

Final Report



The Obuntu bulamu toolkit:
peer to peer support school intervention tools
for teachers, parents, and children
to improve inclusive education in Uganda.

AP2019_029

March 2020 – November 2022

MRC/UVRI and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit



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I. Scientific Report

Foreword

‘Obuntu bulamu’ is a peer to peer support intervention to promote inclusion of children with disabilities in their communities. In the ‘Obuntu bulamu’ intervention we call upon parents, neighbours, teachers, and leaders to take up the communal responsibility to include and take care of ‘our’ children to make sure we build inclusive communities and give all children a chance.

The ‘Obuntu bulamu’ intervention was developed by a group of children, parents, teachers, rehabilitation workers and researchers in Uganda between 2017 and 2019. The intervention aims to improve inclusion of children with disabilities through a peer to peer support model of training and mentoring.

In this project we co-created the ‘Obuntu bulamu’ training manuals using a participatory approach. Between 2020 and 2022 we created three ‘Obuntu bulamu’ training manuals for children, parents, and teachers. The ‘Obuntu bulamu’ manuals were developed by a group of Ugandan children, parents, teachers, academicians, educationalists, rehabilitation workers, and ministry and district education officers who had been involved in the first phase of the project and the intervention development.

The manuals aim to support teachers, parents, and children to implement the ‘Obuntu bulamu’ intervention in their schools and communities. They consist of facilitators manuals, participants manuals and illustrated training materials. The training manuals are available for download in English and French and have been distributed to stakeholders in country and internationally.

We are grateful to the working group members and partners in this project: the MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit, Ghent University, Kyambogo University, Ministry of Education and Sports, Wakiso District Education Office, University of Metz, Makerere University, Katalemwa Cheshire Home, Watifiti art and design, teachers, parents and children representatives of SURE Prospect Primary School, Sacred Heart Jinja Karoli Primary School, and SHYNEA parents group.

On behalf of the research team,

Dr. Femke Bannink Mbazzi
Head Disability Research Group
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A project summary

This applied research project aimed to develop implementation support tools to further inclusive education of children with disabilities in primary schools in low resource settings. The project is in line with Article 24 of the CRPD and SDG4 and was implemented by a multidisciplinary Ugandan team of children with disabilities, their families and teachers, artists, rehabilitation workers, and academicians.

In total 3 illustrated training manuals were developed with practical tools for parents and teachers, and children. The manuals were developed in English, and translated into French. The tools describe simple steps children, parents, and teachers can take to include children with disabilities in school and offer concrete solutions to the include children with disabilities and their families in communities.

The collaboratively created tools are based on the peer to peer innovative, culturally appropriate, and low-cost intervention 'Obuntu bulamu' which was tested in 10 primary schools in Uganda (Phase I 2017 – 2019) and is further being studied in a randomized control trial in 20 other schools (Phase II 2020 - 2024). The Obuntu bulamu intervention offers peer to peer support at the child's, parent's, and teacher's level through training, mentoring and awareness raising activities on a termly basis.

In this project the training manuals were tested and evaluated with 87 teachers, 124 parents, and 125 children in 8 primary schools in Wakiso and Masaka district in Central Uganda.

Introduction

Approximately 14% of the Ugandan population has a disability, of which over 2 million are children (UBOS, 2019). The Ugandan Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act 2006 (Government of Uganda (GoU), 2006) defines disability as: “a substantial functional limitation of daily life activities caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment and environmental barriers resulting in limited participation”.

While recognising the progressive legal framework and policy documents in Uganda, limited progress has been made on the ground to benefit persons with disabilities (Omona et al 2016; UNICEF 2014). Negative perceptions of disability discourage integration of disability in the national development agenda and hamper government resource allocation (Abimanyi-Ochom & Mannan 2014; Lang & Murangira 2009; Lwanga-Ntale 2003; Chataika et al. 2011). Uganda’s universal primary education programme, one of the first in Africa, included children with disabilities from its inception in 1997, and the Special Needs and Inclusive Education Policy of 2011 provides a twin-track approach that combines special needs education and special classes integrated in ordinary schools, as well as learner-centred inclusive education. Nevertheless, government efforts towards inclusive education have been criticised and reproached for placing children with disabilities amid able-bodied children without sufficient modifications of the teaching and learning environment. Classrooms are overcrowded, buildings are inaccessible, schools are understaffed, and teachers lack training and materials (Altinyelken, 2010; Ejuu, 2016; Kristensen, 2006; Nyende, 2012; Ojok & Wormnæs, 2012; Okwaput, 2013). According to UNICEF only 9% of children with disabilities in Uganda attend and 6% complete primary school (UNICEF, 2014).

This project aimed to improve school inclusion, academic and social development of CWD, accessing their right to education and participation using the indigenous concept of *obuntu bulamu* (closely related to the South African *Ubuntu* philosophy). *Obuntu bulamu* is an accepted and consistent communal behaviour that signifies a shared set of values, which promote well-being, togetherness and unity (Karlström, 1996; Nnabagereka Development Foundation, 2018; Otiso, 2006).

The project generated knowledge directly relating to Uganda’s National Development Plan’s (NDP) objectives to promote applied research and publications, achieve equitable access to relevant and quality education and training, and reduce imbalances and improve access to opportunities for all (Government of Uganda, 2015). The NDP is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (United Nations, 2006), which Uganda ratified in 2008. The project specifically contributed to: Article 24 of the CRPD (both male and female persons with disabilities benefit from learner centred inclusive education and learning without discrimination on the basis of equal opportunity) (UN, 2006), SDG 4 (inclusive and quality education for all), and has synergies with SDG10 (inequality), SDG1 (reduce poverty), SDG11 (accessibility), and SDG17 (participation in research).

Scientific data on and implementation tools for inclusive education of children with disabilities in sub Saharan Africa are limited. CRPD and SDG related disability studies and interventions have been dominated by organizations and scholars from high income countries (Alliansen, 2017; AusAID, 2002; DFID, 2013; GIZ, 2014; USAID, 2017). Most studies about children with disabilities have focused on parental stress, quality of life, community based rehabilitation interventions, financial implications and caregivers’ burden (Abasiubong, Obembe, & Ekpo, 2006; Bannink, Idro & van Hove, 2016; Coomer, 2013; Greeff & Nolting, 2013; Greeff, Vansteenwegen & Gillard, 2012; Paget, Mallewa, et al, 2015). A few studies have focused on education and concluded that school environments and teaching

practices do not reflect internationally recognized inclusive education methods, as classrooms are overcrowded, buildings are inaccessible, schools are understaffed, and teachers lack training and materials (Altinyelken, 2010; Ejuu, 2016; Nyende, 2012; Ojok & Wormnæs, 2012).

