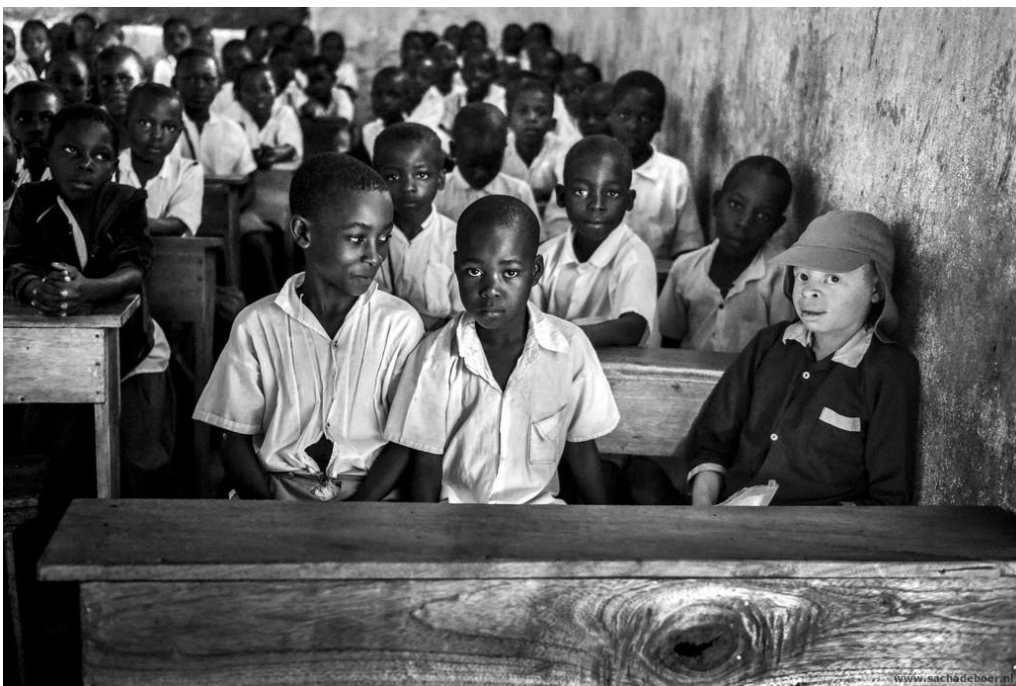


# Children and young people in Tanzania who have a health condition called Albinism



**“It Felt Like a Punishment”  
Growing up with Albinism in Tanzania**



# About us

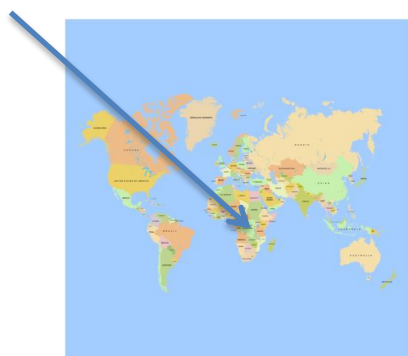
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
WATCH

We are called Human Rights Watch.



We work to make sure that everyone in the world is treated fairly and gets their rights.

# About this report



This report is about children and young people in Tanzania.

Tanzania is a country in Africa.



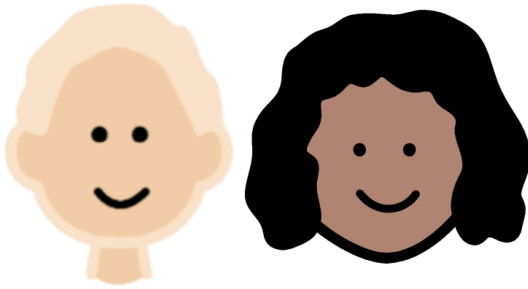
It is about children and young people who have a health condition called albinism.



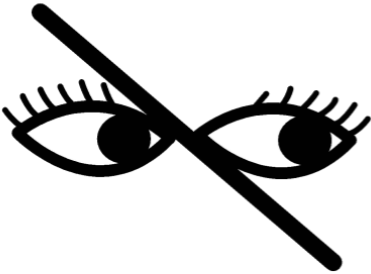
Albinism is a condition to do with people's skin.



It affects the color of their skin, hair and eyes.



People with albinism usually have lighter skin and hair than people in their family.



Some people with albinism cannot see very well.



People with albinism in Tanzania have been treated very badly.

In 2017 we spoke to children and young people with albinism to find out what was happening.

