The Amuru Disability Mainstreaming Project in Amuru District, Northern Uganda provided an opportunity for Send a Cow to learn how to mainstream disability more effectively across its sustainable agriculture and livelihoods programming, to ensure people with disabilities can fully participate and benefit.

The first goal of the project was to improve livelihoods and social inclusion for 4,500 vulnerable people living in Pabbo Sub-County.

Send a Cow Uganda worked closely with the National Union for Women with Disabilities of Uganda (NUWODU), to deliver an integrated social and economic improvement programme for mixed groups of people with and without a disability - addressing barriers to participation and engaging everyone towards full inclusion.

**Activities**

Project participants joined mixed self help groups of people with and without a disability and took part in training in gender and social inclusion (including WASH), disability rights, sustainable agriculture, nutrition, income generation and village savings and loans schemes.

Disability awareness raising and activities reached the wider community through music, dance and drama, radio messaging, engagement of local leaders, the establishment of community tree nurseries and community cooperatives.

---

"The project was instrumental in demystifying disability within Send a Cow programming."

- Peter Magara, External Evaluation Consultant, March 2021
Social inclusion

The project greatly improved social wellbeing for both people with and without disabilities at household and community level. By the end of the project 97% of project participants said they were satisfied or very satisfied with community support (baseline 54%), 86% were involved in community decision-making (baseline 20%) and 86% were comfortable speaking in public (baseline 36%).

“To stay in a community when you have disability is not easy... because you can be afraid to work with others, to stay with them, even to go in the meeting – to talk in a community meeting. It’s not easy when you have disability like me.”

- Quinto Oyet (pictured right)

### IMPACT AND RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baseline 2018</th>
<th>Mid line 2019</th>
<th>End line 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with community support</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% aware of the rights of people with disabilities</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable speaking in public</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved in community decisions</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 96% of participants were aware of the rights of people with disabilities by project end.
Food security and nutrition

The proportion of food secure households increased from 8% to 69% by the end of the project and the percentage of people experiencing less than 2 hunger months per year increased from 34% to 93%. The diversity of food consumed and therefore nutrition also improved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of households fully food secure</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline 2018</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid line 2019</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End line 2021</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of households experiencing less than 2 hunger months a year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of households experiencing less than 2 hunger months a year</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline 2018</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid line 2019</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End line 2021</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% households practising good nutrition with diverse diets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% households practising good nutrition with diverse diets</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline 2018</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid line 2019</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End line 2021</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“We are eating very well with all the three meals that is breakfast, lunch and supper unlike before the project where we used to eat one meal a day.”

– Patrick Lawoka, right, with his son Amos

Yolanda Agik (pictured far right, with family) has a physical disability and her husband has a hearing and speech disability. Since joining the project, her family eats regularly.

“We mix okra, tomatoes, silver fish, peas, eggs and sim-sim paste,” she says. “The surplus is to sell in the nearby local market.”
Livelihoods: income, savings and loans

The project families saw an increase in average daily income from $0.24 to $3.58 (with 27% earning over $4 per day).

Families were able to diversify their income sources for greater resilience, and develop a culture of saving and investment in their enterprises. By project end, 40% of the families were saving $1 per day (baseline 1%) and 89% had completed their loan repayments (baseline 0%).

The results showed that people with disabilities were able to increase and diversify their income, join a mainstream savings and credit scheme, actively save and access loans – something they were previously not able to do and going against the traditional view of people with disabilities being dependent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of households saving $1 per day in VSLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid line 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End line 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of households completing loan repayments on credit secured from VSLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid line 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End line 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Increase in average daily income from $0.24 to $3.58

“Now we have money; if you want a loan you can get it. We have to keep moving on.”

- Pekon Ngee, Village Savings and Loans Group
After the project started, people with disabilities in the project faced several challenges, mostly linked to barriers to participation that limited their potential. Lack of self-belief and low self-esteem was the first barrier with many people with disabilities not believing they could engage in agricultural activities. Other barriers to participation were social isolation, caused by a lack of respect and understanding in the community, lack of adapted tools or accessible facilities, and a general lack of awareness in the community of the rights of people with disabilities.

However, the project's final results show that if barriers to participation are removed people with disabilities can become more self-reliant with community support and a change in mindset at individual, household and community level. Key enabling factors were: acceptance, role models, trust and respect in their groups and communities, active support networks, and encouragement to adopt farming tools and techniques to suit individual needs.

The mixed group approach was also key to success, and by project end people without a disability were advocating alongside their fellow group members with a disability for others to respect their rights.

“Project staff reported that people with disabilities were often underestimated before the project and were seen as dependents. It was a surprise to many community members that they were quick to learn and adopt new practices and were sometimes faster than those without physical disability.’

- Peter Magara, External Evaluation Consultant
March 2021

Adaptations were driven by people with disabilities themselves, who quickly adopted the sanitation and hygiene practices such as constructing ramps and rails for their latrines, adapting the height of tip taps and drying racks, and changing farm layouts by raising beds for easy weeding or widening crop rows to accommodate a wheelchair. Standard ‘inclusive technologies’ are too expensive and out of reach for many resource-strained households in the area, but the project demonstrated that people with disabilities are best placed to find and adopt local solutions to their own barriers.