Disability scholars have argued for valuing diverse understandings and a different discourse when studying disability and inclusion in low and middle income countries (Grech, 2009; Mutua & Swadener, 2011; Meekosha, 2011; Miles & Singal, 2010; Seligman & Darling, 2009; Whyte, 1995), and suggest to look at family, poverty, cultural conceptions of disability, and the notion of *ubuntu* ('I am because we are') (Chataika & McKenzie, 2013). In the 'Obuntu bulamu' project a culturally adapted version of Woodill (1994) and Brown's (2003) framework of belonging, being, and becoming is used (Bannink, 2017). It considers the individual and collective nature of belonging in a social and historical perspective and builds on the South African concept of *ubuntu*, in Luganda *obuntu bulamu* (Bannink, Nalugya & Van Hove, 2019). The intervention embraces and promotes togetherness and unity by enabling dyadic peer to peer support at various interaction levels: child-classmate, parent-peer parent, teacher-peer teacher, child-parent, child-teacher, and parent-teacher, and the triad child – parent – teacher.

Literature review summary

The lives of persons with disabilities in the Global South have primarily been studied and intervened for from a Global North 'lens' (Stubbs, 1999; Grech, 2009, 2011, 2014; Meekosha, 2011). In most African countries with a colonial history, the provision of specialized education for learners with disabilities was initiated by charitable and religious organizations (Chiwaya, 2021). After the publication of the Salamanca Statement countries from the Global South started adopting inclusive education in contexts of 'underdevelopment' with 'colonial legacies' (Walton, 2018). Special, and later, inclusive education in the Global South was developed from a Global North education system, which provided quality basic education for all and was supported by technical, legislative, and financial resources to shift from special to inclusive education. Local, indigenous, and culturally relevant knowledge in educational were minimized (Walton, 2018).

In the literature review (Appendix V) conducted as part of this project, we provide information on the African Ubuntu concept in relation to inclusive education, providing readers with access to an initial list of documents submitted in an annotated bibliography and reading notes. Our review does not intend to be comprehensive but aims to identify the importance of cultural concepts of disability and inclusive education to counter and decolonize the dominant disability discourse on inclusive education imported from high income countries. The review emphasizes the importance of existing family and community resources in Africa to improve inclusive education for children, youth, and adults with disabilities. It closely links to the methodology we used in the 'Obuntu bulamu' project and the co-creative process of the manual development.

Methodology

Presentation of the method

The overall aim of this project is to improve inclusion of children with disabilities. The objectives of the project are to develop the *Obuntu bulamu* intervention and test if the *Obuntu bulamu* intervention and tools can improve:

- i) Attitudes of peers and teachers towards children with disabilities in school
- ii) Participation of children with disabilities in school
- iii) Quality of life of children with disabilities.

Phase I of the project was completed in December 2019 and showed that the '*Obuntu bulamu*' intervention is an acceptable, feasible and culturally relevant intervention which has the potential to improve attitudes, participation and quality of life of children with disabilities and their communities. In 2020 Phase II commenced to develop, test, and distribute two manuals, a comic book and a video based based on the intervention, and available training, data, and workshop materials from Phase I.

The findings of Phase I were communicated in the manual and film in a child, parent, and teacher friendly communication style, with emphasis on practical application. The tools are used in the intervention activities in a randomized control trial in 20 other primary schools in 2 districts in Uganda. Study participants in this trial include children with disabilities (N=160), peers (N=160), parents (N=160), and teachers (N=80). The sample size calculation is based on the pilot study children with disabilities attendance data (on average 10 children with disabilities per school) and Index of Inclusion questionnaire baseline outcome mean of 43.4, and SD of 6.9, 80% power and coefficient of variation $k=0.05$. School selection was conducted from the full list of registered schools of the District Education Office. Half of the selected schools were assigned to the intervention arm, whilst the others are the control group. Quantitative and qualitative baseline, midline, and endline data collection is collected for both the intervention and control group. The intervention group received the *Obuntu bulamu* intervention on a termly basis over a period of 1 school year (adjusted from 2 to 1 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). The control group continues education as per national school curriculum without receiving the intervention at this time.

Ethical approval and research clearance of this project was obtained from the Uganda Virus Research Institute Research Ethics Committee and Uganda National Council for Science and Technology.

The *obuntu bulamu* **intervention** implemented in Phase II of the project promotes inclusion through peer to peer support at the child, parent, and teacher's level in school. It consists of a peer to peer training and support package and includes the following activities:

- Peer to peer support trainings for children with disabilities (3 training days)
- Peer to peer support parents training (3 training days)
- Peer to peer support teachers training (3 training days)
- Awareness raising and support actions at home, in school and the community by children, parents and teachers
- Termly parent teachers meetings and support actions
- On job mentoring of class teachers by training facilitators and peer teachers

In the intervention schools all children with disabilities participating in the project are matched with a peer. Peers are chosen by the child with a disability and are classmates who can sit next to them in class in case of any support needs. The children (including the peers) receive training on helping each

other in class and changing attitudes of other children in class and school. In each school the children develop an action plan on how to improve inclusion of children with disabilities in school. These include actions on inclusion in class, play, and awareness raising amongst other children in their school. In Phase I of the project the intervention was carried out with 32 children and 32 peers in 10 schools. In Phase II the children who participated in Phase I contributed to the manuals development. The tools include information on disability inclusion, as well as successful actions children in this project have developed. The children actively participated in the visualization of their actions in photo, film, and drawings. This information was utilized in the development of a children's training manual in Phase II.

In Phase I parents of children with disabilities and the peers enrolled in the child peer to peer intervention received training from focal parents, trained on inclusive education and making school action plans in collaboration with their child's teacher. From a previous study we know that peer parental support improves Quality of Life in children with disabilities (Bannink, Idro & Van Hove, 2018). Parents received peer support from the focal parents to start up termly parent teachers meetings about inclusion of their child in school, and carry out awareness raising interventions in school for all parents and teachers. Based on the lessons learned of the parents in Phase I a parents' manual for inclusion was developed in Phase II and was tested in the ongoing randomized control trial.

Teachers' training and on job mentoring by experienced peer teachers with special needs and inclusive development skills were highly valued by teachers participating in Phase I of our study. The training content was based on locally available curricula developed by Kyambogo University, which have been approved by the Ministry of Education and Sports. The *Obuntu bulamu* intervention builds on this content, but delivers the knowledge and skills in the classroom rather than on outside school training days. Hagger et al (2013) earlier reported that on job mentoring has a positive effect on teacher retention, teaching methods, and special needs education (Hagger, McIntyre, & Wilkin, 2013). In Phase II we developed a teachers training manual together with the teachers who were involved in Phase I with basic information on disability inclusion, focus on practical skills and methods teachers can use in class to differentiate teaching and include all children.

