



Raising  
**STAR**  
Africa Foundation

# RAISING STAR AFRICA

# ANNUAL IMPACT

## REPORT 2024



**Kola Olugbodi**

CEO, Background  
Check International

## Letter from the Chairman, Board of Trustees

Children and youth with disabilities are the emerging voices of diverse groups of marginalized communities who are stigmatized and are not included in the decision-making regarding policy development and formulation. There is no US without US. Raising Star Africa is at the center of driving representation of all marginalized communities of disability ecosystem, such that their voices are heard and they are included in all diverse processes and become an active member of society. We implement diverse programs where persons with disabilities are integrated into society, empowered with leadership and advocacy skills to aspire for leadership positions and advocate for implementing policies that cater to disability rights. Our approach is a rights-based approach driving effective systemic change.



**Michael Showunmi**

CEO, Raising Star  
Africa

## The Founders Speech

Raising Star Africa co-creates programs and policies with diverse stakeholders to drive systemic change. Our vision is to raise 1 million people with disability in Africa who will become self-reliant, advocates, and contribute to the GDP of their respective countries, thereby facilitating social change and creating a platform for others to thrive. We empower them with a mindset and mind-shift that focuses on their abilities, not their disabilities. We walk the journey with them by creating an enabling environment where they can thrive.

Our work includes:

**Education | Skill Empowerment | Advocacy | Awareness | Social Skills | Inclusion**

Over the years, all these domains have helped us facilitate an inclusive environment and a platform for community integration and for every child and young adult with disabilities to thrive. We see every person with a disability as a contributor to society, not a receiver. That's the perspective that has helped our organization co-create solutions effectively to mitigate every challenge facing persons with disability.



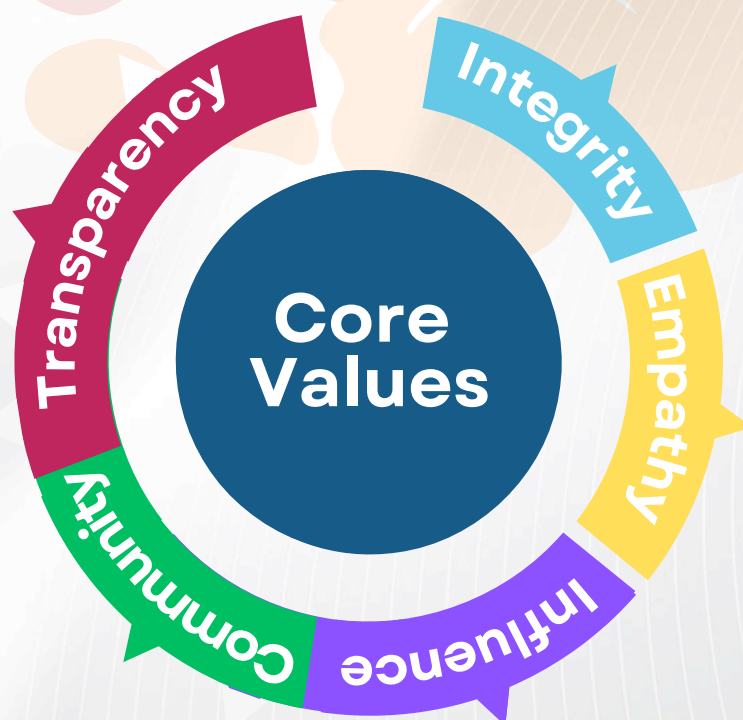
### Vision Statement

Our vision is that every person with disability becomes self-reliant and able to contribute their quota to society, irrespective of their disability.



### Mission Statement

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## Our Impact

In 2024, our impact spread across 160 communities in Lagos state with 35 projects implemented to cater to 1,775 children and young adults with disabilities.



