



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

**BREAKING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST PWDS IN KABALE DISTRICT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Disability Sign World (DSW) is excited to present our report, which covers our journey since our establishment in 2019. Within this report, you will gain insight into how DSW has positively impacted families, children, and individuals' perspectives on disability-related issues within their local communities. We take great pride in collaborating with many of you, and we are pleased to share the positive contributions that have been made within our diverse communities to promote inclusion.

WORD FROM THE SECRETARY



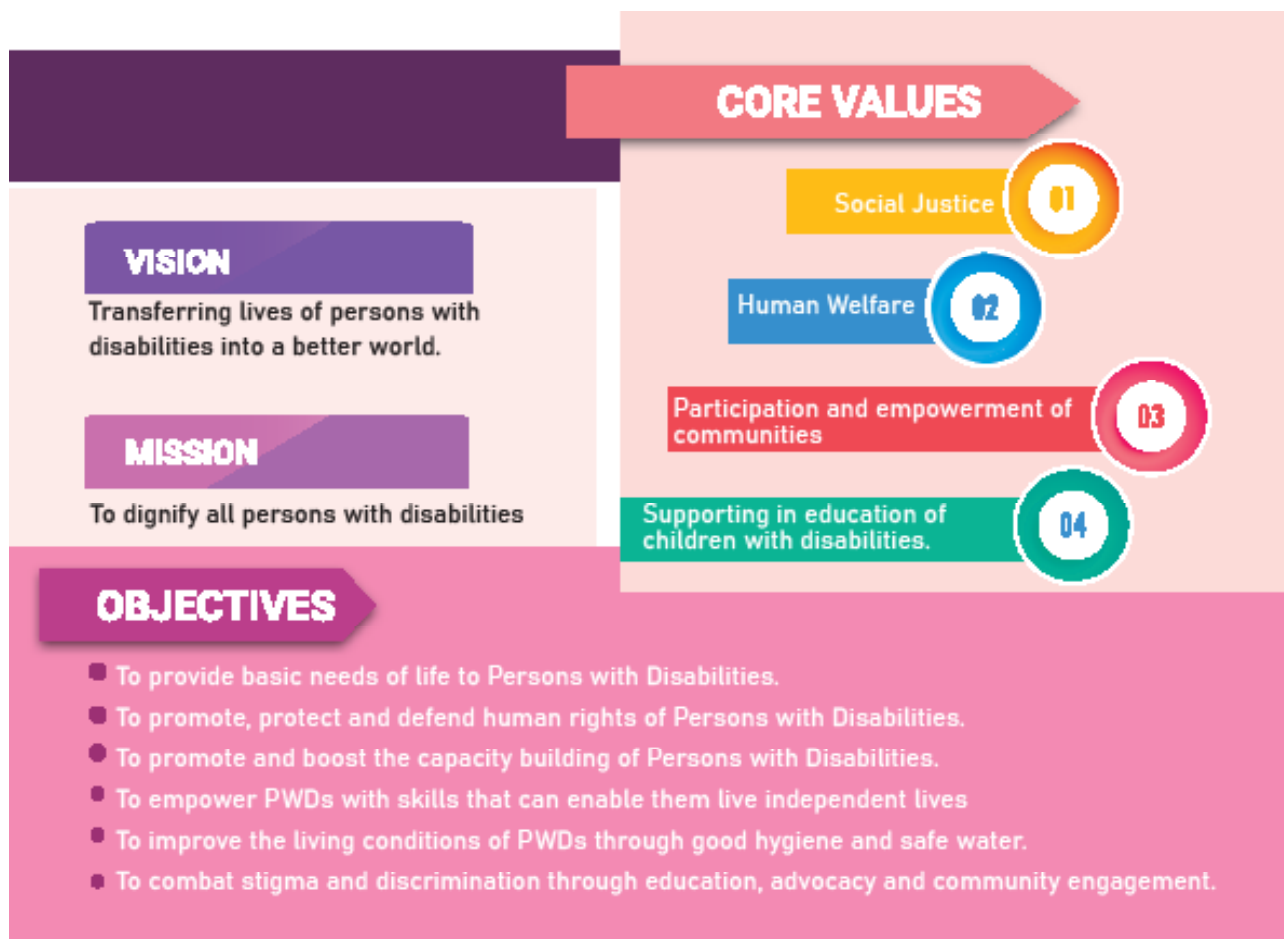
Many children with disabilities have been deprived of opportunities to attend school, access medical services, and participate in family or community activities. I want to emphasize that you have every right to these resources, and I encourage you not to lose hope. DSW is committed to accompanying you on this journey, advocating for your rights, and being your voice.