In Phase I quantitative and qualitative baseline (0), midline (12), and endline (24) **data collection** took place. Demographic and disability data scales (Bedell, 2011; UN, 2017), and structured Likert scale questionnaires measuring attitudes, participation, inclusion and quality of life (Bedell, 2011, Booth, 2002, Masquillier et al, 2012; Ravens-Sieberer, 2014) were administered to 63 parents, 23 teachers and 10 headteachers, and 27 children. All selected questionnaires have shown good reliability. Classroom and home observations of 32 children were conducted using a structured observation list (Kawesa et al, in draft; Booth, 2002 ; Martin-Forbes et al, 2010). In total 63 children were involved in drawing, photo and video voice as participatory qualitative child friendly data collection methods. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with 33 (head) teachers, and 63 parents. To compare outcomes between children with disabilities and peers and carry out multivariate analysis SPSS22 is used. KII, FGD, observational, and visual data was coded in Nvivo12.

In Phase II the same data collection tools were used to collect data from 215 children, 237 parents, and 122 teachers between 2020 and 2022. These participants are currently in follow up as the randomized control trial is ongoing. Between 2020 and 2022 we developed and tested the training tools described in subsequent chapters of this report. A few weeks after signature of the grant agreement between FIRAH and the LSHTM Uganda confirmed cases of COVID-19 and implemented a response to curb the spread. Measures entailed two 3 month full lock downs with continued school closure, night curfew and restrictions on physical meetings for a period of 2 years. Due to the 2 years

of school closure the COVID-19 outbreak caused major delays to our project and required us to reschedule activities. To continue with the training manual drafting we held email and phone consultation meetings with those who had access to the internet and electronic devices. Following the national guidelines we purchased all protective gear required to ensure the team and participants were safe, as we were allowed to resume some smaller in person meetings in 2021. Alongside the existing movement restrictions due to COVID-19, travel was further complicated by political unrest between November 2020 and January 2021, in which several people were killed in riots in Kampala and other towns across the country. FIRA kindly granted us a no cost extension till November 2022 to compensate for the delays experienced due to the response to the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as the political unrest in Uganda.

Presentation of the mobilisation of field actors and researchers

The MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research unit is an established international recognized research centre. The unit is part of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. We conduct rigorous high quality research, which follows international and national ethical regulations and processes. The 'Obuntu bulamu' project is seated within the Disability Research Group in the Non Communicable Diseases Programme. The Disability Research Group has 15 years of experience in disability research in Uganda, and closely collaborates with the International Centre for Evidence in Disability of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. The disability research group at the unit focuses on improving participation, inclusion, and quality of life of children, youth, and adults with disabilities in Uganda. Alongside the *Obuntu bulamu* study, our disability research group studies interventions to improve health care access for persons with disabilities, as well as education and employment for youth with disabilities, which are funded by NIHR, and Mastercard Foundation. We have a large network of national disability partners including organisations of persons with disabilities, health and rehabilitation centres, local and national government departments and universities.

This project was a collaboration between various Ugandan researchers and actors in the field. The project was supervised by Ass. Prof. dr. Femke Bannink Mbazzi, Principal Investigator (PI), Clinical & Educational Psychologist & Anthropologist, Assistant Professor, and Head of the Disability Research Group at the **MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit**. She ensured overall running of the project, implementation of project activities, and drafting of the tools and publications together with Elizabeth Kawesa, clinical psychologist and team leader, and Jane Nassamba, research assistant on the 'Obuntu bulamu' project. Academic support was provided by four co-investigators: Prof. dr. Janet Seeley, Professor of Anthropology and Health and Head of the Social Aspects of Health Programme at the LSHTM unit in Uganda, Prof. dr. Geert Van Hove, head of the Disability Studies and Inclusive Education Research Group at **Ghent University**, Belgium, Dr Patrick Ojok, head department of community and disability studies at **Kyambogo University**, and Dr Pamela Nizeyimana, Senior Special Needs Education Officer at the **Ministry of Education and Sports** and part-time lecturer at Kyambogo University. Dr Michel Silvestre **University of Metz** provided technical inputs to ensure the tools follow international standards and include key child and family development modules. Anne Dewailly of the same university supported with translations. In addition Dr Godfrey Siu, parenting specialist from **Makerere University** was consulted in the development of the parent training manual. Olive Nabiryo, physiotherapist from **Katalemwa Cheshire Home**, represented rehabilitation services. John Mary **Mukiza** and colleagues from Watifiti illustrated and designed the manual. The following persons represented teachers, parents and children: Mr Kitaka Mubarak, head of **SURE Prospect Primary School**, teacher representative; Ruth Nalugya, **SHYNEA parents group**, parent representative; James Kaddu and Mercy Nakirijja, children's representatives.

For each manual, a working group was established. These groups met regularly during the development and evaluation process, a description of the steps taken in this process is outlined below. The names of the persons who contributed to the different manuals are listed in each facilitators manual.

The Ubuntu bulamu team is part of the inclusive education working group of the Ministry of Education and Sports, which consists of government partners, DPOs, and NGOs. We attend meetings quarterly and are consulted as expert reviewers for documents developed by the Ministry and other stakeholders. We also closely collaborate with researchers and teachers from Kyambogo and Makerere Universities in Kampala.

Presentation of the processing of the results

The expected results the overall Ubuntu bulamu project is to improve inclusion of children with disabilities. The objectives of the project were to develop the *Obuntu bulamu* intervention and test if the *Obuntu bulamu* intervention and tools improve attitudes of peers and teachers towards children with disabilities in school, participation in school, and quality of life of children with disabilities.

The overall **expected results** of this project were that:

- i) Peers and teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in at least 20 mainstream primary schools in Wakiso and Masaka districts in Uganda by 2023;
- ii) At least 100 children with disabilities are included and have improved Quality of Life in the project intervention schools in Wakiso and Masaka districts in Uganda by 2023;
- iii) The *Obuntu bulamu* project has developed, tested, and distributed teachers and parents manuals, a comic book, and video to at least 1,000 stakeholders to use the same in schools nationwide and eventually improve inclusion of thousands of CWD.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and budget made available the results were adjusted to:

- i) Peers and teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in at least 20 mainstream primary schools in Wakiso and Masaka districts in Uganda by 2024;
- ii) At least 100 children with disabilities are included and have improved Quality of Life in the project intervention schools in Wakiso and Masaka districts in Uganda by 2024;
- iii) The *Obuntu bulamu* project has developed, tested, and distributed teachers, parents, and children's manuals to at least 1,000 stakeholders to use the same in schools nationwide and eventually improve inclusion of thousands of children with disabilities by 2024.

A detailed breakdown of the training manual development and study activities completed set against the original team line is outlined in the table below.

In addition to developing and testing the training manuals and implementing the intervention, we published papers on findings from Phase I and the COVID-19 outbreak period in international journals, and presented and disseminated tools in country and internationally through presentations at conferences and social media. A list of publications and presentation is described in the results section.

Upon completion of the randomized control trial we also plan to publish papers on Phase II outcomes in 2024 / 2025. These papers will describe the effect of the tools and intervention on participation, inclusion, and quality of life, comparing outcomes in intervention and control group.

