

Spring 2024 Professional Fellow

Name: Moses Serwadda

Country: Uganda

Job Title and Employer: Program Manager

Uganda Federation of the Hard of Hearing (UFHOH)

Project Title: “Civics4ALL” Initiative in Uganda

Issue: While the Constitution of Uganda and the 1996 Local Governments Act provide for the political representation of persons with disabilities at all leadership levels, this representation does not necessarily result in their meaningful participation in civic processes. There is a lack of awareness about many of the policies that support inclusion, from national policymakers to village-level government officials, resulting in partial implementation (Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, 2020). Educating government officials and advocating for the full implementation of policies requires voices to rise from the grassroots level. However, a significant hindrance is the lack of knowledge and capacity gaps among youth with disabilities regarding their civic roles and how they can meaningfully participate in the electoral process (Enyogu, 2022). While the Uganda Electoral Commission and civil society organizations have attempted to improve civic engagement among communities, persons with disabilities have been left out of such initiatives. The lack of skills and knowledge to engage with elected leaders and representatives creates a significant gap in service delivery and accountability.

Project Objective: Moses aims to help youth with disabilities in Luweero District in Central Uganda advocate for their rights by training 30 youth on how to engage in the electoral process.

Project Activities: Moses will begin his work with an assessment of the knowledge and capacity among youth with disabilities concerning their rights and opportunities in the electoral processes at the local and national levels.

Using the insights garnered from his assessment, Moses will collaborate with the Uganda Electoral Commission to develop a training manual. They will tailor this manual to address the specific needs of youth with disabilities by modifying and adapting the Commission’s existing educational content.

In the development of the training manual, Moses will solicit input from various stakeholders, including the Uganda Federation of the Hard of Hearing (UFHOH), Show Abilities Uganda, the National Union of Disabled Persons Uganda (NUDIPU), counselors representing persons with disabilities, youth with disabilities, the chairperson of the district council, and international experts.

Upon finalizing the manual, Moses will recruit 30 youth with disabilities, nominated by organizations of persons with disabilities, to participate in a comprehensive training program. He will conduct this training in person, supplemented by virtual follow-up sessions. The objective is to equip these youth with the necessary skills and knowledge to actively engage in the electoral process and share their newfound expertise with their peers.

Once the project is complete, Moses intends to distribute the training manual to organizations of persons with disabilities and civic societies to facilitate further information dissemination.

References:

Enyogu, Anthony Oleja. (2022). Participation of Youths with Disabilities in political spaces in Pallisa District: A

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Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, Uganda. (2020). Situational Analysis of Persons with

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