

**Evaluation report on the project:  
'Connecting the dots: Investing in youth with disabilities  
for enhanced access to employment in 4 districts of rural  
Uganda'**

Sept 2012 to Aug 2016

**Project partners:** National Union of the Disabled People in Uganda (NUDIPU) and Uganda National Union of the Blind (UNAB)

**Key stakeholders:** Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development; Ministry of Education, Sports and Technology; district local authorities of Buliisa, Hoima, Masindi and Kiryandongo districts



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## List of Acronyms

BPO	Blind people's organisation
BUDAB	Buliisa District Association of the Blind
CDO	Community development officer
CSO	Civil society organisation
CWD	Child with disability
DCDO	District community development officers
DPOs	Disabled people's organisation
DU	District union
FGD	Focus group discussion
HODAB	Hoima District Association of the Blind
HUDDIPU	Hoima District Disabled People's Union
ICT	Information and communication technology
IEC	Information, education and communication
KIDDIPU	Kiryandongo District Disabled People's Union
KII	Key informant interview
MADAB	Masindi District Association of the Blind
MTR	Mid-term review
NDP	National Disability Policy
NUDIPU	National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Support Action Fund
PWD	Person with disability
UgShs	Uganda shilling
UNAB	Uganda National Association of the Blind
UNAD	Uganda National Association of the Deaf
UPE	Universal primary education
VSLA	Village savings and loan associations
VTI	Vocational training institute
WWD	Women with disabilities
YWD	Youth with disability

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Finally, we owe all these work to the cooperation and support of the young men and women who were beneficiaries of Connecting the Dots Project, DPO leaders, local government officials and individual persons with disabilities and members of the community from Buliisa, Kiryandongo, Hoima and Buliisa Districts, who generously shared with us whatever information that they had regarding their experience with the project. We thank you all for your work in making this project a success, and for sharing your stories with us.

## Executive Summary

The EU-funded “Connecting the Dots” project run by Sightsavers in Uganda was implemented in collaboration with Uganda National Association of the Blind (UNAB) and the National Union of Disabled People of Uganda (NUDIPU) and completed in August 2016. The project sought to facilitate access to vocational skills for 324 youths with disabilities and to promote their ‘acceptance’ as productive employees by their families, vocational institutions, employers and the general public. The evaluation was commissioned to assess the extent to which the project had achieved these results and to document lessons learnt.

The evaluation used a range of tools, namely: focus group discussions with direct beneficiaries and their organisations; key informant interviews with project leaders, Disabled Peoples’ Organisations (DPOs) - including Blind peoples’ Organisation (BPOs), leaders of relevant government departments and vocational training institutes; case studies; and direct observation. In addition to the secondary data provided by the project, the evaluation generated statistical data through a random survey covering more than 20% of the 324 direct beneficiaries.

From the analysis of the data generated, the evaluation concludes that the project succeeded in meeting its objectives and has impacted positively on the lives of the youth with disabilities and their families. The project was successful in addressing both the practical challenges of individual persons with disabilities as well as the institutional barriers that inhibit their full participation in the socio-economic life of their communities, an approach that ensured that both economic empowerment and inclusion of persons with disabilities could be achieved. A summary of achievements as set out in Sightsavers’ rating scheme against the seven evaluation criteria is provided in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1: Rating assessment of the evaluation criteria used**

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation findings	Rating
<b>Relevance:</b> extent to which project is aligned to priorities & policies of beneficiaries recipient government and donors.	Overall rating on <i>relevance</i> criteria is “ <b>excellent</b> ”. Rating on specific issues is provided below: <b>Alignment with local and international policies and priorities on disability and employment.</b> – Sufficiently aligned with Uganda government strategy on vocational training for the youth as per the Disability Act 2006 and the National Disability Policy (NDP). – Well linked to government economic programs,	

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation findings	Rating
	i.e. youth livelihood program and women's entrepreneurship fund. – It is line with UNESCO's policy objectives on demand-driven non-formal vocational training for marginalised youths <sup>1</sup> .	
	<b>Alignment with needs and priorities of youth with disabilities in Uganda:</b> Both UNAB and NUDIPU consider it a model on vocational skills training and employment that can be replicated nationally.	
<b>Effectiveness:</b> the extent to which the objectives have been achieved and the anticipated results have been realised.	Overall score on effectiveness criteria is ' <b>excellent</b> ': Rating on specific questions are: <b>Engagement with different levels of government to achieve project objectives:</b> Significant engagement of district-based DPOs and government - <i>but limited involvement with all three<sup>2</sup> key national-level stakeholders</i> . The overall rating of excellent is based on achievement of project goals as stipulated in the logframe.	
	<b>Extent to which unforeseen challenges were overcome</b> Minimum education requirements in VTIs was addressed by tailoring trainings to the needs of youth with disabilities. This was, however, done <i>outside mainstreamed VIT processes limiting impact</i> .	
	<b>Gender considerations</b> Gender balance among trainees achieved - <i>although systematic long-term gender sensitive strategies were not very visible</i> .	
	<b>To what extent was learning from the Mid-Term Review (MTR) incorporated into the project?</b> Rated as ' <b>excellent</b> ' with most of the recommendations and this contributed to the overall achievements of the project.	
	<b>Access to financial services</b> Access to financial services was addressed through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and linking the youth to mainstream government programs. The evaluation considered these	

<sup>1</sup> United National Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, Uganda.

<sup>2</sup> Based on views expressed by NUDIPU, UNAB and the national ministry responsible for disability

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation findings	Rating
	measures sufficient to meet needs of trainees.	
<b>Efficiency:</b> the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible, and the manner in which resources have been efficiently managed and governed in order to produce results.	Overall assessment of efficiency was ‘ <b>excellent</b> ’: <b>Assessment of links with existing government programmes</b> – Strong links to DPO and district governments – seen from contributions in office space and voluntary time provided by members of DPOs – DPOs have lobbied for access to resources from mainstream government economic programs.	●
	<b>Was the project implemented in a timely manner with resources used according to plan?</b> Implemented with minimal costs and targets achieved within project timeline and with no overspends despite fluctuations in exchange rates.	●
	<b>How were management and governance structures established in the project?</b> Operational decisions made at project level and involved members of DPOs at district level. National partners were informed of activities in progress.	●
<b>Impact:</b> the long term change or effects (positive or negative) that have occurred, or will occur, as a result of the project or programme, i.e. what difference has the project or programme made to peoples’ lives, to relevant systems or development conditions?	Overall rating for impact was ‘ <b>Excellent</b> ’: <b>Were employment opportunities for youth with disabilities improved?</b> At least 98% <sup>3</sup> ( <b>Chart 1 below</b> ) of the trainees are earning an income, compared to 41% before project.	●
	<b>Changes (negative or positive) on youth with disabilities as a result of the project.</b> – Positive changes in attitude on disability with 98% of those surveyed <sup>4</sup> reporting an improvement in attitudes and 80% improvement in their environment – There were unplanned social spill overs, including marriages and being elected to political positions.	●
	<b>Changes the project had on the perception of the working capacity of youth with disabilities.</b> FGDs with parents of trainees, VTI leaders and employers suggest improved attitudes on the youth with disabilities in regards to their work potential.	●
	<b>Extent to which the project has improved the</b>	

<sup>3</sup> Based on random survey of beneficiaries as part of evaluation tools

<sup>4</sup> Ibid (As above)

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation findings	Rating
	<p><b>capacity of the project partners</b></p> <p>The capacities of eight district-based DPOs significantly strengthened while the two national DPOs indicated that there were limited investments in their capacities. VTI capacities improved.</p>	
<p><b>Sustainability:</b> whether benefits of the project or programme are likely to continue after donor funding has ceased.</p>	<p>Overall rating of sustainability is “<b>satisfactory</b>”:</p> <p><b>Contribution to systemic changes leading to improvement in youth employment.</b></p> <p>Skills training processes, involvement of employers, job fairs and awareness processes systematically improved employment opportunities for trainees.</p>	
	<p><b>Likelihood of trainees to gain/remain in employment in the future?</b></p> <p>The trainees will sustain their gains since most of them are self-employed, and besides, employers, parents and communities have been sensitized. However, training was outside mainstream and level of benefit can reduce when project activities end.</p>	
	<p><b>Likelihood of DPOs/BPOs continuing at the same or improved level of activity</b></p> <p>DPO activities linked mostly to project funding and there is need for more strategic capacity support to ensure they will continue to function effectively</p>	
	<p><b>Likelihood of VTIs continuing disability inclusive training programmes</b></p> <p>The VTIs will require that parents pay for their children in these institutions for them to sustain training for YWDs. Limited success in mainstreaming youth training into VTI programmes</p>	
<p><b>Scalability / replic’ty:</b> the scope and for the project to be suitable for replication or scale up.</p>	<p><b>What are the lessons from project and which elements are suitable for future?</b></p> <p>Linking youth to formal training institutions is innovative and can be replicated although supporting inclusion in mainstream courses would have been a better experience to scale-up. Other experiences like job fairs, training of institutions on disability and provision of start-up kits are all replicable.</p>	

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation findings	Rating
<b>Coherence / co-ord.</b> extent to which proj. co-ordinated with other similar initiatives & degree of internal coherence	<b>To what extent did the project create synergies with other similar actors and agencies?</b> Coherent with other initiatives by public and private actors in the Albertine Region <sup>5</sup> to prepare youth for oil-sector growth. In line with other Sightsavers' projects in the thematic areas related to inclusive education and empowerment of persons with disabilities. Synergy with govt plans to improve skill for the youth and to promote access to livelihood opportunities.	

Given that the project received a positive mid-term review as well as an encouraging Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) report commissioned by the European Union (EU) and that phase two has already been approved by the EU, it should be no surprise to learn that the evaluation found the project to have been very successful. As a consequence, the project has been given an **excellent** rating for its overall performance. It has enabled all the intended 324 direct beneficiaries to gain vocational training, the overwhelming majority of whom are now earning far more than they were before (this in a context of high youth unemployment) and who were in turn found to be benefitting their families (i.e. an additional 1,620 indirect beneficiaries). Secondly, vocational training institutions (VTIs) have become more open and welcoming to youths with disabilities, and this acceptance is expected to continue, with the continued lobbying by persons with disabilities through their organisations and representatives in the local governance structures. Finally; district DPOs have become stronger, energised with a more vibrant membership and better able and more confident in fighting for their members' rights. This latter achievement will ensure that the benefits generated by the project will be sustained.

Key factors in the project's success were found to be the way in which relationships were built and maintained with the various key stakeholders; the very extensive use of voluntary labour, that both kept costs down and embedded the project within the 'donating' institutions (largely local government and DPOs); and its twin-track approach of direct support to youths with disabilities in accessing vocational training alongside the addressing of some of the wider social and institutional factors that hold PWD back.

**The evaluation recommends that:**

- New and creative measures are introduced to promote access to mainstream VTI courses for youths with disabilities. These could include scholarships provided by local government or provisions for partial scholarships provided in the next phase of the project.

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<sup>5</sup> Western part of Uganda, along Lake Albert, considered to have high natural oils potentials.

- More awareness should be created about the special entry points available for persons with disabilities to join government-run tertiary institutions, including VTIs. Parents should be sensitised and encouraged to pay tuition for their children in these institutions.
- Further measures are taken to entrench disability access audits in public structures, support systems and quality assurance. Improving the quality of support will ensure that structures like ramps meet acceptable and uniform standards.
- A conversation is opened up with national DPOs and the government department responsible for disability to encourage them to take up these issues of PWD access to, and participation in, vocational training. .
- The roll-out of phase 2 of the project are used as a means for establishing a structured engagement with DPOs at national level.
- The engagement with DPOs is extended and systematised into a more structured and organised program of DPO capacity development.

## 1. Introduction and Background

Young women and men with disabilities can and should be accepted as productive members of society. Promoting more inclusive societies and employment opportunities for people with disabilities requires improved access to basic education, vocational training relevant to labour market needs and jobs suited to their skills, interests and abilities, with adaptations as needed. In societies like Uganda, changing employment opportunities for youths with disabilities also requires recognising the need to dismantle other barriers – like making the physical environment more accessible, providing information in a variety of formats, and challenging attitudes and mistaken assumptions about people with disabilities. The **‘Connecting the Dots’** project therefore addressed the problems of access to vocational training and institutional barriers that the youth with disabilities face in the job market. It did so in the context of, first, the Millennium Development Goals (specifically in relation to MDG1 on poverty reduction). Second, the objective of the EU’s call for proposals under which funding was secured for ‘poverty reduction in the context of sustainable development.’ And third, Uganda’s obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and specifically Article 27 Work and Employment.

The project design drew on the WHO/ILO/UNESCO Community Based Rehabilitation Guidelines which outline five elements as critical to improving persons with disabilities’ livelihoods: skills development; self-employment; wage employment; financial services and social protection. It builds on NUDIPU’s three-year project in Northern Uganda aimed at stimulating the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities.

The project targeted 324 youths with disabilities in four districts - Buliisa, Hoima, Masindi and Kiryandongo - in the Bunyoro region in the mid-western part of Uganda. It was implemented in partnership with NUDIPU, the Uganda

National Association of the Blind (UNAB) and district level affiliates of these two national organisations. By working in partnership with organisations representing persons with disabilities, Sightsavers ensured that the project responded to the needs of persons with disabilities of Uganda as enshrined in the strategic plans of the two national organisations.

The purpose of the evaluation, as set out in the terms of reference (see **Appendix 1** below) was ‘to assess the project’s achievements and challenges, and to capture the lessons learnt for Sightsavers and partners in the context of inclusion of youth with disabilities within the sphere of employment against the following seven criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, replicability and coherence.’

The report structure follows that set out by Sightsavers, where the analysis of findings and achievements is organised along the seven evaluation criteria and questions earlier outlined.

