



NEWSLETTER

THE IDIWA DIARIES

An IDIWA Quarterly Publication

ISSUE 1

JAN- MARCH, 2026

TOP STORIES INSIDE

- ❖ IDIWA participates in E. African NELD Regional Learning Exchange
- ❖ Monitoring of SGBV Project highlights results
- ❖ How the BENMAPP Project is transforming lives of youths with Disabilities.
- ❖ Harriet's resilience between climate change impacts, GBV, and Disability.
- ❖ Media Spotlight.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REMARKS



Dear Valued partners and stakeholders

The January-March 2026 quarter reflected continued progress in advancing IDIWA's mission of promoting inclusion, dignity, and justice for persons with disabilities, with a strong focus on women, girls, children, and youth.

We strengthened multi-sectoral programming that integrates gender, disability, health, and climate justice, while enhancing coordination through key strategic engagements that improved collaboration and implementation effectiveness, particularly in addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

At community level, 25 previously unreached Children and Youth with Disabilities were identified and linked to essential services including education support, medical care, and assistive devices. Caregivers were also empowered with knowledge on disability management, child protection, and referral pathways. In addition, parent-led initiatives, including savings groups, continue to strengthen household resilience and sustained care for children.

A key milestone this quarter was the successful regional youth meeting, which led to the establishment of a Regional Youth Council. This marks an important step in strengthening youth leadership, representation, and participation in advocacy and decision-making.

We also advanced our work on climate justice and livelihoods, equipping 100 Women and Girls with Disabilities and gender champions with skills in climate-smart agriculture, land rights, leadership, and GBV prevention. Emergency legal support was provided to survivors of rights violations, while participation in environmental campaigns such as the Walk for Water strengthened community awareness on sustainability issues.

Institutionally, IDIWA continues to grow as a learning organization. Capacity strengthening through regional learning exchanges and internal training has enhanced our work on resilience, inclusive governance, and adaptive programming. Findings from the Community Pulse Assessment are now guiding improvements in sustainability, human resources, M&E, and policy systems.

We remain committed to deepening impact, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring inclusive development where no one is left behind.

Elizabeth Kayanga

Chief Executive Officer

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear esteemed readers,

Welcome to this edition of The IDIWA Diaries, our quarterly newsletter that highlights updates, reflections, and key engagements from Integrated Disabled Women Activities (IDIWA).

This publication brings you a selection of stories, achievements, and field experiences drawn from the dedication of our staff and volunteers, as well as partners, who continue to support program implementation across communities in Eastern Uganda.

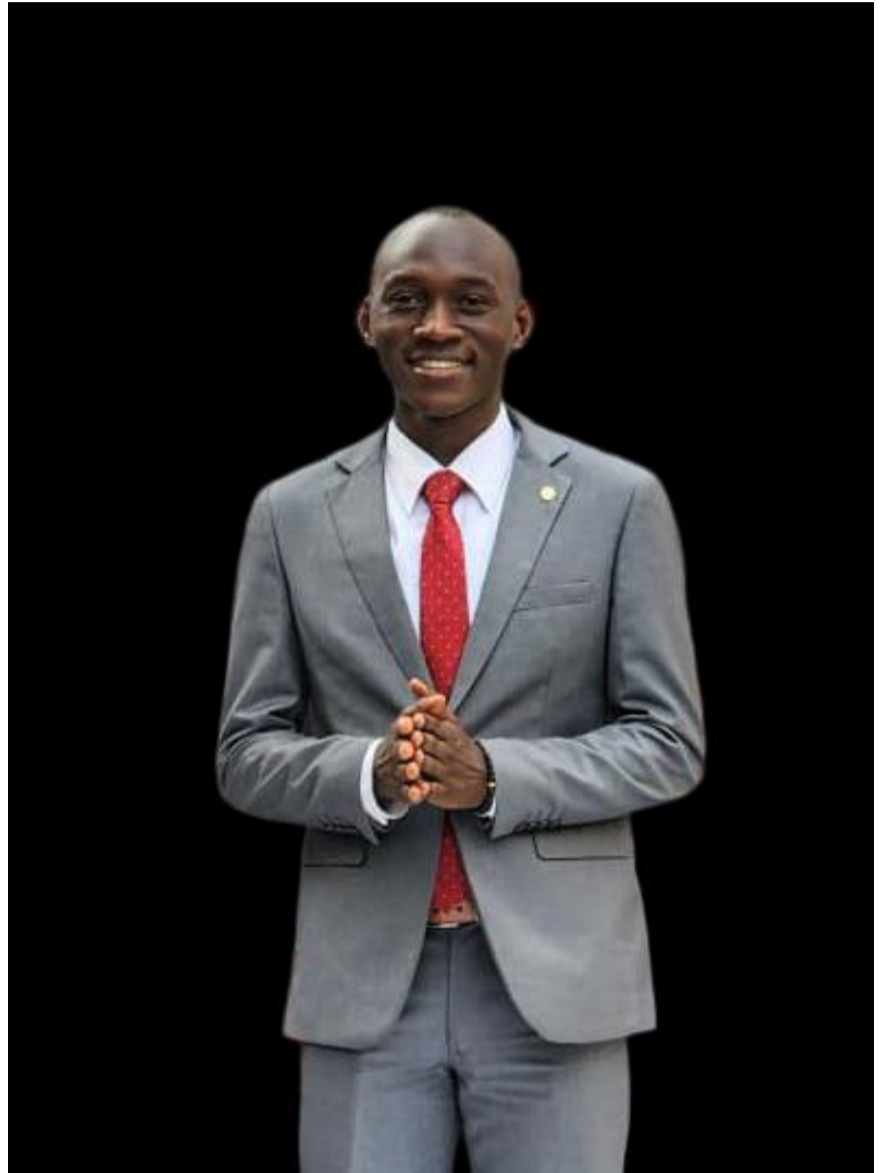
As an online edition, this newsletter is designed to offer an engaging and accessible content experience for both our internal and external stakeholders. It will be shared via email and can also be accessed through our digital platforms, including LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, as well as downloadable copies available on our website.

