

## **ADOPTION OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES FOR 2021 ELECTIONS**

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### **United Nations urged to include more women with disabilities ahead of election race**

The United Nations is being urged by campaigners round the world to ensure more women with disabilities are elected to positions of leadership. Sightsavers Zambia and Zambia Federation of Disability Organisations (ZAFOD) are urging their UN representative to vote for diversity in the upcoming UN elections for the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The call is part of Sightsavers' Equal World campaign which is urging the United Nations and its member states to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities by ensuring their voices are heard in the decisions that affect their lives.

Glenda Mulenga, Country Director at Sightsavers Zambia says, "We need to see more women with disabilities in positions of leadership. If women are not welcomed into the spaces where decisions are made - how will their voices ever be heard?"

"People with disabilities are experiencing some of the worst effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and women with disabilities are the hardest hit. Now, more than ever, we need to make sure they are in a position to ensure the rights of women with disabilities are upheld."

The Committee monitors over 180 countries to examine the extent to which they are upholding the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Committee then makes recommendations to governments to ensure people with disabilities can access their full range of rights.

As the Committee carries out its elections this month, the Equal World campaign is highlighting that of the 18 members on the UNCRPD's monitoring panel, only six are women. Before the campaign began in 2018, only one woman sat on its panel with 17 men.

Equal World is calling for people to write to their country's UN representative before elections close. To support the campaign visit [www.sightsavers.org/EqualUN](http://www.sightsavers.org/EqualUN)

Equal World is calling for people to write to their country's UN representative before elections close at the end of November. To send a message to your UN representative visit: <https://campaigning.sightsavers.org/take-action/>

**Ends**

**For further details, interviews and case studies contact Maria Fsadni, Senior PR and Media Officer at Sightsavers on +44 1444 446677 / mfsadni@sightsavers.org**

## **About Equal World**

Sightsavers campaign Equal World calls on the United Nations and member states to improve the lives of people with disabilities around the world by promoting disability rights and inclusion throughout its work.

The charity has campaigned for disability-inclusive global development since 2013, and in that time has seen significant recognition of disability as a priority issue.

For more information visit: [www.sightsavers.org/equalworld](http://www.sightsavers.org/equalworld)

## **About ZAFOD**

**Zambia Federation of Disability Organisations (ZAFOD)** is a legally constituted national umbrella organization for disability organizations in Zambia and has a long history of work in the legal reform and human rights sector. With a membership of 12 organisations, the primary goal of the organisation is to advocate for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

ZAFOD can be contacted on: Email : [info@zafod.net](mailto:info@zafod.net) Website: <https://www.zafod.net/>

## **About Sightsavers Zambia**

Sightsavers Zambia has been supporting Sightsavers Equal World campaign, and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) / International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) Global advocacy campaign, both calling for a disability inclusive response to the COVID-19 response.

Testimonies from people with disabilities on the challenges they are facing during the pandemic demonstrate the importance of an inclusive response. [Sightsavers Zambia has worked with local DPOs](#) to bring the voices of people with disabilities to the forefront.

Sightsavers is an international organisation that works in more than 30 developing countries to prevent avoidable blindness, treat and eliminate neglected tropical disease, and promote the rights of people with disabilities.