

# Peer-led organization of persons with psychosocial disabilities in sub-Saharan Africa

## UGANDA / UNSAI – SUPPORT MY CHOICE PROGRAMME

In 2017 the Uganda National Self-Advocacy Initiative (UNSAI), a peer-led disabled people's organization based in central Uganda, launched Support My Choice – a programme that works with persons with psychosocial disabilities at risk of being institutionalized or having lived in an institution. The programme uses a targeted approach, such as supporting teachers in retaining their jobs and young people in finding a job, and has assisted 150 persons between 2017 and 2022.

### Problem targeted

People with psychosocial disabilities in Uganda often face anxiety and distress and have little choice over their accommodation.

### Solution, innovation, and impact

Support My Choice partners with local organizations, associations, and informal groups working with housing, food, public security, employment, finance, and social protection to support people with psychosocial disabilities to live independently.

These individuals make their own choices as to which community they want to live in and with whom they want to live. UNSAI makes courtesy visits to institutions to meet persons with psychosocial disabilities, and it works with the institution to customize a plan for each individual to transition to more independent living. Moreover, UNSAI has partnered with Transforming Communities for Inclusion, a global organization focusing on the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities, to replicate the practice at the regional and international level.



“Support My Choice” enables people with psychosocial disabilities to decide in which community to live and with whom to live.

banks, and business owners such as Taata Owen supermarket. In addition, UNSAI has received a grant from Transforming Communities for Inclusion to conduct public consultations on the UN Deinstitutionalization Guidelines; and in 2017 it received a grant of \$3,100 for economic empowerment from the Government of Uganda. By 2027 the programme aims to deinstitutionalize 80 per cent of persons with psychosocial disabilities in Uganda.

## “From Institutionalization to independent and inclusive community living – a Human Right for All.”

Dorothy Nakato, Co-Founder, Uganda  
National Self-Advocacy Initiative.

### Outlook, transferability, and funding

UNSAI receives donations from the community and its partners in the form of food items and clothing as well as free services, such as health care and psychosocial support. Partners include the International Disability Alliance, various government agencies,

### FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2017

- Between 2017 and 2022 UNSAI has worked with 150 people with psychosocial disabilities.
- Over 170 people with psychosocial disabilities and their families have directly benefited from the programme.
- *A project of Civil Society.*



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