



Umbrella of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities in the fight against HIV and for Health Promotions



ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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Vision

An inclusive society where persons with disabilities are empowered, dignified, and enjoy wellbeing.

Mission

Strengthen the capacities of member organizations, support, guide and coordinate programs to promote the rights of PWDs for inclusive services in HIV&AIDS, health and employability

Organizations Members

ABADAHIGWA – Organization of Blind Veterans

AGHR – General Association of Disabled in Rwanda

OLSAR - Organization of Landmine Survivors and Amputees of Rwanda

COLLECTIF TUBAKUNDE – Association for children and youth with intellectual disability in Rwanda

NOUSPR - Organization for people with psychosocial disabilities

RNUD - Rwanda National Union of the Deaf

RUB – Rwanda Union of the Blind

THT - Troup of Handicapped Persons Twuzuzanye

UWEZO – Organization for Youth Empowerment

OWDHD: Organization of women with Disabilities on Health and Development

HSMD: Hope for Single Mothers with Disabilities

RNADW: Rwanda national Association of Deaf women

SSR: Stroke Survivors of Rwanda

FOREWORD

The year 2022, was very busy journey in executing programs aiming at strengthening the capacities of persons with disabilities, health facilities and services providers as well as continuous advocacy for policy change to ensure inclusion and improving the access to equitable services for both children and adults with different impairments.

UPHLS takes this opportunity to express its deep appreciation and sincere thanks to its partners who are contributing financially and technically for effective and efficient program implementation and realize key achievements in the promotion of the rights of persons with

disabilities in different angles including health, employment and advocacy. Our thanks also go to UPHLS members, UPHLS secretariat as well as our community volunteers (peer educators) for the strong collaboration shown throughout the year. We would like to acknowledge the effort and contribution of dedicated UPHLS staff for working tirelessly to realize a great achievement as mentioned in this report.



UPHLS will continue its endeavors to Strengthen the capacities of member organizations, support, guide and coordinate programs to promote the rights of PWDs for inclusive services in HIV&AIDS, health and employability.

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and horizontal strokes.

Dr. Patrick Suubi
The Legal Representative
UPHLS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Annual Report shows a snapshot on the activities conducted in the period of 12 months from January to December 2022. It represents key achievements realized during the reporting period in comparison with UPHLS annual plan. All activities conducted turned around three areas of UPHLS focus including HIV and AIDS, Health Promotion and Employment Programs. Six main projects have been implemented as follows: RBF HIV/NSP, Strengthening HIV Clinical Services in the Republic of Rwanda under PEPFAR (MOH-CDC COAG), Every life Matters, WASH for all, Work for All (Umurimo Kuri Bose) and Mainstreaming disability in Health, Nutrition and HIV services to address stigma and promotion of equity of the children with disabilities, WINSIGA KANDI TUJYANA Phase II.

Briefly, this year UPHLS realized a tremendous achievement through different interventions under the above mentioned projects. 368 health care providers mainly working in health facilities (those working in HIV, ASRH, nutrition, social workers, midwives and the supervisors of community health workers) have been trained on disability including 176 health providers who were trained on disability specific needs and disability mainstreaming, 98 midwives and the supervisors of Community Health Workers were trained on disability prevention, early detection and interventions and 94 health care professionals trained on ear and hearing care to support on screening of children with hearing impairment and fitting of hearing aids. 6 health centers have been renovated to serve as model for inclusive health facilities.

3,178 Community Health Workers (CHWs) were reached out with the message on disability inclusion including 50 community health workers trained on disability mainstreaming in the community health interventions and 3128 CHWs including their supervisors from health centers and hospitals increased their awareness on disability and inclusive nutrition. 253 youth with disabilities were trained on Sexual and reproductive health and life skills.

1024 persons were screened to be provided with assistive devices or supported to medical/rehabilitation services including 153 people screened on eye health 691 children with hearing impairment and 180 people were assessed by orthopedists. 656 persons with disabilities were provided with assistive devices including 295 children with hearing impairment fitted with hearing aids, 103 persons with visual impairment provided with white canes, 84 persons with physical impairment and those with multiple were provided with wheelchairs, 150 persons were given 249 crutches (where some received pairs and others received single crutches). 13 persons were provided with orthosis and prosthesis and 11 persons received compensation shoes.

20,664 persons with disabilities were reached out through community awareness on HIV and ASRH. 220 families of children with disabilities were given livestock including goats, hens and pigs to improve nutrition status of children with disabilities.

In total we enrolled 246 youth but only 229 youth benefited from UKB package services including youth enrolled in technical skills training (82 youth), others grouped into three SILCs (49 youth) and 98 youth oriented in on the job training pathway. About 76 youth have completed the WRN!/BYOB training and benefited from other UKB foundational package such as Work Based Learning (WBL), VSLA, Youth Leadership and Accompaniment Program. All 229 youth have received various types of supplemental packages and linkages support to transition in either wage employment jobs or self-employment.

Without the enabling environment and the commitment of UPHLS team, the mentioned achievements would not be realized. We are thankful for the faith that our beneficiaries, partners and leadership have attributed us in 2022, and look forward to more wonderful milestones to celebrate at the end of next year!



KARANGWA Francois Xavier
Executive Director
UPHLS

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I. INTRODUCTION

Umbrella of organizations of Persons with Disabilities in the Fight against HIV&AIDS and for Health Promotion was created on 21st September, 2006 by the Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), registered under final Registration No 048/NGO/2015 by RGB. UPHLS's Vision is to have an inclusive society where people with disabilities are empowered and enjoy wellbeing and dignity. UPHLS mission is to strengthen the capacities of member organizations, support, and guide and coordinate programs aim at promoting the rights of Persons with Disabilities for inclusive services in HIV&AIDS, health and employability.

During the year 2022, UPHLS carried out different interventions to strengthen the health system to increase the access to health care services for persons with disabilities, capacity building of persons with disabilities in different areas including HIV and SRH, COVID-19 preventive measures, eye care, WASH and vocational and technical skills for youth with and without disabilities, provision of assistive technologies and capacity building of health care service providers on disability rights and specific needs. Apart from trainings and awareness sessions, UPHLS has capacitated persons with disabilities and their families by providing assistive technologies and supporting the families of children with disabilities to improve the nutrition outcome in children with disabilities. Persons with disabilities have also supported to access care and treatment particularly those with eye care concerns and persons with hearing impairments. UPHLS renovated 6 health centers to serve as model for inclusive health facilities. All these interventions are under four thematic areas that UPHLS respond to including HIV and AIDS, Health Promotion, employability and Advocacy.

All the mentioned interventions have been conducted under the technical and financial support of different partners through five main projects as follows: RBF-HIV/ NSP funded by Global Fund through the MoH/RBC, Every Life Matters funded by See You Foundation, MoH CDC – CoAg funded by CDC through the MoH, Umurimo Kuri Bose (UKB) funded by USAID through ADC, WASH for all funded by Disability Right Fund and WINSIGA KANDI TUJYANA funded by UNICEF. During 2022, UPHLS also received small grant from UNAIDS to mainstream persons with disabilities in HIV response in Track Cities.

The purpose of this report is to showcase the different activities conducted by UPHLS throughout the year 2022, best practices, lessons learnt, the challenges met and the solutions taken as well as the recommendations and the plan for the year 2023.

II. UPHLS ADMINISTRATION

2.1. UPHLS Organs meetings and BoD members participation in the events

From January to Decembers 2022, different Governing organs meetings were held as follows:

- o One General Assembly held on 05 April 2022 at where each OPD was represented jointly with all elected organs
- o Four ordinary Board of Directors meetings
- o Two internal audit committee meeting with audit exercises,
- o One conflict resolution meeting
- o OPDs members have been trained on gender and disability mainstreaming policies;

The 2022 was marked by a strong collaboration between UPHLS's organs from national level to the grass root level where the UPHLS is implementing different activities.