## 2. Evaluation Methodology

### A. Evaluation model and approach

The overall evaluation design and approach was driven by the many opportunities identified by the evaluation team including the fact that there was a project logframe with clearly articulated outcome and output targets, and this formed the basis for assessing changes created by the project. Another opportunity was the availability of key project actors at the original project site and this included project implementation team, beneficiaries and other key stakeholders like government counterparts, parents of youth with disabilities, heads of VTIs and employers. Easy access to these actors made data collection and triangulation an easy task for the evaluation team. Mixed methods were used to gather, analyse and triangulate quantitative and qualitative data, including participatory techniques.

The evaluation combined a number of different tools and techniques designed to ensure findings that were both reliable and comprehensive. The various approaches were triangulated with one another to test and cross-check them, and the findings were then presented at a stakeholders’ feedback workshop so as to test their accuracy and robustness. Workshop participants, who included representatives of all the stakeholders who were consulted during the fieldwork, provided complementary information but it was reassuring that no corrections were needed.

The tools and techniques, which covered all four of the project districts, consisted of:

- **Review of secondary information:** The key sources of secondary data were project reports, reports of the mid-term evaluation, focused studies (most valuable was study on the employment areas of project beneficiaries carried out in December 2014) and other documents generated by the project.
- **Six focus group discussions:** This was undertaken with project beneficiaries separately, although one (of six) discussion group combined the beneficiaries and the parents of the beneficiary youths. Focussed group discussions were conducted in three of the four target districts.
- **Key informant interviews:** This was undertaken with beneficiaries, their families, representatives of vocational training institutes, government officials, employers and Sightsavers staff
- **Direct observation:** This included observations of trainees in the work places and in their family settings.
- **Questionnaire survey:** The questionnaire was designed for project beneficiaries and administered by data enumerators recruited and trained for the purpose. In all 64 survey responses were received, which equates to a 20% sample and which the evaluators regard as sufficient from which to draw reliable conclusions.

## **B. Sampling, data collection and analysis**

The field exercise, conducted between 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016, covered all the four target districts, and within the districts the team undertook focussed group discussions with all the beneficiaries and parents (in the case of Hoima district) that could be mobilised and were able to come to the DPO district offices and other locations that were visited. The sampling of beneficiaries for questionnaire interviews was determined by the ease with which enumerators could allocate them in the selected sites where they were thought to be concentrated, and all those who were at these locations at the time of the visit were interviewed. In regards to key informant interviews, the sample size was intended to ensure that representatives of all the implementing partners, VTIs and employers were covered.

Quantitative data from the questionnaire surveys were entered into Excel sheets and analysed as percentages or scores based on the scales in the tool. Secondary quantitative data obtained from project documents were also tabulated and presented graphically for interpretation. Qualitative data from the various interviews were recorded using hand written notes detailing all of the points made in the interview and later reviewed by evaluators.

For the final analysis, quantitative and qualitative data sources were triangulated under each of the evaluation questions. The final scoring went through three processes: Individual ratings by each of the two evaluation consultants which were discussed and harmonised; comparison to findings and conclusions from MTR and other project documents; and, finally, correlated with the opinions expressed by participants at the feedback

workshop – which provided a final feedback, although it did not have any significant changes on the scores.

### **C. Limitations of the evaluation (related to methods, data sources, potential sources of bias)**

- Several factors have influenced (and continues to do so) the changes in the attitudes to disability and the consequent impact on the lives of persons with disabilities in Uganda, and this include the conducive policy and legal environment created by several years of policy influence by DPOs and other multiple non-governmental actors. The evaluation design – though considered appropriate – cannot provide a quantitative attribution of the contributions of the project to these changes. Nevertheless, it is sufficient to identify what changes have taken place, how and why these came about, and assume that the project contributed to these changes based on the logical linkages between project activities, beneficiaries and identified changes.
- There are potential self-selection bias in accessing informants for the questionnaire survey. This might have been exacerbated by the fact that identification of respondents was based on “easy access” i.e. interviewing trainees who were easily accessible to the evaluation team. The evaluation team attempted to address this by ensuring that all those who were accessible in a given area were interviewed.
- Response bias from informants that are aware of the fact that the next phase of the project has been approved and are either keen to ensure that their needs are captured in the next phase or are interested in impressing the implementing organisation so that they can gain from the incoming project. This was addressed as much as possible through multiple lines of questioning and a clear articulation of the objectives of the exercise by the evaluators.
- Although the number of questionnaire administrators were few, there is still a risk of consistency of style and approach in presenting questions and interpreting and presenting responses, especially since it involved interpreting questions in the local languages and recording responses in English. The pre-testing of the questionnaire was designed to minimise this risk.

## **3. Results**

### **A. Assessment of relevance**

The project responded appropriately to the priorities of the youths with disabilities of Uganda, and advanced relevant government of Uganda (GoU) policies within the ministry responsible for disability and the strategic plans of both the national association of the blind (UNAB) and the umbrella organisation representing persons with disabilities of Uganda, NUDIPU, and gets **a rating of excellent**. Achievements on specific evaluation questions are presented below.

### **Alignment with local and international development policies and priorities on disability and employment**

The evaluation identified significant alignment with government policies and priorities on disability and employment and gets a rating of '**excellent**'. The conclusions are supported by the following findings:

- The project design is in line with government economic programs, notably the youth livelihoods program, the women's entrepreneurship fund and Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), among others.
- The project compliments or advances the activities and policies promoted by other NGOs like Sustain for life, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), International Labour Organisation and UNESCO, all of whom have implemented vocational skills programmes for youths with disabilities and youth in the geographical region covered by the project or Uganda in general<sup>6</sup>.

### **Extent to which project design in line with the needs and priorities of youth with disabilities in Uganda**

The evaluation established that the project adequately addressed the needs and priorities of the youth with disabilities in Uganda and provides a rating of '**excellent**'. This is supported by findings that suggest:

- More than 80% of school leavers in Uganda have no access to employment<sup>7</sup>, and among the youths with disabilities, the percentage is considered to be higher because of their marginalisation in the job market<sup>8</sup>. The project therefore responds to a priority need of the youth of Uganda, and especially the youths with disabilities.
- Access to vocational skills training and employment opportunities for the youths with disabilities are strategic priorities for both NUDIPU and UNAB. Vocational skills training is also an important strategy by the government of Uganda to economically empower the youth of Uganda in general, and youths with disabilities in particular. This is spelt out in strategy documents like: Skilling Uganda; Disability Act 2006; UPE; and National Disability Policy (NDP)<sup>9</sup>.

## **B. Assessment of Effectiveness**

The evaluation **rated as 'excellent'** the extent to which the objectives have been achieved and the anticipated results realised. Specific achievements of project objectives and results are outlined below.

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<sup>6</sup> Sustain for Life (organization), 'Improving livelihood prospects of marginalized individuals in Uganda', an integrated skills approach to vocational training, Kampala 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Maureen Kayinza, "Youth unemployment in Uganda", journalism connected, Kampala 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Raymond Lang and Ambrose Murangira, 'Disability Scoping Study for DFID Uganda', Kampala 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Education and Sports, 'Skilling Uganda: BTVET Strategic Plan 2011 -2020', Kampala, 2011.

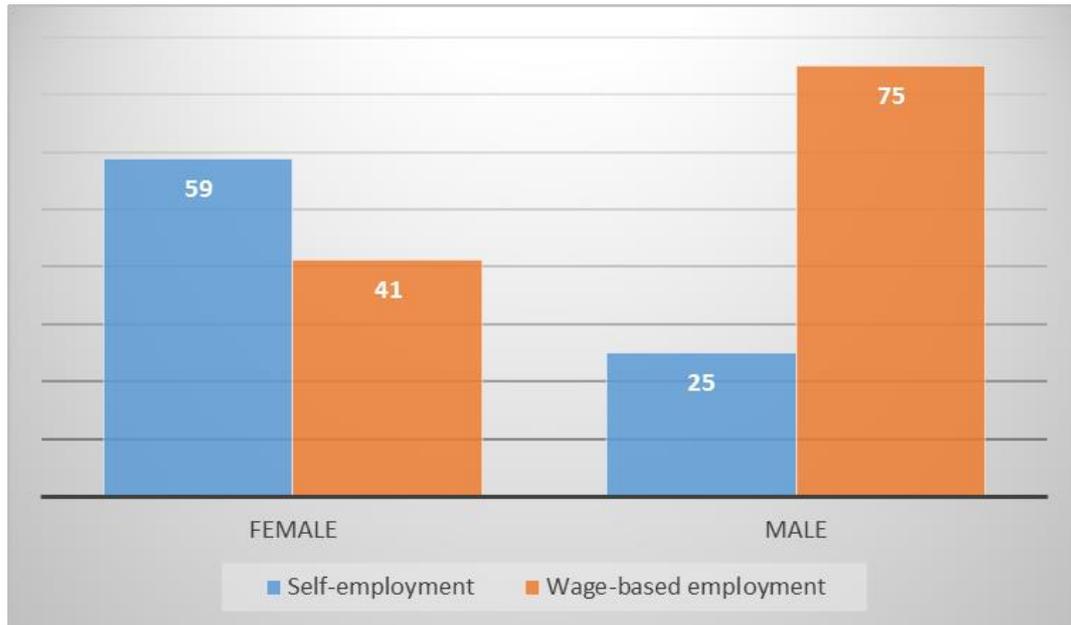
## **Project engagement at different levels to achieve project objectives**

Measure of project achievements in engaging stakeholders at different levels to achieve project objectives is rated as '**excellent**'. The rating is based on the effective involvement of all stakeholders at the district level which resulted into the overwhelming achievement of planned project objectives. The specific achievements include:

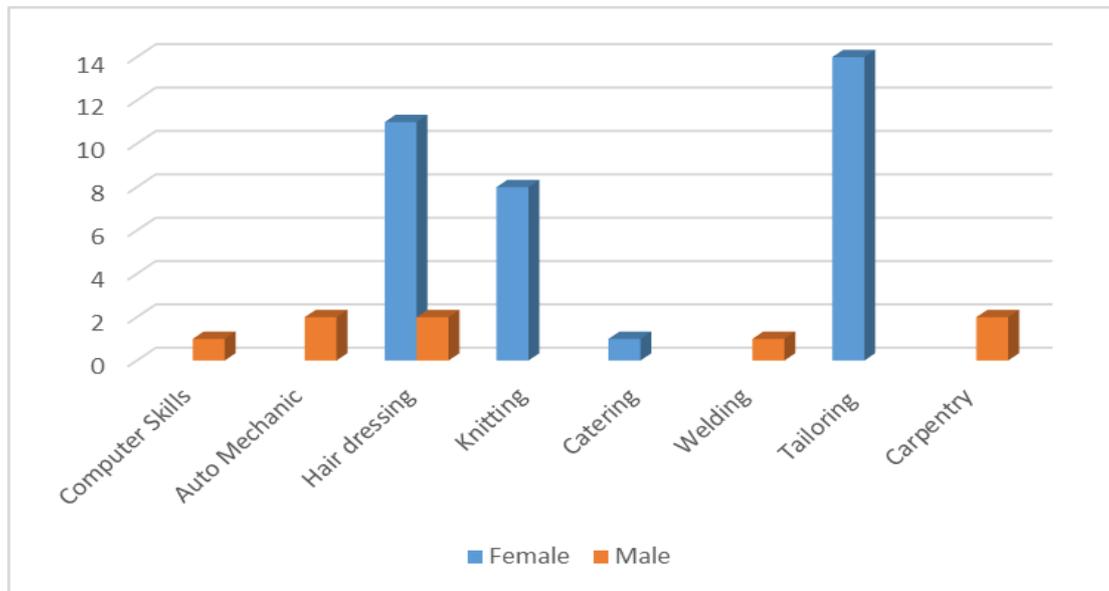
### **Access to wage-based and self-employment**

Although up-to-date data on the employment of trainees could not be obtained because of the mobility of those trained, the evaluation was still able to conclude that this objective was overwhelmingly achieved. This is supported by information generated from various sources, including findings from the random survey of trainees where 98% of respondents agreed that they were gainfully employed. Another source of information on this issue was a survey of 42 trainees that was undertaken in December 2015. The study found that youths with disabilities of different genders and disabilities were gainfully employed in different industries either as salaried employees or were in self-employment (**Chart 1**). In the study, 75% of the men were in wage while nearly 60% of the females were self-employed. This shows men either prefer or have more access to wage-based employment when compared to women. These findings were reviewed with trainees during the evaluation and the only factor thought to determine whether one got self-employed or joined salaried employment after the training was the specific vocational skill acquired by the trainees, which itself is partly influenced by one's gender. Skill areas preferred by men like computer or welding provides easier access to paid jobs when compared to the skills where women congregate like hairdressing or tailoring. The issue of men 'preventing' their wives from fulltime employment arose during FGDs with trainees, and to get around this, young married women prefer self-employment because they think it gives them the freedom to balance their work and family lives and in some cases it is more financially rewarding.

**Chart 1: Trainees by gender in wage-based and self-employment**



**Chart 2** (below) summarises the different employment areas by gender and skill area for respondents in the December 2015 study referred to above. It can be seen that 33 of the 34 women (97%) were employed in the three skill areas traditionally identified with women, namely tailoring (41%), knitting (24%) and hair-dressing (32%). This gendered orientation of courses was identified during the MTR and seems not to have changed in the period following it, a reality probably attributable to strong gender stereotyping in the community.

**Chart 2: Trainee employment areas by gender**


**Table 2** (below) summarises the numbers of trainees by disability and employment areas. The largest employment areas were tailoring, hair-dressing and knitting, all dominated by females. On the basis of disability, most (nine of 20) physically disabled trainees are employed in hair-dressing while most (six of eight) deaf youths with disabilities are working in the tailoring. The rest of the disabilities show no congregation in any particular skill areas. The evaluation believes the choice of skills areas by persons with various disabilities is more coincidental than purposive, and this is what most youths with disabilities said during FGDs and KILs with training beneficiaries.