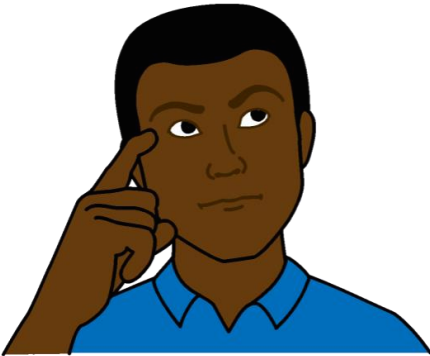


We also spoke to:

- Family members
- People who work in education
- Organizations that support people with albinism

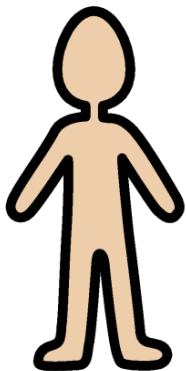
## What we found out

### People with albinism being hurt or killed



Some people in Tanzania have wrong ideas about people with albinism.

They believe that people with albinism have special powers.



For example, they may believe that the bodies of people with albinism can bring them good luck.

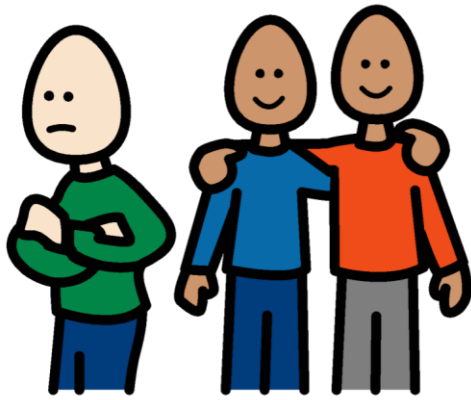
Because of this, some people have done bad things like:



- Killed children and adults with albinism
- Cut off body parts of people with albinism, like arms, hands, legs, hair and skin

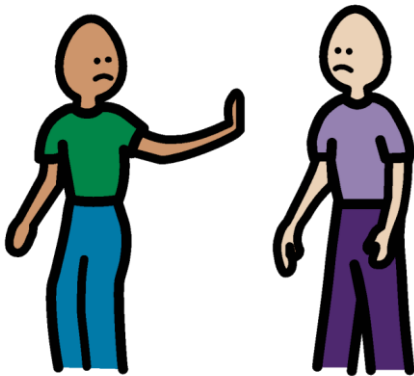


- Sold their bodies or body parts for money



Many children and young people with albinism also get bullied and treated badly.

For example, people may call them names or say they don't want to be near them.

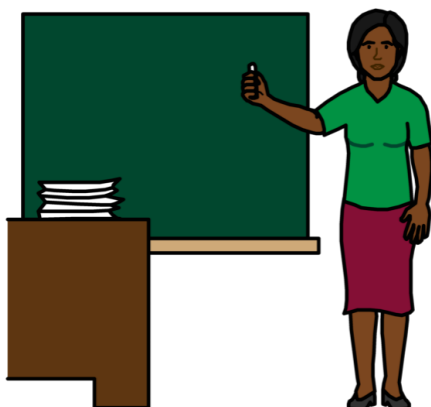


Sometimes people in their own families may do this.



### **What the Government has done**

The Government in Tanzania opened some special homes called shelters for children with albinism to keep them safe.



Children with albinism live in the shelters and go to school there.

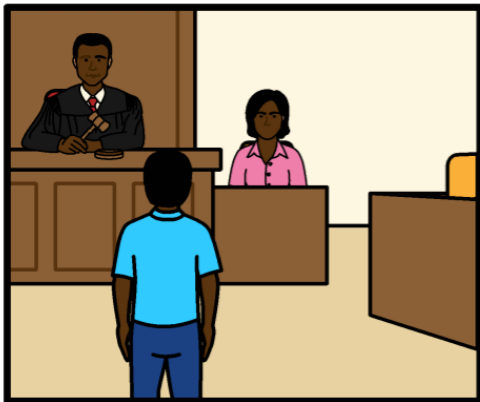
The government has also worked to:



- Stop people called witchdoctors.

Witchdoctors believe that the body parts of people with albinism bring good luck.

They may try to get someone to kill or hurt people with albinism for their body parts.