2.2. Human resource and organization materials management

During the year 2022, UPHLS had a total of 21 staff including 17 at the head office and 4 field officers working in the provincial offices. UPHLS was able to maintain and pay the salaries for 21 staff during 12 moths. Different staff meetings, management meetings and senior management meetings have been organized for capacity building, planning sessions and to assess the project implementation progress and also to discuss on the issues that may hinder the effective implementation of the projects as well as the staff performance towards their responsibilities. Therefore, the matters arise during the year were solved accordingly and smoothly. The Executive secretariat participated international conferences and national conferences and workshops on disability and/or HIV&AIDS, CCM, TWGs (HIV, SRH, Disability and rehabilitation, ...), provincial and District meetings. The outcome of these conferences, workshops was for learning, share best practices, advocacy and networking.

UPHLS materials and equipment have been well managed according to UPHLS Administrative and financial policies. The old equipment that were no longer used have been sold through public auction.

2.3. Administration

Generally, the Executive Secretariat of UPHLS has successfully ensured daily management of resources and property of UPHLS, UPHLS consolidated action plan has been developed and shared to all concerned including the districts of interventions/ JADF where UPHLS is operating and UPHLS oversaw its implementation. The reports for organization interventions have been done and presented to the BoD, shared to the districts of interventions and the donors.

2.4. Organizational development & resource mobilization

2022 was the last year UPHLS strategic plan. For this, UPHLS organized consultation sessions with the staff to assess the ending strategic plan, level of implementation, gaps realized in the strategic plan and propose the orientation for the next strategic plan. 2022 was also marked by the phasing out of Umurimo Kuri Bose Project but also the development new proposals. The feedbacks for some proposals have been received while other feedback are not yet provided. Two projects passed through including WINSIGA KANDI TUJYANA PHASE II and “EmployAble/ Into Business” which is a bridge funding for EmployAble and will be funded by See You Foundation.

III. UPHLS ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR 2022

The year 2022 was marked by different interventions including the capacity building of health facilities, capacity building of UPHLS members, persons with disabilities and their families, provision of assistive technologies, advocacy workshops, conferences, etc. All these interventions were carried out under the following projects: RBF-HIV/ NSP funded by Global Fund through the MoH/RBC, Every Life Matters funded by See You Foundation, MoH CDC – CoAg funded by CDC through the MoH, Umurimo Kuri Bose (UKB) funded by USAID through ADC, WASH for all funded by Disability Right Fund and WINSIGA KANDI TUJYANA funded by UNICEF. UPHLS also received small grant from UNAIDS to mainstream persons with disabilities in HIV response in Track Cities.

3.1. HIV and AIDS Program

Under this program, we have one main project called RBF-HIV/NSP but also there other two project that have intervention on HIV and SRH including MoH CoAg and Every Life matters.

3.1.1. RBF – HIV/NSP

During the year 2022, UPHLS had one specific project to HIV and AIDS which is RBF – HIV/NSP funded by the Global Fund through MoH/RBC. The project interventions focused on HIV and COVID-19 prevention among persons with disabilities. The following are the districts covered by the program: Kayonza, Rwamagana in Eastern province; Rulindo, Gicumbi and Musanze in Northern Province; Rubavu, Karongi and Nyabihu in Western Province; Nyanza, Muhanga & Ruhango in Southern Province; Gasabo, Nyarugenge and Kicukiro District in the city of Kigali.

The main activities conducted under the program include:

- Training of ToTs
- Training of youth with disabilities on Sexual and reproductive health
- Conduct disability-friendly awareness campaigns on HIV prevention and COVID 19
- Capacity building of Umbrella Constituencies to increase their engagement in community mobilization and advocacy during Covid-19
- Provision of assistive devices to persons with disabilities living with HIV

Training of ToT on HIV and AIDS

During the year 2022, UPHLS trained Persons with Disabilities as ToT who in turn have to accompany the peer educators through out the awareness campaigns on HIV and COVID-19 prevention. The trainees were trained on HIV & AIDs, STIs, GBV, VMMC, life skills, Leadership and cooperative management. The trainees also were given information about other pandemics like Monkey Pox and Ebola. ToTs support UPHLS to reach persons with disabilities within the self-help groups with HIV prevention messages and COVID-19 preventive measures including the awareness COVID vaccine.

People reached during during the training of ToTs

Type of disability	Gender		Total participants
	Male	Female	
Physical impairment	30	34	64
Visual impairment	6	9	15
Hearing and speaking impairment	6	7	13
Mental	4	3	7
Other types	6	5	11
Total	52	58	110

The table shows that 110 persons with disabilities including 52 females and 58 males were reached during the trainings in 15 districts including Gasabo, Kicukiro, Nyarugenge in Kigali city;

Gicumbi, Rulindo and Musanze in Northern Province ; Muhanga , ruhango and Nyanza in Southern Province ; Karongi, Rubavu and Nyabihu in Western Province ; Bugesera, Rwamagana and Kayonza in Eastern Province. After the training the ToTs supported the Field Officers in supportive supervision of outreach campaigns conducted in the mentioned districts.

Training of youth with disabilities on Sexual and reproductive health

The training of youth with disability in and out of school on sexual and reproductive health was conducted to increase the knowledge of the trainees on sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV services among youth with different types of impairments. The following topics were covered during the training : UN Conventions on the rights of persons with disabilities and the National legal framework on disability ; Sexual and reproductive health and it's component ; Sex, gender, Gender Roles and Gender Based Violence (GBV); Contraceptive and Family Planning methods for adolescents; Sexually transmitted Infections and HIV&AIDS; Adolescents Risk Behavior as well as Life skills

The training totaling up 138 youth with disabilities including 79 females and 59 males coming from the city of Kigali, Muhanga, Ruhango and Nyanza in Southern Province; Rwamagana, Kayonza and Bugesera in Eastern Province; Karongi, Nyabihu and Rubavu in Western Province and Rulindo, Gicumbi and Musanze in Northern Province.

The chart below shows the participant in different categories of impairments



Conduct disability-friendly awareness campaigns on HIV prevention and COVID 19

During 2022, UPHLS conducted awareness campaigns on HIV and AIDS prevention and COVID-19 preventive measures among persons with disabilities and their families. These campaigns have been conducted in Kayonza, Rwamagana, Bugesera, Muhanga, Nyanza, Nyabihu, Rubavu, Karongi, Musanze, Rulindo, Gicumbi and Kigali. Awareness campaigns were facilitated by the peer educators under the supportive supervision of UPHLS field officers. In total 20,991 persons with disabilities and their families have been reached during awareness campaigns on HIV and COVID-19.

The table below shows persons reached for each activity

Activity	Participants		Total
	Females	Males	
Disability friendly outreach session on HIV and AIDS	1,605	1,310	2,915
Disability friendly outreach session on COVID-19	9,986	7,763	17,749
Total	11,591	9,073	20,664

Capacity building of UPHLS members to increase their engagement in community mobilization and advocacy during Covid-19

UPHLS has 13 members including General Association of Disabled in Rwanda (AGHR), COLLECTIF TUBAKUNDE, Rwanda National Union of the Deaf (RNUD), Rwanda Union of the Blind (RUB) , UWEZO, ABADAHIGWA, Organization of Landmine Survivors and Amputees of Rwanda (OLSAR), Rwanda Union of little people (RULP) , Troupe Handicap Twuzuzanye (THT), Organization of women with disabilities on Health and Development OWDHD), Stroke Survivors of Rwanda SSR) , Rwanda National Association of Deaf Women (RNADW) and Hope for Single Mothers with Disabilities (HSMD).

UPHLS conducted capacity building of all the mentioned member organizations on Risk communication and community engagement; COVID-19 preventive measures, COVID Vaccine and associated rumors to break resistance to the vaccine. We have also discussed on other challenges that may hinder persons with disabilities to access COVID-19 vaccination. Most of the organization members took this occasion to organize general assemblies. In total 273 participants including from the mentioned organizations including 142 females and 131 male attended the capacity building sessions.