Activity	Original timeline	Current timeline	Comments
Ethical approval and research clearance	March - June 2017 Phase I Sept – Nov 2019 Phase II	Completed	Ethical approval and research clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the Uganda Virus Research Institute, reference number GC/127/18/02/633 EBIE / Obuntu in February 2020, followed by research clearance from the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, reference HS SS4557 EBIE/ Obuntu. Annual progress reports have been shared with REC and UNCST.
Set up study site, ODK data collection tools	July – Dec 2017 Phase I Jan – March 2020 Phase II	Completed	Grant agreements to fund the RCT costs of the project were signed with FWO / Ghent University, RHF / Atlas Alliance and Child-Help respectively. Study site was set up and staff was trained by March 2020 to commence Phase II.
Recruitment and training of staff	July – Dec 2017 Phase I Jan – March 2020 Phase II	Completed	The current Obuntu bulamu research team consists of 5 staff members: the principal investigator, team leader, research assistant, data manager, and field worker. All were trained in March 2020.
Recruitment of study participants	February - April 2018 Phase I April – May 2020 Phase II	Completed	School selection for Phase II was carried out in March 2020 in collaboration with the district education officers. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and school closure participant recruitment only started in February 2021, using community tracing as schools were still closed. Recruitment could only be fully completed by April 2022 after schools had reopened in February 2022. In total 215 children, 237 parents, and 122 teachers were recruited into Phase II of the study.
Start of project meeting head of schools	March 2018 Phase I March 2020 Phase II	Completed	Meetings with the heads of school were held in March 2020, and subsequently during the data collection and intervention delivery in 2022.
Data collection	Phase I: May-Jul 2018, Dec 2018 - Feb 2019, Sept-Nov 2019. Phase II: Apr-Jun 2020, Apr-Jun 2021, Apr-Jun 2022, Apr-Jun 2023	Ongoing. Phase II: Feb - Jun 2021, Jan - Apr 2022, Nov 2022, Mar - Jun 2023	Before the team could consent the head teachers of the 20 selected schools and list the children with disabilities enrolled in the schools, the COVID-19 outbreak started and all schools were closed till February 2022. Once recruitment was completed in April 2022 we randomized children from the selected schools to an intervention and control group and with support of the head teachers we contacted those who had phone numbers registered with school about their participation. We changed the intervention to a 1

			school year timeline and implemented this in 10 schools between May and October 2022.
Data entry, cleaning, transcriptions	Sept 2018 – Dec 2019 Phase I Sept-Oct 2021 Phase II tools Sept – Dec 2023 Phase II RCT	Ongoing. Sept 2018 – Dec 2023	Data entry and cleaning for Phase II baseline data was completed. Data entry for follow up data is ongoing and carried out by the field worker, research assistant and data manager.
Data analysis	Sept 2018 – Jan 2020 Phase I Dec 2020 – Dec 2023 Phase II	Ongoing. Dec 2020 – Dec 2023	The COVID-19 related data was analysed end of 2020. Data analysis about the Phase II impact will be conducted after endline data collection in 2023 / 2024.
Intervention / Use of tools	Aug 2018 – Aug 2019 Phase I July 2020 – Aug 2023 Phase II	Completed	Intervention activities and testing of tools was carried out between May and November 2022 under no-cost extension grants from the funders.
Development of content of manuals	February – April 2020 Phase II	Completed	We developed the contents of the training manuals between March 2020 and February 2021. We also made a new video documentary about Ubuntu bulamu using materials from Phase I, which was shown on the Africa Film Festival in Ghent in 2022.
Drafting manuals	May – September 2020 Phase II	Completed	Consultative meetings with stakeholders were held in the drafting of the manuals which was hampered by the COVID-19 outbreak and political unrest, but eventually completed by the end of 2021. Illustrations, design and printing were completed in 2022.
Testing of draft manuals in schools	October 2020 – March 2021 Phase II	Completed	Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and related school closure we could only test and evaluate the tools with the facilitators and participants between June and September 2022.
Review of draft manuals	April – June 2021 Phase II	Completed	Tools were reviewed in September 2022 together with the training facilitators and working group members.
Translation and dissemination of manuals, comic book	July – December 2021 Phase II	Completed	We translated and disseminate the final manuals in November 2022, and continue dissemination during conferences and awareness raising events organized around the International Day for Persons with Disabilities in December 2022.
Drafting and submission of research papers and presentations	September 2018 – December 2023. Phase I and II	Ongoing – Dec 2024	To date we published 6 papers and made 10 presentations at international conferences. We have 2 papers under review and expect an additional 2 papers to be written in 2023/2024.
Lectures and seminars on	December 2018 – December	Ongoing – Dec 2024	We gave 6 lectures and seminars on the impact of COVID-19 on children with disabilities and our

study findings	2023. Phase I and II		study between September 2020 and November 2022.
Dissemination of findings to participants and partners	December 2019 Phase I December 2021 Tools December 2023 Phase II	Ongoing – Dec 2024	The tools were disseminated to our international disability network of over 500 academics, community workers, and organisations of persons with disabilities working in disability inclusion through social media and email. In addition the manuals will be presented to a national audience of disability activists at the National Inclusive Education Symposium on December 7th and 8th 2022 in Kampala. Phase II data dissemination is planned for end of 2024.
Development of multi-country RCT proposal	Oct – Dec 2021 Phase II	July - December 2024	This will be developed in 2024 towards the completion of the ongoing randomized control trial.
Quarterly & annual review meetings	March 2018 – Dec 2023 Phase I & II	Ongoing – Dec 2024	We held quarterly meetings in person and online with the project team and partners. We did not hold in person annual review meetings after 2019 due to the COVID-19 outbreak and this year the ebola outbreak in Uganda.
Administration & reporting	January 2018 – Dec 2023 Phase I & II	Ongoing – Dec 2024	This has been an ongoing activity.

Results and discussion

In 2020 the team reviewed existing inclusive education manuals from EENET, Plan International, LSHTM, Save The Children, USAID, Kyambogo University and the Government of Uganda, and the training materials used during Phase I of the *Obuntu bulamu* research project. An outline of the topics to be included in the training manuals was made in discussion with representatives for all project partners in March 2020. The original intervention manual working group consisted of 12 participants: 2 teachers, 2 parents, 2 children with disabilities, 2 researchers / inclusion specialists, 1 community based rehabilitation worker, 1 educational psychologist, 1 community leader / district official, and 1 Ministry of Education representative.

To develop the manuals a participatory consultative process with quarterly meeting was planned. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and related restrictions the teams had to change the approach of developing the manuals. Not all participants were available online due to lack of electronic equipment, access to internet and phone. The working group felt that additional support of more teachers, parents and children needed to be considered when developing the 3 specific manuals. For the various manuals sub-working groups were created. Regular online meetings and email exchanges with colleagues from Kyambogo University, Makerere University, Ghent University and Metz University continued.

From November 2020 we were able to hold physical meetings again as long as the number did not exceed 30 persons and COVID-19 prevention measures were used. We met with the parents, children, and teachers consultative groups to discuss drafts of the manual, and developed the illustrations for

the same together with the illustrative artist. The final design was developed together with a graphic artist of the same company as the illustrative artist.