I, therefore encourage you to follow us on our various social media platforms.

Enjoy this edition.



John Owen Mpiima
Communications Assistant, IDIWA.



“

As an online edition, this newsletter is designed to offer an engaging and accessible content experience for both our internal and external stakeholders.

”

IDIWA Participates in East African NELD Regional Learning Exchange



Damalie Naigaga (left, seated), Anna Grace (fourth from the left, seated), and our CEO, Elizabeth Kayanga (second from the right, seated), pose for a group photo with NELD and CJRF partners and stakeholders during the NELD Conference in Nairobi.

IDIWA's CEO; Elizabeth Kayanga and project staff recently participated in the East African NELD Regional Learning Exchange held in Nairobi from 2–6 March. The regional convening brought together partners and practitioners to strengthen collaboration and share experiences on Non-Economic Loss and Damage (NELD)- the social, cultural, and human impacts of climate change that cannot easily be measured in financial terms.

The exchange focused on fostering peer-to-peer learning, strengthening practical and demand-driven learning capacities, and co-creating an East African NELD learning agenda. Participants also explored priority thematic areas, key learning questions, and opportunities for knowledge products that can advance action on NELD in the region.

The engagement comes at a significant moment for inclusive climate governance following the recognition of the Disability Caucus as an informal stakeholder group within the UNFCCC process. This milestone provides a platform for persons with disabilities to contribute more directly to climate policy discussions and global negotiations.

Participation in the learning exchange provided an opportunity for IDIWA to contribute insights on strategic communication and knowledge sharing, while building partnerships that advance inclusive climate and health action across East Africa.

LEARNING FROM IMPACT: STRENGTHENING FUTURE INTERVENTIONS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES IN BUGIRI



A key highlight of the session was the documentation of stories of change. These narratives reflected progress in awareness, access to support systems, and shifts in community attitudes toward women and girls with disabilities. Participants spoke about increased confidence, improved reporting of violence, and a growing sense of inclusion in community processes.

Project participants share stories of impact during a focus group discussion with an external consultant during the monitoring visit.

In a continued effort to reflect on impact and strengthen future programming, we convened an evaluation review session for the project “Ending Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities in Bugiri District (2022–2024).” The session was facilitated by Phiona Mpanga, a consultant from MDF Consulting, and brought together project participants to share their lived experiences and insights.

The review session created a safe and inclusive space for open dialogue through a series of focus group discussions. Participants engaged in meaningful conversations, sharing personal journeys, challenges, and the changes they have experienced as a result of the project. These discussions not only highlighted individual stories of resilience and empowerment but also provided a deeper understanding of the project’s influence at community level.



BENMAPP PROJECT SPARKS JOSHUA'S JOURNEY



“

There were moments I felt stuck, but I never gave up on my education”

Muganzi Joshua, one of the beneficiaries of the BENMAPP project excelled in the UACE Exams, thanks to support from IDIWA under the project, which ensured his education journey remained uninterrupted.

Muganzi Joshua's story is a powerful reflection of resilience and the impact of inclusive support. Born with a visual impairment, Joshua lost his sight completely in 2010 after unsuccessful surgeries. His situation was further complicated when his father left, leaving his mother—a canteen attendant—to raise him and his siblings with limited resources.