**Table 2: Economic activity by youths with disabilities, Dec 2015**

	Physical	Blind	Low vision	Restricted growth	Deaf	Hard of hearing	Epilepsy	Tot	%
IT Skills	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2%
Auto mechanic	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	5%
Hair dressing	9	0	0	0	1	2	1	13	31%
Knitting	2	1	1	2	0	2	0	8	19%
Catering	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2%
Welding	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2%
Tailoring	4	0	2	1	6	1	0	14	33%
Carpentry	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>
%	48%	2%	10%	7%	19%	12%	2%	100	

**Source:** Project data

### *Skills development for youths with disabilities*

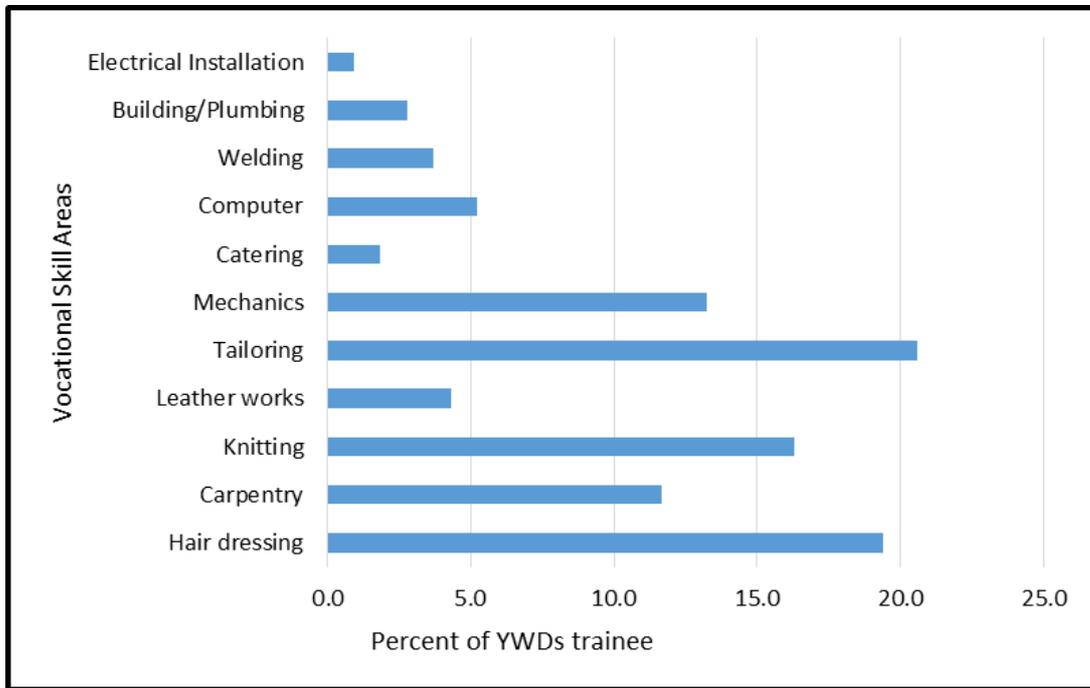
The evaluation considered this result fully realised and all the indicator targets were fully met and in some cases exceeded. These include:

- The training of **324 female and male** youths with disabilities by end of project. This was exceeded by one, and of the 325 trainees, 143 (44%) were female, which is a slight improvement on the MTR findings, where females had constituted only 38% of the then 190 trainees.
- The target of **168 female and male** youths with disabilities realizing enhanced skills through on the job training apprenticeship and/or internship was fully realized, of whom **89 (52%) were females** and **males were 79 (48%)**.
- Increased skills for **64 female and male** youths with disabilities through enterprise based training. This result too was fully realised and again the majority of beneficiaries (**40 or 62%) were females**.

The training for the 325 youths with disabilities lasted between one and three months. There were mixed opinions on the length of the training, with some trainees, employers and trainers considering the period short, while others thought it was sufficient to provide the skills necessary for gainful employment. Among those who considered the training period short were people with hearing impairment, who argued that the trainers didn't fully understand Sign Language and so lots of time was spent on interpretation. The training was tailored to meet the needs and interests of the trainees and was conducted outside the mainstream courses. This was the only option available since most of the trainees didn't have the academic requirements to join the mainstream courses. Moreover, mainstream courses take at least 12 months to be completed, and the project would not have achieved its target within the project life span. The evaluation considered the choice of tailored rather than mainstream courses as appropriate for the moment, but recommends that this should be done alongside formal mainstream courses in future.

**Table 3** below provides the numbers of people trained in various courses, and as seen from the table, tailoring and hair dressing constituted more than 40% (130 of 325 youths with disabilities trained) of the training skills obtained (see also **chart 3** below). Of the 130 youths with disabilities trained in these two skill areas, 94 (72%) were women. Six 'science-linked' courses i.e. carpentry, mechanics, computer studies, electrical installation, welding and building together took 122 of 325 (38%) trainees, and 114 (93% of 122) of these were men, again reinforcing gendered skill orientation.

**Chart 3: Percentage of youth with disabilities trained in different vocational skills**



**Table 3: Training areas by gender**

District	Vocational Skills													Totals	%
	Gender	Hair dressing	Carpentry	Knitting	Leather works	Tailoring	Mechanics	Catering	Computer	Weld	Building	Electricity			
Buliisa	M	1	7	4	4	4	9	1	2	3	1	2	38	58	
	F	7	0	5	0	11	0	1	2	1	0	0	27	42	
	0	8	7	9	4	15	9	2	4	4	1	2	65	100	
Masindi	M	2	13	5	3	19	9	0	4	2	2	1	60	54	
	F	31	2	15	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	51	46	
	T	33	15	20	3	22	9	0	4	2	2	1	111	100	
Hoima	M	1	8	3	4	1	11	0	3	3	3		37	53	
	F	9	0	9	0	11	0	2	2	0	0		33	47	
	T	10	8	12	4	12	11	2	5	3	3	0	70	100	
Kiryandongo	M	4	8	5	3	4	14	0	3	3	3	0	47	59	
	F	8	0	7	0	14	0	2	1	0	0	0	32	41	
	T	12	8	12	3	18	14	2	4	3	3	0	79	100	
Totals	M	8	36	17	14	28	43	1	12	11	9	3	182	56	
	F	55	2	36	0	39	0	5	5	1	0	0	143	44	
		63	38	53	14	67	43	6	17	12	9	3	325	100	
<b>% of Total</b>		<b>19.4</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>		

### *Disability mainstreaming in training programme of the target institutions*

The evaluation rated realisation of this result as **'satisfactory'**. Four VTIs were supported to take youths with disabilities in their courses, but so far this has only happened for tailored project-organised courses rather than within their main-stream classes. Besides, one college, Kiryandongo VTI was unable to train any youths with disabilities during the life of the project. The Kiryandongo case was a typical example of scenarios where managers of institutions didn't believe that youth with disabilities, who did not have the right academic qualifications, were trainable in their institutions. However, after interactions with the project team they were able to see the potential of the youth with disabilities, and they are now expected to participate in the follow-up phase of the project.

Originally we would teach disabled children with lots of difficulties in an inaccessible environment and with teachers who were not disability sensitive – now we are better.  
(Principal, Nile Vocational Institute, Hoima)

However, as explained earlier, the evaluation found a very positive attitude among VTI leaders, and trainees also reported that they believed there were changes in ways these institutions interacted with persons with disabilities.

#### *St Kizito Vocational Training Institute*

St Kizito is a catholic institution founded in 2007 and currently trains young people in courses like catering, tailoring, secretarial and hairdressing. The school had no previous experience with persons with disabilities when Sightsavers approached the school in 2013, with a request that they should train young persons with disabilities in their institution. They were scared and easily declined the request.

*"We just didn't figure out how to work with deaf people, and I didn't think persons with disabilities would cope with the rigour of the vocational skills courses"* says Agnes Nakaziwa, the institute's principal.

After some persuasion, Agnes agreed to 'try'. They were then taken through a one-week 'training' on disability, covering basic sign language skills and other aspects of disability sensitivity.

The institute's engagement with the project has changed the college, from physical structures, attitudes of school community and the composition of their learners. After an accessibility audit, they made improvements on the structures, including the construction of an accessible toilet. Previously they didn't receive disabled applicants willing to pay for a course, but a few come in now and are admitted.

The principal thinks the positive effects of the programme are sustainable, especially if it is supported by sensitization of parents using various channels, including the church and public media.

### *Potential employers appreciate the potentials of youths with disabilities*

The evaluation team met four (of less than ten provided by the project team) employers one-to-one and also listened to their contributions during the final stakeholder workshop meant to review the findings emerging from the evaluation. The conclusion from these consultations is that employers appreciate the potentials of trained youth with disabilities and do not have any reservations about employing them. This conclusion is supported by findings that demonstrate that 98% of youths with disabilities who were sampled during the evaluation survey accept that there have been changes in attitudes towards persons with disabilities.

One activity undertaken by the project was to facilitate 30 job awareness events – referred as job fairs. The evaluation believes these events contributed to the changes in attitude on the potentials of disabled people by employers. Other contributing factors include awareness campaigns by persons with disabilities and the ability of youths with disabilities to demonstrate their capabilities through the results of their work and their self-confidence.

### *Strengthened structures of DPOs at national and district levels*

One key results area was capacity strengthening of DPOs at the national and district levels. These were to be measured through the following indicators:

- *At least six district/national BPOs/DPOs now prioritize youth employment in their annual operational plans:* The target was broadly achieved and all the eight DPOs/BPOs in the region are working with youths with disabilities as a consequence. In fact the youth have penetrated the leadership of all these organizations, including chair for the district DPO in Buliisa District.
- *At least three district youth structures of DPOs had reviewed, strengthened and expanded their membership by end of the project.* The target has been exceeded as youths with disabilities membership of all DPOs/BPOs exploded and youths with disabilities are now driving activities within the DPOs. This is partly attributable to the fact that the project targeted them, building their capacities through the skills training and exposures outside their homes.
- *Increased numbers of youths with disabilities engaging in existing economic empowerment initiatives:* This is also tremendous and only 6% of survey respondents say that they are not involved in new economic activities

Other notable changes in the capacities of DPOs and impact on members identified by the evaluation included:

- Buliisa district had no active DPOs and both umbrella district union and the district BPO, both of which are now vibrant, were the results of project activities in the district.
- Before the project, election for persons with disabilities to reserved positions in the local government structures were dominated by a few better educated and economically empowered persons with disabilities, but in the last elections voters were better sensitized and were therefore able to elect persons with disabilities who were active in disability work and represented the ordinary person with disability in the community.

### **How the project successfully overcame unforeseen challenges**

The evaluation rated the extent to which the project identified, addressed and overcame unforeseen challenges as '**satisfactory**'. The specific case upon which the conclusion is based relates to minimum academic requirements to join public VTIs. The issue of minimum education requirements for joining VITs was identified as a challenge and addressed by tailoring trainings to the needs of youth with disabilities. This approach meant that youth with disabilities remained outside the mainstream courses and this limits their access certifications that determine access to opportunities in the mainstream public and private sectors.

### **Extent to which the project considered gender within the design and implementation of project activities**

The evaluation rates the efforts of the project to incorporate gender sensitivity in the design and implementation of the project as '**satisfactory**'. The evaluation compared changes in the numbers of women accessing trainings before and after the MTR and noted that the percentage of women who had completed the training rose from 38% at the time of the MTR to 44% in the final list of trainees. This increase in the numbers of women attending project supported trainings was the results of deliberate efforts by the project team to set and stick to gender number targets for all training programmes.

Meanwhile, the evaluation team did not identify any evidence that the project undertook a deliberate gender analysis of the different factors affecting access to vocational training opportunities by young men and women with disabilities in the region. Increasing numbers of women by sticking to rigid number targets without identifying and addressing the gendered differences in factors affecting access, will not result into sustainable resolution of the problem. The evaluation recommends a more systematic approach that involves an analysis of the underlying drivers of the unequal access by young women with disabilities to vocational training institutions.

## **Review of MTR Recommendations**

Through KIIs with primary stakeholders (principally Sightsavers staff and DPO leaders), a review of project documents and direct observation, the evaluation assessed the extent to which the recommendations of the MTR were addressed; a summary is provided in Appendix 6. The findings suggest that most of the recommendations were addressed and that this contributed to the successful final outcomes of the project. One MTR recommendation successfully addressed related to the number of young women accessing training opportunities in the VTIs, where the percentage of women trained increased from 38% at the time of the MTR period to 44% by the end of the project.

Some recommendations were either beyond the scope of the project or could not be implemented within the time-frame following the MTR, which was less than one year before the end of the project. This included the recommendation that the project 'should engage in more work to identify other livelihood opportunities for persons with visual impairment'. Little progress was achieved here because VTIs in the region do not provide the kind of courses that people with visual impairment could undertake, and the option of taking them outside the region was outside the scope of the project. Similarly, recommendations for the project to develop and implement mechanisms to encourage parents to either make a contribution to school fees or fully pay for their children in VTIs was not successfully addressed. Again this was because this will require more time and should be included in follow-up phases of the project.

Attempts to implement some recommendations were made, but for various reasons, no change was realised within the life of the project. One such case was the recommendation to support both females and males to avoid falling into traditional gender-stereotyped courses and jobs. By the end of the project more than 90% of the women were taking only three courses (knitting, hairdressing and tailoring) all of which are traditionally female activities, while courses like mechanics, electrical installation and building remained a masculine business. These changes recommended by the MTR were necessary, but the period of only one year after the MTR was inadequate to realise those changes. The next phase of the project will pursue these recommendations. Another recommendation that requires more time and should be included in a future program relates to building the leadership and operational capacity of both disability unions and associations to be able to push the disability development agenda (especially for youth) within their respective districts.