Provision of assistive devices to persons with disabilities living with HIV

After the screening conducted in collaboration with HIV Gatagara Gikondo, in Kicukiro, Nyarugenge, Gasabo, Muhanga, Nyanza, Huye, Musanza, Gicumbi, Rulindo, Rubavu, Nyagatare and Kayonza. 180 persons with disabilities were found in need of different assistive devices. But

due to the limited budget, only 70 persons (43 females and 27 males) out 180 persons selected screened were served in Nyagatare, Kayonza, Huye, Nyanza and Ruhango.



Assistive devices provided

No	Assistive device provided	Quantity
1	Ortheses	7
2	Protheses	6
3	Compansation Ordinal shoes	11
4	Elbow crutches	26
5	Auxilliary cruches	9
6	Wheelchairs	12
7	White canes	3
Total		74

3.2. Health Promotion Program

3.2.1. MoH CDC CoAg

MoH CDC CoAg is the project funded by CDC through the Ministry of Health with the goal of strengthening HIV clinical services in Rwanda where UPHLS partners with MoH to ensure that the specifics need of persons with Disabilities are taken into consideration throughout the program implementation. For this to happen, UPHLS conduct interventions focusing in the capacity building of health facilities that are supported by CDC including the trainings of health care providers, accessibility check and renovation of the selected health facilities to serve as model for other stakeholders (both public institutions and government partners) who wish to promote inclusive health care services.

Conduct accessibility check for health facilities among which 5 will be upgraded

UPHLS conducted accessibility check in 15 health centers using Disability Inclusion Score Card to assess the level of inclusion of Health Center, physical and information accessibility and to propose possible solutions for the gaps identified. The health centres assessed are the following:

- Bugaragara and Karangazi HCs in Nyagatare District;
- Nzige and Nyakaririo health centers in Rwamagana district;
- Giti and Muhondo health Centers in Gicumbi District;
- Tumba health center in Rulindo;
- Shyira in Nyabihu district;
- Murara and Kigufi health centres in Rubavu district,
- Mbuye and Kinazi health centers in Ruhango district;
- Nyabikenke and Kavumu health centres in Muhanga district.

Touring the stated components, the team from UPHLS with the team from the visited health centers toured the health center from the main entrance and inside the health center looking the gaps that hinder a health facility to provide inclusive services in terms of physical accessibility and then provide recommendations for the identified gaps to be more accessible and after observing the nature of most health centers need more renovations to be accessible basing on their nature and locations, and others, regarding the physical accessibility and service provision, we realized that inside part of the health facilities people with Disabilities can move and access some of services exclusively toilets, laboratory, water fountains and laundry which need the renovation and other parts which need the walkways to be accessible and other.

Trainings of health care providers, local partners and local authorities

During year 2022, through MoH CDC CoAG, UPHLS conducted the trainings of health care providers, local authorities and local partners aiming at fostering the inclusion of persons with disabilities in health programs in Rwanda and HIV response by increasing knowledge on disability mainstreaming among HIV services providers, local partners and authorities.

✚ Training of Healthcare providers from upgraded Health centers on specific needs of PWDs, basic sign language, mobility and orientation



During 2022, UPHLS conducted accessibility check to 15 health centers as mentioned above among which 5 health centers were upgraded. The one of gaps identified during Disability Inclusion Score Card (DISC) is the knowledge of health care providers on disability specific needs and how to mainstream them in health care services provision. To address this gap, UPHLS organize the training of the health care providers targeting nurse working in ART services and those working in OPD. The purpose of the training was to provide basic knowledge on disability and specific needs, PWDs rights, sign language, mobility and orientation to healthcare providers in order to improve their communication and service delivery to clients with different categories of disabilities and specifically persons with hearing and visual impairment.

The training brought together 33 participants from 10 Districts in 17 health centers from where accessibility check was conducted. The participants are made of 23 female persons (among them 13 ART nurses, 9 OPD nurses, 1 midwife) and 10 male persons among them 9 OPD nurses and 1 ART nurse.

✚ Training of local partners and local authorities on disability inclusion in HIV services and friendly planning

The training of local partners and local authorities was organized to provide with them the knowledge on disability, disability specific needs, rights of persons with disabilities and disability inclusive planning.

A total number 34 participants (including 12 females and 22 males) attended the training from Burera, Gasabo, Huye, Karongi and Kayanza Districts. 12 participants local authorities from districts, 20 local partners and 2 representatives of organizations of Person with Disabilities.

Training of community health workers from health facilities on disability and HIV/AIDS and on disability friendly services

UPHLS organized a training of community health workers (CHWs) operating in catchment areas of five model health centers including: Rambura health facility catchment area in Nyabihu district, Kayenzi health facility catchment area in Kamonyi district, Kigeme health facility catchment area in Nyamagabe district, Gakenke health facility catchment area in Gatsibo district and Gihogwe health facility catchment area in Gasabo district on community health and Disability to increase and integrate persons with disabilities in the activities conducted by the community health workers, provision of disability friendly services, leaving no one behind to reach the inclusion and integrated care as necessity to end HIV/AIDS as well as the universal health coverage.

The training brought together 50 persons including 45 Community Health Workers and 5 staff in charge of supervision of community health workers.

The chart below shows health care providers, local partners and authorities reached during the training



Coaching and Mentorship

The coaching and mentorship sessions have been organized in the year 2022 to the trained health care professionals, local authorities and partners and the community health workers to share experiences about the implantation of developed disability friendly plans from the training, share experience and the challenges and then look for possible solutions jointly to ensure that persons with disabilities are fully included in health services.

It was conducted in Burera, Karongi, Nyamasheke, Huye and Kayonza districts with health professionals, local authorities and development partners and through such coaching and mentorship sessions the concerned people shared how they included people with disabilities within their implementing programs, plans and challenges faced while mainstreaming disability and got the joint suggestions from UPHLS and NCPD team with the visited trained team.

Through the conducted coaching and mentorship among the health Professionals , it was realized that the trained health care providers changed their mindset towards people with disabilities, they shared the acquired knowledge to their colleagues and some commitments from the training were put in place like, renovation of some feasible areas connecting the provided srvcies at the health facilities but still there is a limited number of trained health Professionals and they need a focal person to be as source of disability and HIV mainstreaming related contexts.

The following are the coaching and mentorship conducted:

Coaching and mentoring of trained clinical mentors from hospitals supported by PEPFAR

- After training of HIV clinical mentors from hospitals supported by MoH CDC CoAg with the aim of enhancing the inclusive health services by sharing with them the experience they faced while serving clients with different disabilities and look for jointly strategies to overcome them and It was conducted within all hospitals supported by MoH CDC CoAg from all corners of the country and through such coaching and mentorship sessions the concerned people shared how they mainstream disability included people with disabilities within their implementing programs, plans and challenges faced while mainstreaming disability and got the joint suggestions from UPHLS and MoH team with the trained team.
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- Discussing on challenges faced in provision of disability friendly services they said that there are clients with disabilities and they are served without any challenge either communication or attitudes and say that the great challenge that still exist is the physical accessibility, and community negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities.

Through such coaching and mentoring sessions, it was observed that the trained clinical mentors have changed their mindset towards PwDs and some said that people with disabilities that cannot come to hospital are facilitated with home based care and do viral load test and other services at their home. And they appreciate the way UPHLS make follow up of trained people as the way to keep them being aware and advocates of disability mainstreaming.

Coaching and mentoring for the trained Community health workers in charge of others in a cell from upgraded health facilities

UPHLS conducted the coaching and mentoring for trained community health workers in charge of others in at cell level from different health facilities: Kigeme Health center in Nyamagabe district, Kayenzi Health Center in Kamonyi district, Gakenke Health Center in Gatsibo district, Rambura Health Center in Nyabihu district, and Gihogwe Health Center in Gasabo district aiming at Providing an opportunity to community health workers trained on disability specific needs and how integrate people with disabilities into community health interventions and disability friendly planning.