Teachers' manual

The teachers' training manual working group consisted of 10 participants: 2 teachers, 2 parents, 4 researchers / inclusion specialists, 1 district and 1 Ministry of Education representative.

The training manual for teachers aims to provide primary school teachers in Uganda and similar settings with a reference handbook / toolkit with practical skills to improve inclusion of children disabilities in school. The research assistant and principal investigator of the *Obuntu bulamu* project compiled a draft manual based on existing materials and knowledge, and shared this by email with the team members which included the teachers, academics, and Ministry of Education officials. The parents and children on the committee did not have access to a computer or internet.

The initial draft manual for teachers contained training sessions on disability definitions, common impairments and education needs, basic knowledge on braille and sign language, inclusive teaching methods with practical examples for different subjects, development of instructional materials from locally available resources with steps on how to develop these for different core subjects, promoting inclusion at home and in communities.

Mukiza, the graphic artist was able to provide illustrations for the manuals based on photo and film material available from Phase I of the project.

Whilst most of the interaction between team members was via email and zoom meetings, a physical meeting was eventually possible in November 14th 2020. In meeting the first draft of the manual was discussed in detail with the working group. This meeting was held at one of the schools that participated in Phase I to allow for a relevant setting and ease of access to learning materials and other relevant tools that may be needed in the feedback and further development of the draft manual. A revised version was completed in January 2021 and shared for comments by email.

Another meeting on the teachers' manual was held in April 2021, after which the tool was presented to a panel of 14 representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sports in September 2021. Edits were made following inputs and a final version of the document was shared with the illustrator and graphic designer in December 2021.

Parents' manual

The parents' training manual working group consisted of 16 participants: 3 education / inclusion specialists, 2 parenting training specialists / academicians, 9 parents, 1 teacher, 1 youth with a disability. Consultative meetings about the intervention manuals were held with the manual development advisor from the Ministry of Health, a parenting training expert from Makerere University, and the manual illustrator.

The research team in collaboration with a delegate from the parents support group started drafting the parents training manual in July 2020. An outline with the following contents was agreed on: the importance of belonging and meaning of *Obuntu bulamu*, disability and impairment definitions, common impairments and support needs, child developmental stages and needs, positive parenting,

promoting participation in the home and neighbourhood (chores, play, functions), inclusion in school, community awareness raising and support, support for parents, and a referral list of services and other information relevant to inclusion for children with disabilities in Uganda.

Two research team members together with Mukiza, the visual artist, were able to physically meet with the two parents on the manual working group to discuss inputs and illustrations for the parent manuals. Some of the illustrations about inclusion at home in household tasks and play are below and in appendix III.

Due to the COVID-19 related lock down we paused the further development as more parental involvement was impossible during the lock down since the parents and rehabilitation workers on the training manual development committee did not have access to computers or internet, and community meetings were still restricted to essential ones only. In September and October 2020 two of the research team members were able to meet with a few parents individually (through home visits) and some feedback was elicited on the manual content. However as most families were trying to cope with the economic, educational, and social impact of the COVID measures it was difficult to ask them to focus on the development of the training manual at that time. The research team did carry out phone follow ups on all families that took part in Phase I of the study, and published the findings of the devastating effects the COVID-19 related measures have had on their day to day life.

The meeting planned to discuss the first rough draft developed by the research assistant and principal investigator of the *Obuntu bulamu* project in collaboration with the leader of the parents support group (who did have access to internet and a computer) on November 21st 2020 was cancelled due to the political unrest that started on November 19th. We decided to postpone the meeting till after the elections to ensure safety of all involved, and give parents time to resume work and children to resume school. We felt it would be important to discuss the development of the manuals when the daily life situation had normalized a little to allow parents to give their full attention and contributions. In March 2021 a next consultative meeting could take place and a first version of the parents training manual was complete by June 2021, and presented to the members from other working groups in September 2021. After considering their inputs a final version was shared with the graphic designer in November 2021.

Children's manual

The children's training manual working group consists of 10 participants: 3 child education / inclusion specialists, 2 parents, 2 teachers and 3 youth with disabilities. Consultative meetings about the intervention manuals were held with children who participated in Phase I and the manual illustrator. This manual was developed last as it required school reopening to be able to consult the children in 2022. The semi-final children's manual was presented to the parents and teachers working groups for inputs and a final version was shared with the graphic designer in May 2022.

We had originally planned to make a comic book. Similarly as with parents, we were not able to meet with children to develop the comic book on disability and inclusive education in 2020 and even in 2021 meetings were difficult as schools were still closed and many families had moved back to their village of origin. We did discuss the idea of the comic book with the two youth in the working group and noted their inputs. They suggested to make it a daily life or story book in which the daily program and needs of children with disabilities come out. Within these daily stories the reader would learn about their impairment, educational needs, need for play and interaction, and support peers can give. It would

also have examples of bullying as well as situation of empowerment such as speaking at a school assembly and participation in sports games between schools. The visual artist outlined the various possibilities on the lay out of the book with the working group. The group decided to wait for schools to reopen to be able to engage more children in the decision making process. Which only happened in February 2022. At this point in time the randomized control trial had been adapted to a 1 year intervention in 2022 with pre and post data collection due to the delays the school closure had caused. The working group felt it may be of better use to have a children's training manual as the trainings would now be delivered to teachers, parents, and children on the same days in the respective schools in separate classrooms, with at the end of the training day, a joined meeting in the school hall to share lessons learned and action plans. The children's training manual includes various case stories, illustrations and child friendly games to improve peer to peer support and inclusion in schools and communities. The children's working group met in March 2022 to discuss the draft training manual and finalized this with support from the illustrator in May 2022.

Testing of the manuals

In 2022 the English manuals were designed and printed. In June 2022 4 teachers, 8 parents, and 4 children's facilitators were trained by the working group leads in a 2 day in person training. All facilitators were equipped with a facilitators manual, training materials, handouts, and stationary to carry out trainings. The research team took care of the planning and logistics of the training days together with the schools involved in the study. During the training days, participants were served break tea, lunch, and were provided with transport refund to travel from home to the training venue.

The trained facilitators implemented the trainings in the selected 8 intervention schools in Wakiso and Masaka district. In total 85 teachers, 124 parents, and 125 children were trained using the training tools between June and October 2022. An evaluation meeting was held with the trainers on small edits to be made based on their experience. After incorporating their feedback the final manuals were printed in English, and translations in French were made. The final manuals were then published and uploaded on the [Ubuntu hub website](#). Dissemination took place through social media due to the ebola outbreak and hesitation about the organization of large events. A final evaluation of the overall intervention (beyond the training manuals) will take place with facilitators on December 6th 2022. On December 7 & 8th 2022 our team will present the manuals at the National Inclusive Education Symposium in Kampala, now the ebola situations seems to be improving.

Dissemination of findings

A full list of publications is available in Appendix I.

