

KYAKA II REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

Phase 51 Distribution Report



DATE: 20TH TO 21ST JANUARY, 2026

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Project: Lifewater Household Water Filtration Systems

Location: Kaborogota Zone, Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, Uganda

Implementing Partner: Watchmen International Uganda – Lifewater Project

Distribution Dates: 20–21 January 2026

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Access to safe drinking water at household level remains one of the most cost-effective public health interventions in refugee settings.

Background and Context

Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, located in Kyegegwa District, is one of Uganda’s largest and most protracted refugee-hosting settlements. It accommodates a diverse refugee population mainly from the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda, and Somalia. Like many long-term refugee settings, Kyaka II continues to experience Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) challenges.



Happy beneficiary

While international standards recommend a minimum of 20 liters of water per person per day (l/p/d), many zones in Kyaka II receive as little as 10.9 l/p/d.

Kaborogota Zone which houses approximately 5,197 individuals, is particularly vulnerable. The area is surrounded by open water sources that are inherently unsafe, yet they have become the primary fallback for families.

Recent prolonged dry spells have left many taps and boreholes completely dry. Furthermore, the water supplied by the some partners is vastly inadequate to meet the surging population's needs.

With the recent reduction in humanitarian funding and the subsequent exit of several NGOs from the camp, the gap in WASH services has widened, leaving the community in a state of heightened risk for waterborne diseases like cholera and typhoid.



Long lines on dry water source

“ When water systems fail, households do not stop drinking water — they turn to unsafe sources.

Project Overview

In response to the persistent gap in access to safe drinking water, Watchmen International Uganda Limited, through the Lifewater Project, implemented a targeted distribution of 203 Lifewater household filtration systems in Kaborogota Zone, Kyaka II Refugee Settlement.

The primary objective of the distribution was to:

- Reduce reliance on unsafe open water sources
- Improve household-level water quality
- Reduce the incidence of water-related illnesses
- Restore dignity and resilience among refugee households facing prolonged WASH stress.

According to the UNHCR Global Distribution Tool (GDT) verification data, this intervention will directly serve approximately 1,237 individuals, ensuring sustained access to safe drinking water at household level.

Beneficiary Selection Criterion

Beneficiary selection was conducted by Nsamizi, the UNHCR WASH implementing partner, through established Village Health Team (VHT) structures. The selection prioritised: - Households relying on unsafe or unprotected water sources - Families affected by intermittent or non-functional taps and boreholes - Vulnerable households with children, elderly persons, and caregivers UNHCR carried out final verification of beneficiary lists using the Global Distribution Tool (GDT).

This process eliminated:

Individuals not officially allocated to Kyaka II Refugee Settlement

Households that had previously received similar assistance

This rigorous verification ensured transparency, accountability, and avoidance of duplication of aid.



Training of beneficiaries

Distribution Process and Key Activities

The distribution was conducted over two days (20–21 January 2026) in close collaboration with: - UNHCR - Nsamizi Lifewater Core Team - Africa Youth Award (AYA) members.

Day One – Mass Distribution

The first day recorded the highest turnout of beneficiaries. This strong attendance reflected the acute need within the community, especially in a context where reduced funding has led to many NGOs scaling down or closing WASH activities. Many households expressed deep concern about their daily struggle to access safe water.

Key activities included:

- Beneficiary verification using the GDT system
- Household orientation on safe water handling
- Practical demonstrations on installation, use, and maintenance of the Lifewater filtration systems
- Issuance of filtration systems to verified households

Day Two – Follow-up and Field Observations

The second day focused on:

- Home visits to selected beneficiaries
- Observation of household water storage practices
- Visits to surrounding water sources used by the community.

These visits provided critical insights into the harsh realities faced by households relying on open water sources, especially during dry periods.



The Lifewater core team and AYA team



Home visit



“Extending Health to Three Generations: Antionette’s Story”



Happy beneficiaries

Antionette Dzidza is a widow, the mother of nine, and a grandmother to twenty-one grandchildren, most of whom live with her. She is among the beneficiaries of the January 2026 Lifewater distribution in the Kaborogota Zone. During a home visit, the Lifewater team found Antionette working in her garden, trying to gather whatever little food she could find for her grandchildren.

She shared that her family frequently drinks untreated water from open sources because the borehole is very far and sometimes not functional. This exposes them to illnesses.

With the limited availability of medication at local health facilities, caring for her grandchildren has become increasingly challenging.

Water-related illnesses have become a constant presence in her household.

We walked with one of her grandsons, Joseph, to their primary water source—a stagnant, open pond. Looking at the murky water, it was clear why the children were perpetually ill.

By providing Antoinette with a Lifewater filtration system, we didn't just give her a bucket and a filter; we extended a lifeline of health to 33 people.

For Antoinette, this filter means fewer trips to an under-stocked clinic and more days where her grandchildren can simply be children, free from the pains of waterborne illness.

This is an extension of health to her and her grandchildren, through reduction in preventable illness, and a restoration of hope to a household carrying the weight of three generations.

“There is usually one grand child who is not well at anyone time,” she said quietly.





Challenges encountered

The distribution highlighted significant and growing challenges within the WASH sector in Kyaka II:

- Reduced humanitarian funding has widened the WASH service gap
- Many NGOs have scaled down or withdrawn from camp operations
- Increased reliance on unsafe water sources during dry spells

These realities underscore the importance of household-level water treatment solutions as a sustainable and dignified response in protracted refugee settings.



Happy beneficiary

Conclusion

The January 2026 Lifewater filtration system distribution in Kaborogota Zone demonstrates the critical impact of targeted WASH interventions in refugee settlements facing prolonged resource constraints.

By enabling households to safely treat their own drinking water, this intervention directly contributes to improved health outcomes, reduced disease burden, and strengthened community resilience.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Lifewater UK and the WaterWorks Program for their continued and timely support, especially during a period when WASH needs are rising and resources are declining.

We also appreciate the invaluable collaboration of UNHCR, Nsamizi, Africa Youth Award (AYA) Alumni, and all community structures involved in ensuring a transparent, dignified, and successful distribution.



Happy beneficiaries

Together, we are making clean and safe drinking water a reality for refugee families in need.