



DSW ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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INTRODUCTION

We are delighted to welcome you to this year's Annual Report. Throughout the reporting period, our organization has been deeply committed to serving our community, and we take great pride in the tremendous work accomplished by our dedicated team and partners.

This report highlights the wide range of activities we carried out, with a special focus on hygiene and sanitation. We recognize that hygiene is essential for everyone, but it holds even greater importance for persons with disabilities, as it directly affects their health, dignity, and overall well-being.

Through our collective efforts, we have continued to promote practices that ensure cleaner and safer environments, empowering individuals and families to live healthier lives. Together, we stand for good health and inclusive well-being for all.



MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM LEADER

As the driving force behind Disability Sign World (DSW), I am deeply inspired by the remarkable progress we have made in promoting the inclusion and empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). Our journey reflects dedication, resilience, and the belief that every individual deserves equal opportunities and respect.

I encourage everyone to openly discuss issues affecting PWDs, this is not a topic to be avoided or treated with shame. Inclusion is not an act of charity, but a recognition of fundamental human rights. Together, we can continue to create a society where all persons, regardless of ability, are valued, heard, and supported.

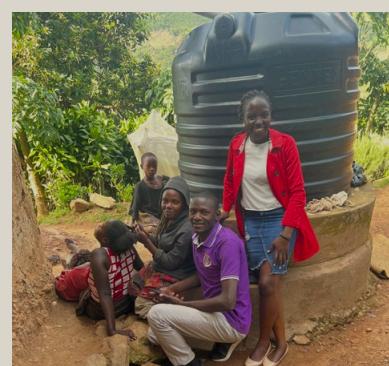
Sarah Atwebembere
Team Leader, Disability Sign World