## Our Programs

- Support Inclusive School Initiative
- ThisAbility Education and Leadership Accelerator Program
- Stars Out Initiative
- Vocational and Self-sufficiency Skills
- Stars to School
- Provision of Educational materials and resources
- Disability Awareness
- Special Education Needs SEN Teachers' Training



## Support Inclusive School Initiative

We renovate inclusive schools to stimulate accessibility, create an enabling environment, and a positive classroom environment for every child and young person with or without disability to access high-quality education and improve learning outcomes. Our aim is for students with disabilities to learn in a conducive classroom environment with dignity. In May 2024, we renovated a classroom in Sari Iganmu Inclusive Schools to give 55 children and young persons with disabilities access to education. We provided classroom furniture in the school to create a conducive learning environment. In November, we refurbished two classrooms in Oki Inclusive Schools to create a positive classroom environment for 68 students with disabilities.

**Location:** Iganmu and Iyana Ipaja, Lagos

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 123 children and youth with disabilities

**Indirect Beneficiaries:** 1670

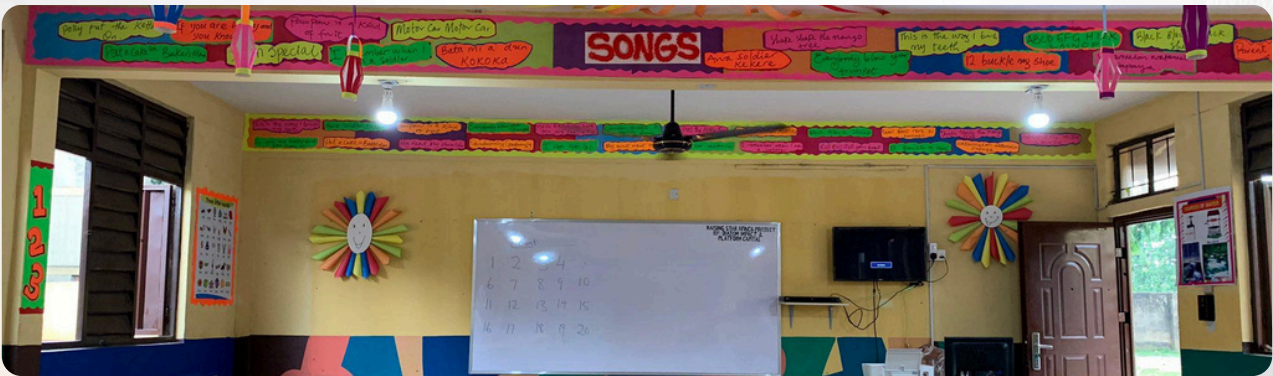
Outcome after 6 months:

- Increased enrollment rate by 30%
- Increased retention rate by 100%
- Stimulate attendance rate by 100%
- Facilitated teacher-student relationship
- Enhanced teaching and learning outcomes by 95%

### Impact Story:

Sandra David, a girl with autism at Sari Iganmu schools, has never missed school because of the new outlook of her classroom. Her school attendance increased by 100%. When asked why she doesn't miss school anymore, she said, "My class is so beautiful, I want to keep learning here."





## ThisAbility Education and Leadership Accelerator Program

To improve career awareness and leadership aspirations, we empower and sensitize students with disabilities on careers, self-awareness, self-advocacy, and strength-based leadership. This has stimulated career aspirations and leadership develop to over 1,000 students with disabilities.

### Impact Story:

Shefiu Alade:

I just had a dream of being a pilot and nothing else. After participating in this program, I gained clarity on how to fulfil my dreams.



## Disability Awareness

We collaborate with diverse private mainstream primary and secondary schools to organize and educate regular students (students without disability) about disability, facilitating social change and long-term access to equal and economic opportunities. We visited 4 primary and secondary schools across two states in the South-West, Nigeria, and sensitized 447 students, 38 teachers, and 4 administrators about disability, equity, and inclusion.

### Schools and Location:

The Bells College (Ogun State), Riverside Schools (Ogun State), Laraday Schools (Lagos State), and Tots Up (Lagos State)

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 447 students without disabilities

**Indirect Beneficiaries:** 1968

### Output:

- Increased awareness about disability
- Positive attitudinal change toward students with disabilities
- Increased empathy towards people with disabilities

### Impact Story:

Bukky Solomon, the school prefect at The Bells College, said, “This is an eye-opener for me and for the entire school. We never imagined people and students with disabilities could do things that we do; they just do it differently. They are indeed differently abled. This awareness gave me a new perspective about people with disabilities generally”.



