



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022

**BUILDING BRIDGES TOWARDS  
INCLUSION THROUGH EMPOWERMENT  
AND FAMILY SUPPORT.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 2022 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.

Enhancing the lives of people with disabilities requires collective action, it's not a task for one person alone. It demands united efforts, teamwork, and a strong push to create meaningful impact within our communities. Let each of us embrace the responsibility of supporting and actively working towards inclusion.

At Disability Sign World, we aim to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities, but financial limitations hinder our progress. We invite all well-wishers, funders, and the government to join us in supporting this cause.

## APPRECIATION MESSAGE.

We are absolutely thrilled to recognize the incredible efforts of DSW in communities, even amidst the challenges we face while working with individuals with disabilities. Despite any obstacles, our dedication and passion drive us to find joy in our work. We warmly invite you to join us in our journey towards achieving our shared goals!



Dorcus

## SENSITIZATION MEETINGS.

We have conducted meetings for people with disabilities and their families. These sessions serve as a platform for sharing challenges, discussing plans, and addressing other related issues that can positively impact their lives. DSW was coming up with a new project called out patient care and so this served as an inception meeting prior the project. These meetings also involved engagement with local leaders, political figures at various levels, and other influential individuals who can enlighten, educate, and sensitize our audience, as many PWDs often lack awareness about their human rights and other essential matters.





**Gathering of Children with Disabilities, their parents and caregivers.**

### **THE OUTPATIENT CARE PROJECT.**

In 2022, UBU launched a new initiative aimed at assisting selected families, (a total of 8 families) were selected to always be visited on a monthly basis. This project focuses on providing household chore training, offering essential family support, and creating a supportive environment for Persons with Disabilities within these families and their surroundings. Through this project, we are actively restoring and strengthening connections between the general population and People with Disabilities thus promoting inclusion. Many people have gained a better understanding of how to coexist with, share meals, engage in activities, share laughter, and care for individuals with disabilities through our project, which involves frequent visits to their homes.





### Home visits to our beneficiaries.

## SKILLING

Our outpatient care project has had a profoundly positive impact on the families we visit regularly. We aspire to expand our reach to more families, provided we receive sufficient financial support, ensuring that this project benefits as many people as possible. We provide training in various skills and knowledge, such as hairdressing, crafts, and related activities. This training equips our beneficiaries with the abilities to create various items, enabling them to earn a livelihood despite their disabilities. For instance, we trained Patience in hairdressing and crafting small baskets, which has allowed her to earn a modest income to support both herself and her grandmother, with whom she resides.



### Skilling Patience in weaving and hair dressing.

Some children with disabilities may not have the opportunity to return to school, or it may not be a feasible option for them. However, by learning practical skills, they gain the independence necessary to lead fulfilling lives. This project has successfully reached out to various households, providing guidance to parents and children to prioritize attending school and obtaining quality inclusive education. In addition, we have established groups that have learned how to create washing soap using locally available materials and herbs. This cost-effective approach reduces the financial burden of purchasing soap daily, particularly given that many Persons with Disabilities live in poverty and face financial constraints.





**Empowering mothers of Children with Disabilities in making soap**

## EDUCATION

Some children with disabilities now have the opportunity to attend school thanks to our efforts, despite their parents initially neglecting them. We have supported parents by providing school materials and encouraging them to persevere with these children. As a result, there has been a small increase in the number of children with disabilities attending school. Nevertheless, this progress is hindered by the limited availability of special schools, such as those for the Deaf or physically handicapped, particularly in the Southwestern region, and their high tuition fees, which many parents cannot afford.







**Support with scholastic materials to Children with disabilities.**

## HOME VISITS

Through this project, we are actively restoring and strengthening connections between the general population and People with Disabilities, promoting inclusion. Many people have gained a better understanding of how to coexist with, share meals, engage in activities, share laughter, and care for individuals with disabilities through our project, which involves frequent visits to their homes.



**Home visits to our beneficiaries.**

Sunday David 15 years from Kitumba subcounty is physically handicapped. He is raised by a single mother who struggles so hard to put food on the table. Sunday has got some missing toes and always gets wounds under his feet. Her mother is unable to take him for medical check because of finances and they opt for local herbs which are not helping so much. Sunday is a very jolly boy and very creative. We chose him as one of our outpatient



beneficiary because he has big dreams regardless of his disability. He wishes to learn how to repair shoes, radios and later starts supporting his mother financially and buy some scholastic materials to his young brother. With this program, we shall get him a person to train him on what he wants to learn, take him for medical checkup, buy him special shoes and provide him with startup capital to start on his future goals. His mother welcomed this program because she had wanted him acquire such skills but she was still financially down. She has a lot of hope in his Son and promises to give his physical support where need be.