At the end of Phase I of the project we described the development and testing of the 'Obuntu bulamu' intervention in two academic papers. '[They give him a chance](#)' in the International Journal of Disability, Development and Education (2020), describes the development of the theoretical framework through parental narratives of children with disabilities. It gives an introduction to the importance of belonging and 'Obuntu bulamu'. The paper '[Obuntu bulamu](#)' in the Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research (2020), further explains the need for and development of the intervention itself. Both papers reflect on the importance of taking into account indigenous knowledge, decolonizing disability studies and inclusive and participatory research methods. Another 2 papers about study outcomes are currently under review. In addition I video narratives from the participatory action workshops were developed and are available on <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyjqZJ7rufRnAJHuN6kqNDQ>.

In 2020 and 2021, in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and related lock down we provided emergency food and nutrition support to 64 families of children with disabilities from Phase I of the project and collected data about the COVID-19 related situation from 39 of the families, which we published a paper about in Disability & Society, <http://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2020.1867075>. The paper has been cited frequently in emerging literature about disability and COVID in Africa.

We also gave five presentations about the impact of COVID-19 on children with disabilities in which we reached over 200 members of parliament, ministry officials, NGO staff, academicians and other stakeholders in Uganda and over 1000 international readers of Disability & Society and participants of research seminar presentations. Presentations were held on the following days:

- Monthly research seminar Uganda Virus Research Institute, September 25th 2020
- COVID seminar London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, September 28th 2020
- Ministry of Education's working group on Inclusive Education, November 24th 2020
- National celebrations of World Disability Day on December 3rd 2020.
- COVID-19 research seminar Ghent University on February 22nd 2021

An article about the findings of the in-depth interviews about parental perspective on the impact of COVID-19 related school closure on children with disabilities was accepted by the International Journal of Disability, Development and Education.

We facilitated one workshop and gave one oral presentation at the virtual international scientific IASSIDD conference on July 6th and 7th 2021: <https://www.iassidd2021.com/>. The conference was attended by over 800 persons working with children with disabilities.

In November 2021 an article about the findings of the in-depth interviews about parental perspective on the impact of COVID-19 related school closure on children with disabilities was submitted for review by the International Journal of Disability, Development and Education. This was accepted for publication in November 2022.

In December 2021 we reached over 2,000 members of parliament, ministry officials, NGO staff, academicians and other stakeholders in Uganda by our presentations at the National Inclusive Education Symposium in Kampala. The event was live streamed: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWfUDNH-Nf4> (key note address at 1:15:35) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Unn1EzW1J9M> (song by SHYNEA parents group partner 1:11:26; and presentation at 1:21:45). Some of the civil society participants included the Norwegian Association of the Disabled, SHAU, Sightsavers, Enabel, Sense International, Uganda Society for Disabled Children, NUDIPU, Refugee Law Project, Cheshire Services Uganda, Humanity and Inclusion and Save the Children.

In March 2022 we presented parents' perspectives on the impact of the COVID-19 response on children with disabilities in Uganda at the online Disability & COVID Conference, organized by the International Centre for Evidence in Disability, LSHTM. The conference was attended by over 200 persons working with persons with disabilities worldwide.

In May 2022 a case study about the experiences of disability and inclusive education of one of the Obuntu bulamu families from Phase I was published in [Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology](#). The journal has a high impact factor (4.864), and citation report (Clarivate, 2022): 61/212 (Clinical Neurology) 17/130 (Pediatrics) in its field.

In August 2022 a paper about parental perspectives of the Obuntu bulamu Phase I was accepted for publication by the African Journal of Disability. This was written in collaboration with the parents group partner organisation's lead Ruth Nalugya.

The team also developed a Obuntu bulamu' [video documentary](#) which describes the *Obuntu bulamu* project, with funding from Global Minds. This documentary was shown at the Ghent Africa Film Festival in November 2022 with over 200 attendees.

The 'Obuntu bulamu' training manuals were made available online and shared by email and social media and will be presented at the National Inclusive Education Symposium in Kampala on December 7th and 8th 2022.

In addition to the awareness raising at events, we also continued online awareness raising about our work and updated our twitter account https://twitter.com/obuntu_bulamu.

Recommendations based on the results

Many traditional ways of caring for persons with disabilities in communities were destroyed when colonial humanitarian models were introduced (Ingstad 1999, Miles 2003). In our study we noticed how easily participants accepted and participated in developing a training manuals and intervention that was based on an indigenous concept and appreciated how the research team members too became part of their lives, rather than staying a distant investigator. Despite the challenges that the COVID-19 outbreak posed on the project, we were able to co-create the 'Obuntu bulamu' training manuals and test them when schools reopened in 2022.

The intervention, where the training manuals are part of, has the potential to make schools and communities more inclusive. Our research study is ongoing and cannot give conclusive answers on its effectiveness as yet. More research is needed to further develop and test this and other interventions and evaluation methods based on African disability frameworks. This will help create inclusive education interventions that are designed and implemented based on indigenous knowledge and practice of inclusion, relevant for our context.

Implementation support tools

The training manuals are available for download on the [Ubuntu hub website](#) and contain the following:

The 'Obuntu bulamu' training manual for **children** consisting of a facilitator's manual and handout materials.

The 'Obuntu bulamu' training manual for **parents** consisting of a facilitator's manual, training materials, handout materials and participant manual.

The 'Obuntu bulamu' training manual for **teachers** consisting of a facilitator's manual, training materials, handout materials and participant manual.

Evaluation

The timeline of the 'Obuntu bulamu' manual development and randomized control trial drastically changed due to the COVID-19 outbreak and related school closure. Despite the 2 year school closure we were able to achieve the expected results, albeit with a few modifications.

In the original proposal we planned to draft 1 teachers manual, 1 parent manual, 1 intervention film, and 1 comic book by the middle of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and budget made available this was adjusted to 1 teachers manual, 1 parent manual and 1 children's manual by 2022. The change from comic book to training manual was suggested during the consultative meetings with all stakeholders and working group participants. We opted for a children's training manual rather than a comic book, to ensure the intervention would be delivered to all 3 groups using a similar training model and instead included various illustrations in the training materials which discuss disability inclusion with children in our setting. The film instead was funded by another grant and has been used as an alternative to the comic book in sensitization activities.

The development of the 'Obuntu bulamu' manuals was not only useful for our study, but has already shown an effect in other areas in Uganda. In addition to using the training manuals in the study sites, our partner organisations SHYNEA has used the manuals in 40 other primary schools and communities in 2022. The Ministry of Education and Sports has made use of the teachers training manuals in the development of their Continued Professional Development training on inclusive education and will be using these country wide for all primary school teachers starting in 2023. This will eventually benefit almost 20,000 government schools with over 9 million children (Government of Uganda, MoES, 2022). Internationally we received various requests for training and use of the manuals from other African countries, including Togo and Belgium, and have been asked to share more about our manuals and intervention at workshops and conferences in 2023.

