

Voices of Women with Psychosocial Disabilities

in Lira, Uganda

June 2024



Key Recommendations

Women with psychosocial disabilities in Lira are requesting **stakeholders to act on the discrimination and violence** they are facing; and to be given the **means to live a more healthy and autonomous life**.

- ✓ **Rights awareness is a priority:** most women express the need for more sensitization on their rights and needs towards community, husbands and relatives.
- ✓ **Strong demand for economic empowerment:** women are requesting lasting support, empowerment and provision of start-up capital for small scale business.
- ✓ **Intentional inclusion in all essential services:** women demand to be better included in Government programs, in particular to ensure **better access to health**. This includes:
 - *Benefiting from mobility devices,*
 - *Ensuring the health centres located in remote areas are provided with adequate drugs without shortage,*
 - *Employing qualified mental health personnel to ensure a decentralized access to mental health services.*

15 out of 16 women interviewed have an income generating activity - only 4 of them report feeling independent.

LIDDWA publishes the report '**Voices of Women with Psychosocial Disabilities in Lira, Uganda**' with the aim of making their voices heard, their experiences shared and ultimately **inform further engagement** by all stakeholders for a more **dignified, autonomous and healthy life for women and girls with disabilities**.

16 women with psychosocial disabilities were interviewed in February and March 2024.

Report edited with the support of the Humanity & Inclusion **Making It Work Gender and Disability Project**

Read full report: bit.ly/LIDDWAVoicesOf



Lira District Disabled Women's Association



A life of high insecurity

Difficult access to education, health and police services

All but one woman with severe physical impairment has an activity (mostly farming or selling goods). Their average monthly income being 190,000 Shillings, it is clearly not sufficient to cater for food and other needs of a family.

6 out of 16 also report holding a position of responsibility in the community, despite the reluctance of the community members.

Difficulties accessing education: most women were not enrolled at school or dropped out in low levels. In school, only 3 out of 16 were feeling happy, the rest told us they were neglected by peers and teachers and even experiencing bullying.

Difficulties accessing police services: 8 out of 16 women declare that the police station is not accessible to them, due to long distance.

Difficulties accessing health services: 8 of 16 women reported having been neglected in health centres or hospitals, not receiving treatment or

support. Shortage of medicine is a paramount challenge for interviewed women. They suffer interruptions in treatment that are very damaging to their mental health and well-being. Also, 8 out of 16 women have never heard of family planning.

Living in an unfriendly or unsafe environment

Only 3 of 16 women said they feel free and secure when moving in the community.

Women with psychosocial disabilities face severe and multifaceted difficulties in the community that significantly impact their sense of security and well-being. All of them mentioned **segregation and discrimination** and 14 of them used are told they are “valueless” or looked down upon. Half the women reported being called “Mad woman”. Their challenges extend beyond social perceptions to include **physical violence, neglect, and others forms of gender-based violence (GBV) such as economic violence**, within their homes and within the community. It includes **intimate partner violence, denial of property rights, denial of parental rights**.

“I want to be a doctor so that I can help women and girls with psychosocial disabilities”



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