## Stars To School

We support children with disabilities' school retention by supporting them with assistive devices, educational resources, and basic resources. Our aim is for children with disabilities to have all the resources that stimulate learning and accessibility within the classroom.

### Provision of Educational and Basic Materials, and Assistive Devices:

In May and October 2024, we donated 682 educational materials, such as books, with 7 assistive devices (wheelchairs) to 399 children with disabilities in Central Public Primary Inclusive Schools and Oki Primary School, respectively.

**Location:** Oshodi and Iyana Ipaja in Lagos, Nigeria.

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 399 children and youth with disabilities

**Indirect Beneficiaries:** 2010

**Output:**

- 399 students with disabilities have access to books, bags, and other stationery
- 7 physically challenged students have wheelchairs that stimulate their accessibility in school and at home.

**Outcome:**

- Student retention rate increased by 100% in Oki inclusive schools
- The progress grade report of students in the two schools increased by 46.9%
- The attendance rate of the 7 physically challenged students in school increased by 80% due to increased accessibility through the wheelchairs.

**Impact Story**

Ariel, a girl who has Hydrocephalus Spina Bifida, celebrated her birthday with a new wheelchair and bag; when we asked about her aspirations, she said, “I want to become a lawyer and show the world my abilities.” The wheelchair stimulated her access to school, which helped her to dream again.



## Reading Literacy

We donated 80 books and conducted reading literacy using the novel “Mama’s Sleeping Scarf” by Chimamanda Adichie to accelerate foundational literacy for 76 children with disabilities at Oki Primary Inclusive Schools, Amosun Primary Inclusive Schools, and Oore Ofe Primary Inclusive Schools in Lagos, Nigeria.

**Location:** Iyana Ipaja, Agege, Dopemu community in Lagos, Nigeria.

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 76 children with disabilities

**Indirect Beneficiaries:** 1007 persons

### Output:

- 76 students, irrespective of disabilities, read and engaged with the novel “Mama Sleeping Scarf”
- 76 students' foundational learning was accelerated

### Outcome:

- Student reading rate increased by 25%
- Language skills acquisition increased by 40% among the 76 children with disabilities
- Increased empathy, creativity, and mental health among the 76 children with disabilities

## Impact Story

Mrs. Joke Olaniyi said, “I never believed my child, Anthony, could read a book; I thought he was not capable because of his disability. Thank you for making me see my child differently now. I promise I will get more books for him and read with him.”



## Teacher Training

We collaborated with the University of Georgia in Athens, USA, to train 25 SEN (Special Education Needs) teachers across 10 Local Governments (Counties) on-site in Lagos state, Nigeria. This training was conducted on-site by Prof. Scott and Prof. Kevin from the University of Georgia in June 2024. They trained 25 SEN teachers on “modelling behaviours” for students with disabilities in the classroom. This was fully funded by the Department of State, USA. In addition, Prof. Scott and Kevin conducted an assessment across 4 public primary inclusive schools, providing feedback and constructive criticism to SEN teachers across the schools in Lagos.

**Location:** Mushin, Ikeja, Iyana Ipaja, Maryland, and Dopemu Community in Lagos.

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 25 teachers

**Indirect Beneficiaries:** 1200

### Output:

- 25 SEN trained on modelling behaviour for students with disabilities
- Increased classroom behaviour
- Teachers experience less stress in the classroom
- Cultural exchange for Prof. Scott and Kevin from the UGA, USA.

### Outcome:

- Increased life skills among students with disabilities within the school by 70%.
- Teachers experience less stress when teaching and handling students with disabilities across schools.
- Retention rate of teachers across the schools increased by 80% due to upskilling

### Impact Story

Mrs. Adeyemi, a teacher from Oore Ofe Schools, said, “Thank you for this training. I have never been trained for the past 7 years that I have been enrolled as a SEN teacher in our school. This training will help me to impact our students with disabilities with daily life skills and other practical support within the classroom and beyond. Indeed, we want to do more training with you.”



