

ANGEL'S
CENTER



Children With Special Needs

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

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"Every Child Matters"



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WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

Welcome to our 10th edition of Angel's Center for Children with Special Needs. I would like to appreciate the partners that have walked with us this tremendous journey of 2022. More thanks go to the administration of Angel's Center, board members, parents and caretakers as well as the staff and volunteers that have made extraordinary efforts to make sure that Angel's center maintains an uninterrupted level of service delivery to our beneficiaries thus accomplishing significant achievements. We are proud to let you know that we shall be launching our very first book I have written about the significance journey of raising our son Abryl who was born with Down Syndrome.



A lot has transpired in 2022 and I would like to share a few highlights. We have accomplished several assignments in the community under our community-based rehabilitation programs where we have trained caretakers in basic therapy, nutrition and hygiene, making and use of locally made assistive devices and among other practices that are making a tremendous change in the lives of our children.

Following our workforce development, self-advocate and inclusion



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programs, we have ensured that young adults with Down syndrome continue to have access to employment. Apparently, we have Arthur and Sylvia employees of Angel's center and are doing a wonderful job.

We have increased access to Early learning using the Analysis Behavioral model from 55 to 74 children at the center and outpatient service. We have continued to provide integrated therapy including. Physiotherapy, Occupational, speech and language therapy.

We have reached out to 60 caregivers using our Community Based Rehabilitation model through coaching and mentoring caregivers to provide simple therapies to their children

Through our advocacy work, the international days for children with special needs have been commemorated including World Down Syndrome Day, Autism Day and World Cerebral palsy day together with the other disability working groups.

We have been able to support over 100 families in the community through food distribution to minimize cases of malnutrition

Furthermore, I would like to inform you that due to the age limit of early learning and the achievements of most children so far, we would like to equip our children with vocational skills and therefore a vocational building will be put in place to empower more young persons with special needs at Angel's center

A huge thank you to our partners including Cerebral Palsy Africa, City of Antwerp, Province of Antwerp, The Irish society in Uganda, Global Down syndrome foundation, Happy Chicken Farm, World Mercy Fund farm and other supporters who managed to pull resources together to ensure that Angel's center activities remain relevant and significant to the community.

All the best,

Rosemary Nambooze Niwagaba

Executive Director

Angel's center for children with special needs



Angel's Center for Children with Special Needs is therefore a non-government organization (S.5914/12226) and community-based organization (WCBO/113/12) founded in 2012 in Wakiso district. Our aim is to reach out to children with neurodevelopmental disabilities through training, equipping and rehabilitation to be able to support them in their physical, emotional and cognitive development to reach their potential goals in life.



Children during a community match on World Cerebral Palsy Day on 6th October

Our vision is a society which integrates children with Special Needs to fully realize their potentials. Our mission is to be a voice and to break the silence of disability in communities, through increasing access to information and service delivery. We need to give disability a “human face” despite the challenges these children remain beautiful, admirable, lovely and important to the social network of society.



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Angels' Centre integrates center and community based technical and rehabilitation programs including Early learning for children with special needs, Outpatient therapy program, Workforce development for young adults with down syndrome, Home based Individualized education program, Inclusive education, home based therapies and coaching of caregivers, family livelihood program and the Parents' support network, collaborations and advocacy.

The results

The tireless efforts of Angel's Centre team, the children, the caregivers, development partners and other stakeholders yielded great results in 2022 as seen through our programs.

a) Early learning



Children during their early learning session

74 children have been trained through the early learning program which entailed lessons and skills including reading and writing, drawing, speaking and playing among others. 35 children were trained



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at the center of excellence while 39 children had individualized home based education. The program registered an 85% retention whereby all the children successfully completed their year of learning. This has improved from 2021 which had a 65% retention. Caregivers appreciated more the importance of developing their children through early learning hence provided the necessary support.



Ronald and Diarah with the support Angel' Centre staff and care giver learning from home using their individualized education plans

Children have improved their feeding habits, fine and gross motor development as well as self- help and self-regulation skills. Children improved their creative expressions through the art and communication skills.

45 children have significantly improved their essential skills including listening, comprehension, and verbal sentence construction. 30 could count numbers in their sequence. 23 children have improved their reading and writing and could write their names off head. 10 could copy their names from the blackboard onto a paper.



Daniell and Dennis during their classes

“My twins can now converse and have greatly improved on their vocabulary and social skills. They now concentrate better. For instance, before enrolling at the centre they could read a book for only 5 minutes but with the training they can take 45 minutes to one hour. This applies to other activities. They could hardly read a single letter or write their names but can write the names, read words and can pronounce them well.”
Guardian to twins Denise and Daniella with autism who enrolled at the centre early 2022



Moses preparing food at Angel's Centre Kitchen

10 young adults with Down syndrome were equipped with employable skills in office attendance, bakery, cleaning services and cooking. 5 of these have been employed in different places including the International School of Uganda, Kireka Vocational and Angel's Centre. Angel's Centre continually received reports of their good performance from their respective employers.