Despite the fact that a few MTR recommendations will only be addressed by the follow-on project, the evaluation does not feel this to have been a deliberate delaying or avoidance tactic by the project, but rather a reflection of what was realistically viable in the time available. Project staff were found by the evaluation to be open to learning and reflection, and not defensive in their

response to questions or comments – positive attitudes that contributed to the project's success.

## **Promoting access to financial services for youth with disabilities**

The evaluation concluded that the project successfully identified constraints to financial services for youth with disabilities and instituted successful measures to address the difficulties and hence gets a rating of '**excellent**'. There were two successful strategies explained below:

- *Village savings and loan associations (VSLAs)*: All the youth groups supported by the project have initiated VSLAs where member save on a weekly basis. These monies are then borrowed with interest among the savers. The savings and borrowings go on for one year after which the individual savings plus interest accumulated on the loans are shared.
- *Access to existing government programmes to improve economic opportunities for youths with disabilities*: The evaluation examined the extent to which youths with disabilities have been able to access mainstream economic programmes that are intended to economically empower poor people. In Hoima District, one group of persons with disabilities reported that they had accessed a total of €7,000<sup>10</sup> from various mainstream government programmes in the last 12 months, and they agreed that this had never happened before. In Buliisa, the District Community Development officer (DCDO) reported that all<sup>11</sup> the groups of persons with disabilities in the district had each received a special grant of €500. The DCDO Buliisa also confirmed that persons with disabilities are earmarked to benefit from other mainstream programmes like Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), the youth livelihoods fund, the women's entrepreneurship fund and equalisation grants.

The evaluation concludes that the measures undertaken by the project to improve access to financial services have been successful and are potentially sustainable since they linked to local community and government structures. It considers financial services provided through VSLAs as sufficient to meet the financial needs of trainees. There should be no external injection of cash into group savings as that would distort the operations of this member-owned loan and savings scheme.

### **C. Assessment of Efficiency**

The evaluation concluded that the project was implemented with minimal costs and that resources were so effectively managed that there were no significant overspends by the end of the project, and therefore gets a rating of '**excellent**'. The evaluators attribute this achievement to the following factors:

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<sup>10</sup> 1 GBP = €1.17695 = 4,465.4 Uganda Shillings

<sup>11</sup> The actual number of groups could not be determined.

## **Linkage to existing government programmes to improve to economic opportunities for youths with disabilities**

The evaluation rates the achievement here as '**excellent**' – and examines two broad areas:

- *Access to mainstream funding pots*: This has already been examined in the last section and evaluation attributes this increased access to mainstream economic opportunities to the effects of the project on the organisational capacities of persons with disabilities, improved awareness and the lobbying by PWD leaders arising from project engagements. In Hoima District, persons with disabilities were able to access these funds through the lobbying activities of the youth association formed as a result of the project. The different groups of persons with disabilities in Buliisa District also accessed funding due to lobbying by the district union of persons with disabilities, and this union came into being as a result of project activities.

- *'In-kind contributions to project costs'*: The project was able to leverage approximately €122,400 from both within government and outside, in the form of 'voluntary' staff time, donated office space and import taxes forgone on the vehicle, among others. These in-kind contributions brought about much lower costs; enabled the project to draw on a wider range of skills, contacts and perspectives; helped embed its work in local systems and practices; and generated a sense of ownership that would not have been possible had the project been fully staffed by Sightsavers. This was a critical factors in achieving the project results.

## **Was the project implemented in a timely and efficient manner with resources used according to plan?**

The evaluation established that the project was implemented and key outputs achieved within the project's lifespan and the resources were so effectively managed that there were no significant overspends by the end of the project. The project is far from unique in having had to operate in a climate of fluctuating exchange rates, and over its four year life the project has at times received as few as UgShs3,100 for a euro up to a high at other times of UgShs4,100 – a 32% swing. Despite that, what is noteworthy, is that the final financial report out-turn showed a 2% over-spend on a budget of €598K, which demonstrates very effective financial control and a very impressive outcome.

The evaluators attribute this achievement to the following factors:

- Strong links with DPOs and government structures in all the districts and as a consequence, district governments contributed office space in three of the four districts. More important though was the contribution of free time by numerous DPO members and others. DPOs recommend that in future a modest budget be provided for their time.
- DPOs were empowered to lobby and access resources from mainstream economic programs for PWDs' benefit. This happened in all 4 districts and involved economic empowerment programmes funded by the government.

- Prudent financial management of project resources by the project manager in Masindi with support from the Kampala and UK offices of Sightsavers.

### **How management and governance structures were established in the project?**

This evaluation question was ‘**satisfactorily**’, based on the analysis of the following governance structures of the project:

- *Involvement of implementing partners in decision processes:* Both the national and district level representatives of implementing partners, i.e. NUDIPU, UNAB and the national and local governments all accepted that they were consulted at one stage or another in the project processes. Both NUDIPU and UNAB expressed appreciation for being consulted during the project design stage and this ensured their agendas were incorporated into the design. However, the DPOs felt that at some stage their views were not being taken into considerations. UNAB, for instance, felt that their proposal to send blind people to a training college in eastern Uganda that has the capacity to train blind people, was politely rejected without being given any feedback. The district DPOs felt part and parcel of the project decision processes and most leaders believed they were sufficiently involved in project implementation.
- *Decentralisation of decision making powers:* The decision making mechanism was decentralised to the extent that most operational decisions were made at the project-level by the project manager/coordinator. This is considered a strength and contributed to the success of the project.

## **D. Assessment of Impact**

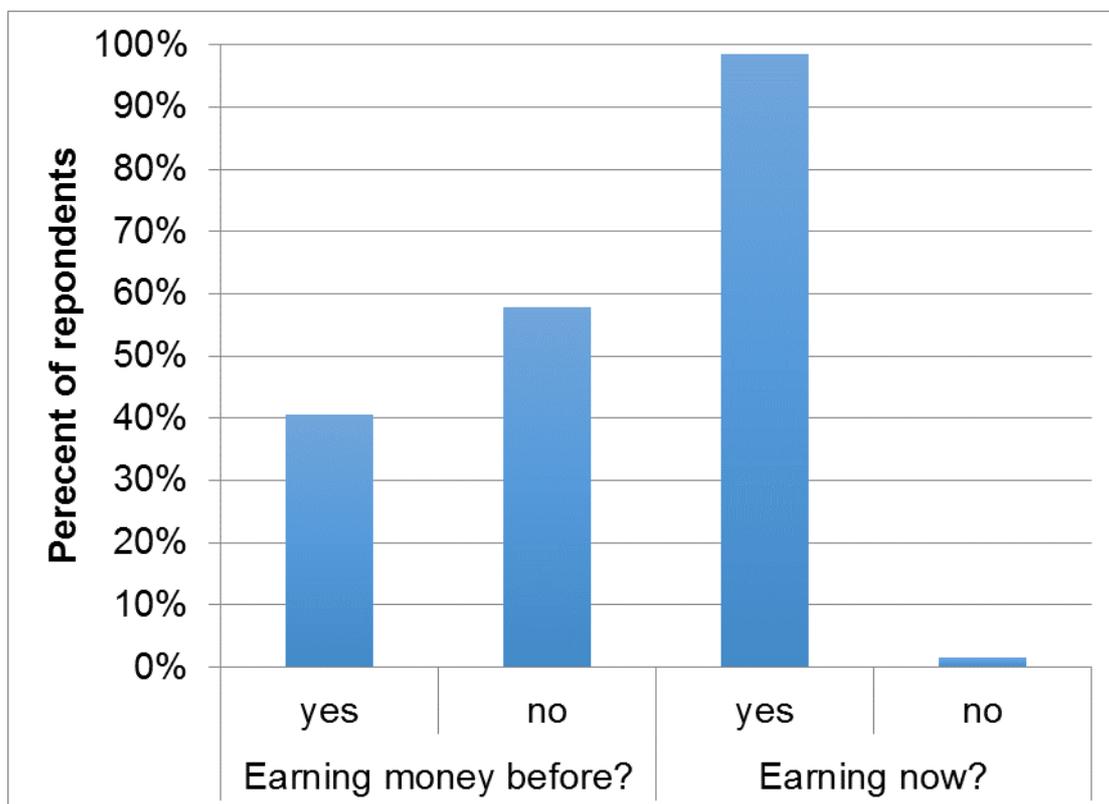
The evaluation established that the project has contributed significantly to the impact on youth employability and access to employment that was observable in all four districts, and therefore gives a rating of ‘**excellent**’. The project demonstrated that providing practical skills to young people with disabilities, combined with addressing issues around stigma and discrimination towards persons with disabilities creates a lasting impact in the lives of individual persons with disabilities, their families and support institutions.

The project had two indicators to measure impact i.e. access to employment for individual youths with disabilities; and, the extent to which government is mainstreaming youths with disabilities into government economic empowerment initiatives. In addition to the two impact indicators provided in the project log frame, the evaluation noted significant changes in the social and political lives of target beneficiaries and persons with disabilities in general. The details are described below.

## Employment opportunities for youths with disabilities

This is given a rating of ‘**excellent**’. The starting point for this is a random survey of beneficiaries which found that 98% (**Chart 4**) respondents are now earning an income, compared to 41% before, and of these 77% (Chart 4) are earning twice as much income as they used to before the project. The study also established that 91% of the youths with disabilities who received vocational training report an increase in income as the result of new economic activities that they are undertaking either in addition to what they were doing before the training (36%) or from completely new economic activities that they started after the training (55%). One challenge mentioned by female youths with disabilities was that in some cases, their husbands did not permit them to work either as self-employed or as salaried employees. The evaluators advised the project team to try and involve partners in training programmes or discussions leading to business or job choices.

**Chart 4: Percentage of respondents earning incomes (yes) or not (no) before and after training by the project**

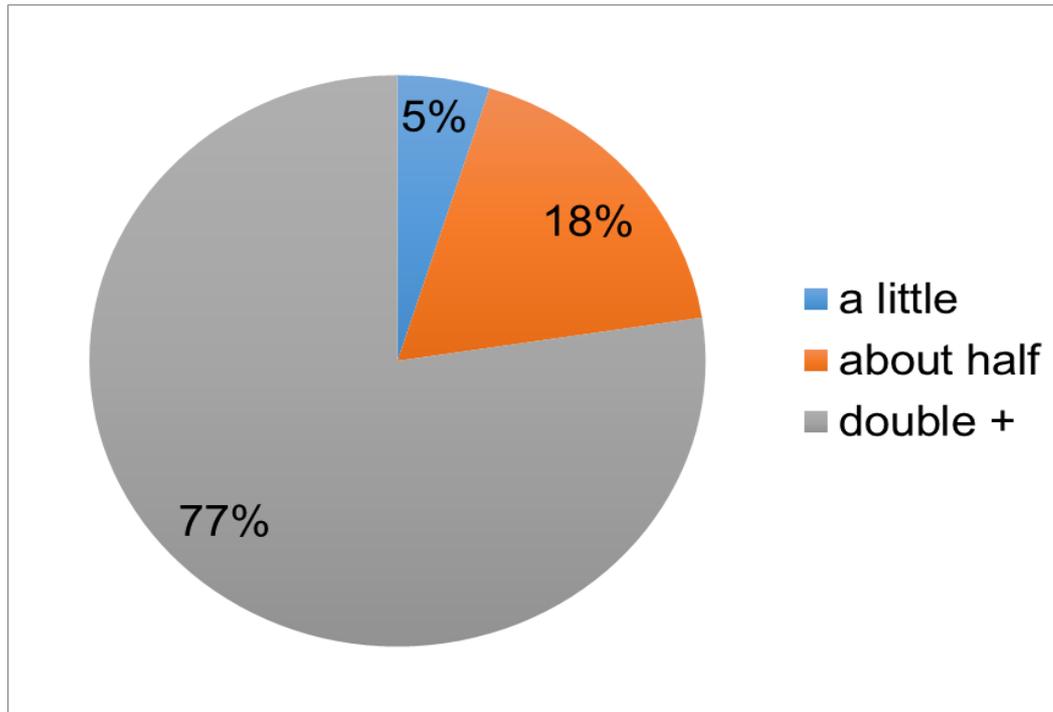


It should be noted that while the number of direct beneficiaries is 325, all of whom the evaluation found to have benefitted from the project, however, because most of these benefits were financial, it is reasonable to project outwards to their families as indirect beneficiaries. Indeed, the evaluation undertook a number of KIIs with parents who

*“The project has made us famous”*  
Kiryandongo beneficiary

attested to the fact that income earned by the youths with disabilities did in fact benefit the family economy. Given average family size in the region of six therefore, it would be reasonable to extrapolate to a figure of a further 1,620 indirect beneficiaries. This latter group clearly do not benefit to the same extent, but equally it would be unfair to omit them from the overall picture. Finally, there were unplanned social spill-overs, including stories attributing marriages by persons with disabilities to the project and being elected to political positions.

**Chart 5: Income increases following training**



Although the actual numbers of beneficiaries (325 of the tens of thousands of youth in this region of Uganda) might be small, and the jobs accessed are not in the mainstream economic areas, the evaluation consider this an important entry point. The lessons learnt can be replicated in other parts of the region and country at large, and skills areas and levels of training can be expanded so that youth with disabilities are able to compete more effectively in the open job market.

## Acceptance of youths with disabilities by employers:

### Important change for youth with disabilities

The evaluation considers acceptance of youth with disabilities by employers as an important change for youth with disabilities that was brought about by the project and rates achievement here as **'excellent'**.

This is based on findings from both the youths with disabilities as well as employers that suggest significant changes in attitudes of employers and the community towards employability of persons with disabilities.

Among the youths with disabilities themselves, 51 of the persons in the survey (80% - with nil response from the remaining 20%) responded positively when asked whether there was a positive change in the environment in which they live and work, while 83% suggested that attitudes to disability have changed positively in their communities. These conclusions were supported by the KII interviews carried out with four employers in two different districts, all of whom had no reservations about continuing to employ more persons with disabilities in their firms.