Despite these challenges, Joshua remained committed to his education. However, after completing Senior Four, his journey was nearly cut short due to an outstanding school fees balance of UGX 2.8 million, which prevented him from accessing his results or continuing school.

Hope was restored when he was linked to IDIWA through Katalemwa Cheshire Home and enrolled in the BEMAPP programme. Through this support, his school fees were cleared, and he received mentorship and continuous guidance that enabled him to return to school with renewed confidence.

Joshua excelled academically, scoring 16 points with three principal passes. Inspired by his journey, he now aspires to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Education and become a teacher who motivates others, especially young people with disabilities.

STRENGTHENING YOUTH VOICE & LEADERSHIP: A REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL TAKES SHAPE



Leaders of the youths with Disabilities pose for a group photo after the formation of the Advocacy agenda following the regional youth meeting.

Integrated Disabled Women Activities (IDIWA), through the BEN-MAPP network, marked a significant milestone in advancing youth inclusion with the successful convening of a regional youth meeting that brought together participants from Iganga, Kumi, Kapchorwa, Budaka, and Tororo

The meeting created a dynamic platform for young people with disabilities to share experiences, reflect on common challenges, and collectively shape solutions. Discussions drew on emerging insights around employment barriers while also addressing broader issues affecting youth participation and inclusion.



A youth shares challenges encountered by youths with disabilities during the session.





Participants, including youth from different districts of Eastern Uganda and project donors, listen during discussions on key priority areas arising from challenges affecting youths with disabilities.

A key outcome was the formal establishment of the Regional Youth Council, an important step toward strengthening structured youth leadership, coordination, and representation in decision-making spaces. This reflects a growing recognition of youths with disabilities not just as participants, but as leaders and change agents within their communities.

In addition, participants developed and presented a Youth Advocacy Agenda outlining priority areas including economic empowerment, climate change and environmental action, employment, and meaningful participation in governance processes.

This initiative marks a critical shift toward institutionalizing youth-led advocacy, ensuring that the voices and priorities of young people with disabilities are increasingly integrated into programme design, implementation, and broader development efforts



Ms. Elizabeth Kayanga, CEO of IDIWA, delivers a presentation on how the organization will support the implementation of the advocacy agenda.

HARRIET'S STORY IN A NEXUS BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE, GBV & DISABILITY



Ismait Harriet at her garden, where—with support from IDIWA—she has implemented climate-smart agriculture practices to overcome the impacts of climate change that had previously hindered her produce.

Isamait Harriet, a 50-year-old nursery teacher from Kapyanga Subcounty in Bugiri District, has faced a harsh intersection of gender-based violence, disability stigma, and climate change. A mother of two—including a 15-year-old girl with a disability—Harriet's life took a difficult turn within her marriage.

As the second wife in a polygamous home, Harriet experienced discrimination after giving birth to a child with a disability, with her husband favoring his first wife and blaming Harriet for circumstances beyond her control. What began as neglect soon escalated into violence.

Her harvests—her main source of livelihood—were repeatedly taken and given to the first wife. Eventually, Harriet was locked out of her home, her belongings thrown out, leaving her homeless.

With resilience, Harriet rebuilt her life. She secured a job at a nearby nursery school and used her first salary to rent a single room for herself and her children. However, with irregular pay and rising needs, survival remained a daily struggle.

With support from IDIWA, Harriet pursued justice through the Bugiri Magistrate's Court. On 18th February 2026, the court ruled in her favor—granting her access back to her home and land, and ordering her husband to provide monthly financial support and contribute to their children's education.



Even with this victory, Harriet continues to face challenges. Climate change has made farming increasingly unreliable, with prolonged dry spells affecting crop yields. To cope, she has adopted climate-smart practices, establishing kitchen gardens using sacks, jerricans, and basins to grow vegetables and sustain her family.

Harriet's story is one of strength in the face of overlapping challenges. It highlights the urgent need to address gender inequality, support persons with disabilities, and build resilience against climate change—ensuring that women like Harriet are not left to weather the storm alone.

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

Our Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Elizabeth Kayanga shared views in Next Media's Nile Post on what this year's Women's Day means for Women and Girls With Disabilities



Click [link](https://nilepost.co.ug/nile_news/325667/international-womens-day-2026-scaling-up-justice-must-include-women-and-girls-with-disabilities/) to read the article



Integrated Disabled Women Activities

Buseyi (B) Nakalama Subcounty, Kigulu South, Iganga District

P.O Box 556, Iganga



IDIWA NGO



IDIWA NGO



@IdiwaNgo



Integrated Disabled Women
Activities



www.idiwaug.org



idiwa2009@gmail.com