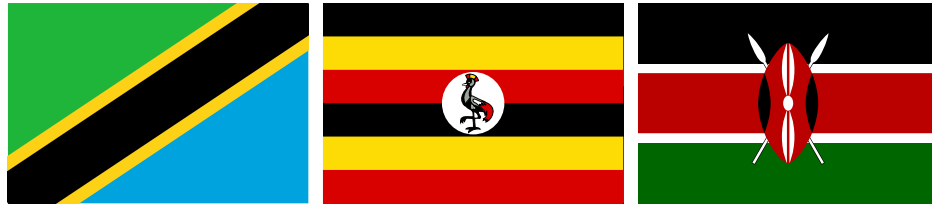


The Professional Fellows Program on Inclusive Civic Engagement



Fall 2025 Professional Fellow



Daphine Kiwala

Founder, Mothers' Alive Foundation (MAF)

Law Student, Cavendish University

Uganda

Daphine is the Founder of Mothers' Alive Foundation (MAF), a Ugandan organization that supports families in need and works directly with individuals with disabilities to help them overcome challenges and access essential resources. Her efforts have improved service accessibility and increased the visibility of people with disabilities in her community.

Previously, Daphine served as a Psychological Counselor at Kyambogo University, where she provided rehabilitation, guidance, and counseling services to persons with disabilities. Her commitment to disability rights and civic engagement is rooted in her professional and academic experiences.

Daphine is currently pursuing a law degree at Cavendish University. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychological counseling from Kyambogo University and a two-year teaching certificate from Wanyange Teacher's College.

Follow-on Project

Training Mothers of Children with Disabilities in Uganda on Awareness of Disability Rights and Advocacy

Issue: While the Constitution of Uganda and the Persons with Disabilities Act (2020) provide non-discrimination and equal opportunities in accessibility, education, and civic engagement, there is a significant lack of awareness about disability rights among mothers and caregivers of children with disabilities. This contributes to misconceptions and limited social participation for affected families (Masquillier et al., 2021; O'Sullivan et al., 2020).

Parental peer-to-peer support has proven effective in fostering opportunities for children with disabilities, particularly in Central Uganda (Nalugya et al., 2022). Through this project, Daphine aims to strengthen community-based support systems by equipping mothers and caregivers with the knowledge and tools needed to advocate for the rights of their children and promote greater inclusion.

Project Objective: Daphine will empower 15 mothers and caregivers of children with disabilities in Kiwanyi Sub-county, Uganda, by providing them with essential knowledge about disability rights, available services, and advocacy strategies through training workshops.



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Project Description: Daphine will recruit mothers and caregivers of children with disabilities through referrals from her existing network at Mother's Alive Foundation. She will plan and implement an in-person training over four weekends in one month, covering disability rights and advocacy. The training will use adapted materials from existing disability rights organizations and incorporate interactive activities, storytelling, role-playing, and visual aids. Daphine will also provide psychosocial support, drawing from her expertise as a counselor and law student, to help participants improve their coping skills.

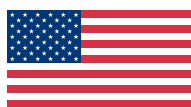
The training will feature guest speakers, including persons with disabilities—some holding political positions or offices in the district—volunteer advocacy trainers from the district department for persons with disabilities, and representatives from the district probation office who are knowledgeable about disability rights. Experienced mothers with successful advocacy journeys will serve as peer mentors to the trainees.

Following the training, the mothers and caregivers will lead monthly community awareness campaigns. During these 2-3-hour sessions, they will engage local leaders, including village chairpersons, district council representatives, community development officers, and representatives from local schools. The campaigns will focus on disability rights and opportunities through awareness-raising, policy discussions, and collective action to address misconceptions about persons with disabilities.

Daphine will conduct pre- and post-test surveys to assess the effectiveness of the training. She will also collect feedback and testimonies from community members during the campaigns to evaluate the project's overall impact. The goal is for Mother's Alive Foundation to adopt and continue the training program with other mothers and caregivers.

References

- Masquillier, C., De Bruyn, S., & Musoke, D. (2021). The role of the household in the social inclusion of children with special needs in Uganda—a photovoice study. *BMC Pediatrics*, 21, 386.
- Nalugya, R., Nimusiima, C., Kawesa, E. S., Nambejja, H., Van Hove, G.,... Seeley, J.,. (2023). Obuntu bulumu: Parental peer-to-peer support for inclusion of children with disabilities in Central Uganda. *African Journal of Disability*, 12(0), a948.
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