

My name is Okwii, Simon Peter, I work with Source of the Nile Union of Persons with Albinism.

I come from the up-countryside where people are ignorant, there is less education and everything, so the level of stigma and discrimination is very high. So, I've not really had a smooth journey.

Around 5 years of age, and trying to go to school, it was really a challenge because when you try to go to school, as you're walking, your peer mates are laughing shouting, they wouldn't want to move with you. Yes because you are a different person, you are like a stranger among them and everything. So for 3 years I failed to go back to school and I had to go back home.

It was really to my mother because she was committed and she gave up everything she had in life to see to it that I succeed and everything so she sacrificed the little she could, sold the little things she could.

I got the government sponsorship to go and do a bachelor's degree in law at Macquarie University. It was not an easy thing but it was out of hard work and commitment.

Then I felt like I can do more in advocacy. And trying to fight and advocate for the fundamental human rights of persons with albinism because having had the experience and challenges I went through, I think I can do more having the experience.

Bridge 1 training module 1 was very helpful, because then it started opening our eyes, especially understanding how the international world operates.

Yes we had our experiences and everything we brought on board, then we had to understand one, our legal framework in Uganda and then, try to now open our eyes to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and coupled with the Sustainable Development goals. So the two international frameworks then expanded our understanding on disability and how we can act as advocates in our own country and cause change.

Bridge 2 is a build on what we had from Bridge 1 and now we are trying to understand policies and how policies work, how we can engage with the key stakeholders to demand for our rights. We are taught how we can do budgeting, collect data, disaggregated data, especially relating to persons with disability and how we can use that data and information that we have, to engage now with the service providers, the key stakeholders so that we can have disability mainstreamed in all sectors.

What has stood mainly for me is how we can cause change and how we can be advocates for ourselves, because then if we don't come out and speak for ourselves then there will be no one to speak on our behalf. Question the choice of footage at 3.08 – of the 2 people to left, one is looking off to left, one standing still and staring straight ahead, and the third person is talking to the board.....

The training has instilled in me practical ways in how I can engage with the State, key stakeholders right from the grassroots to the top level, and how I can cause change in my own community, being a leader now of persons with disability.