



Helen Kisakye

Link Letter no. 29 | March 2023

Contact details:
h_kisakye@yahoo.com



Location: Uganda



What I do: Bringing a message of love, hope and inclusion for people with disabilities in Uganda through leading SPLASH inclusive dance group.

Dear Friends,

I feel the small signs of spring all around me, with crocuses growing near the bus stop, snowdrops in an undisturbed alley and the gentle sunlight coming through the window. In the winter, I was silent but not still; now in spring, I find myself stirring and appreciating the shifts in nature as well as within. In Acts 17:28 Paul reflects on the statement, “For in him we live and move and have our being.” We can rest assured that in every season and circumstance, he is not only near, God himself resides in us, nurturing us, even on the shadiest of days, every step of the way.

In August last year, my final physical engagement with CRANE was during a child’s rights seminar. At the seminar, 30 children were present, representing all 15 participating schools/churches in the project. My role was to teach children choreographic techniques and how to use the skills learned to share a message to the audience about their rights. By the end of the three days together, the children had created a dance piece exploring different themes around their rights. The dance urged those watching to choose life in all its fullness by questioning societal norms that rob children of their right to, for example, education, shelter and play. The dance was also about reaching a hand to others, to never give up, until all children’s voices are not only heard but their desires are realised. Even though words were not used in the piece, a story unfolded witnessed by our eyes and resonating internally. After the workshops, the children were encouraged to share what they had learned with their groups in each of the 15 schools/churches. Please pray that through the work of CRANE, children would be safer in their communities, living their lives the way that God always intended for them.



Helen and Melina.

For personal reasons, at the beginning of September I came to Devon, in the UK, with Melina. While I have been in the UK, I have been able to continue some online work for CRANE by providing consultation for a child-friendly environmental manual that they have been designing. The manual is being produced as part of CRANE’s wider work regarding children’s rights, as children also have a right to a healthy and sustainable world. The manual is an important endeavour, to raise awareness from a young age as to the different ways to protect and care for the world.

Having served at CRANE officially for eight years in December, it felt the right time to move on from my position there this January. I thank God for the ways he has opened the doors through CRANE to use my

Support Helen Kisakye:
churchmissionsociety.org/kisakye

**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**



unique gifts to touch the lives of children. I will always remember my time there fondly.

CMS have supported me in my decision to come to the UK and I have been very grateful for regular counselling sessions they have provided for me. Devon holds a special place in my heart as it is where I did my MA in choreography and I have long-standing friends here. While I have been back, I have been especially grateful for the wide access to movement and dance workshops, especially a weekend led by Adam Benjamin, one of the pioneers of inclusive dance. This was an opportune time to reflect on my practice and how I can apply this at SPLASH.

While I have been in the UK, SPLASH have been meeting in my absence. In November we finally secured space to meet and rehearse at the national theatre at a reduced rate. We are grateful for the partnership with the national theatre, as the space is accessible for wheel chair users as well as being in a prime location. In December, SPLASH was invited by Luigi Giussani Foundation to perform at one of their events with the tagline: "A member driven initiative working to ensure inclusive learning for all children in East Africa". Tedy, one of the organisers, wrote to me and said, "Allow me to extend my gratitude for the wonderful service: the SPLASH team moved everyone! It was a beautiful performance." You can view some of SPLASH performance here: <https://fb.watch/iBVDO9nZI7/>. Please pray for SPLASH to continue to receive opportunities and thank God for their commitment even while I am in the UK.

Melina and I have been made very welcome attending a local church, and Melina has been going to the local pre-school while I work and has been making friends there. However, since we have been staying in Devon, Melina also got seriously ill and was admitted to hospital with an ear infection. She stayed in hospital for a week and during her stay had to have surgery to have a bone removed that had got infected. The surgery was successful and we thank God that after a worrying period, she is again back to her usual bouncy self! Melina will be having a hearing test too (just to check everything is fine) and so do pray that all comes back positive for that.

In January, Melina and I were blessed to attend the CMS conference for people in mission in Northampton. I particularly enjoyed a session led by Ian Adams, spirituality lead in CMS, who shared with us about cultivating a prayerful presence and kept repeating the phrase, "A daily habit, a lifetime work". So often we can easily be moved to go, but it's so important to continually renew ourselves in prayer. On the CMS website, Ian has created a series of short audio prayer exercises which I encourage us to take a look at: [Audio: Prayer exercises by Ian Adams - Church Mission Society \(CMS\)](#).

I appreciate all your care, prayers and support.

With love,

Helen



Photos from top to bottom: The dance workshop at CRANE in August; Participating at an inclusive dance workshop; SPLASH performed in partnership with Luigi Giussani Foundation; At the CMS conference in January.



Going further with Church Mission Society

Stories from the edges: Find out how God is meeting people on the edges around the world through CMS people in mission. Go to churchmissionsociety.org/stories

Please note that opinions expressed in link letters are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org or call 01865 787400. Church Mission Society is a mission community acknowledged by the Church of England. Registered Company No. 6985330 and Registered Charity No. 1131655 (England and Wales) and SC047163 (Scotland).