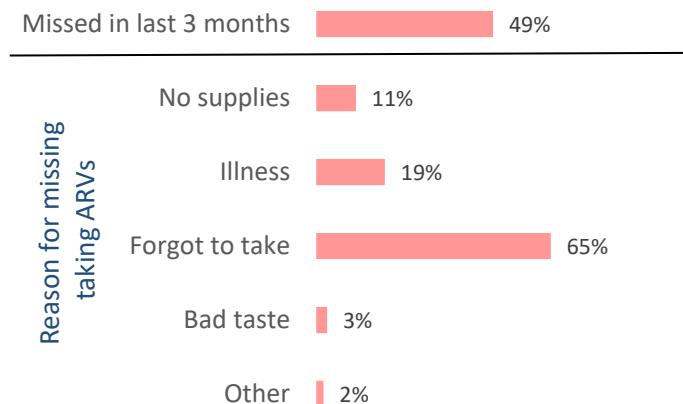
Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children in Mbarara, Uganda 2022

Viral load (VL) testing: Among HIV-positive FSW/SEC aware of their HIV status, two-thirds (66%) stated that their VL had been measured in the previous 12 months. Of these, 59% had received and understood their result.

U=U: One-third (33%) of FSW/SEC living with HIV in Jinja had heard about *Undetectable=Untransmittable*. After learning the meaning of U=U, nearly two thirds (57%) stated that they believed U=U was true.

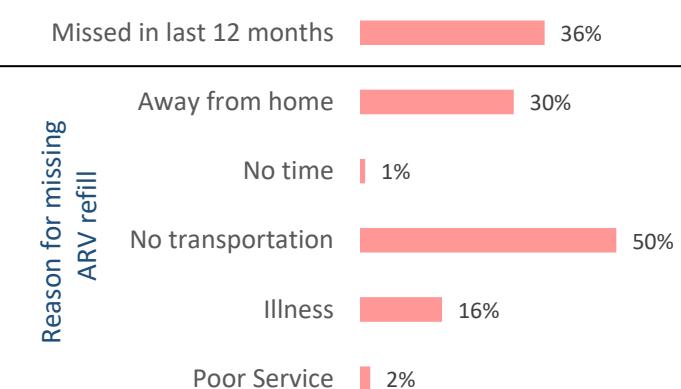
Food security: Of FSW/SEC living with HIV and on ART, two-thirds (68%) reported not having enough food.

Missed ARV Dose(s)



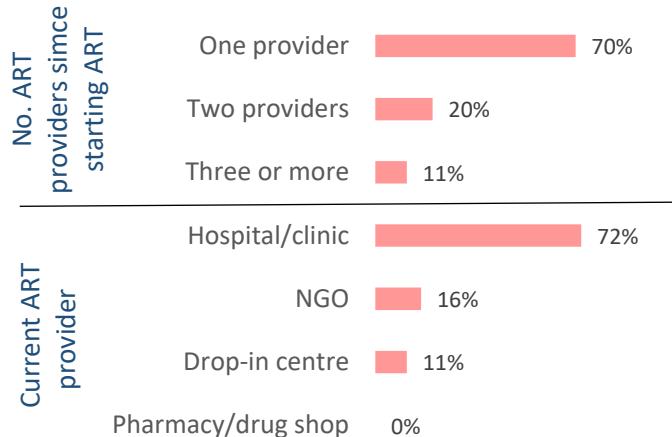
About half of FSW/SEC on ART missed taking their ARVs in the last 3 months; the most frequent reasons included forgetfulness and illness.

Missed ARV Refill



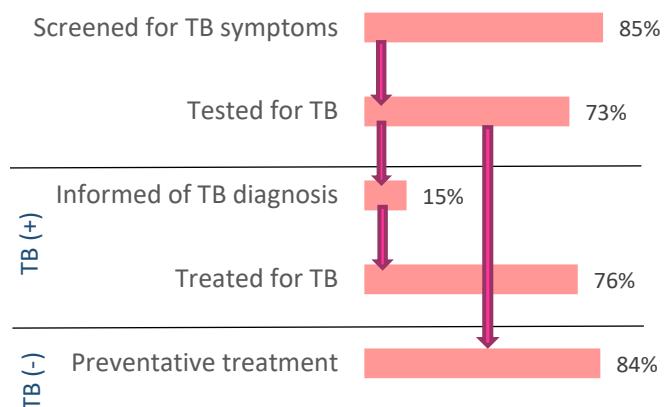
Over one-third of FSW/SEC on ART missed refilling their ARVs in the last 12 months, mostly due to being away from home or lack of transportation.