#### Comments by youths with disabilities in random survey

*I am a teacher and I know persons with disabilities can do any other job that others do; and, that they can join the same institutions as others. (Teacher with disabilities, Kiryandongo District)*

*Most schools have devices that support persons with disabilities, we even compete with normal people in employment market and win them (Persons with disability, Masindi District)*

*Now we have a teacher with disabilities in our school and she usually deals with abled-bodied people (Youth with disability, Masindi District)*

### Changes in the capacities of support institutions

The evaluation rated achievement on this evaluation criteria as **'excellent'**. The project strengthened the capacities of institutions that are considered vital in aiding the economic empowerment of youths with disabilities and this included DPOs, vocational training institutes, employers and the family. The evaluation concluded that there were significant positive changes in the ways these institutions now behave towards persons with disabilities when compared with the time when the first interacted with the project. The evaluation recognises that deep and lasting change in these institutions will require more time than was available within the timeframe of the project. Specific institutional experiences are described below.

#### Capacities of DPOs/BPOs

The project targeted ten DPOs/BPOs:

- Four (4) district DPOs from the target districts.
- Four (4) district-level BPOs.

- NUDIPU, the national umbrella organisation for persons with disabilities; and,
- UNAB, the national association of blind people.

The evaluation gave an overall score of **satisfactory**. The score recognises the significant achievements at the district level and the limited efforts expended and impact realised at the national level.

The project had very limited engagement with the national DPOs, apart from the occasional invitation to facilitate or participate in district activities. What's more, the national DPO partners, especially UNAB, had expected support from the project in the form of training and funding of the national office. These expectations were outside the scope of the project and more should have been made clear to UNAB that there were no provisions in the project budget for the training of their national staff or funding their office costs.

The project made tremendous impact though on the capacities and profiles of the eight DPOs at the district levels. The capacity building activities involved both formal training exposures, and more importantly, the continuous mentoring through working directly on the project.

The impact of this support on the capacities of the DPOs and BPOs at the district level include:

- Proliferation of the youth wings of the umbrella DPOs in all the four districts. These branches were critical in mobilising the youth for the training and have also been instrumental in bringing disability issues to the forefront of government programs.
- The UNAB district branches in all the four project districts were greatly strengthened by the project. As a result they have expanded their membership and individuals have greatly developed their capacities to lobby. For instance, visually impaired people were among the most competitive during the recent elections to fill district and lower level political seats reserved for persons with disabilities.
- Increased ability of DPOs to lobby and monitor services delivered by the districts. In three of the four the districts, office space and furniture were provided by the government. In two districts this benefit was a direct result of the project.
- Parents of youths with disabilities were mobilised into an association with a clear activity plan, and they played key role in sensitising other parents, and members of the community in general on disability. They were also instrumental in identifying youths with disabilities for training, and supporting them during the trainings.

In order to ensure that these gains are sustained, the evaluation recommends continuation of this support in any follow-up phase to this project. This would need to be more structured with defined change pathways and this should be carried out in close collaboration with the national organisations.

### *Capacity strengthening of VTIs*

The project supported four VTIs to enable them to train persons with disabilities. The evaluation considers the achievement in this area as satisfactory and recognises that it requires much longer period to bring about such structural changes. This is because sustainable mainstreaming of disability will require changes not just in the attitude of current leaders of these institutions, but also in the system that produce them, the laws and policies that govern their operations and, in general, systems that treat persons with disabilities as equal members of society. This takes time and multiple actors.

The impact of these changes, according to the leadership of the VTIs, beneficiaries and parents are already very real though, and include:

- One college (Nile Vocational Institute) was able to pay the extra costs needed to make a new building fully disability accessible, something they wouldn't have considered before being made disability sensitive as the results of their interaction with the project.
- One VTI (St. Kizito Vocational Training Institute) used to admit one or two students with disabilities in a given year, but this has increased to between four and five in one year since they started interacting with **Connecting the Dots** project.
- Instructors and managers from the training colleges have developed changed attitudes to disability after interacting with persons with disabilities through opportunities created by the project. One example of this change is that, one of the institutes i.e. Kiryandongo Vocational Institute, finally accepted to admit youths with disabilities into their programmes in the third year of the project<sup>12</sup>.
- The principal of Nile Vocational Institute in Hoima District accepted that engagement with the project has strengthened their relationship with the community and other potential sponsors, and as a consequence the Uganda Society for Disabled Children were impressed by disability accessibility in their college and recently sponsored two disabled students.

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<sup>12</sup> The actual admission did not take place during the project's lifespan, but they at least agreed to offer tailored and mainstream trainings to YWDs.

### *Capacity of the family institution*

The marginalisation of persons with disabilities starts in the family, yet at the same time the institution of the family is vital in supporting youths with

#### **Family support makes a difference**

Daphne Pamela became deaf when she was nine years old after suffering a severe form of malaria, and the experience was devastating for her mother, Mrs Juliet Gafabusa.

Luckily for Juliet, the family was already sending all their children to school and so Daphne managed to attend (?) school, but not for long. Because of limited opportunities for deaf people she stopped studies in primary school (at about 15 years of age).

Now in her late twenties, Daphne had no employment skill and as such she had no job or income of her own until she came in contact with Connecting the Dot project in 2013,

She trained in tailoring, after which she was given a sewing machine, start-up materials and above all she regained her self-confidence.

She now runs a successful tailoring business, alongside her tailor mother. Her mother concludes with a smile, "*Sightsavers has given me the confidence and hope in my daughter*"

disabilities' to access employment opportunities<sup>13</sup>. The impact of the project on the family was that it encouraged and enabled some families to bring out their youths with disabilities from hiding. This started to happen after they had seen what the project was doing with the youth and they saw what their children can be capable of doing once they are sensitised and trained by the project. This was particularly strong in Hoima District where more than 600 youths with disabilities for training by the project, a number far higher than the 69 (of 325) youth trained by the project. The challenge however is that most parents still expect support from 'outside' for their youths with disabilities – a fact that could be attributed to both poverty and attitude to disability.

### **Other social impacts**

Project beneficiaries, DPO leaders and government officials all acknowledged the fact that the project had been responsible for the pronounced changes in the social and political lives of youths with disabilities who were trained, and others who have indirectly benefited as the result of increased public awareness on disability. Changes in the social lives of persons with disabilities like marriages and family acceptance were highly valued by people who have interacted with the project. Although no actual numbers of persons or couples who attribute their marriage to the project was established, the

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<sup>13</sup> ILO and Irish Aid Fact Sheet (2004) on "Employment of People with Disabilities", Uganda Country Profile.

issue kept cropping up in meetings with beneficiaries whenever the subject of benefits arising from the project were raised.

Another ‘unplanned impact’ relates to increased visibility and confidence of individual persons with disabilities and their consequent successful participation in mainstream electoral politics. The elections for persons with disabilities into political offices are of types, election to positions constitutionally reserved for persons with disabilities and the elections to mainstream competitive positions. There was no report of persons with disabilities successfully participating in the mainstream elections. Positions reserved for persons with disabilities are competed for by persons with all kinds of disabilities and this involves persons of different economic and educational backgrounds. Responses derived from key informant and focussed group interviews suggested that these reserved positions have traditionally been dominated by the more educated persons with disabilities, most of whom had physical disabilities. However, in the last elections a new crop of young contestants, empowered by the project, emerged all over the region taking up elective positions. In some cases empowered project beneficiaries won leadership positions in new locations where they had relocated after receiving training from the project (see story of Rehema in box below<sup>14</sup>). In Masindi District blind people won councillorship positions in both the district and municipal councils, a feat that they attribute to the empowerment of blind people as the results of the project.

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<sup>14</sup> Buliisa and Hoima Districts are occupied by different ethnic groups and it is usually difficult to get elected to leadership positions by a community that is not your ethnic group – **Comment by Evaluator.**

### The story of Rehema Bategeka

*“I am a powerful woman because of Sightsavers”,*

*Says Rehema, very confidently. “I am a Mgungu from Buliisa District, but now I am an elected councillor in Kahoora Division, Hoima Municipal Council” (Buliisa and Hoima Districts are occupied by different ethnic groups and it is usually difficult to get elected to leadership positions by a community that is not your ethnic group – **Comment by Evaluator**)*

*Rehema’s story starts in 2013, when a councillor from her village informed her that Sightsavers was looking for young men and women with disabilities to register for vocational skills training. Rehema had never heard of Sightsavers, and had never been active in disability, since NUDIPU, the national umbrella organisation for disabled people had no branch in her district.*

*“I was volunteering as a nursery teacher with very little income and no opportunity for expanding my skills”. She continues, “I jumped on the opportunity ..... and that decision has changed my life’.*

*She enrolled and was trained in computer skills. After her course job hunting proved less challenging because of the careers fair organised by the project and her increased self-confidence. In the elections of 2015 she expanded her horizon by going for politics. She contested and was elected a councillor representing people with disabilities in Hoima Town Council.*

## E. Assessment of sustainability

The project was in the fortunate (though well-deserved) position of having secured follow-on funding for phase two prior to the evaluation taking place. This fundraising success is a testament to the project’s impact to date, and to this extent therefore the benefits will be sustained and expanded for the duration of phase two. Aside from this, the evaluation believes that most of the individual level project benefits will continue regardless of phase two, but that longer term sustainability and expansion will need on-going efforts to keep disability issues in the public domain. The evaluation gives a **rating of satisfactory** for this evaluation criterion. The decision is based on the analysis in **Table 4** (below) that looks at two dimensions of sustainability i.e. sustainability of project processes and outcomes, and sustainability of institutions supported or created by the project. The content of matrix was derived from discussions on sustainability with the project team members, DPOs and youths with disabilities beneficiaries.

**Table 4: Sustainability Analysis and Strategy**

Issues to Sustain	Threats to Sustainability	Opportunities for Sustainability	Sustainability strategies
<p><b>Process and outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VTIs provide training opportunities for youths with disabilities</li> <li>• Employment opportunities for youths with disabilities</li> <li>• Levels of disability awareness and positive attitude to persons with disabilities</li> <li>• Access to mainstream livelihood programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents still unable/unwilling to pay for their children in VTIs</li> <li>• The 'tailored nature' of the courses provided limits competition by youths with disabilities in the job market</li> <li>• Married women (WWDs) face threats from their husbands who do not like their wives working out of home</li> <li>• Lack of sustainable sources of finances for DPOs and PWD councillors to sustain public awareness on disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive legal and policy environment on vocational training for youths with disabilities – including affirmative action for admission to VTIs</li> <li>• Starter kits and tools – gives youths with disabilities strong start &amp; the kit will continue to be used even when the project ends</li> <li>• Skills acquired can sustain individuals but can also be used to train others</li> <li>• Positive prospects for mainstream govt. livelihood programs</li> <li>• Other NGO funders – already some success with USDC and some hope with World Vision and oil companies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPOs and PWD councillors should be helped to understand govt. policy on vocational training and disseminate this information widely to parents, local leaders, educational institutions, youths with disabilities and general public</li> <li>• Continue with skills training in next project phase – with innovations to address hard-to-train groups and encourage entry into formal training course funded by government and/or parents</li> <li>• Awareness raising and sensitization should be institutionalised in the activities of DPOs and elected councillors at various levels</li> </ul>
<p><b>Institutions / groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents' support groups</li> <li>• VTIs</li> <li>• YWD groups</li> <li>• DPOs (NUDIPU and UNAB at district and national levels)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low capacity of these institutions – in terms of management skills, facilities, finances etc.</li> <li>• Ownership – some consider themselves as Sightsavers groups</li> <li>• Youth groups will weaken once members get</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent support groups are united by love for their children and will continue to engage govt and other stakeholders on training of their youths with disabilities</li> <li>• Most support groups run VSLAs that will continue to create a forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen resources mobilisation of DPOs at national and district levels</li> <li>• persons with disabilities councillors to lobby for local bye-laws on accessibility of public structures – and persons with disabilities need viable DPOs to function</li> <li>• Youth mobilisation so they can benefit from</li> </ul>

	<p>past youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in political and civil leaders – some of the local leaders who were sensitised lost elections or were transferred</li> <li>• Financial sustainability of some processes are dependent on money provided by the project.</li> </ul>	<p>for members to come together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• persons with disabilities face common threat of discrimination – this will ensure that they stick together</li> <li>• District-level DPOs are affiliated to national structures which have better sustainability prospects</li> </ul>	<p>mainstream programs like national youth livelihood program – will ensure youth structures are sustained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• persons with disabilities councillors should lobby for local govt to allocate money for disability activities</li> <li>• Persons with disabilities themselves have to desist from expecting free things. <i>“If you can love a girl and start a family with, you should be prepared to work”</i> (Mr Bernard Barugahara, DCDO Buliisa).</li> </ul>
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Key opportunities, challenges and sustainability strategies derived from the table include:

- The level of *disability awareness* and the changing attitudes to persons with disabilities is sustainable. This is because DPOs and PWD local councillors have increased their capacities to engage with government officials and to sensitize communities on disability. The challenge is that recent sensitisation activities have taken place within the context of project implementation context, so they need to begin doing this outside the project framework.
- Youths with disabilities *utilize their skills*: trainees will sustain their gains as most of them are self-employed, and their employers have been sensitized.
- *DPO functionality*: DPOs will continue to function, albeit at a reduced level, because most of them were only formed by the project and will require a few more years of strategic support to become stronger. The links of district level DPOs to national structures will ensure district structures remain potentially sustainable.
- VTIs’ disability mainstreaming will continue as they admit PWD, but this will be limited unless parents pay for their children in these institutions.

Finally, the evaluation noted significant changes in the social and political lives of target beneficiaries and persons with disabilities in general, changes that provide a pillar for sustaining project outcomes after the project ends.

