



# **ZAMBIA AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

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# PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IN ZAMBIA

- ▶ WE ARE ALIVE TO THE FACT THAT PERSONS WITH ALBINISM FACE MANY CHALLENGES. VIOLENCE AND STIGMA AIMED AT PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IS WIDESPREAD. ALBINISM IS STILL PROFOUNDLY MISUNDERSTOOD, SOCIALLY AND MEDICALLY LEADING TO AN UNSAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR PERSONS WITH ALBINISM. THIS IS DUE TO THE GENERAL IGNORANCE AND MYTHS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONDITION. THERE IS STILL STIGMA SURROUNDING PERSONS WITH ALBINISM, RESULTING IN DISCRIMINATION, DEHUMANISATION AND ISOLATION. GRAVE AMONG THE CHALLENGES IS THE BELIEF THAT THEIR BODY PARTS CAN BE USED FOR CHARMS.

# SITUATION IN ZAMBIA

- ▶ THERE ARE ABOUT 25,324 PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IN ZAMBIA, ACCORDING TO THE COUNTRY'S LAST CENSUS CONDUCTED IN 2010.
- ▶ BY MAY 2021, 30 REPORTS OF ATTACKS AGAINST PERSONS WITH ALBINISM HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN ZAMBIA WITH THE LATEST BEING OF A 2 YEAR OLD GIRL CHILD IN SENGA HILL DISTRICT OF NORTHERN PROVINCE WHOSE HAND WAS CUT OFF AND IS CURRENTLY HOSPITALISED.
- ▶ 2021 IS AN ELECTION YEAR FOR ZAMBIA AND THIS INCREASES THE FEAR WITHIN THE ALBINISM COMMUNITY TO FREELY MOVE AROUND AND PARTICIPATE IN DAILY ACTIVITIES AS SOME PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN CHARMS USE THEIR BODY PARTS FOR RITUALS, HENCE AFFECTING THEIR PARTICIPATION IN MANY FACETS OF LIFE WHICH INCLUDE THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AND PUBLIC LIFE.
- ▶ THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC HAS BROUGHT ON ITS OWN CHALLENGES AS MANY PERSONS WITH ALBINISM HAVE POOR EYESIGHT HENCE SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES MAKE IT HARD FOR THE BLIND TO USE GUIDES, WHILE MUCH OF THE INFORMATION ON THE PANDEMIC HAS NOT BEEN TRANSLATED INTO BRAILLE.

# INITIATIVES/EFFORTS MADE TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTION OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM

- ▶ NOTING THE EFFORTS MADE BY THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IN THE COUNTRY INCLUDING PROHIBITING RACIAL DISCRIMINATION OF PERSONS AS WELL AS OFFENSES CAUSING BODILY HARM THROUGH THE CONSTITUTION AS WELL AS PENAL CODE OF ZAMBIA.
- ▶ PART II OF THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT NO. 6 OF 2012 STIPULATES THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND STATES THE DUTY OF EVERY PERSON TO UPHOLD, RESPECT AND SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.
- ▶ In 2020, THE ZAMBIA AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (ZAPD) ENGAGED THE HOUSE OF CHIEFS ON THE ISSUE OF MAIMING AND KILLING OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IN ZAMBIA AS THEY ARE THE FIRST CONTACT POINTS IN THE COMMUNITIES WE LIVE IN AND ARE THE FIRST RESPONDENTS TO ANY REPORTS REGARDING MAIMING AND KILLINGS OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM.
- ▶ THE GOVERNMENT IS IN THE PROCESS OF PUTTING IN PLACE A STATUTORY INSTRUMENT ON THE NON – DISCRIMINATION OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM.

# STRATEGIES TO END PERSECUTION OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM

- **PUBLIC AWARENESS:** INCREASE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONDITION OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM. ALL WELL-MEANING CITIZENS SHOULD JOIN PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IN FIGHTING THIS HEINOUS ACT TARNISHING THE IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY.
- **PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS:** INCLUDE TRADITIONAL LEADERS AND TRADITIONAL HEALERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST PERSECUTION OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISMS.
- **EMPLOYMENT:** BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS SHOULD RESERVE A PERCENTAGE FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF THE UNCRPD AND THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT NO.06 OF 2012.
- **EDUCATION:** INCREASE SENSITISATION OF TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH ALBINISM.
- **TRADITIONAL HEALERS:** BAN ALL TRADITIONAL HEALERS INVOLVED IN MURDERING, MUTILATING AND ROBBING DECEASED BODIES OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM FROM PRACTISING AS HEALERS AND SENTENCING FOR LIFE.

