Dear all,

I have the great pleasure to share with you the successful results of the first module of the Bridge CRPD-SDGs Uganda cycle, which took place in Kampala, from 12 to 18 April 2018.

This module was organised by the African Disability Forum (ADF), the National Union of Disabled Persons Uganda (NUDIPU), and the International Disability Alliance (IDA), with support from the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) and their members; and financed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) and CBM.

First and foremost, I would like to kindly thank IDA and IDDC members that supported this Module with their members/staff and recognise the enormous work all co-facilitators delivered. I have particular thinking to Berhanu (ADF), Fatma (II/ADF) and Michael (WNUSP/ADF) as leaders, and the absolute support from Gordon (CBM) and Fernanda (RIADIS) with the daily notes, which you find at [www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/bridge-uganda-first-module](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/bridge-uganda-first-module).

Secondly, I would like to share with you the kind words from Mr Martin Babu, CRPD Cttee member from Uganda that followed some days of Bridge with us: “*I am happy with the way that the Bridge process has been designed because it helps participants in the workshop to understand how to link the SDGs to the CRPD*.”

And, last, but not least, our warm gratitude to DFID, BLF and CBM for investing in this unique development initiative towards persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in developing countries.

**Preparation of trainers and under-represented groups**

A pivotal moment of the training was the preparation of the trainers and the preparation of representatives of underrepresented groups.

On the 10th and 11th April, the facilitation team worked through the week, to ensure a smooth preparation, in particular, using tools of inclusive facilitation.

Also, the 11th April was dedicated to the preparation of participants from underrepresented groups. For instance, participants with deafblindness, intellectual disabilities, deaf people, persons with psychosocial disabilities and hard of hearing, received support from the facilitation team.

**Diversity and inclusion**

Bridge Uganda involved 72 (seventy-two) people, being 43 participants and facilitators from different groups of persons with disabilities, including persons with cerebral palsy, intellectual disability and Down Syndrome, persons with leprosies, vitiligo, deafblindness, spina bifida and hydrocephalus, psychosocial disabilities, albinism and persons with multi-disabilities, among others.

In addition, the initiative ensured the gender balance among 21 women and 22 men.

The group of participants and co-facilitators was supported by 29 sign language interpreters, illustrators, captioners and personal assistants to build a shared, comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the CRPD in development contexts, including its fundamental concepts and structure, and its links with the SDGs. The full participant list is attached.

**A new generation of trainers with disabilities**

Led by Fatma Haji (Inclusion International) and Michael Njenga (World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, WNUSP), both representing the African Disability Forum (ADF), this intense week was run with the support of a diverse co-facilitation Bridge Alumni team from Uganda: Esther Kyozira (NUDIPU), Patrick Egessa (IFHOH), Robinah Alambuya (WNUSP), Agnes Abukito, Betty Najjemba (UNAD) and George Okudi (DSi).

Also, Mr Martin Babu, CRPD Committee member also joined the training as a CRPD Expert.

Furthermore, this Bridge module was part of the training trajectory of several Bridge Alumni involved in future initiatives, which we are still organising, such as:

* Tanzania: Elizabeth Ombati (WNUSP) and Rebecca Opetsi (IFSBH);
* Regional Bridge: Jenipher Akinyi (II);
* Article 11: Gordon Rattray (CBM);
* The Middle East and North Africa (MENA): Alradi Abdalla (ADD International);
* French-speaking countries: Siddo Nouhou and Mahamadou Oumarou (ADF);
* Portuguese speaking countries: Fernanda Santana (RIADIS)

**Results and evaluation**

Bridge Uganda Module 1 enabled a unique connection among IDA and IDDC members from Africa and other regions, for instance, a participant from the World Blind Union and ADF facilitators from Niger are currently exchanging on country reporting to the UN monitoring mechanisms. Also, the facilitation team created a WhatsApp group and is exchanging on their daily work and experiences. Participants are also in the process to develop a WhatsApp group.

While we are still compiling and analysing the written evaluations, the first Uganda Module was evaluated by participants at a level of 4.2, out of a maximum of 5.

Some informal evaluation of the week:

* I learned about participation. When we have same opportunities, at the same time, we see that other people can also participate very much;
* I learned here that the most critical thing is self-advocacy;
* I learned that learning is a process and that we learn better when we support each other,
* Now I learned about inclusion; I learned to include the ones that are left behind, to include everyone;
* I realised that our State has many things to do for us. It is their obligation. Even if we have people supporting us, the responsibility to protect and fulfil is of the State;
* Even if I was facilitating workshops on the CRPD previously, I learned now that I still have lots of things to learn, including on being more inclusive;
* I have learned that teamwork is the first way to achieve! We learned how to use the best of each of us. Some of us came here not knowing what the CRPD was really about. Now we know disability is not inability. I never saw a person with deaf-blindness in my life before, and I saw blind people reading. It was very impactful;
* I appreciated the alternative material. It is my first time that I saw all these different constituencies, and I liked to see the sign languages interpreters;
* We need to manage our resources appropriately and this requires planning. We all can create changes, and it will depend on our capacity to develop our abilities to make changes. Information is vital and we need to equip ourselves with this to make our advocacy effective.

Testimonies are attached to this message and will be published soon.

The facilitation team and preparatory meetings were supported by Kathy Al Ju'beh (CBM) and myself, with full involvement of Berhanu Tefera (ADF) in the preparations of the Module and his remote support during the week.

I am at your disposal may you have any questions or comments.

Very best regards,

Tchaurea

Tchaurea Fleury

**International Disability Alliance**

Senior Advisor

BRIDGE CRPD-SDG Coordinator