Through such coaching and mentorship sessions, it was realized that the trained community health workers shared the acquired knowledge to their colleagues and started to identify all people with disabilities who are within their catchment areas specifically those who used to be hidden and help them to access health services and other government development programs.

This project year has been characterized by a high level of determination and commitment of the project team to communicate and share experience on disability inclusion with a broad range of health care providers, people with disabilities, different development partners, decision makers and key partners in HIV services provision and the project left not development partners and decision makers got knowledge on HIV/AIDs, SRH and Disability and their contribution to HIV reduction among people with disabilities but also decision makers, donors and health care providers became aware of special needs for inclusive HIV/health services and how to address such existing challenges that hinder people with disabilities in accessing HIV services.

 Facilitate 10 health facilities and 5 trained partners per Province to carry out study tours to the model health facilities and learn from the upgraded health facilities



To break the cycle of HIV and disability, UPHLS contribute to both the information and the infrastructure accessible to the big range of users with impairments by training health care providers on disability and specific needs, sign language and mobility & orientation, providing IEC tools and renovation of five health facilities to serve as model in disability friendly HIV service provision. With this regard, UPHLS organized study tour for health care providers, local authorities and development partners to learn from there about accessibility in order to provide disability friendly HIV services in particular and health services in general. 50 health care providers from different health facilities around the upgraded health facilities and district development partners from Kayonza, Eastern province, Kamonyi, Southern province, Nyamagabe, Southern province and Nyabihu in Western province at renovated health facilities including: Gahini, Kayenzi, Kigeme and Rambura health facilities participated in study tour.

The study tour at different upgraded health facilities for health care providers and development partners aimed specifically at exchanging knowledge and practices on disability friendly health services offered at the upgraded model health facilities, facilitating networking among health care providers on providing disability friendly health services especially HIV&AIDs related services,

demonstrating best practices on the inclusion of PWDs in HIV&AIDS and health services by health practitioners and community health workers, Showcase the accessibility features of the upgraded model health facilities in the catchment Districts of the project and introduce accessible IEC tools to the visiting health centers.

This was a good opportunity to share and exchange best practices on inclusive HIV&AIDS services and support learning on how to make health services disability friendly between the upgraded Model Health facilities and visiting heads of health facilities and development partners.

“I realise that we need more technical skills in what we do, at Food for Hungry we built a toilet reserved for people with disabilities but after visiting the accessible facilities I find that our toilet lacks other things to serve as disability friendly toilet, to conduct such site visit raises our understanding and thinking about disability mainstreaming, I find that we do things for PwDs without their involvement and they are not use, Said Clemence.”

National forum on HIV and Disability



UPHLS conducted a national forum on HIV and Disability and it brought together more than 70 participants including: MoH, RBC, NCPD, OPDs, UN Agencies, PEPFAR, and HIV/AIDS actor, international and local organisations with the aim of sharing the achievements, best practices in Disability and mainstreaming on HIV response in Rwanda and to raise awareness of disability issues especially in HIV/AIDS and disability to different Decision makers, stakeholders

/development partners, and governmental institutions.



During the national forum, different presentations were shared to the participants and discussions on UPHLS key achievements in the Disability and HIV, success stories, lesson learnt and the gaps that need to be addressed to ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities to HIV services.

Actions taken during the forum

The following actions have been undertaken:

- To conduct an assessment for factors influencing the high HIV prevalence among People with Disabilities
- Conduct formative research on the impact of HIV among persons with disabilities living with HIV
- Conduct a baseline survey on HIV, SRH and GBV among people with psychosocial disability, mental illness and to design strategies to address the identified issues
- Conduct desk review for gaps assessment in the existing SRH related policies and propose changes to address the identified gaps
- Increasing the awareness campaigns on SRH and existing HIV preventive measures to reduce stigma and increase of the self-confidence among people with disabilities
- UPHLS to use the research findings on HIV and disability to do a longitudinal follow to make sure that those who test negative are staying negative and those with positive to access care and treatment
- Strengthening collaboration among partners including UN Agencies, government, CSOs and OPDs to mainstream disability in HIV response
- Find preventive solution for deaf not only prevention but also treatment all partners to support UPHLS and RRP+
- Ensure that all communication materials developed are produced in accessible format to increase its accessibility to people with different categories of impairment.

Recommendations

People with disabilities experience all of the risk factors associated with acquiring HIV. They are often at an increased risk because of poverty, face severely limited access to education and healthcare, and lack the information and resources needed to facilitate safer sex. Often, they lack legal protection and are vulnerable to abuse and stigma.

- Strengthening the collaboration among CSOs and NGOs to advocate for the rights of PWD regarding GBV and IGAs to reduce stigma and dependence among people with disabilities
- Increase investments in health facilities to be disability friendly and provide adequate and accessible health services as those in place are still few
- Continuous sensitization by emphasizing on teaching persons with disabilities especially women and girls with disabilities on SRHR and fighting against GBV
- Provide continuous trainings on disability and specific needs to government entities and health care providers in particular
- There should be an expansion of partners especially government and legal partners
- Ministry of education: to strengthen the comprehensive sexual education in education sector

- Legal AID Forum to work on the law and policies in the sexual reproductive health rights modified specifically for PWDs
- Ministry of infrastructure: to work and improve inclusivity in the infrastructure planning
- Conduct baseline survey to better understand the accessibility barriers and challenges experienced by children with disabilities
- Conduct a formative research to assess how persons with disabilities living with HIV are complying with ART to achieve 95-95-95 global targets on HIV/ AIDS
- Dissemination of the research findings to other institutions which are not presented or not represented
- Advocating for a disability inclusive HMIS (health management information system) Psychosocial and economic support for persons with disabilities living with HIV
- Integrate HIV/ AIDS in pediatric development clinics (PDC) as we have seen children admitted in the services with disabilities have families characterized by:
 - Most of them single mothers
 - Separation and reunited parents due to the child
 - Mothers are more likely to be depressed
- With the support of implementing partners, to create more awareness through an integrated and tailored message on contraception use and family planning services and information in order to empower people with disabilities to make informed decision on their sexual and reproductive health
- Involve youth with disabilities in activities/ projects that aim at creating awareness around health related issues such as HIV/AIDS and SRHR as most of the youth or young people relating to their peers more than older people or their parents

3.2.2 WINSIGA KANDI TUJYANA

Winsiga Kandi Tujyana is the UNICEF funded program with aim of mainstream persons with disabilities particularly children in health, nutrition and ASRH. The program is implemented in partnership with RBC. The program has three expected results as follows:

- Reduced impairment impact to the identified children born with/or at risk of impairment
- Barriers to ASRH/HIV among youth with disabilities with special needs are reduced
- Improved and maintained nutrition status among children with disabilities to reduce stunting.

During 2022, the program covered the following districts: Musanze, Kicukiro, Nyarugenge, Karongi, Nyabihu, Huye, Nyagatare and Nyabihu.

 Conduct workshop on disability awareness and inclusive nutrition to strengthen capacities of service providers and increased engagement of parents of children with disabilities and parents/caregivers with disabilities including young women in improving the access to Maternal Infants and Young Children Nutrition (MIYCN) including hygiene promotion

- 3,128 parents/ caregivers, service providers, local authorities and community health workers have increased their awareness on disability and inclusive nutrition through awareness sessions conducted in 30 districts of the country. As outcome the community health workers have conducted the mapping of children with disabilities and young mothers with disabilities and their nutrition status as mentioned below.
- The mapping of children with disabilities, parents with disabilities including young mothers has been conducted countrywide by the community health workers. The findings revealed that 18,327 children under 6 years old, and **1825 of them were showing the signs of malnutrition (around 10%) during the period of mapping**, 8346 parents/ caregivers with disabilities have been identified including those with mental disability, multiple disabilities, hearing impairment and those with visual impairment, **554 children** under the care of these parents with disabilities report to be in malnutrition or **7% and** the highest number of children in malnutrition is concentrated in parents with multiple disabilities. The mapping also revealed 180 young mothers with disabilities. as recommendations, basing on the findings, it was recommended that there is a need to strengthen the nutrition intervention targeting children with disabilities and their families to improve the nutrition status among children with disabilities.

