

**REPORT FOR THE RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND KEY SERVICES ESSENTIAL TO INCLUSION IN SCHOOLS.**



**PROJECT NAME:** EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN

**EVENT VENUE:** NETWORTH HOTEL WOBULENZI,  
LUWERO DISTRICT

**EVENT DATE:** 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022

**INTRODUCTION:**

The report of February covers the **residential workshop for parents of children with disabilities and key services essential to inclusiveness**. The report highlights the background to objectives of Sub Sahara Advisory Panel (SSAP) and Cerebral Palsy and Autism Renaissance Organisation (CPARO) “**EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN PROJECT**” and community activities implemented, achievements, Challenges, lessons learnt, future plans, conclusions, recommendations and Success Stories.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Sub Sahara Advisory Panel (SSAP) and Cerebral Palsy and Autism Renaissance Organisation (CPARO) “**EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN PROJECT**” was designed to partially cater for the education of Persons with Special Needs (PSNs) and/or Children with Disabilities (CWDs). While the two Organisations are implementing the above mentioned project, they diligently do it in relation to the Millennium Development Goal-2 (Achieve universal Primary Education-MDG: 2) and Sustainable Development Goal-4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all –SDG: 4).

According to previous research made by **CPARO and SSAP** it was found that Parents of children with disabilities (CWDs) and the community members have been culturally having a negative attitude towards Education of Children with Disabilities (CWDs); and this is because of ignorance and/or beliefs that the disabilities are caused by curses or witchcraft.

This prompted the two subjected Organisations above to furnish up with a foresaid project in order to bridge the gap of illiteracy levels in the households of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) in the districts of Kampala, Luwero Mukono and Wakiso. Although we planned this, our Organisations could not manage to raise all the funds needed and this compelled us to approach the British & Foreign School Society (BFSS) for financial support to enable us implement the perfect activities efficiently.

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### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES:**

- Children are enrolled in school, will not drop out, and achieve national average grades or above.
- Training and special needs education materials will be provided to their teachers and key school administrators.
- Children will be equipped with assistive/adaptive devices.
- Outreach community workers will coordinate wrap-around support to children to remove barriers to accessing education.
- Workshops will be held for stakeholders with influence/role inclusive education.
- Children will be listened to in order to get their feedback and be responsive to their needs throughout the project.

## ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The needs of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) and/or Persons with special Needs (PSNs) were disseminated at both national and lower levels amongst the government technical staff, leaders of persons with disabilities and community members through the workshop conducted and all agreed that much emphasis should be put on inclusiveness.
- Community members at large were trained on inclusion of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) and/or Persons with special Needs and as a result of this they shall capitulate in the fight over the same.
- British & Foreign School Society (BFSS) sponsored “**Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel (SSAP) and Cerebral Palsy and Autism Renaissance Organisation (CPARO) Education for all Children**”

## LESSONS LEARNT:

- Basing on the course content during the workshop, majority of the community members were adamant and/or ignorant about the rights of Persons with Special Needs (PSNs) and/or Children with Disabilities (CWDs) hence, all the participants appreciated the support of “**SSAP & CPARO EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN PROJECT**” and embraced the great gesture of helping the vulnerable. This has created a sense of better understanding in the Community members who had negative perception that the disability households sacrificed their beloved Children with Disabilities for the purposes of becoming rich and in return they were punished by God.  
Due to the above reason, parents of children with disability become inferior and reluctant to take their children to school.
- Mr. Peter Kiwanuka a disability Human Rights activist in Luwero district narrated a story that during his primary level he suffered a lot with the teachers who did not know how to handle disabled children. He said that because of the lameness on one of his arms teachers were compelling him to write very well in class like those without any disabilities. So, as the teachers were enforcing for clear handwriting they used to subject them to corporal punishments such as beating them using sticks in their hands, but for him it was unfortunate that he had only one hand that he could use to do his routine activities and the same hand was flogged. Based on his testimony, it emphasizes that there is a need to train some teachers on how to treat and/or handle children with special needs/Children with Disabilities (CWDs).
- In addition he said, he witnessed many Children with Disabilities who were highly disturbed in their movements in school due to lack of ramps that could simplify their access to the important facilities e.g. classes, toilet, kitchen among others at different time periods.  
He therefore brought an idea that there is need to modernize the already existing school structures in order to make them fit the standard of the accommodating Children with Disabilities



*Mr. Kivanuka Peter at the workshop demonstrated how he was disenfranchised by the teachers and his fellow students which resulted in pocketing his lame arm most of the time while at school. Much as he did all that, the abuse never stopped to date. Hence there is still a need for advocating for the rights of disabled persons in Uganda.*