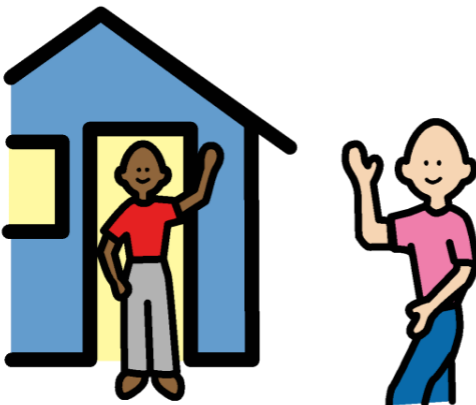


- Make sure that people who do bad things to people with albinism go to court



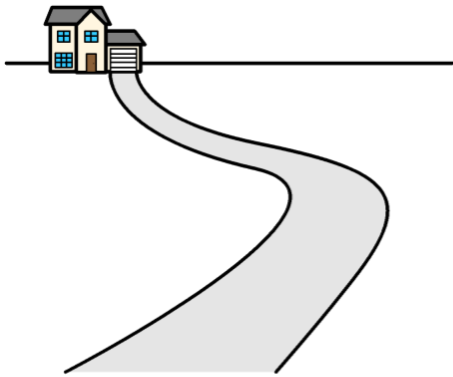
People with albinism are not being killed as much now.

But the shelters for children with albinism are still there.



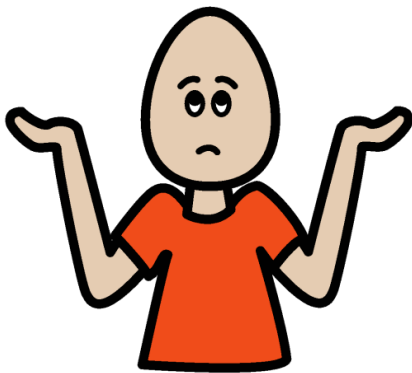
More children with albinism are being sent back to their families.

But many children with albinism still live in the shelters.



## Problems for children with albinism living in the shelters

Children in the shelters may be far away from their families and communities.



Sometimes children had no choice about living in a shelter.

The government said they had to move there.

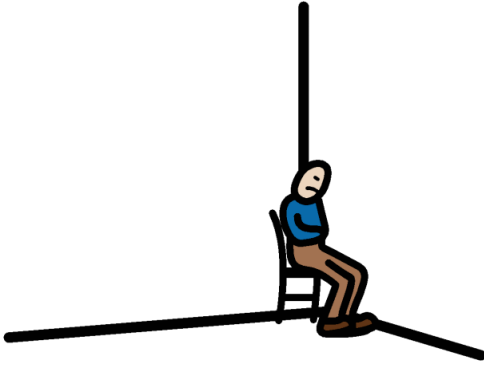


The government said it was up to local communities to keep children with albinism safe.

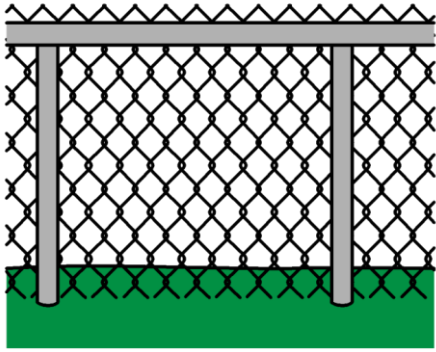


But many local communities were worried about that.

It was easier for them to send children with albinism to a shelter to be safe.

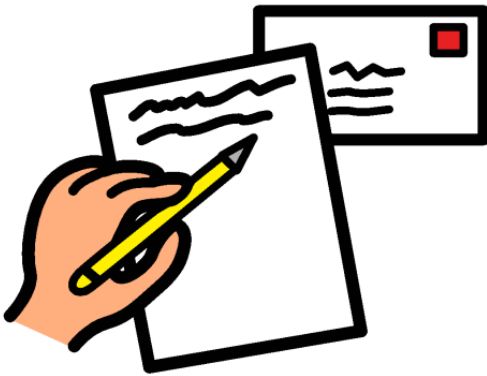


Children with albinism in the shelters may not get the chance to go outside or visit their families because it might be unsafe.



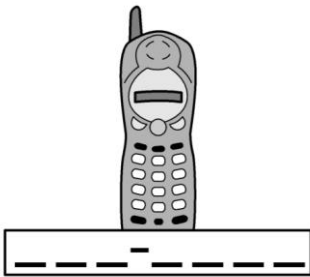
For example:

- There are high walls or fences that stop people getting in or out of the shelters.



- Families might have to get someone to write a letter to say that their community is safe for children with albinism.

This must happen before their child can visit them.