The project demonstrated to staff, communities and people with a disability themselves that those with a disability had the capacity to work and thrive just like others, provided they had access to assistive devices/tools and a supportive network of like-minded persons. The project pioneered adaptive technologies for engaging people with disabilities in agricultural interventions, customising sanitation and hygiene technologies, adapting tools and farm layouts and facilitating access to mainstream savings and credit initiatives.

At country level, NUWODU helped mentor SACU staff on how to work with people with disabilities, from identification of disability, to effective communication and inclusion of all types of disability.

Working with an Extension Worker with a hearing impairment and a sign interpreter who regularly visited the communities to raise awareness and inspire others as a role model was a significant factor in the project success. Recruitment of people with disabilities as Community Resource Persons (CRP, 33% with a disability) also made it easy to reach out to and inspire others in the communities. CRP are volunteers chosen by self help groups who receive additional training and facilitation skills and go on to mentor the group members continuing to provide support after the project ends.

The project enhanced learning and effectiveness of Send a Cow staff to mainstream disability across country programmes.

Send a Cow is now committed to actively include people with disabilities and shift mindsets around inclusion in all their projects and ensure that all staff are appropriately trained.
“One important lesson I’ve learned is that working together in partnership is very important, because working alone you cannot achieve the goals you want to. I’ve learned that partnership is a strength to everything.”

-Molly Ongoza, Extension Worker from NUWODU

In the picture below she sits opposite her sign interpreter Sandra and Send a Cow staff, many of whom have now learnt basic sign language.

Summary of Key learnings

- The importance of engaging with a local DPO like NUWODU
- Role models are important – group leaders and trainers with disabilities help to inspire others
- Building the confidence of people with a disability – self-belief comes first and is key
- Supportive community networks ensure sustainability – self-help groups, community volunteers, Extension Workers
- Changing attitudes towards people with disabilities at family and community level is vital
- Mapping local support services is important for referrals for specialist medical help or assistive devices – as a mainstream organisation Send a Cow is not an expert in disability and had to link with other local services
- Breaking down barriers to participation is needed – physical and attitudinal
The second goal of the project was to create a shift in Send a Cow's wider organisational culture, in terms of knowledge and attitudes towards disability as well as the introduction of more disability-inclusive practices across all operational areas, including Programmes, Finance & HR, Communications and Fundraising.

In 2019, a Gender and Social Inclusion (GSI) Workshop in Uganda brought together all of Send a Cow's GSI Coordinators to learn from the ADIMAP project and exchange knowledge and ideas to improve inclusion across all country programmes. A GSI Working Group continues to share learning at monthly online meetings. All UK staff took part in a training session facilitated by the West of England Centre for Inclusive Living (WECIL) to develop their knowledge and understanding around disability and inclusion issues. A cross-team Disability and Inclusion Working Group now meets monthly to continue to champion these issues and improve practices.

As a result of these activities, Send a Cow is now better able to support programme participants, staff members and supporters with disabilities, monitor, evaluate and communicate about our disability-inclusive development work and create a more inclusive culture to actively attract employees with a disability.

Send a Cow has used the learnings from this project to develop a 10 point ‘Inclusion Charter’ for the organisation, using the key building blocks of: **Training and Awareness**; **Embedding in Strategy and Project Cycles**; and **Links to Networks (T.E.N)** to help ensure disability inclusion is mainstreamed across Send a Cow.

**Send a Cow recommends 10 principles of disability inclusion**

1. Proactive inclusion of people with disabilities at project participant identification stage

2. Adopt the Washington Group questions (short set) to guide data collection

3. Develop a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) survey to promote thinking and discussion

4. Develop and roll out a staff training program relevant to the work, programming and structures of your organisation

5. Promote the use of ACAP tools as principles of inclusion (Access, Communication, Attitude, Participation)

6. Adopt an in-house data analysis tool, for example Send a Cow uses a Social Inclusion Index - a set of 10 questions within our impact surveys to measure if people feel included

7. Embed inclusion commitments in strategic documents and policies

8. Share learning and examples of adaptations of programme work amongst country programs, partners and other NGOs (hygiene and sanitation, basic farming tools and techniques)

9. Stipulate a mandatory line for inclusion in budget templates (3%)

10. Embark on the Disability Confident Employer Scheme looking into processes and policies

‘This project was a catalyst to wider organisational change and has helped embed inclusion at all levels within Send a Cow. With support from WECIL we are working to become a Disability Confident Employer and continue on our journey towards full inclusion.’

-Amanda Crookes, Global Gender and Social Inclusion Coordinator
Anthony Okeny is a leader for his self-help group called ‘Kica Ber’ translated as ‘kindness is good’. Anthony has a physical disability and over the last 3 years of the project he has become a role model in his community, helping to inspire others to change the way they view disability.

Anthony joined training and awareness raising sessions in his mixed group of people with and without disabilities. The awareness raising sessions transformed his own perspective on attitudes towards disability: “disability is not inability,” he now says.

Anthony and his fellow group members multiplied their farm production following training in sustainable agriculture. He was able to sell his surplus farm produce and diversify his income by investing some of his profits into a small shop selling basic goods such as salt, cooking oil, soap, kerosene, food and drinks.

“I appreciate the project for highlighting disability through awareness”

Anthony’s life has changed significantly. “I appreciate the project for highlighting disability through awareness. We are now achieving our rights and transforming our lives.”

His future plan is to buy a vehicle for transporting farm produce to market and supplies to stock up his shop.