

CEREBRAL PALSY AND AUTISM RENAISSANCE ORGANISATION  
(CPARO)



**ANNUAL REPORT-2025**

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**Your ref:.....**

**Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> /01/2026.**

## ANNUAL MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-YEAR ENDED 2025

### **Greetings and Reflections**

I extend my warmest greetings to you and express my sincere gratitude for your continued support of CPARO. On behalf of the Board and Management, I reflect on the past year with humility, appreciation, and unwavering determination. The journey of the Cerebral Palsy and Autism Renaissance Organisation (CPARO) in 2025 has been marked by purposeful action, learning, and resilience, as we advance our mission to enhance the livelihoods and well-being of People Living with Disabilities (PLWDs) and their families across Wakiso, Mukono, Luwero, and Kampala.

### **Achievements and Impact**

Despite operating in a complex social and economic environment, CPARO remained steadfast in its commitment to inclusion, dignity, and equity. Our programs delivered critical health rehabilitation and habilitation services including occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and psychosocial support to over 2,250 highly vulnerable individuals. Complementing these services, our community sensitization and advocacy initiatives strengthened protection of PLWD rights, promoted inclusive education, and raised awareness of environmental stewardship and climate change's disproportionate impact on marginalized populations.

### **Research Insights**

A major milestone in 2025 was the completion of community-based research through the CPARO Medical Centre, examining how PLWD households access HIV/AIDS and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) services. The findings revealed persistent barriers, including weak referral and follow-up systems, insufficiently equipped health facilities, and gaps in inclusive HIV education. Social vulnerabilities such as caregiver dependence, isolation, orphanhood, widowhood, and single caregiving further increase exposure to abuse, delay treatment, and elevate preventable health risks.

These realities are supported by national data: the 2024–2025 Uganda National AIDS Indicator Survey (UNIADS) reports adult HIV prevalence at approximately 5.1% among persons aged 15–49, with women and young people disproportionately affected. Similarly, the 2022 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) indicates that 17% of women and 6% of men report experiences of sexual violence. For PLWD households, these risks are compounded by gaps in disability-inclusive health and social services.

### **Partnerships and Collaboration**

As we conclude the year, I wish to underscore that none of our achievements would have been possible without the strength, dedication, and sustained commitment of our partners. At the national level, we extend our sincere appreciation to the Government of Uganda for providing a

conducive policy and operational environment that has enabled our work to thrive. We further acknowledge with gratitude our CPARO members, Rev. Fr. Dr. Gerald Wamala of Mulajje Parish, Kasana-Luweero Diocese; the House of Zakat and Waqf Uganda; and Kayunga SEMAKA Association Limited Uganda for their invaluable collaboration and continued support.

Internationally, we remain deeply grateful to our partners in the United Kingdom, particularly the Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel (SSAP). I wish to extend special recognition to Ms. Carol Adams, Research and Grants Officer of SSAP, and her colleagues, whose tireless efforts in resource mobilization have been instrumental in enabling CPARO to effectively implement planned programs and expand its reach. Through these strategic partnerships, CPARO currently supports more than 2,250 severely vulnerable individuals, contributing meaningfully to improved livelihoods, enhanced access to essential services, and overall social well-being.

### **Looking Ahead**

While we take pride in the progress made in 2025, we are mindful that these gains remain fragile. The coming years will require renewed commitment, strategic investment, and bold advocacy to ensure that PLWDs and their families are not left behind. CPARO is sharpening its advocacy agenda and calling on development partners, donor agencies, and governments to sustain and deepen support for disability-inclusive programs that are strategically designed and locally driven. Our work continues to be anchored in the values of solidarity, justice, and accountability, guided by the conviction that communities closest to the challenges are also closest to the solutions. We remain committed to championing approaches that place PLWDs at the center of policy, practice, and impact.

### **Acknowledgements and Closing**

I extend sincere appreciation to our partners, supporters, staff, volunteers, and the communities we serve. Your trust, collaboration, and shared vision inspire our work daily. Together, we will continue building inclusive systems and communities where PLWDs can live with dignity, opportunity, and hope.

Thank you very much. I wish you a peaceful and prosperous 2026, marked by shared achievements and success in all endeavors.