✚ **Capacity development of 200 parents of children with disabilities and parents with disabilities including teen mothers to improve MIYCN by supporting them to install the Kitchen garden and providing with them livestock for animal protein intakes and economic empowerment through their VSLA**

- 220 parents of CWDs have been given livestock (including goats, sheep, chickens) and 60 kitchen gardens have been set to the selected households to improve the nutrition outcome of their children while 200 women have been supported with seed fund through Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLAs).

✚ **Training of health care providers on impairment screening, early detection and management of new-borns and children with disability**

- 98 health care providers including 26 supervisors of the community health workers from 26 hospitals, 36 midwives and 32 community health workers supervisors from 36 health centers in Huye and Nyagatare have been trained on impairment screening, early detection and management of newborns and children with disability.
- Around 2,500,000 people countrywide have been reached out through community dialogues and Public awareness campaign through TV and Radio spots on disability early detection and prevention.

✚ **Screening, diagnostic and fitting of hearing aids to children with hearing impairment and the provision of other assistive devices**

This activity has been conducted in 4 pilot districts including Huye, Nyagatare, Nyarugenge and Nyabihu. Prior to the screening and the provision of assistive devices, the training of National champions, teachers and health care providers from Nyagatare, Huye, Nyarugenge and Nyabihu has been conducted as follows:

94 professionals including 17 national champions, 7 teachers from the schools of the deaf (Centre des Jeunes Sourds et Muet in Huye, Insteitut Filippo Smaledone in Nyarugenge, Umtara deaf school in Nyagatare and Nyabihu school of the deaf), 70 health care providers from district hospitals (Nyagatare and Gatunda in Nyagatare district, Kabutare in Huye District, Shyira in Nyabihu district, Nyarugenge and Muhima in Nyarugenge district) and health centers from the catchment area of the mentioned hospitals have been trained on ear and hearing care, specifically on pre-screening, assessment, acoustic couplings, counseling/troubleshooting and inspire Hearing Aid Fitting Software Overview.



691 children with hearing impairment out of 760 children identified were examined by ENT experts including 369 boys and 322 girls. Of these 115 found to have ear wax were treated with syringing. 295 children including 152 boys and 143 girls were fitted with hearing aids, 168 children referred for Auditory Brainstem Response test (ABR) and 221 including children with severe hearing loss and small children were put on waiting list.



Number of children assessed by ENT and children fitted with hearing aids



District	Children assessed by ENT			Children fitted with hearing aids			Hearing aids provided
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
Nyagatare	120	115	235	43	52	95	187
Huye	137	97	234	61	49	110	214
Nyabihu	38	33	71	25	19	44	88
Nyarugenge	74	77	151	23	23	46	91
Total	369	322	691	152	143	295	580

101 children with physical disability have been provided with assistive devices including 36 children who received 36 wheelchairs, 25 children received 25 pairs of crutches and 24 persons with disabilities provided with 24 walkers and 16 children were given white canes.

🏠 Post fitting follow up for children fitted with hearing aids



After the screening and post fitting of children with hearing impairment with hearing aids, in collaboration with the national champions and RBC, we have organized the post fitting follow up in Nyagatare, Huye, Nyabihu and Nyarugenge where 211 children out of 292 children fitted met with the national champion team to assess the provided hearing aids. The main objective of this activity was to meet with children who were provided with the hearing aids to check if they are still

operational, fit to children and to readjust those hearing aids that need to be adjusted.

- o 122 children fitted with hearing aids were safe with their devices (233 hearing aids)
- o 37 hearing aids for 24 children had the internal feedbacks. 33 out 37 hearing aids were adjusted
- o 19 hearing aids were broken while others dead among which 2 hearing aids were repaired and refitted
- o 12 children lost their hearing aids
- o 25 children were not comfortable with their ear molds while 7 children have damaged ear molds.
- o During the follow up, 49 ear molds were replaced for the children to be comfortable with their devices.



- The majority of children fitted with hearing aids are able to recognize and localize the sounds around them.
- Most of the students with hearing impairment fitted with hearing aids confessed that, after being fitted their performance in school has improved.
- Most of the children fitted took care of their devices and keep contact with the schools of the deaf for batteries changing and other advices.

Capacity strengthening of orthopedic workshops

To strengthen orthopedic workshops with purpose of improving the access to orthopedic services to children with physical impairments, four hospitals have been selected including Ruhengeri in Musanze District, Gihundwe in Rusizi District, CHUB in Huye and CHUK in Nyarugenge to be given the orthopedic materials. But as the materials came late, the distribution has been done to Ruhengeri hospital and will continue with the remaining hospital the early 2023.



Strategic documents developed in 2022

In collaboration with RBC the following strategic documents on disability and impairment early detection and management of the reversible impairments have been developed and they are under review:

- Rwanda integrated rehabilitation model (RIRM) (under validation process)
- Simplified tool for Early Detection of Developmental Delays and Disabilities in the community (STED) (under validation process)
- National clinical practice guidelines for the management of angular knee deformities (under validation process)
- National cerebral palsy clinical practice guideline (under validation process)
- National Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Management of Clubfoot Deformity (under validation process)
- National clinical practice guidelines for the management of flat foot

After the incorporation of the inputs provided the TWG, they will be submitted to the Senior Management of RBC to be approved. After the approval of RBC, the dissemination process will follow.

Training of youth with special needs of disability on ASRH and Centered co-design tools adapted to them and their care givers in Huye and Nyagatare District

66 youth with different types of impairments have been trained on ASRH and disability rights including 37 boys and 29 girls. According to the type of impairment, there was 8 trainees with physical impairment, 24 deaf, 12 trainees with visual impairment, 13 trainees with mental impairment, 3 deafblind, 2 with multiple impairments and 4 trainees with albinism. After this training, youth with disabilities in collaboration with the health centers staff in charge of youth corner are going to organize the Community engagement through

youth centered interpersonal communication on ASRH/HIV for youth with disabilities to reduce self-stigma.

District	Participants		Total
	Males	Females	
Youth with physical disabilities	5	3	8
Youth with hearing and speaking impairment	11	13	24
Youth with visual impairment	8	4	12
Youth with mental disabilities	6	7	13
Deafblind	2	1	3
Multiple (physical and mental)	2	0	2
Albinos	3	1	4
Total	37	29	66

The training of parents of CWDs on the rights of children with disabilities (focus on ASRH) and on care for CWDs

Children and adolescents with disabilities face barriers in accessing ASRH information, few of them got chance to attend schools the majority of them did not and their parents are less likely to think they need SRH information. UPHLS in collaboration with the National Child Development Agency and the District hospitals (Kabutare and Nyagatare) organized the training of parents of children with disabilities to increase their knowledge on the rights of children with disabilities with focus on ASRH and on care for CWDs living with HIV



District	Participants		Total
	F	M	
Nyagatare	20	5	25
Huye	19	6	25
Total	39	11	50

In total the training was attended by 50 parents of children with disabilities including 39 women and 11 males.

Workshop of health, youth and SGBV centers personnel on how to respond to the ASRH/ HIV needs of persons with special needs of disability in Nyagatare and Huye districts

A workshop training of 39 staff (including 27 females and 13 males) in charge of youth corners at health centres, Yego (Yes) Centers, persons in charge of GBV at the District hospitals (Kabutare, Nyagatare and Gatunda hospitals) from Nyagatare and Huye has been organized. The training was

to increase the knowledge of health care providers from health, youth and SGBV centers on how to respond to the ASRH/HIV needs of persons with special needs of youth with disabilities.