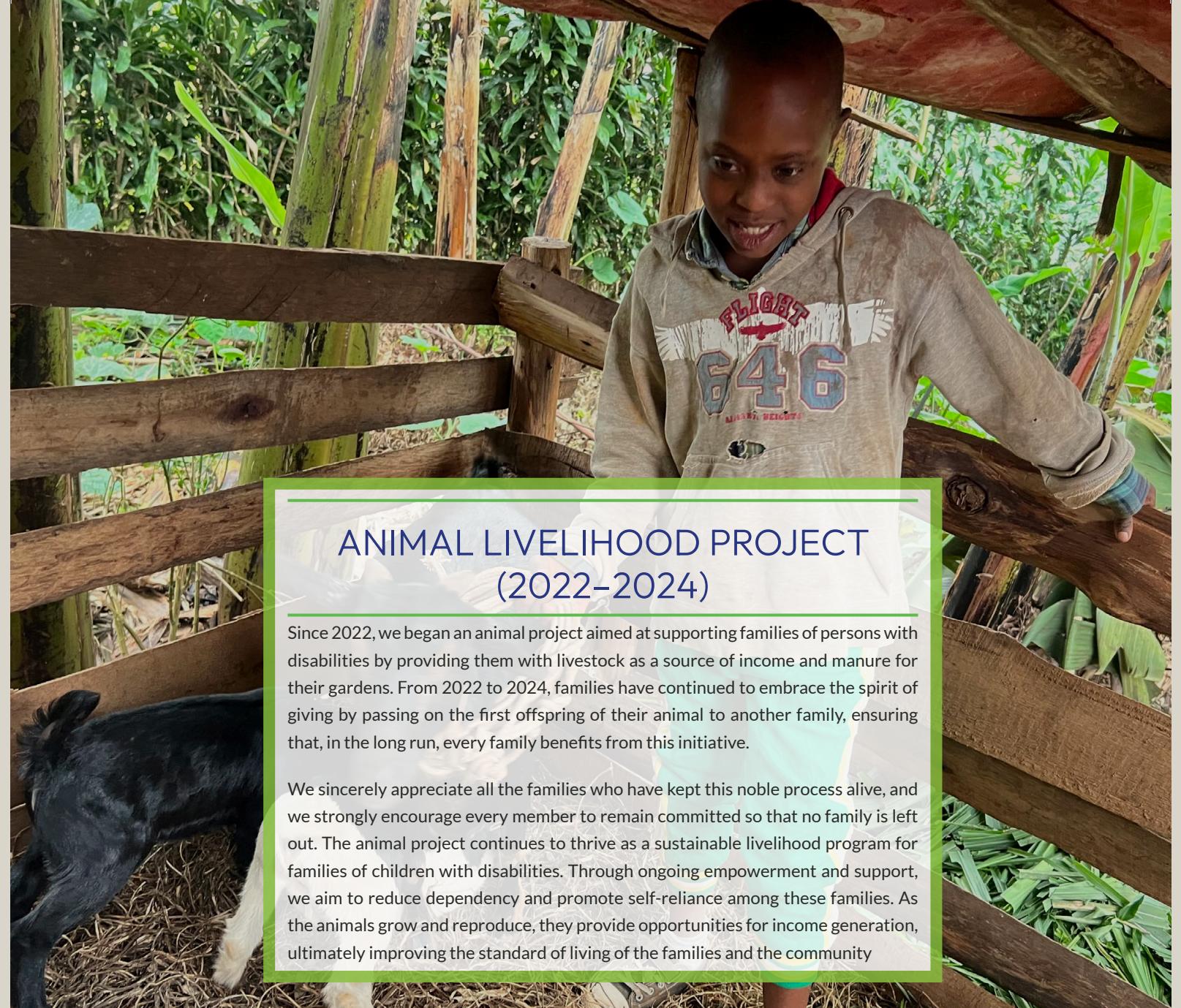
HOME BASED CARE PROJECT & HOME VISITS



We have also continued carrying out our routine home visits under the Home based care Project. These visits are designed not only to provide follow-up support but also to create joyful, meaningful, and empowering moments for families raising children with disabilities. During each visit, we take time to engage with the children and their families, sharing experiences, offering encouragement, and listening carefully to their stories, challenges, and needs.

The families we visit have warmly embraced this ongoing initiative, noting that it has helped to reduce discrimination and stigma within their communities. Moreover, the visits have significantly boosted the self-esteem and sense of belonging among persons with disabilities, as they feel loved, valued, and recognized as important members of society.





ANIMAL LIVELIHOOD PROJECT (2022-2024)

Since 2022, we began an animal project aimed at supporting families of persons with disabilities by providing them with livestock as a source of income and manure for their gardens. From 2022 to 2024, families have continued to embrace the spirit of giving by passing on the first offspring of their animal to another family, ensuring that, in the long run, every family benefits from this initiative.

We sincerely appreciate all the families who have kept this noble process alive, and we strongly encourage every member to remain committed so that no family is left out. The animal project continues to thrive as a sustainable livelihood program for families of children with disabilities. Through ongoing empowerment and support, we aim to reduce dependency and promote self-reliance among these families. As the animals grow and reproduce, they provide opportunities for income generation, ultimately improving the standard of living of the families and the community.





CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON HYGIENE & SANITATION (UBU E.V PARTNERSHIP)

In an effort to promote better hygiene and improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities in Kabale District, Disability Sign World (DSW), in partnership with UBU e.V, organized a consultative meeting with parents and guardians of children with disabilities. The purpose of this meeting was to engage the caregivers in a meaningful discussion about essential hygiene items that could significantly enhance the health and well-being of their families. During the session, DSW shared its initiative and ideas aimed at supporting families in maintaining proper hygiene standards, while also giving participants the opportunity to identify and prioritize the specific items they considered most important and beneficial for their unique household needs.



IMPROVING BEDROOM ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



Every child deserves a comfortable, safe, and welcoming bedroom environment, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. At Disability Sign World, we believe that a child's room is not just a place to sleep, it is a space where they feel loved, valued, and at peace. Through our dedicated efforts, we have supported many children with disabilities by improving their bedroom environments, making them more accessible, cozy, and child-friendly. Seeing the joy and bright smiles on their faces reminds us of the impact of our work and strengthens our commitment to continue creating inclusive and dignified living spaces for every child.