Arthur's story

"I feel so loved and more confident that I can now earn some money to take care of my needs. Meeting different people every day has enabled me not only make friends but also learn many things. I thank Angel's Centre for employing me and giving me the chance to improve my working skills."
Arthur, Wakiso

Arthur has also greatly improved his speed and accuracy in records keeping, communication skills and ability to make friends. His family is also very supportive of him which has enabled him to work harder. From the monthly payment he receives, Arthur has managed to save 166 USD which he wants to use to acquire a small laptop to improve his computer literacy skills. This he hopes will further improve his employability skills.

Arthur with one of the staff at Angel's Centre



c) Centre based provision of therapy

Angel's center supported 74 children with Neurological disorders including Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and Autism through physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy. Angel's center also provided outpatient therapy for children and their caregivers.



Under physiotherapy, 12 children with Cerebral Palsy were supported through motor and mobility exercises such as stretching, joint rotations, calf stretch and shoulder stretch to cultivate their ability to do things on their own. 4 could walk on their own while 6 still used assistive devices like walkers and clutches to move themselves. They improved greatly on coordination, balance, strength, flexibility, endurance, pain management, posture, gait, and overall health due to exercises done with them daily.

Under occupational therapy 74 children received skills development in activities of daily living such as dressing themselves, socializing, speaking, playing and among others.

55 children have improved on their fine motor skills shown through their ability to manipulate toys and puzzles, holding a pen or a pencil, using silverware or straw for eating and drinking, tying shoelaces thus improving on their independence.

Moreover, 42 children greatly improved on gross motor skills including movement, strength and balance development which helped them to move and coordinate their arms, legs and other body parts. They could use stairs, had good balance and could differentiate the left and right sides.

Similarly, at least 63 children showed great improvement in social interaction skills as they could play and communicate to each other and those around them better.

Furthermore, 74 children received speech and language therapy on a weekly basis and had showed a progress in oral motor. 23 children could express themselves verbally. 12 children reduced drooling, could drink with a straw from the cup and were no longer picky with foods with certain texture.



Children and therapists during a walk session

d) Community Based Rehabilitation

Under community-based rehabilitation, Angel's Centre focused on mentoring of caregivers in providing home-based therapies as well as Nutrition and emergency food support.

Njoki a mother to Jordan has always believed in therapy, she consistently applies therapy on her child and she has seen a great improvement, Jordan now tries to sit by himself for about a minute something she couldn't believe, she was selected to be the village health team member of Ganda village where she oversees all children with neurological disorders and reports to the community staff.

Angel's center coached 60 caregivers in the provision of home-based therapies including therapeutic exercises, using locally made



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assistive devices for standing and walking, using wheelchairs and standing frames, feeding and sitting, hygiene and nutrition, play therapy and among others. As a result, 39 caregivers have adopted the therapies especially the feeding and sitting a child in an appropriate position, proper hygiene and nutrition, eye-hand coordination. Moreover, 4 caregiver support groups were formed as safe spaces for caregivers to receive emotional support and experience sharing. Similarly, Angel's center provided quarterly respite care for 10 caregivers.



Njoki and her son Jordan



Some of the children receiving therapy from their caretakers



“Marion was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at two years. I am a single mom who cannot afford therapy and assistive devices since they are expensive. However, when therapists from Angel’s center trained me on how to do therapy on my child as well as using locally made materials to help Marion in therapy. I don’t have to spend or worry about her anymore.” Phionah caregiver, Nansana.

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Furthermore, Angel's center distributed food hampers over 100 families in September and October 2022. Items included cereals, milk, pulses, nuts and hygiene products.



Caregivers receiving food hampers at Angel's center

Angel's Centre also supported medical cover for 35 children to access basic medicines at Sebbi hospital and Bambi Children's Clinic. This enabled caregivers to cut down some of the health bills to meet other basic needs. Additionally, Angels' center trained adolescent girls and caregivers in menstrual health and hygiene and supplied sanitary pads.

e) Economic initiatives for caregivers and family

To improve caregivers' incomes, Angel's center collaborated with UWEZO micro finance. The micro finance supported 10 caregivers with low interest loans to set up businesses or expand their existing ones.



One of the caretakers who received a loan from UWEZO microfinance to improve on her livelihood and of course she is now able to take care of her family needs compared to before.

“I used to spend about 180,000 Ugx monthly on my child’s hospital bills. My small business suffered because all the proceeds and some of my capital went to the hospital bills. With the support of Angel’s Centre, I got a small loan of 500,000 Ugx to consolidate my business. My stock has increased together with my income from 20,000 Ugx to 35,000 Ugx per day. I can now afford to buy her a cup of milk every day and other nutritious foods which have boosted her immunity. Since the hospital bills have reduced, I now have more savings.” Hope’s mother, Nansana.

f) Water and Hygiene facility support



Children washing their hands



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Angels Centre for Children with Special Needs was supported by the World Mercy Fund to implement a WASH project for children with special needs. The support enabled the construction of a 30,000-liter underground water tank and installation of a solar pump at the centre in Wakiso district Uganda. The water was used to serve the children's hygiene needs as well as their caregivers as they come for learning and therapy. The water system was connected to the toilets and bathrooms of the children's learning and accommodation spaces. The project is benefiting at least 55 children who come for early learning and therapy sessions, 25 caretakers at the centre and at least 59 caregivers when they bring their children to the centre.

g) Safe and Inclusive Sanitation Facilities for Special Needs Children

Angel's Centre received support from Irish Embassy Uganda to set up a safe and inclusive sanitation facility for the children. The facility is aimed at enhancing safe waste disposal, proper hygiene and clean-living environment at the centre. The facility will also enable increase the capacity of Angel's Centre to accommodate more children at the centre.