District	Participants from Youth corners in the health centers		Persons in charge of Yego Centers		GBV personnel from District hospitals		Total	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Nyagatare	12	8	0	1	2	0	14	9
Huye	11	4	1	0	1	0	13	4
Total	23	12	1	1	3	0	27	13

Mapping of nutrition stakeholders and their engagement in inclusion of children with disabilities in their programs

The mapping exercise gave UPHLS and its partners a better understanding of existing nutrition actors and how disability inclusive their interventions are and most importantly to identify where they should strengthen their interventions, mainstreaming children with disabilities within their programs. The stakeholder mapping exercise also expected to provide UPHLS and its partners the way that can help to create a platform for long term disability inclusion.

The following stakeholders have been mapped out:

- Caritas Rwanda and Food for Hungry in Nyagatare District.
- World Vision, Duhamic ADRI, APROJUMAP, Growing Health, Mwanukundwa, Compassion International, Health for Community Development, PRISM, AEE-Rwanda, RAB and Umubano Mpore in Huye District.

During the mapping exercise we found that some stakeholders mainstream families of children with disabilities in their interventions like World Vision and Compassion International while others do not. But the common challenge among the identified stakeholders is the lack of knowledge on disability mainstreaming.

Training of health centers and hospitals nutritionists and Social workers in Nyagatare and Huye on Disability and inclusive nutrition

74 health care providers participated in the training as follows:

- 16 nutritionist and 16 mental health workers from all health centers and Kabutare Hospital in Huye District;
- 20 nutritionists and social workers from Nyagatare health centers, Gatunda and Nyagatare Hospitals.

District	Nutritionists		Social worker		Total
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
Huye	6	10	7	9	32
Nyagatare	9	11	9	13	42
Total	15	21	16	22	74

The main areas covered during the training are the following:



- Understanding disability, early detection, intervention and referral
- Social behavior changes among caregivers/family of children with disabilities and psychosocial support,
- Inclusive maternal Infant and young children nutrition (MIYCN)
- Communication with parents and children with different types of impairments
- Rehabilitation strategies for children with disabilities
- Nurturing care for children with disabilities.

3.2.3 Every Life Matters

UPHLS is implementing a project entitled “**Every Life Matters**” since 2017 to date. The project focuses on the development of disability inclusive practices in sexual reproductive health and eye care. The main objective of the program is to design, test and adapt disability-inclusive interventions in healthcare system (with the specific focus on SRH and eye care), stimulate collaboration between health care providers, Organization of persons with disabilities and specialized institutions working in the area of health. The project is implemented in 4 districts including Ruhango, Nyarugenge, Rubavu and Karongi.

The following are activities conducted in 2022:

Community screening at Ruhango District



In collaboration with Kabgayi Eye Unity (KEU), Bymana Health center, and Gitwe Hospital, UPHLS conducted the community screening to people with disabilities and others in need from catchment area of Byimana health center including Mpanda, Byimana and Ntenyo sites. The total number of people screened was 153 including 92 females and 61 males. Among the people screened, people with disabilities reached are 69 including 30 males and 39 females from all sites. After screening 66 people were referred at KEU for further assessment and treatment.

Renovation of Karambi health center

Karambi health center is located at Ruhango District under and it was renovated in first step in terms of physical accessibility which means making walkway/ramps, sign post and accessible toilet to facilitate persons with disabilities to use the health center premises easily.

- **Facilitate horizontal learning and exchange on accessible health facilities design between the model health facilities developed during the pilot and new health facilities targeted in the adaptation and scale-up phase:** This was used to support the health care providers from 7 health centers in the study tour at Karambi health center that was renovated for learning on how an inclusive health center is looking like and to replicate the initiative to their respective working places. Among participants, there were the managers of health center, persons in charge of primary eye care services and the supervisors of community health workers.
- **Conduct Media and social campaign (Video spots) to promote eye health and encourage persons with disabilities and their families to take better care of their eyes:** This activity was conducted in partnership with KEU staff through different message on eye care services to promote eye health and encourage PWDs to take care of their eyes. The following is the link for more information <https://youtu.be/vZiFurF2Kl4>.
- **Mobilize the Community engagement/ animation:** This was conducted through story telling where short messages were captured among persons with disabilities on the access and use of SRH to show communities that PWDs also need SRH services and facilitate them to remove all. This video has been involved the beneficiaries with different category of disabilities, healthcare providers and others local leaders. The following is the link <https://youtu.be/fjnnaZJIojQ>
- **Public awareness on eye health and SRH/GBV through radio talk shows**
 - **Awareness raising on eye health focused on people at risks of preventable blindness and talk show was hosted by** Huguka Radio operating in Muhanga District with UPHLS Executive Director and KEU Head of department of eye

services. The main objective of this radio talk show was to raise awareness among citizens on eye health and the preventive measures to the blindness.

- o **Awareness raising on SRH/GBV** was organized and conducted by UPHLS in partnership with partners (Hope for single mothers with disabilities (HSMD) and Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB) through radio talk show (working at Kigali city) with the objective of raising awareness to the public on SRH/GBV particularly health officials, local authorities and entities responsible for law enforcement but also to discuss on strategies to be taken to remove the identified GBV related challenges.
- **Targeted SRH training sessions for PWDs, parents and caregivers by health promoters/DFP:** It was conducted in Rubavu district. One training session was conducted on SRH for youth with disabilities from Ubumwe Community Center (UCC) . 26 youth with disabilities with their parents were reached out. The second training session was provided to 12 young girls with visual impairment and their parents (on the right of PWDs in accessing SRH services and the role of parents).
- **Training of coalition and mobilization with different stakeholders:**



The main objective of this mobilization and training was to build their capacities on disability rights and information against stigma and prejudice towards persons with disabilities. The training brought together 38 participants from Karongi, Rubavu, Ruhango and Nyarugenge.

- **Lobby and advocacy meeting:** These meeting was conducted to raise awareness of the community on the challenges faced by PWDs in accessing health services in general especially SRH. The Lobby and Advocacy meetings were conducted in collaboration with the coalition team and the district authorities through community gatherings in Rubavu, Karongi, Ruhango and Nyarugenge District. In total 6 advocacy sessions were conducted in the mentioned Districts. The estimated participants during these meeting is around 800 hundred.



Training of youth with disabilities from UWEZO:



UPHLS in collaboration with UWEZO organized the training of youth with disability from UWEZO on SRH and HIV/AIDS as ToTs. The training brought together 23 youth with different category of disabilities from Nyarugenge, Rubavu and Karongi.

Training of deputy directors of prisons and healthcare providers on disability inclusion



In collaboration with Sun Light, UPHLS organized the training of deputy directors of the prison country wide with the objective of increasing knowledge on fundamental principles of human rights for persons with disability enshrined in the Constitution and other laws among Directors of prisons and the healthcare providers within the prison facilities. This will contribute to the improvement of the wellbeing of persons with disabilities in prisons in Rwanda particularly the access to health care services as well as assistive devices. A total number of 30 participants were present from RCS Headquarters and from 13 prisons of Rwanda

Provision of assistive devices: The provision of assistive devices was done during the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities which is celebrated at 03rd December every year. This activity was conducted in 6 Districts including Karongi, Nyarugenge, Muhanga, Ruhango, Nyaruguru and Rubavu. In total ... persons with disabilities were provided with assistive devices including 100 White cane for 100 persons with visual impairment, 46 wheelchairs for 46 persons with physical or multiple impairments and 200 Crutches for 100 persons with physical impairments.



