

Spring 2023 Professional Fellow

Name: Rashid Kalule
Country: Uganda
Job Title and Employer: Disability Inclusion Facilitator,
[Jinja District Union of Persons with Disabilities \(JIDU\)](#)
Project Title: Creating an Enabling Environment for Persons with Cerebral Palsy in Northern Division, Jinja

Problem: Cerebral Palsy (CP) is one of the most marginalized disabilities in Uganda due to a lack of public knowledge about this disability (Kakooza Mwesige et al, 2017). This makes it difficult to differentiate CP from other disabilities, its causes, how to manage it, and how to care for individuals with CP. The lack of information about CP among the public has resulted in many barriers to social inclusion, including discrimination or denial of employment to persons with CP. Individuals with CP can play a key role in progressively changing attitudes through sensitization, training others to become self-advocates, and lobbying for public funding. A case in point, Rashid used his position as a Disability Inclusion Facilitator as a platform to raise awareness about CP among potential employers. This has helped to narrow the knowledge gap, change mindsets, and strengthen positive attitudes towards persons with CP. It is evident that there is a need to train more self-advocates.

Project Objective: Rashid aims to develop these advocates by training individuals with CP on their rights, developing skills for self-advocacy, and building a team of Resource Persons in the Northern region of Jinja to disseminate information about CP to the general community.

Project Description: Using a training of trainers approach, Rashid will train 20 Resource Persons and 10 Peer Monitors. Resource Persons are advocates charged with raising awareness by holding meetings with community members, employers, and trained CP advocates to discuss rights and challenges individuals with CP face. Rashid will recruit Resource Persons through the network of individuals he has helped find employment for or is currently working with. The 20 Resource Persons will include 10 individuals with CP (at minimum).

Rashid will identify key areas of the training for Resource Persons through consultative meetings with persons with CP. He will conduct further research on these key areas to come up with training content as well as a training timetable. Following training, Resource Persons will organize 10 sensitization meetings for key stakeholders, including government officials, parents/caregivers, religious leaders, school administrators, and representatives of civil society organizations. Resource Persons will also be featured on JIDU radio talk shows to ensure wider coverage when raising awareness of CP.

Peer Monitors are trained by Resource Persons and are tasked with mobilizing, regularly visiting, interacting, and monitoring how persons with CP in the community are responding to the project activities and its outcomes during and beyond the project implementation period. Rashid will recruit Peer Monitors from among those with CP in the community.

Following a successful pilot, Rashid aims to incorporate the project into JIDU's employment training program for those with CP who are applying for formal employment to become self-advocates at their workplaces.

References:

Kakooza-Mwesige, A. et al (2017). Prevalence of cerebral palsy in Uganda: a population-based study. The Lancet Global Health (5/12). Retrieved from: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29102350/>