### Teach for Nigeria Teachers Training

We trained 500 teachers from the Teach for Nigeria, a nonprofit organization that fosters education for children in Nigeria. We trained the 500 teachers on fostering inclusive education in the classroom.

- Location:** Lakowe in Lagos
- Direct Beneficiaries:** 500 teachers
- Indirect Beneficiaries:** 15,000 persons

**Output:**

- 500 teachers trained on fostering inclusive education in the classroom
- 500 teachers were equipped with tools for inclusive education
- Increased rate of disability awareness by 100%

**Outcome:**

- Increased inclusive education awareness in public schools by 100%
- Teachers developed an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for students with disabilities

### Impact Story

Miss Taiwo, one of the teachers from Teach for Nigeria, said, “I learnt how to build an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from the training conducted by Mr. Michael, founder of Raising Star Africa, and I conducted it for Bayo, one of my physically challenged students, and his learning has improved greatly. Thank you for all you do for teachers and our students”.



## Awareness Events

### This Ability 3.0

This is an awareness and advocacy event that spotlights and showcases the talents of children with disabilities. It is used to commemorate Children's Day for students with disabilities. The theme for the event was "Abilities Activated". 5 public inclusive schools across Lagos State participated in the event. One hundred fifty students with disabilities participated in a talent competition and an art exhibition. The winner was celebrated with a cash prize of 100,000 NGN. The event also catered to 50 parents, 10 teachers, and 18 stakeholders from Government, corporate, and private institutions to stimulate advocacy and policy reforms. The chairman of the day was Folashade Adefisayo (Former Commissioner of Education in Lagos State). 5 youth with disabilities were supported with 1 million NGN (\$100,000) to facilitate business development and sustainability. This event was sponsored by seven organisations, including the Aliko Dangote Foundation, Premium Power Solutions, and the U.S. Department of State, among others. The event took place at the Community Hall, Yaba, Lagos. The U.S. Consulate Lagos participated virtually in the event.

(<https://youtu.be/XoBNigfkFWc?si=sVQ4Bm7n396HIFtm>)



## This Ability Sports

This project took place at All Saints Schools in Agege, Lagos, and Oki Inclusive Schools, Iyanaipaja, Lagos, consisting 177 students with disabilities. This was sponsored by SOCCERNET - an international organization dedicated to sports.



## Sport Fest 3.0

This is the biggest sporting event that showcases the abilities of children and young people with disabilities in sports. The theme was “Play Without Barriers.” It unites children and youth with disabilities across 7 different public inclusive schools in Lagos, Nigeria, and creates awareness of disability discrimination and marginalization. This was sponsored by Nestle Milo. 210 students with disabilities participated in the sports, including 14 teachers, and 10 parents. We had the privilege of hosting the representative from His Royal Majesty, the Ooni of Ife. Also, the guests include Amanda Roach Brown from the U.S Consulate, Commissioner of Sports in Lagos, Paul Onwuanibe (CEO of Landmark Event Center) in Lagos, Nigeria. The event took place in Abalti Stadium in Surulere, Lagos. The schools that participated include: Maryland Primary School, Ikeja Senior and Junior High School, Oore Ofe Primary School, Ojuwoye Community School, Atunda Olu Primary School, and Central Primary School, Igbobi, Lagos.



