

NEWSLETTER

A Season of Smiles, Inclusion, and Hope

A message from our founder:

It's been a busy summer and fall for Ability Sports Africa! It was an exciting period of growth and new opportunities, from historic national victories to launching Africa's first Unified 5K race. At Ability Sports Africa, we don't just run programs; we use inclusive sports to foster community, shatter barriers, and champion a world where every ability is celebrated. This newsletter is a testament to that spirit, and we couldn't do it without your support. Thank you for being the driving force behind these incredible stories of resilience, inclusion, and pure joy.

With gratitude,
Faruk Musema, founder of Ability Sports Africa

THE HIGHLIGHTS



Unified 5k Race for Everyone 2 August 2025

The Unified 5K race was a unique race that advocated for social inclusion of people with and without disabilities to race along side each other. On 2 August, 2025 Ability Sports Africa, in partnership with Adapt X, organized the First-ever unified race in Africa, in Gulu City, Uganda, attracting 670 people (350 people with disabilities). It was a colorful event where people of all abilities enjoyed racing together and that focused on reverse inclusion, engaging people without disabilities in adaptive games that challenged their abilities and attitudes.



Restoration of basketball court

Since 2020, the basketball court that provided hope to many youth with disabilities to enjoy sports, especially basketball, has been unusable due to poor condition. Many young people used the facility for socialization, inclusion, and talent development. ASA organized a fundraiser to rebuild the court, and we are grateful to everyone who donated, allowing us to raise \$1,500.



ASA Crowned the National Disability Gala Champion in October!

20 athletes from Ability Sports Africa participated in the recently concluded National Disability Sports Gala, emerging as the National Champion of the event in Uganda. The event was an 8 day gala conducted between 10 to 18th October 2025 in Masaka, where ASA won 6 trophies and 53 medals.



ABOUT ASA



Ability Sports Africa (ASA) is a grassroots community-based organization that uses adaptive sports to promote health and wellbeing, empower children and youth with disabilities, and break down stigma and inequalities to advocate for a more inclusive world.

ASA was founded in 2019 by Faruk Musema, who lived through the LRA insurgency in northern Uganda as a child, and experienced first-hand the power of sport to bring joy and community during difficult times. Faruk realized his friends who had disabilities faced many barriers and were excluded from sports. Faruk founded ASA to create equal opportunities for people with disabilities, especially children and youth, to enjoy the holistic benefits of sports, and use the transformative power of adaptive sports to champion the equal rights and dignity of disabled people.



MISSION

To empower individuals of all abilities by building their self-esteem, efficacy, and life skills through sports, creative arts, and physical literacy programs in schools and communities.

VISION

An inclusive community where children and youth with different abilities are fully included in physical literacy, adaptive sports, games, and creative arts.



Our Approach: Reverse Inclusion

Using “Reverse Inclusion”, we train children and youth with disabilities in adaptive sports suited to their abilities, building their skills and empowering them to be leaders to include their peers without disabilities into their adaptive games. In this way, children with disabilities become drivers of inclusion, creating spaces where everyone’s diverse abilities are valued.



Our Impact

1,700

Children and youth with disabilities engaged in adaptive sports

180

Coaches trained in inclusive sports

95%

of participants report feeling fitter, empowered, and more socially included from ASA’s programs

SCHOOL PROGRAM



Overview

We engage children with and without disabilities at partner inclusive schools in weekly adaptive sports training. ASA leads programs in games such as Boccia, goalball, blind football, sitting volleyball, and many others. Beyond improving health and fitness, our adaptive sports sessions create social connection and friendship, and increase children's enjoyment of school.

Inter-School Inclusive Sports gala



Every August, we organize inter-school competitions that unite our partner schools. On Saturday, August 15, 2025, ASA hosted the sports gala, which brought together 260 children with disabilities from four primary schools: Gulu Primary School, Gulu Prison Primary, Laroo Primary School, and Thumbs Up Academy. The athletes competed in six disciplines: Showdown, Goalball, Blind Football, Boccia, Unified Football, and Sitting Volleyball, designed to accommodate children with various physical abilities, hearing impairments, visual impairments, and intellectual disabilities. Gulu Primary School emerged as the winner, followed by Laroo Primary School and Gulu Prison Primary School.



Weekly training in adaptive games and sports

The last quarter proved to be highly engaging as our children prepared for the inter-school and National Disability Sports Gala in Masaka. We conducted training sessions twice a week at each school, providing the children with ample opportunities to enjoy sports. This approach has ensured that every school remains active throughout the term.