In solidarity,



James Ssenkandwa  
Chief Executive Officer

## 2. Organisational Profile

The Cerebral Palsy and Autism Renaissance Organisation (CPARO) is a registered non-governmental Organisation based in Uganda, founded in 2017 by Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and parents of Children with Disabilities (CWDs), and formally registered in 2019 under registration number **INDR145232247NB**. CPARO works to advance the health, dignity, livelihoods, and social inclusion of People Living with Disabilities (PLWDs), with a particular focus on children with disabilities and their families.

CPARO delivers inclusive medical, rehabilitative, psychosocial, and community outreach services through the CPARO Medical Centre, complemented by community-based interventions that address systemic barriers to healthcare, social protection, and human rights. The Organisation prioritizes the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, especially children with disabilities, their mothers, grandmothers and other caregivers, by strengthening access to essential services and promoting the enforcement of fundamental human rights.

The Organisation operates under a robust governance structure comprising a multidisciplinary, seven-member Board of Directors with expertise in healthcare, advocacy, social work, and finance, and with representation of Persons with Disabilities. CPARO is supported by a dedicated workforce of 16 staff and 7 volunteers, including therapists, social workers, and community health workers. Staff expertise spans project management, accountancy, medical and rehabilitative care, human rights, specialist education, counselling, social work, dietetics, environmental sustainability, and social entrepreneurship, enabling holistic and inclusive programme delivery.

With over eight years of operational experience, CPARO anchors its work in community realities while maintaining strong standards of transparency, accountability, and due diligence in grant management. This commitment to good governance and service to the most disadvantaged has enabled the Organisation to mobilize sustained support from both local and international partners.



*CPARO delivering structured psychosocial support to highly vulnerable mothers and their children with disabilities at Mulaje Catholic Parish, Luwero District Strengthening emotional resilience, restoring hope and promoting family/ well-being.*

### 3. Programme Focus Areas

CPARO's work in 2025 focused on three core thematic areas:

#### a) Health and Rehabilitation

- Physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and psychosocial support
- Medical assessment, referral, and follow-up
- Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) through home and school visits

#### b) Inclusive Education

- Development of Individualised Education Plans (IEPs)
- Teacher training and Continuous Professional Development
- Provision of Special Needs Education (SNE) materials and assistive devices
- Enrolment and retention of CWDs in schools

#### c) Community Empowerment and Protection

- Sensitisation on disability rights, GBV prevention, HIV/AIDS, and WASH
- Formation of Parent, School and Community Action Groups
- Livelihood skilling for mothers and caregivers



*CPARO Staff conducted a disability-inclusive health care situation analysis at Rose Gardens, Kyengera, Wakiso Districts involving, PLWDs, CWDs, and the parents, caregivers and other key essential stakeholders (police, Health inspectors, Local, Culture and religious leaders) from Kampala and Wakiso District.*

### 4. Key Achievements

#### Health and Rehabilitation

- Over 2,250 vulnerable individuals received therapy, counselling, and medical support
- Strengthened referral systems through health facility collaboration
- Expanded outreach services to underserved communities

#### Education and Inclusion

- Increased enrolment of CWDs into mainstream schools
- Distribution of assistive devices

## Advocacy and Social Change

- Communities sensitised on disability rights and protection
- Improved attitudes towards children with disabilities
- Stronger parental engagement in education and care

## Research and Evidence

- Completed research on HIV/AIDS and GBV access for PLWD households
- Generated data to inform advocacy and programme design



*Children with disabilities in Kimenyedde, Nakifuma (Mukono District) identified as requiring urgent mobility support and appropriate assistive device to improve functional independence quality of life.*

## 5. Research Findings and Learning

Research conducted by CPARO Medical Centre revealed:

- Weak referral and follow-up systems
- Inadequate disability-friendly health facilities
- Limited inclusive HIV and GBV education
- Increased vulnerability due to poverty, isolation, orphanhood, and single caregiving

National data (UNIADS and UDHS) confirm high HIV prevalence and GBV exposure, with PLWD households facing compounded risks due to service gaps.

## 6. Partnerships and Collaboration

### Local Partners

- Government of Uganda
- Friends of Rev. Fr. Dr. Gerald Wamala (Mulajje Parish)
- House of Zakat and Waqf Uganda
- Kayunga Semaka Association Ltd

### International Partners

- Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel (SSAP)
- Educational Opportunity Foundation (EOF/BFSS)
- Queen's Commonwealth Trust (QCT)

Through these partnerships, CPARO reached over 2,250 severely vulnerable individuals.