**Sunday David our Beneficiary from Kitumba.**

### **SPECIAL PACKAGES.**

Besides out patience care, we have also ensured that families of people with disabilities which are normally living in poverty now celebrate Easter and Christmas like everyone else, providing them with food packages on these significant days. Previously excluded from such celebrations, we aim to make these occasions meaningful for them by ensuring they have something to eat. This is done annually.



**Food distribution and other items to a mother of 3 children all with different disabilities.**



**Food distribution in Kitumba sub county.**



**DSW team with children and their caretakers in Omukibega Bugarama.**

### **ANIMAL PROJECT.**

How can we sustainably improve the economic situation of families with children with disabilities? This question is always on our minds and the exchange and thoughts around it have filled numerous conversations, emails and messages. I was driven by theoretical “value chains” and how they could be initiated and built up in rural Uganda. DSW asked the families what would be needed to make them economically better off, and the answers were spontaneous, honest and simple: We need Poultry, Rabbits, Piggery and Goat rearing so that we can set up a small animal farm. From the proceeds of selling the animals we can pay for what we need to pay for with money. So DSW and UBU e.V. put their heads together again and thought. The result is a concept of how this could be implemented without overburdening all those involved. The central role will be played by “expert advisors” whom DSW knows and who will advise and support the interested families.

The main purpose of this project was to empower children with Disabilities and their families. We also looked at these animals after reproducing to become a support system to the Child with a Disability and the family at large just in case a child gets sick, an animal can be sold to save a life or any other pressing need in the family.

It is a young and promising project which can bring about sustainability and financial growth in the families of Persons with Disabilities if animals keep healthy, reproduce and well cared for.





**Animals distributed in different homes of our beneficiaries.**

## **SUPPORT WITH ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

DSW was one of the key organizers behind the 2022 wheelchair distribution event conducted by Father's Heart Ministries in Kabale District.

The majority of our recipients received wheelchairs and other assistive mobility devices, significantly enhancing their ability to move comfortably. These programs play a pivotal role in assisting People with Disabilities, who might otherwise be unable to afford such items independently.

The director of the organization, Mr. Mugwanya Francis, is himself a wheelchair user and knows from his own experience that people with paralysis/ walking disabilities are second-class citizens without a wheelchair. They simply cannot participate in anything and are excluded, over 200 families received wheelchairs. For DSW beneficiaries who got wheelchairs, it was so hard to mobilize them since most of them do not have a mobile phone, this was done via the "mobilisers" who take messages by mobile phone and then inform the actual recipients of the message also on foot, or from mouth to mouth.



**Wheel chair distribution by Fathers heart Ministries in Kabale District.**



## BEDROOM ENVIRONMENT

From 2022 onwards, we have also taken steps to enhance the living conditions of some of our beneficiaries, particularly by improving their sleeping quarters. It has come to our attention that many children with disabilities sleep in less sanitary environments compared to other children within their households. We have engaged in conversations with parents and, when necessary, provided bedding, as exemplified with Moreen, Patience, Junior, and Patricia.



**Support with bedding to Tusiime Moreen Kitibya**

## SOCIAL TIME

DSW invites all families who are currently benefiting from DSW's work to a joint celebration. This wonderful get-together includes information sharing, food, games and fun. A feeling of belonging, mutual acceptance and solidarity emerges.

We transport these children with their parents or caretakers in minibuses and motorbikes (boda bodas) from their villages/settlements. This action alone has made many families travel to the big town Kabale for the first time in years.

The focus of all the day's activities is always on communicating with each other, experiencing something together and simply enjoying the time together.

On this very event DSW invites Speakers from different fields to come and talk to PWDs, give them word of encouragement and also educate them of different income generating activities to live independent lives.







## Get together party at Vienna Hotel Kabale

### 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.
- Lack of passionate staff to volunteer in the organization.
- Limited disclosure on the cause of disability which limits our engagement.
- Limited Government financial support towards uplifting the lives of people with Disabilities.



### CONCLUSION

To parents and guardians of children with disabilities: We understand the challenges you face, including stigma, depression, financial hardships, and family issues while raising these children. Please don't give up on them; they need your support more than you may realize, and it's not their fault that they have a disability.

To local, political, church, and community leaders: Let's unite to advocate for the rights, lobby for change, and raise awareness about the existence of people with disabilities. Many of them are struggling because they lack voices to speak up on their behalf.

**TOGETHER for MORE, APART for LESS.**

Home visit to the family of Kenneth, Joseph and Jackline all with different disabilities in













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