Conclusion

In this project we developed and tested the 'Obuntu bulamu' training manuals. The manuals are part of the 'Obuntu bulamu' intervention, which is based on the 'Obuntu bulamu' alternative disability framework to 'improve disability inclusion'. According to our knowledge it is one of the few interventions which aims to translate the 'Ubuntu' philosophy into practical disability inclusive education actions that has been written about in academic literature.

The 'Obuntu bulamu' intervention development process was distinctive as it was a co-creative process that emerged over a fairly long period of time and built on experiences of persons with disabilities, families of children with disabilities, and academics and rehabilitation workers from the Ugandan disability field. It started from and proved that indigenous concepts can provide alternative frameworks for disability inclusion. Since the development of the 'Obuntu bulamu' intervention a number of other African scholars have made suggestions on how Ubuntu can be practically be translated in education (e.g. Chiwaya, 2020 ; Chiwandire, 2021 ; Musengi, 2021).

Shared responsibility through family and community involvement is key in the 'Obuntu bulamu' intervention. Earlier and more recently, other authors have highlighted the importance of family and community involvement to reclaim indigenous practices and values and implement Ubuntu inspired inclusive education (Chiwandire 2021, Musengi 2021, Masondo 2017).

We encourage further use and testing of the manuals in other African countries and recommend more organizations and researchers to develop tools based on indigenous knowledge and inclusive practices.

Appendices







Appendix I. Publications

1. Bannink Mbazzi, F. & Kawesa, E. (2022) 'Impairments of the brain' – Global South perspectives on childhood neurodevelopmental disabilities. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, [10.1111/dmcn.15253](https://doi.org/10.1111/dmcn.15253).
2. Naluyga, R., Nimusiima, C., Kawesa, E.S., Nampejja, H., Seeley, J, van Hove, G., Bannink Mbazzi, F. (2022) 'Obuntu bulamu' - Parental peer to peer support for inclusion of Children with disabilities in Central Uganda. *African Journal of Disability*, in press.
3. Bannink Mbazzi, F., Kawesa, E.S., Nalugya, R., Nimusiima, C., Seeley, J., van Hove, G. (2022) 'We have to try and teach them from home' – parents perspectives on education of children with disabilities during the COVID-19 outbreak in Uganda. *International Journal of Disability Development and Education*, accepted for publication.
4. Nimusiima, C., Kawesa, E., Seeley, J., Bannink Mbazzi, F. (2022) Psychometric properties and validity of The Child and Family Follow-up Survey (CFFS) as a measure of participation of children with disabilities in Uganda. Under review.
5. Kawesa, E., Nimusiima, C, Nalugya, C., Seeley, J., Bannink Mbazzi, F. (2022) Selection of a Classroom Observation Tool to Measure Disability Inclusion Following a Peer-to-Peer Support Intervention in Primary Schools in Central Uganda. Under review.
6. Bannink Mbazzi, F., Nisusiima, C., Nalugya, R., Kawesa, E., King, R., Van Hove, G., Seeley, J. (2021) The impact of COVID-19 measures on children with disabilities and their families in Uganda. *Disability & Society*, <http://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2020.1867075>.
7. Bannink Mbazzi, F., Nalugya, R., Kawesa, E., Nampejja, H., Nizeyimana P., Ojok, P., Van Hove, G., Seeley, J. (2020) 'Obuntu bulamu' – development of an indigenous model for disability inclusion in Uganda. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research, special issue Disability and the Global South*, 22(1), pp.403–416. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.697>
8. Bannink Mbazzi F. (2020) 'Obuntu bulamu': entangled voices in visual narratives of children with disabilities in Uganda. In: D. Goodley, and K. Runswick-Cole, *Disabled Childhood Studies*. iHuman Press. p.77-82. <http://ihuman.group.shef.ac.uk/interventions-in-disabled-childhood-studies/>

Appendix II. Presentations

1. Kawesa, E.S., Nisusiima, C., Nalugya R., Bannink Mbazzi, F. & the Ubuntu bulamu research team (2022) Evidence based inclusive education in Uganda: the 'Ubuntu bulamu' intervention. Oral presentation on the National Inclusive Education Symposium, Kampala, December 7th & 8th, 2022.
2. Bannink, F., Kawesa E., Nalugya R., Van Hove, G., Seeley, J. in collaboration with Kitsha Magic Films Production (2022) 'Ubuntu bulamu' a peer to peer support for inclusion - [a video documentary](#). Presented at the Ghent Africa Film Festival, October 26 – 28, 2022. Ghent: Belgium.
3. Bannink Mbazzi, F. (2022) 'We have to try and teach them from home' – parents' perspectives on the impact of the COVID-19 response on children with disabilities in Uganda. Oral presentation, Disability & COVID Conference, International Centre for Evidence in Disability, LSHTM, online, March 14th, 2022.
4. Bannink Mbazzi, F. (2021) Dominant and emerging discourses of inclusive education in Uganda. Key note. National Inclusive Education Symposium, Kampala, December 16th & 17th, 2021.
5. Nalugya R., Kawesa, E. & Bannink Mbazzi, F. (2021) Inclusive classroom management and practice: the *Obuntu bulamu* peer to peer approach. National Inclusive Education Symposium, Kampala, December 16th & 17th, 2021.
6. Bannink Mbazzi, F. (2021) The impact of COVID-19 measures on children with disabilities in Uganda. Oral presentation. IASSIDD Conference, Amsterdam hybrid / online, 6-8th July, 2021.
7. Bannink Mbazzi, F., Kawesa, E., Nalugya, R., Seeley, J. & G. van Hove (2021) *Obuntu bulamu*, a peer to peer support intervention for disability inclusion in Uganda. Workshop presentation. IASSIDD Conference, Amsterdam hybrid / online, 6-8th July, 2021.
8. Bannink Mbazzi, F., Nisusiima, C., Nalugya, R., Kawesa, E., King, R., Van Hove, G., Seeley, J. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 measures on children with disabilities in Uganda. I@Home Webinar Supporting others in times of COVID-19, a global perspective, Ghent University, February 11th 2021.
9. Bannink Mbazzi, F., Nisusiima, C., Nalugya, R., Kawesa, E., King, R., Van Hove, G., Seeley, J. (2020) The impact of COVID-19 measures on children with disabilities and their families in Uganda. Uganda Research Virus Institute Research Seminar 25th September 2020 & COVID-19 webinar Global Health and Development LSHTM, 28th September 2020.
10. Bannink, F., Nalugya, R., Kawesa, E., Van Hove, G., Seeley, J (2020). *Obuntu bulamu*, a peer to peer support model for inclusion of children with disabilities in Uganda. Oral Presentation World CBR Conference 2020 (postponed to 2023 due to COVID-19).