**Impact**

- Increased awareness in 15 communities in Lagos by 55%
- Promote attitudinal and behavioural change towards persons with disabilities
- Increased confidence and sense of belonging of all participants
- Policy advocacy increased by 2%
- Increased disability awareness across social media platforms
- Improve the coordination of motor skills of children with disabilities, thus improving their health

## Side Attractions with Schools

### Christmas Party

We organized a Christmas party for 65 students with disabilities at Roman Catholic Mission Primary Inclusive Schools to increase bonding, a sense of belonging, and community integration. In addition, we organized a Christmas party for 55 students with disabilities at the Apapa Amusement Park, which was fully sponsored by **Hallelujah Challenge – a global Christian organization founded by Pastor Nathaniel Bassey.**



## Individual Intervention

### Ayo Dele

Ayo is a 24-year-old young adult with cerebral palsy in Igando, Lagos – a rural community in Lagos, Nigeria. He is skilled in shoe-making. We raised \$2000 for him. We donated an industrial shoe-making machine and other shoe-making equipment to him to become self-reliant and foster access to long-term economic opportunities. Ayo now makes \$500 monthly from making shoes for people within his community, thereby becoming an active member of his society.



### Samuel Ogwuche

Samuel is a young adult who is deaf. He has been out of school for over 2 years. In 2022, we enrolled him in DO-ESTDOT private inclusive secondary school in Igando, Lagos, to have access to high-quality education. In his first assessment, he had 80% overall in all subjects. In 2024, Samuel is in Year 8 and performing excellently.



## Individual Intervention

### Victor

Victor is a young adult living with cerebral palsy. He was born prematurely at 6 months and spent 72 days in the incubator. We got him a cerebral palsy wheelchair to enhance his mobility. Also, we engaged a physiotherapist and occupational therapist to work with Victor for 6 months, which has improved his motor skills.



### Esther Bewaji

Esther is an eight-year-old girl with severe cerebral palsy living in a rural community in Ogun State, Nigeria. We donated a cerebral palsy wheelchair to her and enrolled her for surgery to mitigate the severity of her disability.



## International Day of the Girl Child

To foster equity, we celebrated girlchild with disabilities by inviting female leaders with disabilities to mentor and share their experiences with girls at State Senior High School Surulere, Lagos. This fostered aspirations and exposure for our girls with disabilities. We invited Adenike Oyetunde-Lawal, General Manager of Lagos State Office of Disability Affairs (LASODA), and Tobiloba Ajayi, Founder of Let CerebralPalsyKids Learn.



## Some of Our Collaborations

### Collaboration with Rotary District 9111

In October, we collaborated with Rotary District 9111 to provide educational materials to students with disabilities in Oki primary inclusive schools, fostering access to education.



### **Corporate Day with Students with Disabilities**

ITo foster long-term success for students with disabilities, we invited leaders in the corporate organizations to speak to our students on “Dream Again”. This gave them a mindshift and mindset to dream, aspire, and achieve future goals. We invited leaders from Sterling Bank and social media influencers.



## The Global Raising Star Africa

Raising Star Africa was taken to the global stage by partnering with the University of Georgia in Athens, USA, in June 2024. The collaboration was a reciprocal cultural exchange that was fully sponsored by the Department of State, USA.



## Volunteer's Corner

Our volunteers increased by 25% in 2024. Since our inception, volunteers have devoted over 27,400 hours to the growth of the organization. Here is what one of our outstanding volunteers has to say about volunteering in our organization.

### Favour Afolabi

I joined Raising Star Africa in April 2023. Honestly, I really love children with disabilities because they are created in God's image and likeness. This is what drew me to the organization, and I look forward to always contributing my skills and quota to the organization and the people with disabilities we serve.



## Our Partners

The image displays a grid of logos for various partners. The logos include: United States Diplomatic Mission in Nigeria (US flag), NNPC (Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation), Aliko Dangote Foundation, FIRST E & P (First Exploration & Petroleum Development Company Limited), AIR PEACE (...your peace, our goal), BIC, UAC FOODS, Nestle MILO, IHS (Towers of strength), NEWS CENTRAL, LAZOVAR NIGERIA LIMITED, Chivita, Gala (Since 1962), Tedbree, TOYIN F. SANNI FOUNDATION, Supreme (Rich & Creamy Ice Cream), PLATFORM CAPITAL, INNOCENT CHUKWUEMEKA CHUKWUMA Empowerment Foundation (ICCEF), Premium POWER SOLUTIONS, and DakoreHomes INT'L LIMITED (...Your secure path to investment).