## **CHALLENGES:**

- It is of no doubt that the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic was sordid; it shook the foundation of the entire globe in all aspects and affected programme implementation as a consequence of lockdown and the need to observe Standard Operating procedures(SOPs) in order to mitigate the risk of exposure. Under the Inclusive Education Programme of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) and/or Persons with special Needs (PSNs) were greatly affected mentally/psychologically, physically, economically to mention but a few.
- Low levels of education barred many persons with disabilities from benefiting from the Inclusion development programmes that stood in their way for employment in the formal sector. They fell short of the minimum academic requirements hence, the need to create conducive learning environment for Children with Disabilities (CWDs) in order to spare their road for the future.
- Mindset /attitude change to eradicate the stigma created among the Persons with Special Needs (PSNs) and/or Children with Disabilities (CWDs) where they described themselves as curses due to the influence/ stories told by the community members thus, it lowers the motivation of the target going to school.
- During project implementation we are facing financial hardships because of the fall in the exchange rate due high fuel prices subjected to the war in Ukraine.
- Inadequate Adaptive /Assistive devices and Special Education Needs Materials.

## **FUTURE PLANS/RECOMMENDATIONS/WAY FORWARD:**

- Advocating and/or lobbying Education and Health care of the Persons with Special Needs (PSNs) and/or Children with Disabilities (CWDs) through facilitating them with Adaptive /Assistive devices and Special Education Needs Materials to enable the target group study in a conducive environment.
  - To train role models in the community in Counseling and guidance to enable them provide psycho-social support and simple therapies to children with disabilities (CWDs) who attend school.
  - To arrange for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) trainings for teachers purposely to boost inclusiveness.
  - To do some renovation on the already existing school structures by creating easy pathways/ramps that are suitable for children with disability (CWDs).
  - To encourage parents /caretakers of persons with disabilities to form Self Help Groups (SHGs) amongst themselves.
  - To advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities.
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- To encourage pregnant mothers to avoid using toxic drugs and also to visit health units as early as possible hence preventing unnecessary disabilities.
  - To sensitize the social service providers on how to handle the children with disabilities.

- Increase the monitoring and evaluation of the interventions to establish whether the strategies of “**SUB SAHARA ADVISORY PANEL (SSAP) & CEREBRAL PALSY AND AUTISM RENAISSANCE ORGANISATION (CPARO) EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN PROJECT**” bear tangible impact in the lives of the beneficiaries.
- Document and report on the success stories, key findings and learning, and good practices.

## CONCLUSION:

- During the project course unit covered above it was established that a number of persons with special Needs (PSNs) / Children with Disabilities (CWDs) drop out of school though this is not well documented. According to several interactions and interventions with community members and parents/caregivers of children with disabilities in Wakiso and Kampala districts Children with Disabilities (CWDs) indicate that over 90% of such kinds do not access education opportunities partly due to family and community negative attitudes.
- Despite the highlighted challenges above, the **residential workshop for parents of children with disabilities and key services essential to inclusiveness** was successfully conducted. Cerebral Palsy and Autism Renaissance Organisation’s (CPARO’s) appreciation goes to all our partners especially **SUB SAHARA ADVISORY PANEL (SSAP), BRITISH & FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY (BFSS) United Kingdom** and Community stakeholders who are committed to support the programmes that are gearing to improve the lives of persons with Special Needs (PSNs) and/or Children with Disabilities (CWDs) (vulnerable groups) in areas of Kampala, Luwero, Mukono And Wakiso districts in Uganda. We pray that the Almighty God forever reward you abundantly.

## SUCCESS STORIES:

Mr. Peter Kiwanuka a 49 year male Ugandan was born a disabled in the district of Luwero. He said that amidst the Civil wars that greatly affected his home district, he managed to go to school in difficult situations where now he is holding different posts in the disabilities forum as described hereunder:

- He is a National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU) representative in Makulubita sub-County in Luwero district.
- Under Buganda Kingdom he is a Ssaza (county) Chairman of disabilities in Bulemezi Luwero district.
- He is also a chairman of L.C II of disabilities at Kagogo in Luwero District.
- Mr. Peter Kiwanuka welcomed the SSAP and CPARO Project and he said, he will provide the necessary support required during Project implementation through sensitizing and mobilizing the community as a whole not to violate the rights of school ongoing disabled children.
  
- The participants having gotten some good light about the rights of Persons with Special Needs (PSNs) and/or Children with Disabilities (CWDs), they decided to become vigilant and act as watch dogs in the fight of inclusiveness. And they also learnt that now it is so necessary to support Children with Disabilities to have education so as they can in the long run support themselves and contribute towards the development of their country.
  
- After all that above, the participants were capable of sharing examples of those disabled persons who excelled through education and are currently members of parliament representing persons with disabilities namely:-
  - Hellen Asamo (Eastern Region).
  - Bumali Mpindi (Kampala Region).
  - Hatwib Katoto (Western Region).