## 7. Funds:

### Financial Summary (2025)

<b>Funder</b>	<b>Amount (UGX)</b>
Kayunga Semaka Association Ltd	6,500,000
House of Zakat & Waqf Uganda	15,455,000
Friends of Rev. Fr. Dr. Gerald Wamala	14,325,400
Other Local Donors	31,245,000
CPARO Members	19,880,000
<b>TOTAL RECIEVED</b>	<b>87,405,400</b>



*Some of the assorted beneficiaries participated in the Universal Health access consultative meeting held in Nakawala Village, Namataba Town Council, Mukono District.*



***CPARO Team providing direct medical assistance to highly vulnerable mothers and children with disabilities at Waluleeta Health Centre, Luwero District, ensuring access to essential health services***

## **8. Challenges**

- High cost of medication and therapy
- Negative cultural beliefs about disability
- Poverty in households of People Living with Disability (PLWDs)
- Lack of SNE materials and specialist teachers
- Limited assistive devices and therapeutic equipment
- Inadequate infrastructure and transport
- Food insecurity and poor nutrition

## **9. Lessons Learned**

- Community sensitisation reduces stigma and improves inclusion
- Teacher attitudes directly affect child learning outcomes
- Parent involvement is critical to success

- Preventive healthcare reduces disability risks
- Advocacy remains essential to protecting PLWD rights

## 10. Way Forward

- Increase school enrolment
- Expand assistive devices
- Strengthen teacher training
- Improve school accessibility
- Strengthen partnerships
- Promote caregiver livelihoods



*The CPARO staff conducted an idea sharing session on Universal Health Access development with beneficiaries in Kimenyedde, Nakifuma, Mukono District.*

## 11. Case Study: Joshua and His Mother in Mukono District

Joshua Kateregga is thirteen years old and lives with his mother, Ms. Harriet Nansove, in the village of Katwe-Bukeerere in Mukono District. Joshua was born with multiple disabilities and is unable to walk. For many years, his mother transported him in a wheelchair to the nearest health centre, a journey that took more than an hour on foot. Often, they returned home without receiving treatment because the facility was overcrowded or lacked disability-friendly services. Neighbours advised Ms. Nansove to keep Joshua at home, believing that nothing could be done. Over time, isolation became a part of their daily life.

When CPARO's community outreach team first visited the village, Joshua had never been assessed by a rehabilitation worker, and his mother had never received guidance on how to care for a child with physical disabilities. Through CPARO's community-led identification process, Joshua was enrolled in home-based care and linked to a nearby health facility for

regular follow-up. Ms. Nansove joined a caregiver support group, where she learned basic physiotherapy exercises, safe feeding techniques, and how to prevent pressure sores and infections. For the first time, she felt that she was not alone.

As Joshua’s health stabilized, CPARO also supported his mother through a small livelihood initiative tailored to caregivers of children with disabilities. She received training and start-up support to begin a poultry project at home, enabling her to earn income without leaving Joshua unattended. A group savings scheme later helped her recover after floods destroyed her first chicken shelter during the rainy season. This experience demonstrated how climate-related shocks affect disability-affected households more severely and more quickly than others.

Today, Joshua is healthier, attends a local inclusive learning programme twice a week, and smiles whenever the CPARO outreach worker arrives. His mother explains that the greatest change has not only been financial but emotional:

“Before CPARO, I thought my son’s life would always be full of suffering. Now I see his future differently.”

Joshua’s story reflects the lived reality of many People Living with Disabilities (PLWDs) in Wakiso, Mukono, Luwero, and Kampala Districts. Families face overlapping barriers including poverty, stigma, fragile health services, and the growing threat of climate change. Through community-led solutions that integrate health access, psychosocial support, caregiver empowerment, and livelihood protection, CPARO ensures that individuals who are often invisible to national systems are identified, reached, and supported with dignity. As climate pressures intensify, CPARO continues to adapt its approach so that disability inclusion remains central to health care, humanitarian response, and long-term resilience for households like Joshua’s.