Training manuals

<p>MRC/UVRI and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit</p> 		
<h2>'Obuntu bulamu' - Training Manuals</h2>		
<h3>Obuntu bulamu</h3> <p>'Obuntu bulamu' is a peer to peer support intervention that promotes inclusive education and participation of children with disabilities. In the 'Obuntu bulamu' intervention we call upon children, parents, teachers, and community members to take up the communal responsibility to include and take care of 'our' children. The intervention includes training and peer to peer support activities for children, parents and teachers.</p>	<h3>Manual development</h3> <p>The '<u>Obuntu bulamu</u> <u>intervention</u>' was developed by a group of Ugandan children with disabilities, their peers, parents, teachers, community rehabilitation workers, educationalists and researchers between 2017 and 2019.</p> 	<h3>Results</h3> <p>Between 2019 and 2022 the intervention has been tested and implemented in 40 schools and communities in Uganda. It has shown to be a culturally relevant intervention that can improve inclusive education and participation of children with disabilities.</p>
		<h3>More information</h3> <p>To learn more about 'Obuntu bulamu' publications and events watch the '<u>Obuntu bulamu</u> <u>video documentary</u>' and follow us on Twitter #obuntubulamu.</p>
<h3>Manuals</h3> <p>There are 3 <u>training manuals</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Obuntu bulamu' training manual for children consisting of a facilitator's manual and handout materials. • 'Obuntu bulamu' training manual for parents consisting of a facilitator's manual, training materials, handout materials and participant manual. • 'Obuntu bulamu' training manual for teachers consisting of a facilitator's manual, training materials, handout materials and participant manual. 		<h3>Contact</h3> <p>The trainings are designed and intended to be delivered by trained facilitators. Facilitators training is offered by SHAU: admin@shauganda.org. For questions around the design and testing of the intervention or reproduction of any of the manual content, contact the MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit.</p>   
		<h3>Acknowledgements</h3> <p>Partners: MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit, Ministry of Education and Sports, Kyambogo University, Makerere University, Spina Bilida and Hydrocephalus Association of Uganda, Katalamwa Cheshire Home, SURE Prospect Primary School, and Sacred Heart Primary School.</p> <p>Funders: Atlas Alliance / NORAD / RHF, Child-Help, FIRA, FWO, Ghent University, IF, and VLIR-UOS.</p>

Appendix IV Photos of training manual development

Photo 1: Ubuntu bulamu parent and children's manual development - working group meeting 2020



Photo 2: Consultative meeting with Ministry of Education and Sports officials 2021



Photo 3: Ubuntu bulamu facilitators' training children 2022



Photo 4: Ubuntu bulamu facilitators' training teachers 2022



Photo 5: Ubuntu bulamu facilitators' training parents 2022



Photo 6: Ubuntu bulamu trainers and facilitators



Appendix V Literature review

Attached as separate file.

II. Scientific summary of the research

This applied research project aimed to develop implementation support tools to further inclusive education of children with disabilities in primary schools in low resource settings. The project is in line with Article 24 of the CRPD and SDG4 and was implemented by a multidisciplinary Ugandan team of children with disabilities, their families and teachers, artists, rehabilitation workers, and academicians.

In total 3 illustrated training manuals were developed with practical tools for parents and teachers, and children. The manuals were developed in English, and translated into French. The tools describe simple steps children, parents, and teachers can take to include children with disabilities in school and offer concrete solutions to the include children with disabilities and their families in communities.

The collaboratively created tools are based on the peer to peer innovative, culturally appropriate, and low-cost intervention 'Obuntu bulamu' which was tested in 10 primary schools in Uganda (Phase I 2017 – 2019) and is further being studied in a randomized control trial in 20 other schools (Phase II 2020 - 2024). The Obuntu bulamu intervention offers peer to peer support at the child's, parent's, and teacher's level through training, mentoring and awareness raising activities on a termly basis.

Our project was greatly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Uganda closed all its schools from March 2020 till January 2022. We continued with the tool development but could only test the collaboratively created tools in 8 primary schools in 2022 with 87 teachers, 124 parents, and 125 children. The training manuals were evaluated and found culturally appropriate and practical in use. Endline data collection in the randomized control trial will take place in 2023 and findings on the long term effect that the trainings and intervention have on the participation, inclusion, and quality of life of children with disabilities in Uganda are expected to be published in 2024.

We are grateful to the working group members and partners in this project: the MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit, Ghent University, Kyambogo University, Ministry of Education and Sports, Wakiso District Education Office, University of Metz, Makerere University, Katalemwa Cheshire Home, Watifiti art and design, teachers, parents and children representatives of SURE Prospect Primary School, Sacred Heart Jinja Karoli Primary School and SHYNEA parents group.

III. Summary for a social valorization of the results

In Uganda there are over two million children with disabilities. Many of them live in poverty, do not receive the health services they need, and do not go to school. Some though are well accepted and taken care of in their families and are attending school. The children who do belong and participate have families, neighbours, and teachers who believe that children with disabilities too belong to the community and should be included in all that other children are included in.

‘Obuntu bulamu’ is a peer to peer support intervention to promote inclusion of children with disabilities in their communities. In the ‘Obuntu bulamu’ intervention we call upon parents, neighbours, teachers, and leaders to take up the communal responsibility to include and take care of ‘our’ children to make sure we build inclusive communities and give all children a chance.

The ‘Obuntu bulamu’ intervention was developed by a group of children, parents, teachers, rehabilitation workers and researchers in Uganda between 2017 and 2019. The intervention aims to improve inclusion of children with disabilities through a peer to peer support model of training and mentoring. In this project we co-created the illustrated ‘Obuntu bulamu’ training manuals using a participatory approach between 2020 and 2022. The ‘Obuntu bulamu’ manuals were developed by a group of children, parents, teachers, academicians, educationalists, rehabilitation workers, and ministry and district education officers who met regularly to discuss the content and illustrations of the manuals.

We developed 3 illustrated manuals with practical tools for parents and teachers, and children in English, and French in printed hardcopies and softcopies online. The tools describe school experiences and simple steps children, parents, and teachers can take to include children with disabilities in school and offer concrete solutions to the difficulties children with disabilities and their families encounter on a daily basis. The focus is on how one can support fellow teachers, parents and children in creating communal responsibility to include children with disabilities at school and create awareness about disability using the ‘Obuntu bulamu’ peer to peer support intervention. The materials are available in English and French and have been distributed to stakeholders in the country and internationally.

Our project was greatly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Uganda closed all its schools from March 2020 till January 2022. We continued with the tool development but could only test the collaboratively created tools in 8 primary schools in 2022 with 87 teachers, 124 parents, and 125 children. The training manuals were evaluated and found culturally appropriate and practical in use. We are still collecting more data to measure the effect the tools have in the long run on the participation, inclusion, and quality of life of children with disabilities in Uganda.

We are grateful to the working group members and partners in this project : the MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit, Ghent University, Kyambogo University, Ministry of Education and Sports, Wakiso District Education Office, University of Metz, Makerere University, Katalemwa Cheshire Home, Watifiti art and design, teachers, parents and children representatives of SURE Prospect Primary School, Sacred Heart Jinja Karoli Primary School and SHYNEA parents group.