## **F. Assessment of scalability/replicability**

The scope and potential for the project, or elements of the project, to be replicated or scaled-up in other settings was rated as **'satisfactory'** by the evaluation. Some of the elements of the project that can be replicated are:

- Linking youths with disabilities to formal training institutions was considered as innovative and potentially replicable and/or scalable in other parts of the country. The only concern here is that, tailored trainings that take significantly shorter time than mainstream trainings in the same institutions limits opportunities for the youth with disabilities to compete in the open job market.
- Job fairs, disability sensitivity trainings for VTIs and provision of start-up gears are all tested initiatives that are found to economically empower youth with disabilities. These experiences can be shared through the national DPOs and are potentially replicable around the country.
- The dual approach of addressing practical as well as strategic factors that drive the marginalisation of persons with disabilities is a rights-based approach that is promoted by disability organisations and the lessons learnt could help national DPOs improve their disability strategies.

The evaluation acknowledges the limitations of tailored trainings that are outside the mainstream programmes of VTIs. The second phase of this project that has already been approved provides the opportunity to promote the integration of youth with disabilities into mainstream courses offered by the VTIs in the region. Already government offers added points to youth with disabilities so that they can meet the minimum academic requirements for joining government vocational training institutions. There is limited awareness of this government offer among youth with disabilities and their parents. The next phase of the project could promote awareness of this government incentive among youth with disabilities and their parents. Secondly, the new project could device innovative measures to part-sponsor (pay a proportion of tuition) qualified youth to vocational mainstream training courses. This can be done alongside tailored courses that target those youth who do not have the minimum qualifications.

## **G. Assessment of coherence/coordination**

The extent to which the project has coordinated with other similar initiatives, and the degree to which the project design and implementation is internally coherent was rated as **'excellent'**. The basis for this rating includes:

- The project is located in the Albertine Region<sup>15</sup> (regions being a grouping of districts) of Uganda where commercial oil exploration is presently taking place. The project was intended to create skills for youth with disabilities in the region so that they can compete in the job market in the event that

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<sup>15</sup> This is part of the western axis of the Great Rift Valley that passes through western Uganda where oil exploration is currently taking place.

the anticipated oil economy becomes vibrant. The project interacted with the oil industry investors and the skills sets supported by the project enable beneficiaries to benefit from an oil economy in the future.

- The project strategy and approach advances Sightsavers' theme of '*social inclusion*' and is improving the quality of life of enjoyed by youth with disabilities in Uganda. This is in line with other projects implemented by Sightsavers in Uganda.
- There is synergy between the project and government projects (youth empowerment fund and NUSAF among others) that are intended to improve skill for the youth and to promote access to livelihood opportunities.

### Summary/Conclusion and Recommendations

'**Connecting the Dots**' project was found to have been highly successful, hence the award overall of the '**excellent**' rating. It met virtually all its targets (and in a few small instances exceeded them); it was extremely cost-effective and delivered virtually on budget; by fostering local ownership and good government links. Its methodology was such that the benefits stand a good chance of sustainability and it provides a model for replication elsewhere in Uganda and beyond. As a consequence of the project there are now hundreds of young men and women with disabilities earning an income who might otherwise not be doing so, benefitting both themselves and their families financially, while also positively impacting self-esteem and community attitudes.

Local DPOs are stronger with larger memberships, and better able to engage with various duty bearers for their members' rights. VTIs (and to some extent local government) have come to appreciate the contribution persons with disabilities can make and their right to inclusion and participation.

The evaluation found it entirely right and appropriate therefore that follow-on funding had already been secured to expand the project's actions to new areas (as well as to deepen them in the existing locations). Sightsavers, NUDIPU, UNAB and the many participating local DPOs are to be congratulated therefore.

**There are a number of factors that the evaluation considers contributed to this success. These include:**

- Strong participatory approach employed by Sightsavers staff started during the consultative process leading to the decision by Sightsavers, UNAB and NUDIPU to present a joint funding proposal to the EU. Both the local government and DPO officials in the beneficiary districts expressed satisfaction with the extent to which their views were accommodated when the project was starting activities in their respective districts.

- The project was able to leverage costs from both within government and outside, and this was a critical factor in achieving the project results. Details are provided in the section on the assessment of efficiency.

The evaluation identified a number of other features that also deserve commendation. First, it was evident throughout that a great deal of effort had been put into ensuring the inclusion of deaf people – and especially deaf women. This is sadly not the case in many disability programmes so it deserves mention. Sign Language (SL) was always – and routinely – available for meetings and workshops during the evaluation; training in SL for VTI staff, for instance, was built into project activities; and costs of interpretation were seen simply as part and parcel of project expenditure rather than as an additional burden that might get squeezed from the budget. On the other hand, blind people thought that their special needs, including support to their guides, were not always attended to.

Second, there are extended benefits to the families and secondary outcomes such as getting married or being elected into political positions.

Finally, the project is far from unique in having had to operate in a climate of fluctuating exchange rates, and over its four year life the project has at times received as few as UgShs3,100 for a euro up to a high at other times of UgShs4,100 – a 32% swing. Despite that, what is noteworthy, is that the final financial report out-turn showed a 2% over-spend on a budget of €598K, which demonstrates very effective financial control and a very impressive outcome.

The recommendations below are grouped into four thematic areas:

a) **Access to mainstream VTI courses:** For YWD the project was very successful in enabling the direct beneficiaries to access and make use of vocational training. However it had less traction in creating a more positive environment for future YWD, and while some success was seen with attitudinal change, much still remains to be done. The evaluation therefore **recommends that:**

- **New and creative measures be introduced to promote access to mainstream VTI courses for YWD**, such as scholarships. It is further **recommended**
- **Government-run tertiary institutions, including VTIs, award special entry points for persons with disabilities.** The two government institutions who participated in this project stated that they rarely get students with disabilities who apply for these courses, which reflects in part on the reality that persons with disabilities face barriers from birth and hence many will not have had the chance to acquire the basic entry requirements.
- Another strategy therefore is to **raise awareness on the existing government affirmative action for youths with disabilities** in these colleges.

- Parents and the youth with disabilities should also be encouraged to sponsor their children who qualify and cannot be sponsored by government.

**b) Disability access and mainstreaming in the VTIs:** Disability access to VTIs has many aspects. It of course involves the built environment (ramps, accessible toilets and washing blocks etc.) and equipment such as Braille printers. However it also touches on staff training, peer student attitudes and the open-ness of staff towards YWD. The project has made a start on most of these aspects, but it is **recommended that:**

- **Further measures be taken to entrench access audits in public structures, support systems and quality assurance.** A support system ensures that institutions requiring technical guidance on disability mainstreaming get the support they require with ease, and quality control relates to standardization of structures like ramps.
- **Open conversation DPOs and the government department** responsible for disability to encourage them to take these issues up.

**c) National level engagement:** While the project was successful on an individual level (and, to a more limited extent, on an institutional one) it did not work at the national level. There were engagements at the national level with the ministry of education and sports conducted through NUDIPU and intended to influence the national ministry to ensure that vocational training guidelines are inclusive. However, not much was achieved by the end of project apart from creating general awareness among public servants on the need for inclusion. This evaluation suggests that, if real progress is to be made for significant numbers of youth with disabilities this requires country-wide effort and political engagement – neither of which can happen without the involvement and leadership of the national DPOs, and especially NUDIPU and UNAB. It is therefore **recommended that:**

- **Phase 2 of the project should be used as a means for establishing a structured engagement at national level** not just for project coordination but also for the encouragement of wider policy engagement so as to facilitate replication.

**d) Structured DPO capacity development:** The project has had a positive impact on the capacity of DPOs/BPOs at district level with which it worked. However the evaluation **recommends that:**

- **This be extended and systematized into a more structured and organised program of capacity development.** This would require defining DPO capacity building objectives and then working with DPOs to achieve those results, with clear markers of progress along the way. DPO capacities at the higher level can be built for the purposes of lobbying and advocacy. This means that, among the skill sets to be incorporated in the capacity building program during the next phase, are the skill sets needed



for 'lobbying and advocacy with government'. NGO capacity can also be built to ensure issues of disability remains within the limelight all the time.

## Background reading and appendices

### A. Background reading

- DFID, 2009, “Disability Scoping in Uganda”
- Government of Uganda, “National Council for Disability Act, 2003”.
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Irish Aids, 2004, “Employment of People with Disabilities: The Impact of Legislation (East Africa), Uganda Country Profile.
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Irish Aids, 2009, “Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Uganda
- Maureen Kayinza, “Youth Unemployment in Uganda”, Journalism Connected, Kampala, 2014.
- Ministry of Education and Sports, 2011. “*Skilling Uganda: BTVET Strategic Plan 2011-2020*”. Kampala, Ministry of Education and Sports.
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Recovery of Acholi Youth (RAY) Project, final evaluation report, 2013.
- Sebastian Martinez, Evaluating youth employment programs in Northern Uganda, Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), 2010.
- Sustain for Life (organization), 2014, “Improving Livelihood Prospects of Marginalized Individuals in Uganda: An Integrated Skills Approach to Vocational Training”

### B. Sightsavers supplied documents reviewed

Document title
2nd Annual Review Meeting
2012 - 22029 Connecting the Dots Investing in YWD for enhanced access to employment Annual Project Report
2012 22029 EC Uganda Signed Contract
2013 - 22029 Investing In youths with disabilities for Enhanced Employment Annual Project Report
2014 - EC Uganda Second Year Financial Report
2014 - EC Project End Of Year Two Report-Sept 2014
2014 22029 Uganda Social Inclusion Programme Mid-Term Review
2015 - 22029 EC Uganda six month report March 2015
22029 Annex C Log Frame for Connecting the dots investing in YWD for Enhanced access to Employment
22029 Budget for Connecting the Dots Investing in YWD for Enhanced access to Employment
A Field Activity Report - 3rd Annual Review Meeting
A Report On The Accessibility Audit Of Vocational Institutions In Bunyoro Sub-County
Accessibility Audit Report- St. Kizito
accessibility audit revised two
Case Study Overview Uganda Economic Empowerment
DCI NSAPVD 2012 278 113 EU Year 3 Report OCT 2015

EU 2016 Work plan
EU PY4 budget 2016
EU-Sightsavers Six Months report-Sept 2015 Feb 2016
Logical Framework Sightsavers Uganda Oct 2015
Project proposal Annex A - EC application Sightsavers Uganda
Training of Self-employed March 2015
Training on need for good
Strategic_Framework_2015_Final_Approved
Reflect on Economic Empowerment and Social Inclusion
Final CAT for Connecting the Dots filled form
Accessibility audit report of vocational institutes final
Trained youths with disabilities per district
Work status of trained youths with disabilities per quarter

## Appendices

### *Appendix 1: Terms of Reference*

#### **Background**

**Project name:** Connecting the dots: Investing in youth with disabilities for enhanced access to employment in four districts of rural Uganda

**Project number:** 22029

**Project duration:** 4 years (1<sup>st</sup> September 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016)

**Project budget:** 587, 532 euros or shs 1,821,349,200 with funding from European Union (74.89%) and Sightsavers (25.11%).

**Project partners:** National Union of the Disabled People in Uganda (NUDIPU), Uganda National Union of the Blind (UNAB)

**Key stakeholders:** Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Education, Sports and Technology, District local authorities of Buliisa, Hoima, Masindi and Kiryandongo districts.

#### **General information on project area**

The project targets Youth with Disabilities in four target districts of Buliisa, Hoima, Masindi and Kiryandongo districts found in Bunyoro region in the mid – Western part of Uganda.

#### **Project design, goal, objectives, and outputs.**

The overall objective of the project is to increase the employability and employment prospects of disabled youth in four districts of rural Uganda.

#### **Specific Objectives**

The project has two specific objectives:

1. To support access to employment (wage and self) for youths with disabilities through non formal skills development and vocational training.

2. To strengthen capacity of Disabled Peoples' Organisations (DPOs) and Blind Peoples' Organisation (BPOs), targeted vocational institutions, private sector and families to support access to employment of youth with disabilities

The project outputs include:

- Improved skills development of youths with disabilities through vocational training and apprenticeships/internships.
- Disability mainstreamed in the training program of the target institutions.
- Raised awareness of the potential employers, local entrepreneurs, and communities about the potential/benefits of employing and supporting youths with disabilities engaged in wage and self-employment.
- Strengthened structures of DPOs at national and district level for mobilising, follow-up and supporting youths with disabilities.

### **Purpose of Evaluation**

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the projects' achievements and challenges, and to capture the lessons learnt for Sightsavers and partners in the context of inclusion of youth with disabilities within the sphere of employment against the following seven criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, replicability and coherence.

The evaluation findings should make qualified statements on the question of if/ how far we have achieved our project objectives as per the logframe and where possible, in the absence of baseline data, assess impact through innovative methods. The evaluation should also scope out the future use of the findings/ learnings for similar interventions in Uganda.

### **Evaluation criteria**

**Relevance** – the extent to which the project or programme is suited to the priorities and policies of the target beneficiaries, recipient and donor, where applicable.

1. Was the project aligned with local and international development policies and priorities on disability and employment?
2. To what extent was the project design in line with the needs and priorities of youth with disabilities in Uganda?

**Effectiveness** – the extent to which the objectives have been achieved and the anticipated results have been realised.

- i. How effectively has the project been able to engage with the different levels (both district and national) of the government to achieve project objectives
- ii. To what extent has the project been able to successfully overcome unforeseen challenges? (e.g. minimum education requirements in government vocational training institutions)
3. To what extent did the project consider gender within the design and

implementation of project activities? What were the successes and challenges of methods employed and their results?

4. To what extent was the learning from the Mid-Term Review (MTR) incorporated into the project?
5. To what extent was the project able to address difficulties for youth with disabilities in accessing financial services? How could this be improved in future phases?

**Efficiency** – the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible, and the manner in which resources have been efficiently managed and governed in order to produce results.