Sanitation facilities being constructed at Angel's Centre.



h) Transport and communication grant

MIVA Uganda supported Angel's centre with a van to ease movements in the community. This has helped the centre to cut down transportation costs while increasing its effectiveness in its work. Angel's Centre purchased a Toyota Van, Reguisance (KR-KDH205V) UBK095Y. The vehicle was used to transport care workers and therapists to do home based therapy and monitoring of children's health. The vehicle was also used to transport children who are part of the early learning program at Angel's centre to places where they do co-curricular activities- The vehicle was also used to transport children and their caretakers in case of health emergencies from their homes to the respective care units. There has been increased efficiency in the work Angel's Centre does as therapists were transported in time to meet the community. Moreover, in case of emergency referrals for children in critical conditions, there was ease in movement to the health centres.



Children and caretakers going for a learning visit



i) Partnerships and collaborations

Angel's center partnered with a Banda Health centre two to conduct four trainings in NDD and prevention strategies. 15 Community members and 10 health workers got more knowledge on the use of a Developmental Milestone Chart (DMC), handling different types of neurological disorders, referral pathways as well as feeding and nutrition. Furthermore, the training was done at a local community at the (CBS 88.8) radio station on inclusion for one hour

Furthermore, Angel's center trained 30 teachers, social workers, and caretakers from SOZO children's village on NDD. SOZO is an organization that adopts abandoned children. They got more knowledge and skills on handling children with neurological disorders.

In addition, Angel's center hosted students from African Renewal University who got more knowledge and skill in the identification of children with NDD and the different referral places they could use in support of such families. Similarly, Angel's center collaborated with EPLICIT EFFECT to support play for children. The organization donated a basketball court and balls and children are using them.



Students from Kings Norton during play at Angel's center. They played together and it was a great experience for all of them



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j) Commemoration of world days

World Down Syndrome's Day





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On March 21st, 2022, Angel's center commemorated the World Down syndrome's day at Kiwatule recreational center under the theme "WE DECIDE". This fourth annual event was organized by Global Livingstone institute in partnership with the government of Uganda, Embrace culture, Dina special children foundation, 200 children and parents of children with Down Syndrome participated in the event. Through the event, Angel's Centre further amplified the rights of children with intellectual disabilities and need for inclusive social services.

Autism awareness Day

On the 2nd April's 2022 Angel's center celebrated Autism Awareness Day under the Inclusive Education. Angel's center focused on sharing stories and providing opportunities to increase understanding and acceptance of children with Autism.

Furthermore, on July 17th 2022 angels center joined Special children's trust to celebrate the 8th annual awareness fun day for children with special needs. The celebrations were attended by various organizations working with persons living with disabilities. There was increased collaboration and experience sharing among the like-minded actors. The children also enjoyed themselves.



Some of Angel's center children and staff at MTN arena lugogo where the celebrations took places



World Cerebral Palsy Day

On the 6th October 2022, Angel's Centre did an awareness match to celebrate the World Cerebral Palsy Day. Angel's Centre did this through a community match involving the parents, children, angel's centre staff and other likeminded partners such as Save the Children, Special Children's Trust. This further helped to raise awareness on neurological conditions and the need to support children and families affected.



Children and Angel's Centre team during the match around community



Angel's center was honored to host the District Governor of Rotary club Dr.Rtn Michael Sebalu where he launched inclusive education program in Wakiso district

Project summaries

- ◆ Inclusive Employment for Persons with Down Syndrome supported by Global Down Syndrome
- ◆ Solar for wash project for children with special needs supported by World Mercy Fund
- ◆ Enhancing resilience of caregivers under community-based rehabilitation supported by Cerebral Palsy
- ◆ Strengthening Community Based Care and Rehabilitation for Special Needs Children and their Caregivers in Wakiso district by City of Antwerp
- ◆ Individualized Education Plan supported by Province of Antwerp
- ◆ Transport and communication grant supported by MIVA.
- ◆ Safe and inclusive sanitation facilities for special needs children supported by Irish Embassy Uganda.



2023 priorities

- ◆ Construction of an inclusive vocational block at Angel’s Centre for vocational education.
- ◆ Provision of centre-based therapy and education services to more children
- ◆ Collaborations with institutions of learning and health sector for knowledge gathering and complementing efforts
- ◆ Caregivers’ emotional well-being and livelihood initiatives through community-based rehabilitation
- ◆ Awareness raising and advocacy campaigns for inclusive education and health services for children with intellectual disabilities



OUR PARTNERS



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