- **Provision of rehabilitation services:** during the screening, different cases have been identified that need different interventions. It is in this framework that 14 persons with visual impairment were supported to go at Masaka Rehabilitation Center for rehabilitation including learning braille, mobility and orientation and to be trained on how to perform every day activities at home.

3.2.4 WASH FOR ALL

Persons with disabilities often have limited access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. The WASH actors have a key role in reducing attitudinal, institutional and environmental barriers. This relates closely to articles nine and 19 of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Minor changes are needed to ensure that PWDs can be included in WASH programs and service provision. Involving persons with disabilities from the design can help to ensure that WASH provision responds to different needs. It is much cheaper to ensure designs are inclusive at the planning stage than to make adaptations later.

UPHLS under Disability Rights Fund is implementing “WASH for Project” to advocate for accessible hygiene and sanitation facilities, engage in rights of persons with disabilities advocacy, capacity building, work with different partners to overcome stigma in the community and to promote inclusive COVID-19 recovery efforts. WASH for All project is implemented in partnership with Pax Press and Hope for single mothers (HSMD) in 5 Districts Gicumbi, Kayonza, Gisagara, Rubavu and Karongi. The project objectives are the following objectives: 1) To Strengthen the capacity of Local Leaders, Local partners, PWDs and Parents of CWDs on inclusive WASH, 2) To demonstrate Use of evidence- based advocacy on WASH among persons with disabilities at grassroots level.

The following are the activities implemented in the year 2022:

 ***Hold a workshop with local leaders, Persons with disabilities, and parents of CWDs to empower them on Disability inclusion in WASH services in five District***

5 workshops were conducted in Karongi, Kayonza, Gicumbi, Gisagara and Rubavu targeting local leaders persons with disabilities and the parents of children with disabilities. Reached participants were 115 including 48male and 67 females. Discussed topics were related to the rights of persons with disabilities and WASH.

Stigma, lack of knowledge on disability specific needs are the main challenges presented during these sessions. Participants committed to conduct a joint field visit to identify specific needs of CWDs in their catchment area to provide advocacy on education and health including access of WASH services

 Conduct Local Radio talk shows with community leaders in partnership with Pax Press and Hope for Single Mothers with Disabilities (HSMD) on disability -inclusive WASH services in the 5 Districts

The community radio talk shows were conducted in collaboration with Pax Press and have been hosted by RC/RBA Rubavu, RC/ RBA Huye (Gisagara), Radio Ishingiro for Gicumbi, Radio Isangano in Karongi and Radio Izuba in Kayonza. 40 people including 9 men and 31 females participated in these talk shows including local authorities, decision makers, district partners, PWDs and parents of CWDs. These talk shows reached around 75,000 Persons. During the radio talk shows, persons with disabilities shared the challenges they face in accessing WASH facilities, local partners and District authorities discussed on WASH program related interventions in process and how the specific needs of persons with disabilities are taken into consideration.

 Develop a UPHLS gender mainstreaming policy based on recommendations provided from the organizational gender audit and revise the reasonable accommodation policy

Last year UPHLS hired a consultant to conduct gender audit within the organization and one of the recommendations was to develop the gender policy of organization. It is in this framework that UPHLS together with the board developed Gender Mainstreaming Policy. UPHLS also developed reasonable accommodation policy. After these policies have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. These policies are available at UPHLS website. After the development of the mentioned policies, UPHLS staff, Board Members and HSMD members have been trained

 Awareness rising of disability inclusive WASH among student clubs and schools Management committees' schools

The awareness raising sessions on disability inclusive WASH among the student clubs and schools leaders were conducted in Karongi, Gisagara, Gicumbi, Kayonza and Rubavu Districts. The main objective of this activity was to raise awareness of school leaders committees and students' WASH clubs on inclusive WASH services to highlight the challenges that students with disabilities are facing and propose ways to make address them. In total 113 people attended the sessions including the students and the school managers. These sessions were conducted in collaboration with the districts representatives.

 Development of the training manual on disability and WASH to empower community WASH committees and School clubs on WASH and disability

In collaboration with Rwanda Health Communication Center (TWG on Health Promotion, Environmental and Social Determinant), National Council of Persons with Disabilities and World Vision, UPHLS organized 4-day workshop to develop the training manual on disability and WASH under the facilitation of the consultant. So far a draft document is available ready to be presented for review and validation. This manual will be used to empower community WASH committees and WASH School clubs on disability and specific needs in WASH.

3.3 Employment program

3.3.1 UMURIMO KURI BOSE



Under the Employment Program, only one project named USAID UKB project (October 2021-July 2022) was implemented. This annual report is only focusing on the UKB Project and its achievements. The UKB Project's overall goal was to promote an enabling environment for YWDs to access and succeed in employment with big focus to develop strong linkages with employers or business developers supporting them in developing more sustainable disability inclusive employment through monitoring and

improvement strategy with objectives *to increase youth employability skills, empowerment, engagement and equity and to Promote an inclusive and enabling environment for YWDs to access and succeed in employment.*

This report will only provide an overview of grant making activities in four districts of engagement out of the UKB Project's twelve targeted districts, namely Kicukiro, Nyanza, Rubavu and Musanze, to enable 220 youth to acquire skills and to gain better access to employment (self or wage employment). In total we enrolled 246 youth but only 229 youth benefited from UKB package services including youth enrolled in technical skills training (82 youth), others grouped into three SILCs (49 youth) and 98 youth oriented in on the job training pathway.

About 76 youth have completed the WRN!/BYOB training and benefited from other UKB foundational package such as Work Based Learning (WBL), VSLA, Youth Leadership and Accompaniment Program.

All 229 youth have received various types of supplemental packages and linkages support to transition in either wage employment jobs or self-employment.

Three SILC youth groups have been formed in Musanze District with 49 members and have been financially supported to increase their capital so that they could start their businesses.

As challenges, the USAID UKB Project could not fully accommodate certain categories of disabilities due to the budget that is not matching with the target as for example provision of the

assistive devices and transport facilitation to the trainees physically disabled. This has caused an imbalance between YWDs and youth without disabilities. The table below summarize the key achievement.

Activities conducted compared to annual plan

#	Activity conducted	Target ed youth	Achiev ement	Observation
1	Youth project beneficiaries enrolment	220	233	
2	Deliver WRN/ BYOB youth with P6 literacy	80	76	4 dropped out
3	Deliver technical skills training	220	180	Other 40 have been grouped into 3 formed saving groups of 49 members
4	Provide Sign Language training (basic SL to deaf youth who don't know SL)	N/A	6	All the youth in need should be selected for the training
5	Provide Disability Mainstreaming Training	N/A	34	We should have a one saving group per district but Musanze District has 3 groups
6	Formation of youth savings and loan groups	4	6	
7	Disability awareness campaign	4	4	In each district of operation a disability awareness campaign should be conducted to the parents of youth beneficiaries

IV. PARTICIPATION IN DISTRICTS, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Apart from the planned activities that implemented during this quarter, the following are other UPHLS achievements in this period:

- ✚ UPHLS staff at district level participated in different meetings, retreats and open days organize by JADF in the Districts where UPHLS operates.
- ✚ UPHLS staff at National level participated in National Conferences and workshops as well as TWGs activities
- ✚ UPHLS participated in the 24th International AIDS Conference fri,29 Jul-Tue,2August 2022 held in Canada and IAPAC Concurrence in Sevilla/Spain
- ✚ Celebration of World AIDS Day

During the year 2022, UPHLS joined the Ministry of Health/ Rwanda Biomedical Centre to celebrate the World AIDS Day on 1st December which took place in Huye District/ Southern Province. The following are the activities conducted by UPHLS during World AIDS Day :

- Mobilization of Persons with Disabilities particularly youth to participate in WAD celebration. Around 200 persons with disabilities in Huye District participated in the event, particularly, UPHLS supported youth with disabilities from CJSN school, (Youth with hearing impairment), and the youth from HVP Gatagara;
- Exhibition of adapted communication materials;
- Provision of sign language interpreters to deaf to follow different activities of the event;
- Sign language on TV Spots to reach persons with hearing impairment

✚ During exhibition, TWISUNGANE cooperative of persons with disability (from Huye district, Simbi sector) has exhibited



their products.