1. To what extent has the project been able to link with existing government programmes (such as youth livelihood programmes, National Agricultural Advisory Services etc.) to improve access for people with disabilities? How could this be improved in future phases?
2. Was the project implemented in a timely and efficient manner with resources used according to plan?
3. How were management and governance structures established in the project? Could these have been improved or were they satisfactory?

**Impact** – the long term change or effects (positive or negative) that have occurred, or will occur, as a result of the project or programme, i.e. what difference has the project or programme made to peoples' lives, to relevant systems or development conditions?

1. To what extent has the project improved the employment opportunities for young men and women with disabilities within the project area?
2. What are the main changes for youth with disabilities produced by the project (positive or negative) and what are the key factors behind these changes? Have there been any unexpected outcomes for persons with disabilities (positive or negative)?
3. What changes (if any) has the project had on the perception of the working capacity of youth with disabilities? (including perceptions of youths with disabilities, family, community, employers and government) Where has there been the most success/resistance and why?
4. To what extent has the project improved the capacity of the project partners?

**Sustainability** – whether benefits of the project or programme are likely to continue after donor funding has ceased.

1. Has the project contributed to any systemic changes to lead to improvement in youth disability employment issues in the country, or the districts where the project was implemented?
2. What is the likelihood of the project training participants to gain/remain in employment in the future?
3. What is the likelihood of DPOs/BPOs continuing at the same or improved level of activity after project end?
4. What is the likelihood of training institutions to continue disability inclusive training programmes after project end?

**Scaleability/replication** – the scope and potential for the project, or elements of the project, to be suitable for replication or scale up in other settings, and whether the necessary conditions are in place for this to occur, if relevant.

1. What learning can we draw from the project and which elements are suitable for future interventions in Uganda aiming at improving employment for youth with disabilities? What are the recommendations for implementing future projects?

**Coherence/coordination** – the extent to which the project or programme has coordinated with other similar initiatives, interventions or actors, and the degree to which the project design and implementation is internally coherent.

1. To what extent did the project create synergies with other similar actors and agencies in the region to support the achievement of project objectives?

### **Review Team**

The evaluation will be conducted by an external evaluator or evaluation team, selected through a competitive bidding process. The consultant/s or firm will have demonstrated competence in having undertaken similar work before, including experience in conducting similar scale evaluations.

The lead evaluator will have as a minimum the following core competencies:

- Disability and social inclusion specialist with experience in issues of employment and livelihoods;
- Gender analysis skills and experience
- Significant experience and understanding of project design and management, budget development and monitoring and resource management
- Projects/programme analysis and evaluation expertise, including strong qualitative analysis skills;
- Good understanding of the Ugandan context;
- Fully proficient in English.

Experience and good understanding of evaluating advocacy initiatives and working with government structures would be desirable.

### **Methodology**

The assessment should review all aspects of the Connecting the dots project. The team should detail their approach and methodologies to be used to indicate how they will fulfil the requirements of the ToR in their Expression of Interest application. These may include qualitative and quantitative tools as appropriate to conduct this evaluation.

The consultant/team is responsible for developing the evaluation methodology, in consultation with Sightsavers, in order to address the key evaluation criteria questions. The consultant/team will define an appropriate sample size, where relevant, for those areas of data collection which they are leading on, and specify what mechanisms will be adopted to avoid selection bias.

As a minimum, the evaluation should include the following key steps:

1. Review relevant reference material, as listed in Section five below.
2. Development of a detailed Inception Report including details on the development and application of appropriate data collection tools (e.g. questionnaire schedules and tools, interview checklists and focus group templates) for interviews and discussions with stakeholders
3. Field visit to the intervention region - Interviews/focus groups with project implementers, partners, other relevant actors in the sector and service recipients/beneficiaries. The evaluation may need to seek a representative sample of service recipients from relevant groups.
4. A debriefing session for partners and stakeholders at the end of the field work period.
5. Analysis and report writing.

### Reference Material

Various sources of information will be made available to the consultant/team. These will include relevant project documents such as:

- Project proposal
- Logframe
- Accessibility audit
- Accessibility guidelines
- Quarterly and annual reports (Narrative and financial),
- Reports of meetings with partners, trip reports
- Training programme reports,
- Training materials,
- MOUs
- Research and study reports
- ROM and other monitoring and evaluation reports
- Various communications material

### Timeframes

The evaluation will be approximately 23 days' work with fieldwork planned for October.

### Expected number of days input by evaluator/evaluation team

Phase	Activity	No of Days
<i>Phase I – Desk study: Review of documentation and elaboration of field Study</i>	Desk research /literature Review	2 days
	Inception Report	2 days
	Revision of collection methods and tools based on inception report comments	1 days
<i>Phase II: Field Data Collection</i>	Field Visits & Data-collection including Debriefing (In-country)	12 days
<i>Phase III – Analysis and production of evaluation</i>	Data analysis and preparation of draft report	4 days

Phase	Activity	No of Days
<i>report</i>	Review of draft report from feedback	2 days
<b>Total</b>		<b>23 days</b>

## **Outputs/ Deliverables**

### **Inception report**

The report should describe the conceptual framework the evaluator will use in undertaking the evaluation and should contain the methodology, quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and instruments, the assessment questions, sampling methodology, work plan etc. The report should reflect the team's review of literature and the gaps that the field work will fill.

Fieldwork will only commence once this report has been reviewed and agreed with Sightsavers.

### **Draft Report**

A draft report should be submitted to Sightsavers within 5 working days after completion of the field activities. The draft report will be presented internally during a debriefing session and will be circulated for comment to all stakeholders and appropriate Sightsavers staff. Sightsavers will provide feedback on the draft version to the evaluation team.

### **Final Report**

The Final Report will be submitted to Sightsavers within 5 working days after receiving the feedback from Sightsavers on the draft report. The final report should be a detailed report of not more than 40 pages (excluding annexes), written in English.

### **Data Sets**

The evaluation team will be expected to submit complete data sets (in Access/ Excel/Word) of all the quantitative data as well as the original transcribed qualitative data gathered during the exercise. These data sets should be provided at the time of submission of the final report.

### **Summary findings**

On submission of the final report, the team is expected to submit a PowerPoint presentation (maximum 12 slides), summarizing the methodology, challenges faced, key findings under each of the evaluation criteria and main recommendations.

### **Reporting Format**

Detailed guidelines on how to structure the evaluation report will be provided to the evaluation team prior to commencement of the activity, and reporting templates will be provided which the team should use for the Inception Report and the Evaluation Report.

Please note that penalties up to 10% of agreed fees may be imposed for noncompliance with the requirements 7.1 to 7.4 and reporting format provided.

### **Administrative/Logistical support**

Please include the following generic statements, unless there is a special arrangement due to the nature of the evaluation, partnerships involved etc.

### **Budget**

The consultant should submit to Sightsavers an Expression of Interest indicating their daily rates for the assignment. Sightsavers will assess Expression of Interests submitted according to standardized quality assessment criteria, as well as on the basis of their competitiveness and value for money in line with the budget available for this evaluation. The daily fees proposed by the applicant should exclude expenses such as:

- Economy class fares and visas. (where applicable)
- In-country transportation
- Hotel accommodation (bed, breakfast and evening meals taken at the place of accommodation)
- Stationery and supplies
- Meeting venue hire and associated equipment e.g. projectors

Sightsavers usually cover the above costs, unless otherwise stated.

The consultant/team is expected to cover all other costs and materials not mentioned above related to this exercise as part of their daily fees or equipment (e.g. laptops).

### **SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT**

The following payment schedule will be adhered to:

- On signing the contract: 20%
- On acceptance and approval of inception report: 20%
- On submission of draft final report: 30%
- On acceptance and approval of final report: 30%

### **MODE OF PAYMENT**

As agreed by Sightsavers and the consultant.

### *Appendix 2: List of People met*

<b>Kampala</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Position</b>
UNAB	Executive Director
UNAB	
NUDPU	Executive Director
Ministry of G	Principal Officer
Sightsavers	Country Director
Sightsavers	Prog. manager
Sightsavers	Finance manager
<b>Masindi</b>	
Sightsavers	Project manager
District Union	Chairperson

Masindi YWD group	Chairperson
	Sign interpreter
Council for Disability	Chairperson
Masindi District Council	Councillor for PWD
Masindi Parents' Network	
MADAB, Masindi	Chairperson
Masindi Centre for the Handicapped	Teacher
Masindi Centre for the Handicapped	Teacher
Masindi Centre for the Handicapped	Teacher
Masindi Municipal Council	Councillor
St Kizito Vocational Training Institute	Principal
Uganda Technical College, Kyema, Masindi	Registrar
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
Masindi YWD Savings and Credit Group	Member
St Kizito Vocational Training Institute, Masindi	Principal
Uganda Technical College, Kyema, Masindi	Registrar
	YWD grandparent
	YWD grandparent
	YWD mother
Masindi Municipality	Principal CDO
	Parent to Daphne
<b>Kiryandongo</b>	
Amor Foundation Vocational Training Institute	Employer
Kiryandongo Training Institute	Principal
Kiryandongo Training Institute	
	parent
KIDDIPU	KIDDIPU
Kiryandongo District YWD Association	Chair
	employer
Kiryandongo District YWD Association	Member
Kiryandongo District YWD Association	Member
KIDAB	
<b>Hoima</b>	
Hoima YWD	Secretary
Hoima district councillor	Councillor for PWD
HODAB	co-ordinator
Parents' group Hoima	Chair
YWD DPO	Chair
Hoima Association of Parents	Publicity Sec
Hoima Association of Parents	Asst. Sec general
Hoima Association of Parents	Member
Hoima Association of Parents	Treasurer

Hoima Association of Parents	Member
Hoima Association of Parents	Gen Sec
Hoima Association of Parents	Chairman
Hoima Association of Parents	V/Chairman
Hoima Association of Parents	Member
Hoima District Association youths with disabilities	Sec
Hoima District Association youths with disabilities	Sec for mobilisation
Hoima District Association youths with disabilities	Publicity
Hoima District Association youths with disabilities	V/Chair
Hoima District Association youths with disabilities	Chair
Hoima District Association youths with disabilities	Member
Hoima District Association youths with disabilities	
Nile Vocational Institute	Principal
Hoima town	Employer
Hoima town	Employer
Hoima YWD DPO	Secretary
<b>Buliisa</b>	
DPO	Vice-chair
Buliisa district council	Councillor for PWD
BUDAB	Chair
Buliisa district union	Chair
Parents Association	Chair
DCDO Buliisa	DCDO

### *Appendix 3: Survey Questionnaire*

Connecting the Dots questionnaire survey (for use with a sample of youths with disabilities)	
Survey questions	Responses
<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>The enumerator should explain the survey is being done to help in the evaluation of the Sightsavers project run by Edith Kagoya. Responses will enable future projects to increase benefits, so ask for the person's full and honest responses, and thank them for their time. Please stress that the information is very important to the project, and that the information will be treated in confidence.</p>	<p>Questions about the respondent:</p> <p>Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Child (i.e. under 18) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Are you a member of a PWD group?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, what is its name?</p>

Ask the respondent what type of impairment they have.	Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Visual <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Mental <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple <input type="checkbox"/>
First, some questions on access to training and jobs	
1. Did you receive any training from the project? If no, go to Question	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Did you receive any skills training from the Sightsavers project? (please list all the training you can remember)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. If yes, how long did the training last?	Less than a week <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 4 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 3 months <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 months <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Were you earning any money before the training?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. If yes, what sorts of activities were you earning money from? (tick all that apply)	Farming <input type="checkbox"/> Trading <input type="checkbox"/> Food processing <input type="checkbox"/> Tailoring/crafts <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanic <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Hairdressing/beauty <input type="checkbox"/> Knitting <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are you earning any money now?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Would you say there is any difference in what you are earning now compared to before the project?	Less than before <input type="checkbox"/> About the same <input type="checkbox"/> More than before <input type="checkbox"/>
8. If you are earning <i>more</i> now, can you say roughly how much more you are earning now each week?	Up by a little? <input type="checkbox"/> Up by about half? <input type="checkbox"/> Double or more? <input type="checkbox"/>
9. What do you think is the cause of your change in income? Please specify.	
10. What sort of activities are you earning money from now?	The same activities as before <input type="checkbox"/> The same as before, together with one or more new ones <input type="checkbox"/> Different activities <input type="checkbox"/>
11. If you are doing any new activities to earn money, what are they? Please all that apply.	Farming <input type="checkbox"/> Trading <input type="checkbox"/> Food processing <input type="checkbox"/> Tailoring/crafts <input type="checkbox"/>