*Joshua Katerega smiling in his wheelchair.*

## 12. Community-Led Solutions

Across Wakiso, Mukono, Luwero, and Kampala Districts, CPARO implements community-led interventions to address the multidimensional challenges faced by households of People Living with Disabilities (PLWDs). These challenges arise from intersecting factors such as poverty, stigma, limited access to disability-responsive health services, and constrained livelihood opportunities. CPARO's programming is structured around six integrated priority areas: support for children and adults with disabilities, strengthening the capacity of mothers and primary caregivers, provision of home-based care services, promotion of health, education, and overall well-being for PLWDs, particularly those with Cerebral Palsy and Autism, provision of psychosocial support, and expansion of sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Service utilization rates for disability-responsive interventions within CPARO-supported communities, in partnership with local and international partners, consistently exceed organizational benchmarks. This performance is attributable to strong alignment with community-defined priorities, trust-based engagement with households of persons with disabilities, and targeted efforts to reduce stigma and structural barriers to access. Through community-based identification and follow-up mechanisms, CPARO ensures that PLWDs who are under-served from national social protection and health systems are systematically identified and supported through inclusive and rights-based service delivery approaches.

Emerging evidence from CPARO's 2025 outreach indicates that households of People Living with Disabilities (PLWDs) are disproportionately affected by barriers to inclusive education, as well as by health and environmental risks. They experience heightened exposure to communicable and non-communicable diseases, including malaria and HIV/AIDS, in addition to climate-related hazards. Flooding, drought, and extreme weather events disrupt access to essential health and social services, undermine household livelihoods, and exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities. These impacts intensify social and economic exclusion and pose significant risks to household resilience and long-term sustainability.

In response, CPARO is integrating climate resilience as a cross-cutting priority within its community-led programming. This includes strengthening climate-adaptive livelihoods, safeguarding the continuity of health and social services for PLWDs during periods of shock, and ensuring that disability inclusion remains central to humanitarian and disaster response mechanisms. CPARO's approach demonstrates that locally driven, inclusive systems are essential for achieving equitable health access, social protection, and long-term resilience for persons with disabilities and their households.



***CPARO CEO Mr. James Ssenkandwa presents a wheelchair to Mr. John Ssenyonjo at Nsangi Buwaali, Kyengera Town Council, Wakiso District, bringing mobility and smile.***



**The CPARO Team conducted a rapid disease assessment at Mulajje catholic Parish in Luwero District engaging PLWDs, CWDs the mothers and caregivers.**

### **13. Disability-inclusive promotion of health, education, and social participation:**

At CPARO, we believe that no child with a disability (CWD) should be invisible and no family should walk the journey of disability alone. We place the people we serve at the heart of every decision that shapes their lives, ensuring that Children with disabilities and their families are not only heard, but actively involved in designing the solutions that affect their future. Through this approach, we restore dignity, strengthen hope, and empower families to move from survival to possibility.

Through our Medical Centre and Occupational Therapy programs, children and their families find more than treatment they find hope. In safe, welcoming, and child-friendly spaces, they receive personalized care, mentorship, and guidance that responds to their unique needs. Our services promote disability-responsive healthcare, mental well-being, leadership, and future livelihoods, helping children grow in confidence, independence, and resilience so they can dream, learn, and thrive.

Beyond our clinic walls, CPARO reaches deep into communities where stigma and silence still surround disability. Our outreach teams and trained peer educators walk alongside families, schools, and local leaders to challenge harmful beliefs and replace them with understanding and respect. Through school programs and community dialogues, we reach thousands with life-changing information on health, education, climate change, and gender equality.

Using digital tools, social media, and creative approaches such as *Soccer for Mental Health Awareness*, CPARO is inspiring a new generation of youth champions young people who are standing up against discrimination, breaking stigma, and speaking boldly for inclusion. Together, they are building communities where children with disabilities are not hidden, but celebrated; not pitied, but empowered.

With your support, these children are no longer defined by their limitations they are defined by their potential.



***CPARO Team engaging key stakeholders in a strategic coordination meeting to advocate for disability inclusive service delivery systems and strengthened inter-sectorial collaboration at CPARO Medical Centre.***

#### **14. Power in True Partnership**

Our partnership is founded not on arrangements alone, but on trust. From the outset, our partners chose to walk alongside us rather than operate from a distance. They have listened to our voices, respected our leadership, and placed confidence in the strength and knowledge of our communities. This commitment to authentic partnership, anchored in mutual respect, transparent dialogue, and shared decision-making, has enabled CPARO to grow with confidence and independence into the organization it is today.

