

Dear Friends and well-wishers!

We hope that you are doing great and that this first quarter of the year has been better than you dreamed it.

We at SCT hit the ground running as always. There has simply been a lot to do, many opportunities to serve and grow, that this newsletter is not enough to share all our highlights as we would have loved to.

We have tried to give you a snippet of what is going on in each of our five areas of Health, Education, Family Empowerment, Capacity Building, Advocacy and Awareness, but feel free to reach out if you would like to hear more in detail.



HEALTH

We have lots of new children attending our Therapy Programs at our Centres and Outreaches. It is interesting to note that we are starting to see children as young as three months coming to our programs, which shows an increase in awareness and service seeking behaviour in the communities.

At the beginning of the year the medical team was involved in giving out over 500 wheelchairs in partnership with two other organizations, although very great news for those that were able to receive them, this was just a drop in a very big ocean, as hundreds of children are still on our many waiting lists for a suitable device. We hope that many more opportunities will arise to meet this need in the future.

They both had severe malnutrition, pressure sores on all bony prominences and cried at every touch or movement due to pain. Mother said that they had been very well and thriving until they turned 3 years old.

Petronella was the first to get a stroke and Pauline got one three months later. This is when they were diagnosed with Sickle Cell Disease. They got very sick and subsequently lost the use of all their limbs. They were then mostly kept indoors in bed and only taken out of bed for feeding and bathing.

After assessment, it was determined that it was impossible to give them wheelchairs, but instead a care plan that involved the use of positioning blocks, frequent turning, nutrition and counselling for the parents was started. The Therapists and Hub Technicians made regular visits to the home to change/ resize blocks as the children made progress.

By 2019 exactly a year later, they were ready for their first wheelchairs as they now had enough seating range at the hips and knees. The chairs have had to be readjusted over the last two years every 3 to six months as their bodies got more accustomed to sitting and their joint ranges improved.



Pauline

Petronella

We would like to share the story of the twins Petronella and Pauline, as it clearly helps to explain how much an appropriate device can change a life, and the consequences of being without one.

Some of you might have heard a bit about the twins because this has been a journey we embarked on in 2018 when the twins were brought to one of the Wheelchair Outreach Clinics.

At the end of March 2023, the team was very happy to report full range in seating, no pressure sores, better nourishment, high tolerance for sitting and movement, but best of all was the fact that the children now spend their days outside and go on frequent walks in the community with the help of their siblings! Mother is so proud of what has been achieved for her children and wishes that many more children get this help sooner than later, as was the case for the twins!

We have had so much to celebrate in this quarter. 18 of our vocational skills youths at the Mukisa Inclusive Village on Bussi Island graduated with honors, after a successful training in farming practices, and tailoring.

All the students got a starter pack of either animals and feeds or tailoring machines and their accessories to continue perfecting their trade at home. We look forward to hearing more from these budding entrepreneurs.



Furthermore, two of our children, Jovia Nagawa and Joram Mutikke, that started in our therapy program in 2007 and 2011 respectively, made progress to catch up class and later integrated into mainstream schools, finished their Primary School Education with very good grades.



Jovia Nagawa



Joram Mutikke

Joram has since started Secondary School, but sadly our Jovia has been turned away from all possible Secondary Schools because they are not able to cater to her complex challenges. Jovia wants to become a lawyer and we are looking for every possible way of helping her achieve this dream!

At our Inclusive Kindergarten and Primary School, **DAWN CHILDREN'S CENTRE**, located in Bukoto, we got a completely new look in the new year with the addition of new classroom blocks and a complete compound makeover. With the addition of Primary 6 and the reintroduction of one of our beginners classes, the number of classes and the number of children in attendance is continuously increasing.



In this first quarter we have already engaged the children in a variety of learning activities including a School Trip and the celebration of World Book Day with a costume day at the end of Term 1. We also continued with swimming lessons and dance classes as well as exploring other vocational skills. Being able to expose our children to a wide variety of experiences expands their knowledge base and experience of the world, as well as guiding them towards achieving their full potential.



FAMILY EMPOWERMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

APRIL 2023 | NEWSLETTER

ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

We cannot help but brag about our Kwagalana (love one another) Parents Support Group at Mukisa Foundation. This is because, not only have they been able to put their high quality soap on market, they are now mentoring other mums to follow their footsteps.



When they heard that fellow mums in Malawi were struggling to set up viable income generation projects, they quickly organized tutorials in both soap making and hair dressing, which were filmed by the visiting CEO of Fount for Nations in Malawi. The mums are more than eager to give ongoing support to their friends in Malawi, having seen how these skills have improved the quality of their lives and that of their children.



Our Advocacy and Awareness efforts are no longer limited to Uganda!

We have recently joined the African Disability Collaboration, which so far has six founding member organizations from East Africa and Malawi. These include Fount for Nations in Malawi, CBDIO in Tanzania, Kuhenza and The Action Foundation in Kenya, Kyaininga Child Development Centre and Mukisa Foundation in Uganda. Uganda was the first host of the collaboration's events in March, and plans are underway for other events in other countries.



The dream is to have this collaboration cover the whole of Africa with both knowledge and best practices for better service delivery and impact across the entire continent.

While we have many reasons to celebrate, we also have a number of pain points. These include;

- Increase in malnutrition amongst children. Over 30% of our children have moderate to severe malnutrition. This trend started during the pandemic and sadly is on the increase.
- Scarcity and exponential increase in the cost of medication for epilepsy and seizures. The medicines for most of our children are often not available in both government and private facilities and the few that have them, sell them at a very high cost. This has led to many families failing to get refills for their children, and as a result we are seeing many children regress in development and sometimes dying due to lack of compliance to their medication. We are doing everything possible to avail this medicine to the children but the cost is too high for us to serve them all.
- Our faithful Mukisa van has served us and carried us across the country for eight long years. Being the only car we own, it has done everything from being an ambulance, produce and equipment carrier to even being a funeral van, faithfully and is very, very tired as seen from the ever increasing costs of repairs and service. It is safe to say that it has served us well and needs to retire, but this can only happen if we get a replacement.
- The landlord of the current Dawn Children's Centre premises is planning to put it on the Market for sale. We have been given first priority to buy it and we are believing for the funds to make this a reality. Please join us and/ or refer us to any sources of assistance as we need to raise the funds quickly.

Gifts and donations towards the following are highly appreciated:

Medical and Nutritional Care is \$50 per child per month.

Our target is to serve 300 children in the next quarter.



Van and General Mobility: \$50,000



Dawn Children's Centre premises is on the market at \$547,945



Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need more information about these ongoing projects or anything concerning children with disabilities in Uganda.

We would love to hear from you!

None of this would be possible without your continued generosity, love, commitment and support.

We thank you and appreciate all that you do on our behalf.

**Wishing you every blessing.
Florence and the entire SCT Team.**

*Thank
you*

Contact:

0776613170/ 0705445565

0772353020/ 0393108942

Email:

sctuganda@gmail.com

 **SpecialChildrensTrust**

www.specialchildrenstrust.org