BACKGROUND

Disability Sign World (DSW) is non-profit organization working with Persons with Disabilities in Kabale District South western Uganda. It was started in 2019 and we are excited to present our 2021 report, which covers our journey since our establishment. Within this report, you will gain insight into how DSW has penetrated through thick reaching out to families of Children with disabilities who have been hidden, isolated and discriminated from the rest of the family and community members due to the nature of their disabilities.

Persistent discrimination against and exclusion of people with disabilities, in particular Children with disabilities has increased their vulnerability and also barriers to accessing health, educational services hence left behind in policy-planning, programme development, service delivery and data collection.

People with disabilities face stigma and discrimination in families and communities, lack transport to health-care facilities and are faced with poor attitudes of health workers while seeking health care and in other public places.



Alvin and his grand parents who stay with him.

ORGANISATION ACTIVITIES

- Training and sensitization.
- Community meetings.
- Home visits.
- Education and skills training.
- Household support with income generating activities.
- Support with assistive devices.
- Promoting hygiene.

SENSITIZATION MEETINGS

We held small meetings with community leaders and guardians of children with disabilities like any other organized team. These gatherings served to deepen our engagement within their communities and provided valuable guidance on how to collaborate effectively. This approach not only enabled us to enroll more children in the organization but also helped us align our efforts with the set goals.



EDUCATION

Through our regular home visits, we've discovered a concerning trend, many parents are hesitant to enroll their children with disabilities in school, regardless of the nature of their condition. Recognizing the importance of education for all children, we embarked on a mission to change this mindset. We began encouraging parents and guardians of children with disabilities to consider sending them to nearby schools, emphasizing the value of education for their development and future opportunities.

Our efforts yielded positive responses from some parents who had previously believed that having a disability meant exclusion from educational settings. By fostering awareness and advocating for inclusive education, we aim to empower children with disabilities to access the same educational opportunities as their peers, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.



Support to our children with scholastic materials.

Patience Ayebare (16 years), she was born normal, She is a double orphan staying with her grandmother in Nyabushabi village, Kyanamira subcounty. At 9 years while in school she started suffering from chest pain, got paralyzed and finally her legs couldn't move anymore. She dropped out of school up to date. We identified her in 2021 and since then we have been engaging her in different conversations and activities. For example doing craft work however, her challenge has been buying materials for such work. Patience equally loves plaiting hair and with this coming out patient project, we are going to train her more in that field so that she can sustain herself financially after a full year of engagement.



Patience our newly enrolled beneficiary from Nyabushabi.

Ayebare Keneth 15 years can't talk well but can hear, walk and do little work at work when he wants. DSW took Keneth at school early 2021 and we have been supportive to keep him there. Previously, his parents had kept him home because they can't afford school fees and scholastic materials but we kept encouraging and supporting them so that he can also acquire quality inclusive Education. That is good. DSW's regular contact with the family has born a fruit. The new school uniform was also financed by DSW

Nevertheless, the progress of such children being enrolled in schools is hindered by the limited availability of special schools, such as those for the Deaf, physically handicapped and other forms of disabilities, particularly in the Southwestern region, and their high tuition fees, which many parents cannot afford.



Home visits to our beneficiaries

In September 2021, we were fortunate to have a volunteer from SES Germany, Mr. Siegbert Garisch, who shared his expertise in disability-related matters. His three-weeks training program covered various programs and management criteria, significantly enhancing our organization's capabilities. We really appreciated this great opportunity that caused a positive impact in the works of our organization.