By demonstrating a deep understanding of local realities, our partners respond not only to organizational imperatives but also to the needs of the communities we serve. Their capacity to engage with our context, learn continuously, and sustain collaboration during periods of challenge has fostered robust trust and enhanced the relevance, timeliness, and effectiveness of our interventions. These partnerships are characterized not by hierarchical power, but by mutual solidarity.

Central to CPARO's mission is the conviction that sustainable social change must be anchored in community leadership. We prioritize grassroots, community-driven interventions that advance social justice, with particular emphasis on disability inclusion, gender equity, and movement-building. Our work is dedicated to ensuring that the voices of People Living with Disabilities are not merely represented, but meaningfully amplified ranging from remote village contexts to national and international decision-making forums.



***CPARO conducting a professional capacity building seminar for Health workers at Luwero Hospital to promote inclusive healthcare practices and disability responsive service provision.***

Each day, we work to strengthen households of People Living with Disabilities so they can meet their basic needs and live with dignity. For many years, CPARO has stood alongside families of persons with disabilities, advocating for their rights and equitable access to

essential services. Through the dedication of our team and the compassion of our partners, meaningful transformation has taken place. Children with disabilities are accessing care, caregivers are finding renewed hope, and families who were once invisible are now recognized and supported.

During moments of greatest hardship, when vulnerability was highest and resources were most limited, our partners remained steadfast. Their support enabled the most fragile families to survive and rebuild, reinforcing a powerful message that they are not alone. We are deeply grateful for the resilience of these partnerships and for the lasting impact they continue to generate, particularly in advancing disability-responsive approaches.

This relationship holds particular significance for Icebreakers Uganda because it creates opportunities for communities that have long been underserved and marginalized, especially persons with disabilities. Our partners, including Rev. Fr. Dr. Gerald Wamala and friends, House of Zakat and Waqf Uganda, Kayunga Semaka Association Ltd, and the International Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel (SSAP) UK, contribute far more than financial resources. They invest in people through capacity strengthening, advocacy, and networks that unlock pathways to sustainable change.

Together, we are not merely implementing programs. We are restoring dignity, cultivating leadership, and shaping a future in which no family affected by disability is left behind.

**15. Change of Office**

CPARO wishes to inform all partners and stakeholders that its main office has relocated from **Gayaza-Kayebe, Kasangati Town Council** to **Nsangi-Buwaali, Kyengera Town Council, Wakiso District**, along Masaka Road, approximately **19.8 km from Kampala**.

Additionally, the liaison office has moved from **Kirumira Towers** to **Plot 68, Katwe Road, near Equity Bank, Katwe Branch, Kampala**.

We kindly request all partners and stakeholders to update their records accordingly and direct all future correspondence to the new office locations.

We appreciate your continued support and cooperation.



*Dr. Irene Kwagala and Dr. Kisambira Kasim at the CPARO Medical Centre.*

**16. Conclusion**

CPARO respectfully urges its partners and stakeholders to join hands in advancing the inclusion of persons living with disabilities in all areas of life. This commitment is a moral, social, and spiritual duty, grounded in the belief that every person deserves dignity, worth, and full participation in society and within the community of faith. In this regard, it calls us to uphold the shared values of compassion, justice, and inclusion for all.

**Signed by;**

*Ssenkandwa*  
.....  
James Ssenkandwa  
Chief Executive Officer

*Joan*  
.....  
Joan Aduo  
Secretary

***“Those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.”***

## **Disability Inclusion & Support**



***CPARO facilitating a focused dialogue session with fathers of children with disabilities in Nakawala, Namataba Town council to enhance family engagement, shared caregiving responsibility, and positive parenting practices.***

***“To deny inclusion to People Living with Disabilities is to deny humanity itself; for their dignity, creativity, and resilience are indispensable to a just society.”***



***CPARO Staff conducted a disability-inclusive health care situation analysis at Rose Gardens, Kyengera, Wakiso Districts involving, PLWDs, CWDs, and the parents, caregivers and other key essential stakeholders (police, Health inspectors, Local, Culture and religious leaders) from Kampala and Wakiso District.***