

I'm by the name of **Baguma Derrick**, and I'm Ugandan, from **Masindi** district. I belong to the organisation called the Ugandan Down Syndrome Organisation.

As a child, I really faced a lot of challenges. Because I would see people laugh at me, people yell at me, people call me names. In one instant even I wanted to drop out of school, because I remember, you know like in primary here, you will find yourself like pupils want to fight you, pupils want to tease you...

So really it was so bad for me but, I had to keep up, and keep up and keep up, until when I finished my primary, I finished my high school, I finished my university, and now I'm here.

Most of my support came from my family, because first of all they appreciated who I am, first of all they got to understand me. And all they did was to go on and just keep loving me.

The Bridge training is really important because really it has made me to realise myself. More so in this disability sector, that I am able to stand and speak for the rights of persons with disability, without fearing, without asking myself what people will say, but going ahead to push for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Before module 1, I never understood that there are many disabilities. We have to ensure that we move as a team, to go and address our issues to the government. Remember, when you go to the government as an individual who has a disability, advocating your own rights, it doesn't come out very well because, assume, put yourself in their shoes, you go there as someone with Downs syndrome to advocate for your rights, after that, someone knocks on the office that I'm coming to advocate for the rights of those who are living with autism, after that, someone also comes in I'm coming to advocate for persons living with albinism, so it will not work out well. So it's all upon us to work together, come together, take use of the necessary opportunities available to us to advocate for persons with disabilities. So that at least each and every one is not left behind as per the SDGs or the Sustainable Development Goals are noted.