Training and field with our SES volunteer Mr Garisch.

Mobility support

We were able to acquire a wheelchair for Junior to facilitate his mobility, addressing a significant challenge he faced. Often, Junior found himself isolated at home while others attended church or school or engaged in activities outside. His mother struggled to accompany him due to his size and inability to be carried on her back. Recognizing the impact of this situation, we coordinated efforts to provide a wheelchair, which we delivered to his home in Omwirashaniro, Bugarama. This act brought immense joy and relief to Junior and his family, as it granted him the freedom he rightfully deserved, allowing him to participate more fully in daily life despite his disability.



Junior gets a wheelchair from DSW

LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY

In 2021, DSW became aware of John's situation. Upon visiting his home in Rwakashande Rubira, it became evident that their living conditions were substandard. John resided with his mother in a two-bedroom house with a leaking roof, presenting a challenging environment. Despite their hardships, they lacked the means to improve their situation. John attended Rubira Primary School, where he faced difficulties acquiring essential school supplies. Following his enrollment in our organization, routine home visits were conducted, similar to other families under our care.

During one such visit, heavy rain exposed the severity of their living conditions. As we sought shelter, it became apparent that their dwelling was not just leaking, but their belongings were also being soaked. This revelation spurred a sense of urgency and concern, prompting us to explore solutions to provide them with a safer living environment.

While DSW's resources were limited, advocacy efforts and outreach to various networks, including the Lions Club Kabale, garnered support. Through collaborative efforts and generous contributions, enough funds were raised to construct a new home for John and his family. This significant achievement brought immense joy to the family and garnered appreciation from the wider community, highlighting the positive impact of collective action in addressing pressing social needs.



Old house for John and his mother.

After



Newly constructed house for John and his mother.

WHAT WE INTEND TO DO

- Raise awareness on the existence of persons with Disabilities in their families and communities.
- To promote and encourage parents and guardians to enroll children with Disabilities for quality inclusive Education.

- To empower People with Disabilities through skilling and starting Income Generating Activities (IGAs)
- Improve hygiene of people with Disabilities through construction of water tanks to easily access clean water and massive sensitization on how to keep hygiene to guardians and parents in homes.
- To lobby and advocate for equal rights of People with Disabilities .
- Improving livelihood
- To mobilize for resource distribution to people with Disabilities.
- To raise esteem and restore lost hope for PWDs through routine home visits .
- Referrals



CHALLENGES

- Hard to reach areas which makes us incur a lot of costs to reach out to our **Beneficiaries**.
- Limited funds to meet the basic needs of people with disabilities.
- High expectations from people with Disabilities and their families.
- Limited disclosure on the cause of disability which limits our engagement.
- Limited Government financial support towards uplifting the lives of people with **Disabilities**.
- Lack of enough special schools for Children with Disabilities to attend and the few which are there are expensive for them.
- limited access to information.

- Bad weather with heavy rains that limit our field work.
- lack of wheelchairs for the physically handicaped



CONCLUSION

At Disability Sign World, we are dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities. However, our progress is impeded by financial limitations. Therefore, we extend an invitation to all well-wishers, funders, and governmental bodies to join us in supporting this cause.

To parents and guardians of children with disabilities: We understand the multifaceted challenges you face, including stigma, depression, financial hardships, and family issues. Please do not lose hope; your support is invaluable, and it's crucial to remember that disabilities are not the fault of the children.

To local, political, church, and community leaders: Let us unite to advocate for the rights, lobby for change, and raise awareness about the existence of people with disabilities. Many individuals within our communities struggle due to lack of representation. It's time to amplify their voices and enact meaningful change.







Keep following and sharing our stories on all our social media pages;

Twitter; @DisabilitySign | LinkedIn: Disability sign world

Facebook; Disability Sign World | Instagram; Disabilitysignworld

You tube; disabilitysignworld | Website; www.disabilitysignworld.org

Contact person; Sarah Atwebembere | Tel: 0703 227 125

Email; info@disabilitysignworld