Select ART Characteristics



Among FSW/SEC on ART, one-third had switched ART providers at least once. Most received ART from hospitals and clinics or NGOs.

Tuberculosis (TB) Among HIV Positive FSW/SEC

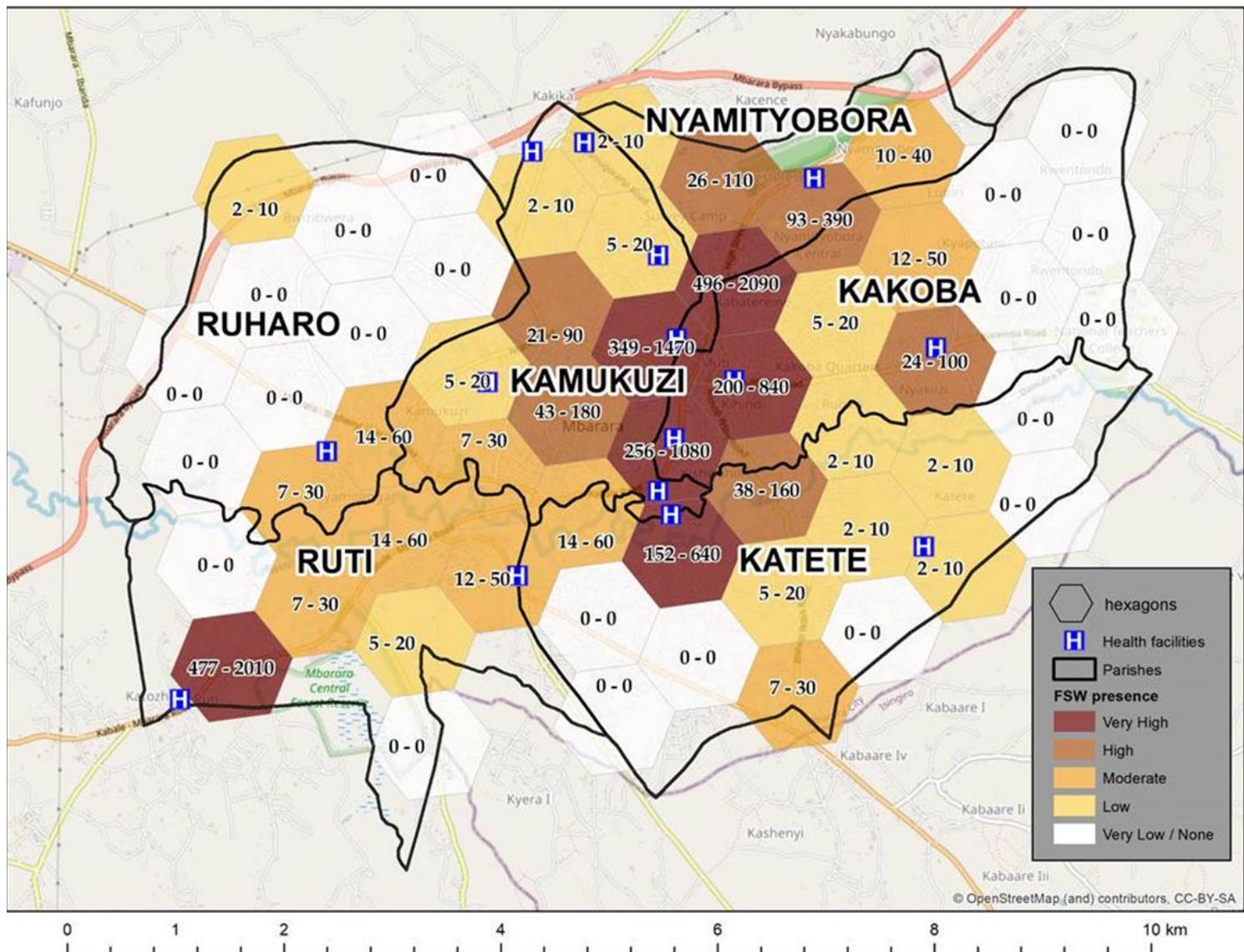


Among FSW/SEC living with HIV, most were screened for TB symptoms and tested for TB as needed at time of diagnosis. Three in four who were diagnosed with TB received TB treatment; most of those who tested TB-negative received preventive treatment.

Crane 3 Survey Summary: Distribution of Sex Work Female Sex Workers and Sexually Exploited Children, Mbarara, Uganda 2022

Mbarara includes six parishes and below coloring 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.

Figure 1. Distribution of sex work in Mbarara, 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.

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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.

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