Capacity Building training for games teachers

To keep up with quality and inclusive practices, our coaches and games teachers are taken through regular refresher training on adaptive sports coaching techniques. At the beginning of the school term, we trained 8 (4 male, 4 Female) games teachers from their respective schools.

[SUPPORT ASA'S WEEKLY ADAPTIVE SPORTS PROGRAM](#)

UNIFIED 5K RACE



First Ever Unified Race in Africa

ASA, in collaboration with AdaptX, an American organization that promotes adaptive sports, ran the Unified 5K race in Gulu, the first all-inclusive race in Africa. The race fostered social inclusion of people with and without disabilities to race along side each other. Over 670 people (350 with disabilities) participated in the ground-breaking event. The race was a powerful display of unity and inclusion, and what is possible when we come together and every person's unique abilities are valued.



A Race for Every Body

Classification of our athletes with disabilities during the race was the unique point at the event. We classified different disabilities by putting them in their different categories such as Wheelchair racers, Tricycle racers, cerebral palsy, visual impairment, hearing impairment, and intellectual.

Testimony from Participants

"I've never felt so seen and so equal. For the first time, the race was built for me, too" – Racer

"I saw a young girl with one leg off with support aids running like wind" – Volunteer

[Watch the race recap video!](#)



[Link to Media Coverage of the Race](#)

SPORTS GALA

10 – 18TH OCT 2025

HOSTED BY UGANDA PARALYMPIC FOUNDATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF SPORTS FOR



Ability Sports wins the 2025 National Disability Sports Gala!

Ability Sports Africa, has proudly emerged as the National Champion at the Uganda Disability Sports Gala 2025, amassing an impressive total of 53 medals: 24 gold, 20 silver, and 9 bronze. Our organization excelled in six categories, including Wheelchair Basketball, Blind Football, Athletics, Boccia, Showdown, and Archery, in addition to securing the overall winners' trophy.

Team ASA at the 2025 National Disability Sports Gala

Every year, the Uganda Paralympics, in collaboration with the National Council of Sports, organizes the annual Disability Sports Gala. This year's event was held in Masaka City from October 10 to 18, 2025.

- A total of 17 districts across Uganda participated.
- Four universities and four primary schools also took part in the gala.

Athletes engaged in over 10 different sports, aimed at introducing various games and selecting competitors for the qualifiers for the Commonwealth Games.



Six trophies and 53 medals won by our athletes



[Social Media Post](#)

[Link to Media Coverage](#)

"It was my first medal in my whole life this means a lot to me and I feel strong mentally" -Athlete

Our athletes took part in ten different disciplines during the National Gala, and they successfully brought home six trophies in Wheelchair Basketball, Boccia, Athletics, Blind Football, Showdown, and the Overall Winners trophy.

PHYSIOTHERAPY



Aquatic Therapy

Aquatic therapy is a recent activity launched by ASA in 2025. This therapeutic approach is particularly beneficial for children with movement and mobility challenges. The therapy focuses on improving balance, coordination, strength and mental health. Currently, 10 children participate in this therapy on a weekly basis, and we have observed significant improvements in their overall well-being through this intervention.

[Watch more here!](#)



Home visits

Since September 2025, six children have benefited from physiotherapy home visits. ASA's physiotherapist travels from one home to another, providing therapy to children and training parents to support their kids. Some children have been recommended for aquatic therapy, which is a fundamental component of the services offered by ASA.

We plan to establish parent support groups to foster collaboration among families, creating a more sustainable approach to our home visits. This initiative aims to address the challenges associated with transporting equipment necessary for therapy and facilitating the transportation of children for aquatic sessions every Saturday. We invite anyone interested in supporting this initiative to get involved.



Adaptive Swimming

Two children, Odoch James and Odoch Sunday, have embarked on their journey in adaptive swimming, viewing it as a significant opportunity to excel in future Paralympic Games. They possess a strong belief in the process, and both are performing exceptionally well.



Parent support groups

A key challenge is the shortage of physiotherapists in the community, resulting in worsened conditions for many children due to parental knowledge gaps. Creating parent support groups could effectively promote knowledge sharing among parents of children with disabilities.

FOOTBALL PROGRAM



ASA junior premier league Nwoya

The ASA Junior Premier League serves as a flagship initiative for Ability Sports Africa, receiving full support from Liam Jones of Opiyo Technology UK and FC Lakeside UK. The program has successfully expanded its reach to additional communities in Northern Uganda. A new league commenced in Nwoya District in October 2025, targeting rural areas. Currently, 280 children aged between 6 and 14 years have registered, with numbers increasing daily. The children participate in matches every Saturday at Patiira Primary School in Anaka Town council.