EMERGENCY HOUSING SUPPORT



One of our beneficiaries recently experienced severe damage to their home after a large tree in their compound fell onto the house, completely destroying all the iron sheets on the roof. The incident left the family devastated and uncertain about how to recover from such an unexpected disaster. In response, Disability Sign World (DSW), in partnership with UBU.eV, promptly stepped in to provide support by replacing the damaged iron sheets. This timely intervention brought immense relief and renewed hope to the family, who expressed deep gratitude for the assistance during their time of need



HYGIENE & SANITATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT OVERVIEW

Hygiene and sanitation are essential for all families to maintain a healthy and dignified lifestyle for their children, regardless of whether a child has a disability or not. To address this need, we launched a hygiene and sanitation improvement project focused on promoting cleanliness and better living conditions within families. One of the major interventions under this project is the construction of water tanks to ensure reliable access to clean water.

Access to clean water greatly supports personal hygiene, including bathing, washing clothes and utensils, and maintaining cleanliness of other household items. This helps prevent hygiene-related illnesses and other health problems that often arise in families with limited access to safe water.

We chose to provide water tanks, solar power systems, beddings, and livestock as part of our support package. Specifically, the provision of water tanks was prioritized because Kabale is a hilly area where many families face challenges fetching water from distant sources. In most cases, when water is scarce, caregivers tend to prioritize non-disabled children, leaving children with disabilities without adequate water for their hygiene needs.

Through this initiative, we aim to eliminate the frequent excuses we used to hear from caregivers during our home visits such as the lack of water or difficulty accessing it and to promote equal care and hygiene practices for all children within the household.



WATER TANK CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

We began the construction of water tanks for the selected families, and everything progressed smoothly. It was truly heartwarming to witness the active participation of both family and community members throughout the process. Their involvement reflected a strong sense of willingness, unity, and genuine love for persons with disabilities and their families.

The construction work proceeded as planned and was successfully completed within the estimated timeframe. The beneficiary families expressed immense joy and gratitude, appreciating the efforts of Disability Sign World (DSW). Many of them shared that DSW was the first organization to recognize and respond to their personal household needs in such a meaningful way.



SOLAR ENERGY INSTALLATION PROJECT

We also initiated a solar energy project, as some families opted to install solar systems in their homes to ensure adequate lighting, particularly for the benefit of their children with disabilities. In many cases, children with disabilities require additional support in their daily activities, often assisted by their caregivers. For children using wheelchairs, navigating the narrow pathways and small houses within the village can be especially challenging, particularly when lighting is inadequate. Recognizing this, some families decided it was important to have sufficient lighting at night to provide comfort, safety, and convenience for their family members with disabilities. To implement this effectively, we sought out a qualified team capable of managing the installation and ensuring that the solar energy systems would meet the families' needs.





BEDROOM IMPROVEMENTS, BEDDINGS DISTRIBUTION &HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT

In our efforts to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities, we focused on providing essential items such as solar power installations, quality beddings, and kitchen equipment. Our goal was to ensure that they live in a clean, safe, and dignified environment. Witnessing these individuals enjoy a well-maintained and hygienic living space is truly inspiring and is an experience that everyone would find desirable.

We distributed beddings to the children through their caregivers, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that these items are used only by the intended recipients. We requested that the caregivers not divert or give them to other children, as we will continue to supervise and monitor their proper use, ensuring accountability and that the children directly benefit from the support provided.

DISTRIBUTION PHASES & SUPPORT TO DISTANT SUBCOUNTIES

DISTRIBUTION OCCURRED IN TWO PHASES TO ACCOMMODATE DISTANT BENEFICIARIES, INCLUDING FAMILIES FROM BUHARA SUBCOUNTY.