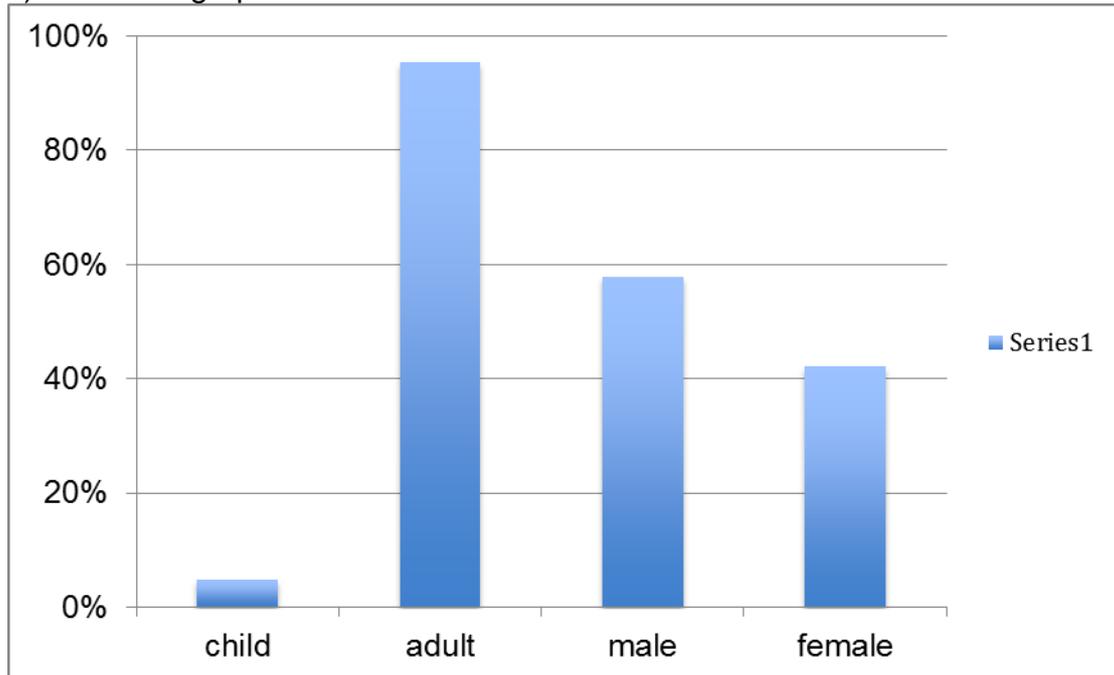
	Mechanic <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Hairdressing/beauty <input type="checkbox"/> Knitting <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
12. Can you tell us what some of the skills learnt that you are using in your business?	
13. Are there any skills you were trained in by the project that you are <i>not</i> using? Please list them all.	
14. Is there any training you did not get that you think you would have found helpful? Please be as specific as possible.	
That's the end of the questions on training and jobs. There are now a few questions on disability.	
15. If you are a member of a group of persons with disability, how long have you been involved?	Less than a year <input type="checkbox"/> Between 1 and 3 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 years <input type="checkbox"/> Not a member <input type="checkbox"/>
16. If you are in a group, do you have a specific position?	Chair <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary <input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer <input type="checkbox"/> Other position <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinary member <input type="checkbox"/> Not a member <input type="checkbox"/>
17. Thinking about the way people who are disabled are treated or have access to training and employment opportunities decision-making and community activities, do you think this has changed? If no, thank you very much – that is the end of the survey.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
18. If yes, do you think there has been any change in the physical environment in the training institutions and work place for people who are disabled?	Better <input type="checkbox"/> About the same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse <input type="checkbox"/>
19. And again, if yes, in either training institutions or the workplace do you think there has been any change in people's attitudes towards people who are disabled?	Better <input type="checkbox"/> About the same <input type="checkbox"/> Worse <input type="checkbox"/>
20. Can you give examples in which training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities are now different?	
21. Why do you think there have	

been these changes?

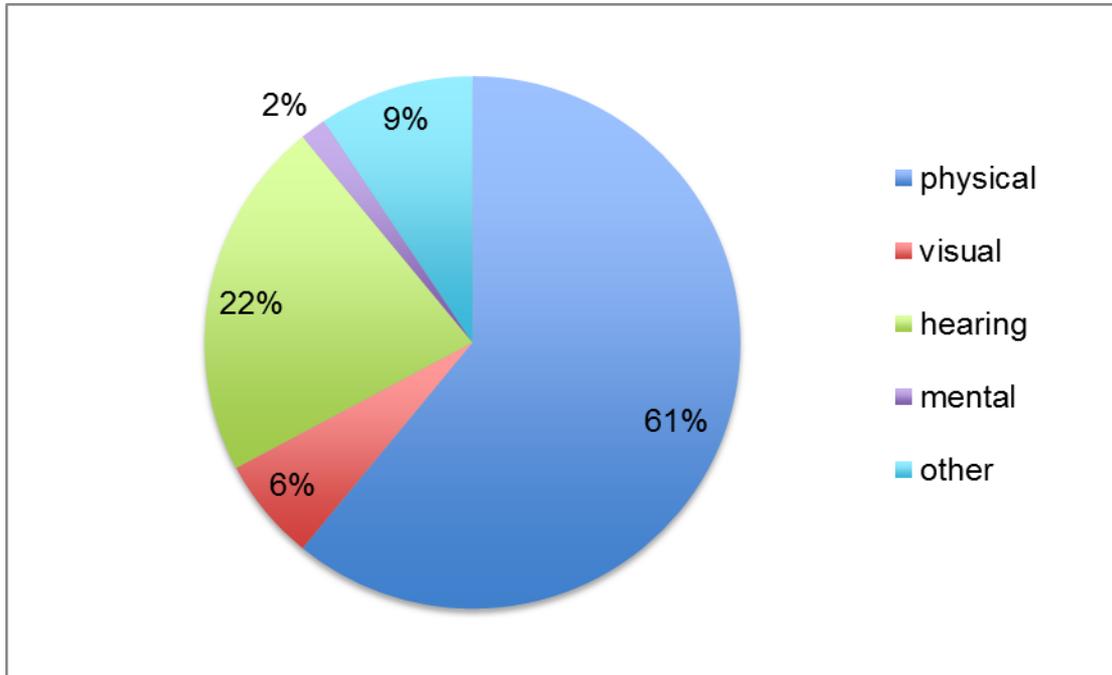
THANK YOU!

*Appendix 4: Basic data from questionnaire respondents (N = 64)*

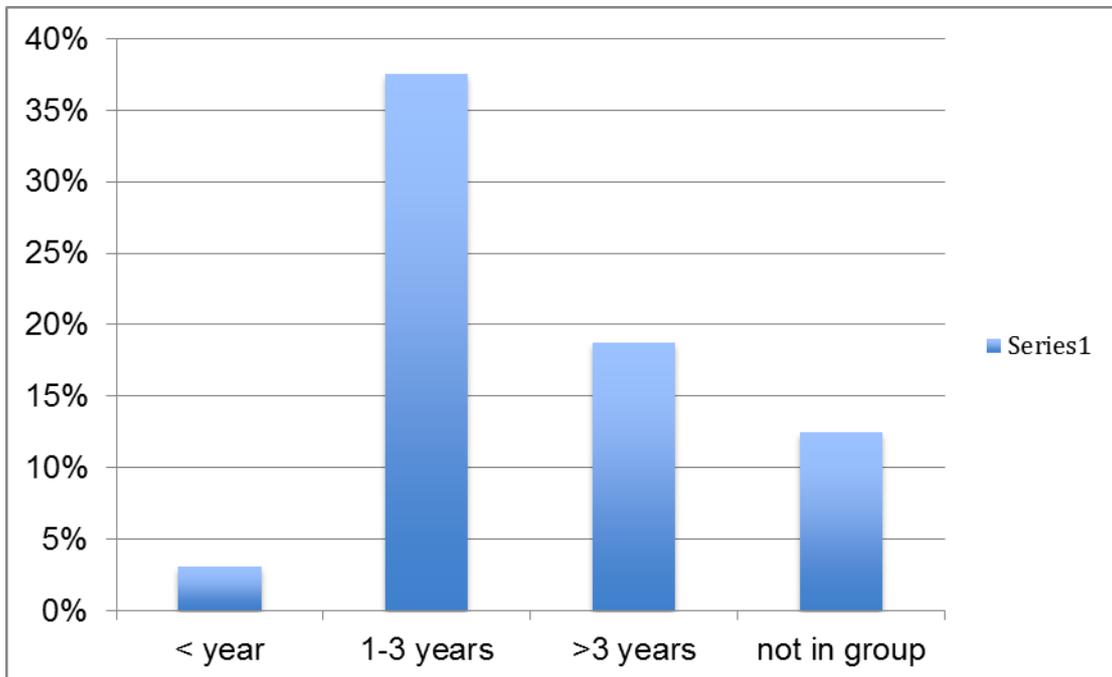
a) Demographics



b) Impairment type



c) Group membership



*Appendix 5: Update on MTR recommendations*

	<b>MTR Recommendations</b>	<b>Update and evaluation comments</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Skilling and employment</b>	
	Levels of female and male application should continue to be monitored closely and efforts made to attract and select female youths with disabilities where appropriate in Yr3. In addition, close monitoring and reporting of male/female numbers and reasons for non-take up of places on training should be done in order to identify any emerging gender trends or reasons for fall off which could be addressed by the project.	There was found to be a gender imbalance at the MTR, but the project has worked hard and successfully to rectify this, such that the final numbers are now well balanced.
	Given Sightsavers' focus on visually impaired, the project should engage in more work to identify other livelihood opportunities for persons with visual impairment.	This has been done, working with UNAB and the Directorate of Industrial Training to identify new skill areas, backed by certificated courses. Exposure visits for VTIs (possibly outside Uganda) are also being considered in the new project, although to date UNAB is not impressed.
	Both females and males are undertaking their traditional stereotype courses and jobs. In the next two years, the project should work to influence both females and males to try out courses and job opportunities in non-traditional areas.	Some progress has been made on this front, though significant change will take far longer – and require far more in terms of social change – than the project could be expected to deliver. The project's documents, explanations and field observations do not though demonstrate any clear strategic gender strategy.
	Design an intervention to strengthen the integration of trained youths with disabilities into the community. Follow up after training is critical. It is, therefore, important to build support and monitoring systems to closely follow up the youths with disabilities overcome their neglect and possible loss of the value of training them.	Empowerment meetings were organised with beneficiaries on a quarterly basis, and 83% of survey respondents reported being treated better.
	Strengthen capacity building and information sharing/guidance for employers to help them appreciate how to handle youth with disability in a working environment.	The project meetings mediated by NUDIPU between YWD and employers to explore issues and concerns. The new project will also organise visits for employers to VTIs.

<b>B</b>	<b>For future designs beyond this project phase:</b>	
	To enable more youth to meaningfully benefit from the programme, it is necessary to support their training in institutions outside the project jurisdiction in the instances where they cannot benefit from the available options in the project area.	This forms an element of the new project and is something the evaluation strongly supports.
	It will be essential also to accord more resources and time to build the home-based strategy.	The home-based element was dropped as it was felt to be rehabilitation work rather than economic skills training. The 'hard to train' groups of youths with disabilities remain a challenge in a resource constrained situation.
	Increase period of training for the courses that need longer time to grasp content and skills (for both instructors and youths with disabilities)	Again this forms an element of the new project and is supported by the evaluation, which recommends that youths with disabilities be mainstreamed into VTIs' training courses.
<b>C</b>	<b>Awareness on employment benefits</b>	
	The need to undertake a rapid mini-assessment of the extent to which the attitude towards gainful employment is accepted at work places	It is intended that the on-going research programme will be covering this.
<b>D</b>	<b>DPO capacity building</b>	
	Build the leadership capacity of both disability unions and associations and to support their general assemblies in order to build both the youth wing and the wider structures. It is proposed that the programme budget is adjusted to cater for this increased capacity building need.	At national level NUDIPU was enabled to support AGMs for KIDDIPU and HUDDIPU, and they also made inputs at district level supporting the development of DPOs' constitutions and planning processes. However the evaluation does not feel a strategic approach was demonstrated and the DPOs themselves agree that little effort was done.
<b>E</b>	<b>Family involvement</b>	
	In order to attract more self-funded youths with disabilities in vocational institutions, the project needs to develop or promote mechanisms to encourage parents to either make a contribution to school fees or fully pay for their children.	This will be done in the new project.
	The project should design strategies for improving attitudes of parents towards the training and employment of their children. This could be done by developing communication materials showing parents	The project organised bi-annual sensitisation meetings/workshops for parents, and the new project will continue these at its inception so that parents fully understand from

	the benefits of their children receiving training and their abilities while in employment.	the outset.
	In order to attract more self-funded youths with disabilities, the project needs to develop or promote mechanisms to encourage parents to either make a contribution to school fees or fully pay of their children.	This has not been done.
<b>F</b>	<b>Inclusive vocational institutes</b>	
	Spread awareness to communities of the inclusive services now available to train students with disabilities to give opportunity to youths with disabilities to access life skills and promote sustainability of project benefits.	This has been done, albeit on a limited scale during career fairs and radio talk shows. The project has also facilitated links between youths with disabilities and the government's Youth Livelihood Programme.
<b>G</b>	<b>Project monitoring</b>	
	To make the monitoring process even more effective, the team composition should be improved to include more technical personnel from the district local government to provide expertise in thematic areas such as the agricultural livelihoods.	The project attempted this but ran into some challenges where payments were expected which had not been budgeted for.
	Monitoring reports, as discussed above, should be shared with a wide range of relevant stakeholders to enhance information flow and accountability	Progress reports are shared with relevant local government officials, who the evaluation found to be well informed about the project and enjoying good relationships with the project.
<b>H</b>	<b>Coherence</b>	
	There is need to realign the project proposal and logical framework as well as clearly define outputs, outcomes and indicators at the different levels	This was done.
<b>I</b>	<b>Environment</b>	
	VTIs should improve management of the waste that arises from the activities of the training institutions such as disposals in the workshops and public functions.	This was done.
	As VTIs engage in constructing disability-friendly structures, they should conduct Environmental Impact Assessment to ensure that environment-friendly standards are observed.	It is unclear if this is happening.

*Appendix 6: In-kind contribution costings*

(assumes an exchange rate of UgShs4,200: £1.00)

	nos.	% of time	monthly rate	annual rate	no. of years	project total UgShs	project total £
local co-ordinators	4	45%	1,500,000	18,000,000	4	129,600,000	30,857
youth chairs	4	50%	1,000,000	12,000,000	4	96,000,000	22,857
CDOs	4	10%	1,400,000	16,800,000	4	26,880,000	6,400
CBR workers	4	10%	500,000	6,000,000	4	9,600,000	2,286
PWD councillors	3	50%	1,500,000	18,000,000	4	108,000,000	25,714
Masindi office	1					10,000,000	2,381
Hoima & Bulisa offices	2	50%	100,000	1,200,000	4	4,800,000	1,143
vehicle import tax	1					33,000,000	7,857
conference venues	8	per month	400,000	4,800,000	4	19,200,000	4,571
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>437,080,000</b>	<b>104,067</b>