

Kenya: Albinos Decry Discrimination in the Country

By Martin Mwita, 20 May 2012 – The Star Kenya



An Albino boy carries a baby in Oromi IDP camp, Kitgum District, northern Uganda, 17 May 2007. Each segment of the civilian population in the north faces its own horrors. Boys are kidnapped by the LRA and brutally indoctrinated into life as soldiers.

THE Albinism Foundation of East Africa has decried the discrimination faced by albinos in the country. Speaking in Mombasa during an Albino sensitisation training at the weekend, Afea programme officer Lilian Wafula said the government should implement the new constitution to address issues affecting persons with disabilities.

She said the government should clearly define what disability is. She said albinos have not yet been accepted in the society and are being segregated and denied equal opportunities with other Kenyans.

"The government should account for persons with albinism in the country and ensure they are accorded their rights like other normal citizens," Wafula said.

She said the new constitution is progressive and will change lives of persons with disabilities if implemented. Wafula said disabled persons have for a long time been left out in civic, elective and appointive positions in the government.

"If the new constitution is implemented well and Kenyans respect it, then it will be the turning point for persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups in this country," she said.

Wafula appealed to Kenyans to accept and understand people with albinism. Muslim for Human Rights rapid response project officer Francis Auma said affirmative action is needed if the country is to develop proportionally.

He urged vulnerable groups to stop playing victim and instead use the new constitution to get their rights.

Auma said selfishness in leadership has made a few Kenyans benefit at the expense of the vulnerable groups and poor citizens.

"The country is in transition and everyone has a right as a Kenyan citizen. We now have a new constitution and provisions to address our issues whenever we are oppressed," Auma said.