Celebration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Every year on 3rd December, Rwanda joins the rest of the World to celebrate the international day of persons with disabilities (IDPD) as it is an occasion to educate the general public on issues and barriers preventing persons with disabilities from participating equals country's development. During 2022 IDPD, UPHLS participated in 9 District including Gicumbi where the event celebrated at National level; Musanze in Northern Province Kicukiro and Nyarugenge in Kigali city ;Karongi and Rubavu in Western Province ; Muhanga ,Ruhango and Nyaruguru in Southern Province. During the event



UPHLS provided assistive devices including white cane, wheelchair and crutches to the people with physical and visual disabilities in all mentioned districts and provision of sign language interpreters to facilitate the people with hearing impairment to follow the event.

UPHLS also participated in exhibition to explain to the public what UPHLS, different activities conducted by the organization is.

V. BEST PRACTICES, LESSON LEARNT AND CHALLENGES MEANT DURING THE YEAR 2022

1.1. Best Practices

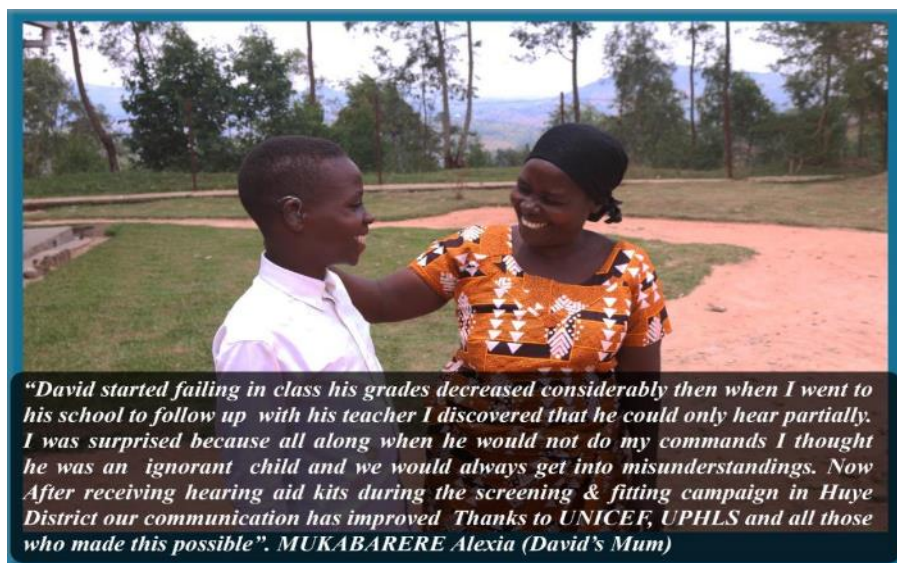
Due the training conducted with the local authorities and partner some initiatives to make their services accessible for persons with disabilities. Partners in Health put in place the accessible walkways connecting all services to facilitate persons with disabilities including ramps. Mwana Ukundwa put in place accessible walkways including pavement of ways and installation of ramp and accessible toilet. Mwana Ukundwa also provided assistive devices to children in need and supported children who need rehabilitation services. Komera started to mainstream Girls with disabilities in their interventions. Before the training, they have selected one girl who were not brought to the school because of limited economic ability of her family. Now this Girl has been supported.

New partnerships between UPHLS and different partners like Compassion International, WI Her International and SOS Village, to name few. These are results of different workshops, meeting and trainings.

Gahini sector was aware of the contribution of community dialogues and they kept conducting the community dialogues and support the self help groups formed during WINSIGA KANDI TUJYANA Project.

Kayonza district Partners and local authorities committed to take action in disability mainstreaming as they have reference where others can learn how disability friendly health services are provided.

Some of the children fitted with hearing impairment have started to improve their hearing, improvement in school performance (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6p282ZT26Tc>)



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAxI-kogVrw>

1.2.Challenges

- Persons with disabilities are still facing challenges in accessing the existing HIV preventive measures especially, HIV self-testing, and VMMC which make many people with disabilities do not know their HIV status
- Trained health care providers are no longer aware of disability and specific needs especially using of sign language while others changed the working place.
- The organization was going through many projects with squeezed activities with short deadlines, which had a detrimental effect on the remaining employees' confidence and job satisfaction.
- The identified youth were scattered and from different corners of Sector of the district. This has limited the youth from attending the work readiness training as there was one site training per district. To solve this, we have first selected the youth from the same location to avoid long distance from home to the training site as there is not transport facilitation covered by the project.
- Lack of IEC tools on WASH at accessible formats to be used by WASH actors to different categories of PWDs
- Delays in the provision of funds from the donor and release big fund to be utilized in the short time,
- Particularly on UKB project, the following challenges were documents:
 - o The youth job retention into cooperatives is accept only if the youth accept to pay for membership fees. UPHLS has solved this by contributing to the membership fees that the project could not cover
 - o Concerning the Literacy/Numeracy Assessment, most of the deaf youth do not know to read and write Kinyarwanda, only English. And the assessment test is only written in Kinyarwanda. They have only passed the test on calculation and

- performed well.
- Presence of youth with severe disability especially mental disability. And the project is not fully accommodated all categories of disabilities, as for example transport facilitation.
 - Insufficient budget for technical skills training. This has been solved by reducing the training period.
 - The project budget is not covering the internship fees for the trainees in formal training/TVETs.
 - The COVID-19 consequences have impacted the youth job retention by the companies. The companies have reduced the number of employees and this has impacted on the wage employment rate as expected in the results.
- Reduction of funding and some funds that are not responding directly to the beneficiary needs.

The Plan for the Year 2023

During the year 2023, UPHLS will continue to orient its interventions in health, child protection employability as well as advocacy to ensure that persons with disabilities are enjoying their wellbeing and dignity by addressing all barriers that hinder the full access. Particularly, the following interventions will be focused:

- ✚ Development of UPHLS strategic plan 2023-2028 and organization restructuring,
- ✚ Continue advocacy for the improvement of accessibility to health care services by setting models, capacity building of health care providers on disability rights, disability specific needs, impairment early detection, prevention and interventions, and adaptation communication tools and renovating the selected health facilities,
- ✚ Screening of persons with disabilities and provision of assistive technologies,
- ✚ Continue the advocacy to ensure that WASH actors to ensure that the specific needs of persons with disabilities are taken into consideration,
- ✚ Provision of technical skills to youth with disabilities,
- ✚ Capacity building of persons with disabilities both children and adults on health related topics like HIV and AIDS, Sexual and Reproductive Health, eye health and ear and hearing care,
- ✚ Research, learning and sharing,
- ✚ Fund mobilization and networking

Find more details on Action Plan 2022 enclosed to this plan.

VI. CONCLUSION

UPHLS is proud to what has been achieved and the smooth collaboration with its partners, Governance organs, staff from the central level to the grass root level. By this collaboration the year was ended up with success. We express our gratitude to UPHLS Leadership for the enabling environment offered to the executive Secretariat. The success has been reached through a joint effort of UPHLS and its partners whom we want to express our gratitude to.

UPHLS is thankful for its partners who supported both technically and financially during this endeavor including Global Fund and CDC CoAg through the MoH/RBC, USAID through EDC, UNICEF Rwanda, See You Foundation, DRF, UNAIDS, the National Council of Persons with disabilities and UPHLS constituencies. We are confident enough for the fact that these interventions will contribute directly the welfare of persons with disabilities in one way or another.

The projects under the program were implemented successfully and we are proud of what have achieved however some challenges have been met where some were responded on while others are still needs to be advocated for and will continue to seek for solution in the year 2023 including fund mobilization.