[DONATE !\[\]\(8d0f0e0fe25b320c33272c52aec1fbca_img.jpg\)](#)

Grants support to the league

We are thrilled to announce we have received a grant of £10,000 from Opiyo Technology and FC Lakeside Community to support our football academy and the ASA Junior Premier League. This grant has arrived at a crucial moment, as we aim to expand our football program in Northern Uganda. The funding will be used to invest in equipment, uniforms and kits, and enhance transportation for our gear.

We are exceptionally grateful for your support!



More Balls for the children

Access to quality soccer balls has been a significant challenge for many children in rural communities in Uganda, depriving them of their right to play. Through grant support, we have successfully acquired twenty out of the sixty balls to enhance the football program in Uganda.

Transport for Equipment

We have acquired a three-wheeled motorcycle with a cabin for transporting sports equipment, addressing ethical concerns and challenges previously faced by our children and coaches in managing transportation. This solution significantly alleviates those difficulties.

FOOTBALL PROGRAM



Gulu Football Academy

Gulu Football Academy is a grassroots initiative located in the heart of Gulu City, dedicated to nurturing talent and developing future stars in Uganda. The academy is led by directors Bakit Isaac Agogo and Musema Faruk, supported by a team of four coaches. Currently, the academy boasts 76 registered players aged between 4 and 12 years. Training sessions are held every Saturday during the school term and daily throughout holiday periods.

On the left is a picture of 4 children from academy training.

Pictured below is a group photo of the U12 South Sudan team players.

Refugees in the ASA JP league

ASA JPL has unlocked a world of opportunities for kids in Gulu communities, and we've wrapped our arms around a special group of children displaced by the southern conflict. Football's magic is real—it's a unifying force, blending kids from all walks of life into one happy team. We've got 38 refugee children kicking it in the ASA Junior Premier League, where they've been warmly welcomed by the host community. Now, the Junior League is their joyful home to play in.



Closing Ceremony of the ASA JPL

9th October was Ugandan independence day. We used the day to celebrate the winners of the ASA JUNIOR PREMIER LEAGUE for U8, U10, and U12 age groups. U8 was won by Ability Junior team, U10 won by Gulu Football, and U12 by Cubu community team. Children received medals and awards



The league brings together over 300 children to participate in weekend football competition at a grass root level. Since 2021 the league has become a safe space for many underprivileged children in Gulu City and surrounding communities. Through the league we offer mentorship and life skills to the children.



GRANTS & FUNDRAISING

Court of Hope - \$1,500 - Givengain

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our supporters and funders for their contributions to the refurbishment of the basketball court. This renovation has created an opportunity for youth with disabilities to participate in wheelchair basketball, paving the way for the establishment of Uganda's first wheelchair basketball league. We are truly appreciative of the trust and support you have shown us.

Unified 5K Race - \$3,200 - Adapt X

AdaptX played a key role in making the first unified race in Uganda a reality. Its founder, Brenden, contributed 3,200 USD toward a total budget of 5,600 USD. We also thank Children Care Uganda, Elevate Water, Light Ray Uganda, and Gulu Disabled Persons Union for their financial and in-kind support. We're excited to keep building together next year.

PARTNERSHIPS & TEAM GROWTH

We know we can't achieve our vision of an equitable and inclusive society on our own, and over this period, ASA strengthened existing partnerships and established new partnerships. We want to extend appreciation to all of our partners who we've worked with across various events and programs, and that share ASA's vision of promoting social inclusion and human rights for all.

In partnership with Light For The World (LFTW) "We can work" project, ASA received 3 new interns for the next 6 months. We happily welcome Jeremiah, Matthew, and Sarafinah to the ASA team. They've already shown incredible dedication to ASA's vision, and have brought new energy and innovation to their roles in adaptive sports coaching, youth mentorship, administration, and accounting. We are grateful to LFTW for this fruitful collaboration!

Football Program - £10,000 - FC Lakeside

The ASA Junior Premier League has provided children with weekly football opportunities, alongside the Gulu Football Academy, which offers specialized training for children ages 4-14. A strong partnership with Liam Jones, chair FC Lakeside has resulted in donations of balls, uniforms, and over 100 pairs of boots in the past 3 years. In September 2025, Liam further donated to support our football program in Uganda for the next 10 months.

National Disability Sports Gala - \$1,500 - Givengain

Through our campaign on the GivenGain fundraising site, within only two days we managed to raise \$1,500. We dedicate this to Gretchen Reynolds, Maxwell Thurston, Russell Thurston, and Selma Scheewe for making this dream a reality. Your generosity changed the lives of 20 athletes who became champions in the National Disability Championship in Masaka.