# STRATEGIES TO END PERSECUTION OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM

- **PROTECTION:** LOCAL AUTHORITIES SHOULD INCREASE SECURITY FOR PERSONS WITH ALBINISM RESIDING WITHIN THEIR AREAS. COMMUNITIES SHOULD BE SENSITIZED ON RAISING ALARM AND IMMEDIATELY REPORTING ATTACKS TO THE POLICE. THE POLICE SHOULD ALSO ENSURE THE SECURITY AND ANONYMITY OF WHISTLE-BLOWERS.
- **LAWS AND POLICY :** ENACTMENT OF LAWS AND POLICIES FRAMEWORKS TO REGULATE TRADITIONAL HEALERS AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINE. VICTIMS OF SUCH ATTACKS SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH PRO-BONO LEGAL REPRESENTATION.
- **REDRESS:** VICTIMS OF MUTILATION OF BODY PARTS AND DEPENDENTS OF MURDERED VICTIMS SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH REDRESS INCLUDING FULL MEDICAL CARE FOR INJURIES SUSTAINED, PSYCHIATRIC COUNSELLING, MONETARY COMPENSATION, AND WHERE NECESSARY, REALLOCATION TO SAFER AREAS OF RESIDENCE.
- **SPECIAL PROCEDURES:** THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD COORDINATE WITH THE UNITED NATIONS INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON ALBINISM ON THE ENJOYMENT OF RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM BY ALLOWING HER TO MAKE COUNTRY VISITS TO ZAMBIA TO SHARE HER EXPERTISE.

# STRATEGIES TO END PERSECUTION OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM

- **HEALTHCARE:** THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ESTABLISH SPECIAL SKIN CARE AND LOW VISION CLINICS FOR PERSONS WITH ALBINISM, AS WELL AS INCREASING DERMATOLOGISTS AND OPTOMETRISTS SPECIALIZED IN ALBINISM. SKIN CANCER TREATMENT SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED. NURSES AND MIDWIVES SHOULD BE TRAINED ON ALBINISM AND PROVISION OF COUNSELLING TO PARENTS WHERE BABIES WITH ALBINISM ARE BORN. THIS WILL REDUCE CHANCES OF REJECTION AND ABANDONMENT OF SUCH MOTHERS AND THEIR BABIES.
- **POLITICAL AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** COME UP WITH DELIBERATE POLICIES TO APPOINT PERSONS WITH ALBINISM IN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC POSITIONS AND POLITICAL OFFICES.
- **INCLUSION IN DECISION MAKING:** PERSONS WITH ALBINISM SHOULD BE EMPOWERED AND GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN DECISION MAKING THROUGH APPOINTMENT AS WELL AS CONTESTING FOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS. THEY SHOULD ALSO BE WELL CONSULTED AND INCLUDED IN PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AND PROGRAMS

# SUGGESTION OF PUNITIVE MEASURES:

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS SHOULD LOBBY FOR LEGISLATION WHICH WILL PROTECT PERSONS WITH ALBINISM BY COMING UP WITH STIFFER PENALTIES FOR ANY PERSON FOUND PERPETRATING SUCH HEINOUS ACTS.

- SLAP STIFF PUNISHMENT TO PARENTS WHO NEGLECTS THEIR CHILDREN WITH ALBINISM .
- ALL TRADITIONAL HEALERS, BUSINESS MEN AND WOMEN AND OTHERS INVOLVED IN MURDERING, MUTILATING AND ROBBING BODIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES SHOULD FACE DEATH SENTENCE AND FORFEIT THEIR WEALTH TO THE STATE AND FAMILIES OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM WHO LOSE THEIR BELOVED ONES THROUGH RITUAL KILLINGS.
- LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES SUCH AS THE POLICE, COURTS AND OTHERS WITH OBLIGATION TO CRIMINALIZE, INVESTIGATE AND PROSECUTE PERPETRATORS OF CRIMES SHOULD FAST TRACK CASES AGAINST PERSONS WITH ALBINISMS.
- ANY PERSON WHO PASSES DEROGATORY REMARKS AGAINST PERSONS WITH ALBINISM BE GIVEN A JAIL SENTENCE OF NOT LESS THAN FIVE YEARS.
- SHOULD ENSURE ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE REMEDIES, REDRESS AND REHABILITATION, INCLUDING MEDICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE, FOR THE SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES.
- ALL TRADITIONAL HEALERS NOT REGISTERED BY ZAMHRA SHOULD BE PROSECUTED FOR A PERIOD NOT LESS THAN FIVE YEARS



# CONCLUSION

THE GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBIA IS WORKING HARD TO ENSURE ALL CITIZEN'S RIGHTS INCLUSIVE OF PERSONS WITH ALBINISM ARE RESPECTED AND PROTECTED HENCE NOT LEAVING ANYONE BEHIND. IT IS THE DUTY OF EVERY CITIZEN – IN SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITIES – TO ENSURE THAT PERSONS WITH ALBINISM ARE PROTECTED AND RESPECTED IN ZAMBIA.

CITIZENS SHOULD NOT ONLY SHOW SYMPATHY BUT DEMONSTRATE EMPATHY TOWARDS PERSONS WITH ALBINISM.



**THANK YOU ALL**

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