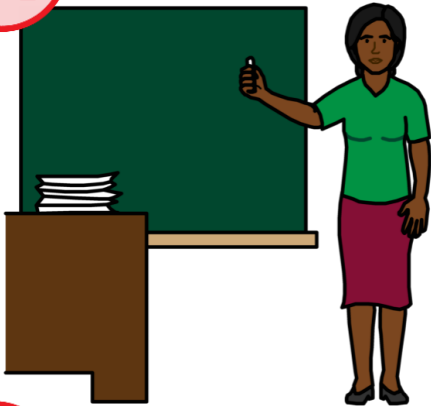
- Some families might not give the shelters their phone number or address.

This means their child cannot keep in touch with them.



This can make children and young people with albinism very sad.





## Problems with education

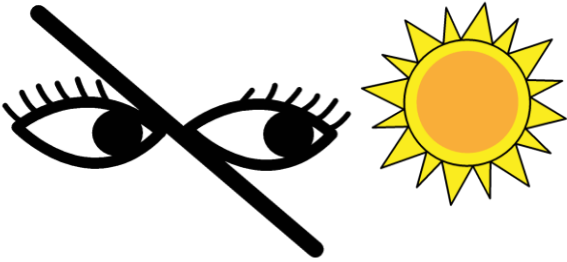
It can be hard for children with albinism to get the education they need.

This is because:



- Many children with albinism who live in shelters cannot go to school with other children from their community.

They have to go to school in the shelters instead.



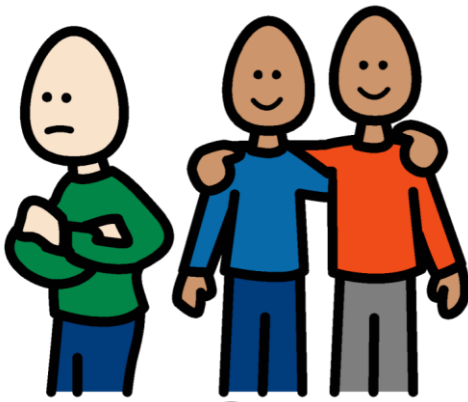
- Many children with albinism cannot see very well.

It can also be unsafe for them to be in the sun.



Schools may not give children the right support with this.

For example, teachers may write in small letters on the blackboard or make children go out in the sun.



- Children with albinism may be called names by other children and find it hard to make friends.



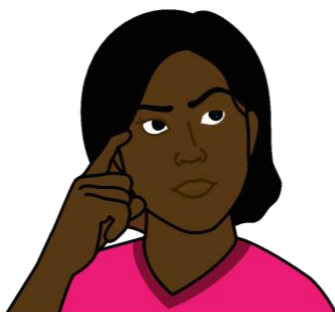
- Families may worry that their child may be unsafe walking to school.

## What should be happening?



Children with albinism have the right to:

- Live in a family home
- Be part of the community
- Get the education they need and learn with other children without albinism
- Say what they want to happen at school and be listened to



People should always think about what is best for each child.

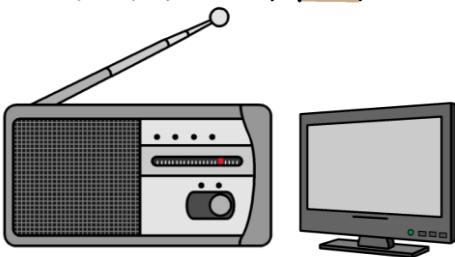
# What we want to happen next



The following things are for the Government in Tanzania to do:



Do more to help people in Tanzania understand albinism and think good things about people with albinism.



For example, there could be meetings about this and information on the radio and TV.



Make sure that all teachers:

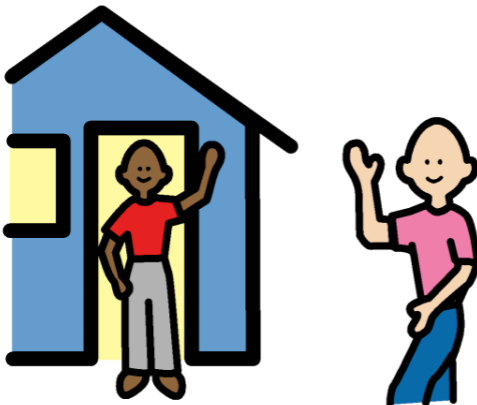
- Get training on how to support children with albinism
- Have the support and equipment they need to teach children with albinism

The following things are for the Government in Tanzania to do:



Keep working to stop people from hurting people with albinism.

For example, send people to court if they do bad things to people with albinism.



Help more children living in shelters for children with albinism to move back to their families.

Work with children with albinism, their families and communities to do this in a safe way.



Make sure that families have enough money and support to care for children with albinism and send them to school.



Other organizations in the world can help with this work.