

# Helen Kisakye

Link Letter no. 27 | March 2022

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*The call in action*

Dear Friends,

Recently SPLASH partnered with a non-profit organisation called Artabilities 4 All, creating a new piece titled Under Reconstruction. We wanted to create a piece that wrestles with the concept of embracing each other amid the chaos, and which expresses that something beautiful will emerge when we do so. In the dictionary, “to reconstruct” is defined as “the act or process of rebuilding, repairing or restoring something”. In life, let’s be reminded to walk alongside each other through the struggles of life. Though we are different, we are all made in God’s image and by supporting each other, we bear witness to God’s love right now, in the clutter. The piece went live on YouTube and was part of a bigger celebration commemorating World Disability Day. Please click on the link provided to watch this piece being performed: [https://1drv.ms/v/s!AkdZkGzbtjPupGixZ4p\\_YLFa4zFG](https://1drv.ms/v/s!AkdZkGzbtjPupGixZ4p_YLFa4zFG). I am also pleased to share that through this collaboration, I received a certificate from the Keith Mashburn, mayor of Simi Valley, California; “In recognition for your contribution to the world of inclusive arts and music and for going above and beyond, to provide opportunities for fellow artists through Artabilities 4 All.”

As well as partnering with Artabilities 4 All, in December, SPLASH also had the opportunity to perform live at the Buganda kingdom’s World Disability Day celebrations. The prime minister of the Buganda kingdom, Peter Mayiga, was present, which added to the excitement and media coverage of the event. Overall, it was a great way to end the year and be reminded that in the grand scheme of things, even this event shadows the fact that God, who knows each of us by name, has the biggest title of all. Please pray for SPLASH to continue to grow our networks while building a secure base.

In my last link letter, I shared about a new initiative using Zoom to connect children with and without disabilities through dance. Knowing the challenges of technology, I have to admit I was apprehensive and sceptical to begin with. However, I decided to give it a shot anyway. Feedback from one of the children with disabilities confirmed that it was all worth it:

“It was fun for me because when I finished dancing, I would feel more motivated about the lessons I learn here, like plaiting hair.”

After eight virtual meetings, we did a final dance video which you can view here: <https://youtu.be/DYCBY5CTOhc>. As much as I prefer live workshops, it was good to witness the benefits of technology in bringing people together



**Name:** Helen Kisakye

**Location:** Uganda

**My call:** To bring lasting change through the power of dance.

**My role:** To be a dance advocate for minority groups.



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SPLASH performing Under Reconstruction; SPLASH performing at the Buganda kingdom event.

from different geographical locations efficiently and without incurring any transport costs. Please pray that this experience would be embedded in the children that participated as a reminder that what connects us far outweighs the initial awkwardness when first meeting.

As well as the inclusion work, I have also been involved with the Hope project at CRANE (Children at Risk Action Network). In November we held a residential camp bringing together 88 children from 10 schools and nine churches for intensive arts training. The theme of the camp was Our Voice Matters. There were daily devotions as well as additional sessions on the environment, communication skills, child protection and crafts too. It was a time to nurture children holistically with the longer-term goal of giving children the momentum needed to return to their communities and speak out about matters concerning them. Camp happened while schools were still closed and so the impact was even greater as children had a unique opportunity to interact with their peers as well as with their teachers (keeping in line with COVID measures). Here is positive feedback from Titus Mufabi (schools liaison officer between CRANE and partnering school representatives):

“Children interact and share their learnings easily compared to the times when they are isolated. They are highly creative and bond easily with others. A camp is one thing that enables children to learn and do more in a short space of time. Thank you CRANE for giving children a fair chance, rich and poor... a camp is a true equity among our children. Children felt the same at all levels.”

Please do check out the links to some of the videos that were created as a result of the activities that took place at camp – Maanyi Gange (My Voice is My Strength): <https://youtu.be/CdSljf0dy1A>, The Kite Dance (which is about being able to thrive when all rights are fulfilled): <https://youtu.be/eQ0lhRtXtUE> and The Ideal World: <https://youtu.be/8fxPslbgMA4>.

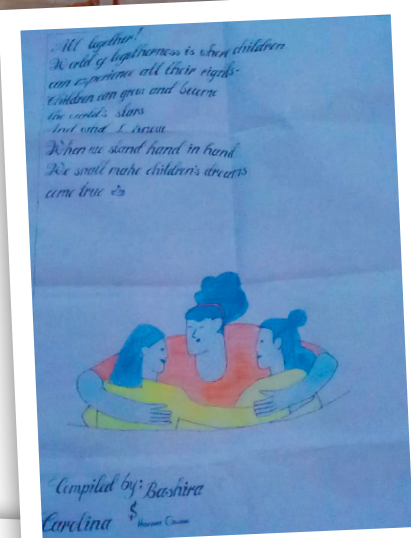
In the Ideal World video, children from one of the schools came up with these words; “A world of togetherness where children can experience all their rights. Children can grow and become the world’s stars and what I know, when we stand hand in hand, we shall make children’s dreams come true.”

An image of Jesus comes to mind, where he is shepherding the children and telling the disciples that the kingdom of God belongs to “such as these” (Mark 10:13–16). In that moment, Jesus could have turned the children away, saying that he was too busy, but he chose to act in love. Imagine if, in that moment, you were that very child being advocated for by the Most High. What a defining moment it would be. We may never know the impact we have on a child but as we protect and walk alongside, strong foundations will be laid for this life and in the next to come.

We are all children in God’s sight and as he embraces us, let us embrace each other,

With love,

Helen



**Photos from top to bottom:** children participating in a dance class at camp; Ideal World poem written by children; children enjoying camp

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