Thank you to all of our amazing partners!



New office Space @ Elephante

ASA has entered into a two-year agreement with Elephante Commons to establish its second office in Uganda. This strategic development enhances ASA's operations by providing access to office space, training facilities, event hosting venues, and an inclusive environment for individuals with disabilities. This partnership has also opened doors for ASA to collaborate with various key stakeholders and partner organizations.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

End of year party for children with disabilities

Each festive season, ASA upholds a cherished tradition of organizing an inclusive holiday party for children with disabilities in Gulu. Many of these children are often denied the opportunity to partake in festive celebrations due to their disabilities, negative societal attitudes, and poverty.

Every year, as we raise funds from friends, well-wishers, supporters of ASA's mission, and partner organizations, we invite you to support this important cause. A donation of \$20 will enable a child with a disability and their parents to attend this year's inclusive children's party. During the event, children will engage in various activities, including inclusive games, dance competitions, face painting, bouncing castles, and numerous team-building games.

Unified 5K Race plan 2026



Next year, ASA in partnership with AdaptX, plan to host 3 Unified 5K races in three regions of Uganda: Arua city (west Nile) in May; Gulu/Lira (Northern) in August; Mbale in November (Eastern Uganda). We can't wait to bring this one of a kind event to more people across the country in 2026!



Formation of Ability Sports Club to be launched on 21st November 2025

ASA has established Ability Sports club, dedicated to nurturing athletes to reach elite levels. The academy provides support for both individual adaptive sports and team sports, including athletics (both field and track), goal ball, wheelchair basketball, blind football, sitting volleyball, archery, table tennis, and badminton.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Gulu City Legends Cup -2025. 27th -31st December 2025

The third edition of the Gulu City Legends Cup aims to raise funds to provide school-aged children with disabilities access to essential educational materials that will enhance their learning experience. This unique football tournament brings together veterans, particularly those who have retired from professional football or corporate institutions, who subscribe to participate in the games for a noble cause. The subscription fee of 250,000 UGX covers match officiation, with the remaining funds directed toward the fundraising initiative. This year, our goal is to raise 5,000,000 UGX to support the acquisition of learning materials for children with disabilities. We anticipate participation from over 20 teams of legends in this tournament.

Launch of Wheelchair Basketball league

Since its inception in 2007 as part of a post-war recovery initiative, wheelchair basketball has become a significant adaptive sport in Gulu, Northern Uganda. This program has enabled young individuals with disabilities to cultivate a passion for the sport, establishing it as one of the most recognized activities for persons with disabilities in Northern Uganda. The game has brought hope and joy to the lives of many young people.

However, in 2019, the situation took a turn for the worse when all the wheelchairs became unusable, and the GDPU basketball court suffered severe damage, leading to a decline in youth participation. Despite these setbacks, Gulu proudly holds the highest representation of athletes on the national wheelchair basketball team, currently featuring five players.

To re-engage the youth, we plan to establish the first-ever wheelchair basketball league in Uganda. Our goal is to reach out to many young individuals with disabilities. While this endeavor presents challenges, we are actively seeking partners and donors to support our initiatives.



EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION TO OUR SUPPORTERS OF THE LAST QUARTER

Thank you to all of our donors!

1. Maxwell Thurston - Director of Programs ASA
2. Liam Jones - FC Lakeside (Football program)
3. Brendan Alyward
4. Margaret Reynolds
5. Jackson Gossard
6. Michael Niesman
7. Joshua Jones
8. Douglas Thurston
9. Fiona Hughes
10. Chris Khamis
11. Evelyn Davalos
12. Anson Davalos
13. David Grimes

**“WAPWOYO MATEK”
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR
BELIEVING IN US!**

Follow ASA on Social Media



SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO GRETCHEN REYNOLDS & FAMILY

Towards their contribution to the three core activities at ASA, interschool disability sports gala, repair of wheelchair basketball court, transport and accommodation for 20 athletes with disabilities during the National Disability Sports Gala.

Please consider continuing your support through a monthly donation. Your donations are crucial to sustain our impactful work!

DONATE

Volunteer program

ASA works through passionate individuals worldwide to share expertise and learn from one another. We offer short-term and long-term volunteering opportunities, which are available in person or virtually.

To Volunteer with us please visit our website: www.abilitysportsafrica.org
 Contact: WhatsApp +256 771487566
 Email: volunteer@abilitysportsafrica.org
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