

Spring 2023 Professional Fellow

Name: Bakar O Hamad
Country: Zanzibar, Tanzania
Job Title and Employer: Acting Executive Director,
[Organization of Women with Disabilities in Zanzibar \(JUWAUZA\)](#)
Project Title: Haki Yangu “My Right”

Problem: Representation of women with disabilities from marginalized communities and demographics can help society gain new perspectives on local and national concerns. The Constitution of Zanzibar, Article 67, guarantees women’s representation as members of the House of Representatives. However, there is currently no such provision for people with disabilities. Of the 76 total representatives, only three have identified as individuals with disabilities, one of who was appointed by the President of Zanzibar to represent all people with disabilities. Participation of women with disabilities in particular has been limited due to stigma, insufficient infrastructure, poverty, and lack of access to education and leadership opportunities (JUWAUZA, 2021).

Project Objective: Bakar aims to increase the number of women with disabilities participating in decision-making, planning, and monitoring in Zanzibar.

Project Description: Bakar will work with 20 women with disabilities and four Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to co-create a program where every targeted beneficiary has partnership in the process. Specifically, the group will develop a program that trains beneficiaries on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), local political rights and government structures with the goal to enable them to participate in political and public processes. The group will develop training content utilizing existing training material currently implemented by JUWAUZA and adapting material from other local organizations that have experience in leadership training. Bakar will involve the National Council for People with Disabilities (NCPD), the District Commission Office, and local government leaders to provide resources in support of this project.

Additionally, Bakar will partner with Internews Tanzania, Zanzibar Cable Television (ZCTV), and Furaha FM Radio to increase awareness among policymakers and the public to foster participation of people with disabilities, and women with disabilities in particular, in the decision-making process from the grassroots to the national level.

The JUWAUZA fundraising team will support the development of localized initiatives to ensure the program’s influence turns into a powerful movement.

Following evaluation of this project, Bakar aims to use the network of JUWAUZA, which consists of 12 OPDs, to scale the program so that more women with disabilities can advocate for the inclusion of disability issues in decision-making processes. The ultimate impact of the project will be determined by the increase in participation of women with disabilities as evidenced by the 2025 election observer reports and the election report that will be published by the Zanzibar Electoral Commission.

Reference:

JUWAUZA (2021). Guidelines on Participation of Women and People with Disabilities in General Elections in Zanzibar. Retrieved from: <https://juwauza.or.tz/2021/04/02/guidelines-on-participation-of-women-and-people-with-disabilities-in-general-elections-in-zanzibar/>