The distribution of beddings and other household equipment was carried out in two phases to ensure an organized and efficient process. We set up two distribution points on different days, specifically to accommodate beneficiaries coming from distant areas. For example, we successfully delivered items to individuals from Buhara Subcounty, where traveling to the distribution points would have been costly and challenging for them.

Within this group, we also catered to those who had expressed interest in receiving animals, fulfilling their requests accordingly. We have always made it a priority to reach out to our beneficiaries directly in their homes, so this approach was entirely consistent with our usual practices and posed no inconvenience to our team. In fact, home visits and personalized delivery have become a routine part of our engagement with the communities we serve.



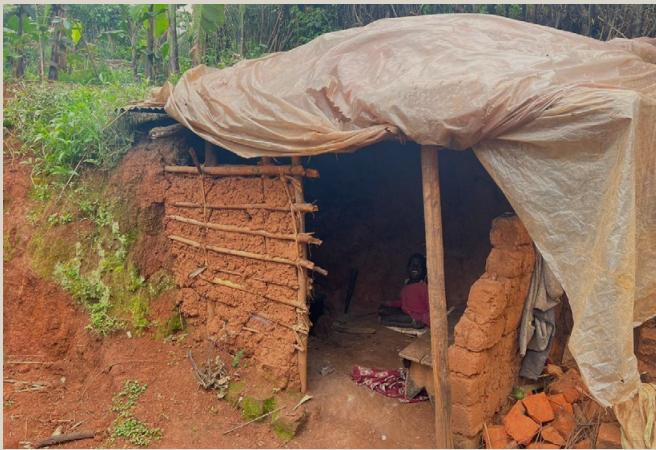




HOUSEHOLD FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION (TOILETS & KITCHENS)

We ensured that every family was given the opportunity to express their personal and household needs to improve the living conditions of children with disabilities. Some families chose to have specially designed toilets to enhance the comfort and hygiene of their children, while others requested the construction of kitchens to better support daily living activities. All improvements were implemented according to the specific requests of each family. Previously, some households had certain facilities, but they were either inadequate or of poor quality, while others lacked such facilities entirely. Therefore, we prioritized creating improved and more functional structures to meet these needs effectively.





EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING, FAMILY JOY & COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

There is nothing more heartwarming than witnessing the joy on the faces of children with disabilities. It is equally important to recognize and appreciate the dedication of parents and guardians who go above and beyond to create these moments of happiness for their children. Seeing the wider community acknowledge and embrace the existence of children with disabilities is truly inspiring. One of our core missions at Disability Sign World is to sensitize communities, fostering understanding, inclusion, and harmonious coexistence with persons with disabilities.

Our work at Disability Sign World extends beyond closed doors. We have successfully engaged local government leaders, encouraging them to lend their voices and support to the initiatives we champion for our beneficiaries. During our gatherings, we consistently invite these key stakeholders to address our beneficiaries, and their feedback has affirmed the value and impact of the work we are doing.





ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL LEADERS & ANNUAL FAMILY GATHERING

We organize an annual gathering for the families of persons with disabilities, creating a special day dedicated to connection, learning, and celebration. On this occasion, parents are invited to attend together with their children. The event provides an opportunity for families to share personal experiences, learn from one another, and build lasting friendships.

During the gathering, we provide a specially prepared lunch for all attendees, ensuring everyone feels welcomed and valued. A guest speaker is also invited to address the families, offering guidance, encouragement, and education on resources and opportunities that may not be readily accessible at home.

This annual event is always filled with meaningful interactions, joyful experiences, and a sense of community. It serves not only as a day of enjoyment but also as a platform for empowerment and mutual support among families of persons with disabilities.

EMPOWERING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH CONFIDENCE BUILDING

Due to the low self-esteem often experienced by persons with disabilities, they frequently require special attention and dedicated time to feel comfortable sharing their experiences and challenges. It is crucial that we patiently provide them with this time if we genuinely wish to understand their needs and offer meaningful support. Many individuals with disabilities may feel that their opinions are undervalued or that they do not make significant contributions in public life; however, this is far from the truth. It is our responsibility to continually empower them, nurture their confidence, and create opportunities that enable them to grow into accomplished and respected members of society in the future.



LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT & TEAM DEDICATION AT DSW

Disability Sign World (DSW) has achieved remarkable milestones thanks to the exceptional leadership and the dedication of a truly committed team. Our team members are passionate about transforming the lives of persons with disabilities and work tirelessly, often on a voluntary basis, without hesitation or regret. This unwavering commitment has made our outreach programs more effective and impactful.

The team at DSW consistently plans and coordinates activities meticulously, ensuring that every initiative aligns with our mission and goals. Their collaboration, creativity, and shared vision have been instrumental in achieving the objectives we set forth.

We deeply appreciate this spirit of service and encourage everyone to continue the noble work of serving humanity with dedication, compassion, and perseverance.





EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

Supporting the education of children with disabilities remains one of our most significant achievements each year. Many parents had previously given up on the idea of educating their children, believing that their future prospects were limited. However, through the dedicated efforts of DSW, we have been able to challenge and transform these mindsets, instilling hope and confidence in both the children and their families.

We continue to provide comprehensive support, including scholastic materials and school fees, enabling these children to access quality education on par with their peers. Our goal is to empower every child to reach their full potential and to ensure that no child is left behind. Through these efforts, we strive toward creating a truly inclusive world—one where all voices are valued, heard, and represented at every level of society.



SENSITIZATION MEETINGS FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

Sensitization meetings are regularly conducted to keep parents and caregivers of persons with disabilities (PWDs) well-informed about their roles, responsibilities, and strategies for overcoming challenges. These sessions also equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to support themselves and promote the independent living of their children or dependents. The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) organizes these meetings, inviting a range of facilitators with expertise in disability rights, caregiving, and community support to provide valuable guidance.

Such meetings have proven instrumental in keeping parents and caregivers actively engaged and ensuring that they remain relevant and influential members of the communities in which they reside. Additionally, key stakeholders including leaders of PWDs, local council representatives, and community leaders are consistently invited. Their participation fosters a deeper understanding of how to promote inclusion, harmony, and supportive relationships with PWDs within the broader community.



IMPACT OF THE HYGIENE PROJECT

The joy of witnessing families benefit from the outputs of the hygiene project is truly remarkable. It is always a great feeling to see these families fully utilizing and appreciating the support provided by Disability Sign World (DSW). This initiative has significantly improved hygiene practices in households, particularly among those who previously struggled due to limited access to water. Families who were far from water sources and have now received water tanks have no excuse not to maintain proper hygiene, including washing clothes and bathing regularly.

Through projects like this, we are gradually transforming the lives of persons with disabilities and their families. To extend this impact further, we earnestly seek additional support and partnerships to reach a wider community and positively affect even more lives.





CHRISTMAS SUPPORT PROGRAM

At Disability Sign World (DSW), we have always made it a tradition to celebrate Christmas by providing special packages to our beneficiaries. During this festive season, many people prepare for celebrations by buying new clothes, food, and other wonderful items. Unfortunately, families of persons with disabilities often find themselves unable to participate in these celebrations, unable to afford the small joys that make the season special.

At DSW, we are committed to changing this narrative. We strive to ensure that our beneficiaries experience the joy and excitement of the festive season just like any other family. Through the generous donations of well-wishers, we provide food items, clothes, and essential personal equipment to bring smiles and hope to the families we serve.

We deeply appreciate every individual and organization that contributes to this cause. Your generosity not only brightens the lives of our families but also strengthens the spirit of giving in our community. We encourage you to continue supporting us in this mission, because DSW cannot achieve these remarkable outcomes alone. With your partnership, we can reach even greater heights and make a lasting impact in the lives of persons with disabilities.



APPENDICES



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My Disability, My Strength

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