



Photo credit: www.kiefelphotography.com

The Brilliant & Resilient photo exhibit and book project highlights the achievements of disabled women activists from across the globe who are confronting discrimination and working to improve the lives of women and girls with disabilities in their communities.

“The contributions of the extraordinary women of the Women’s Institute on Leadership and Disability (WILD) not only improve the lives of women and girls with disabilities in their home countries, they also play a critical role in combating discrimination, promoting inclusion, and defending human rights the world over.”

– Hillary Rodham Clinton  
67th U.S. Secretary of State

Mobility International USA (MIUSA) is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization with the mission of empowering people with disabilities around the world to achieve their human rights through international exchange and international development. For over 30 years, MIUSA has developed an extensive network of over 2100 alumni from over 110 countries who are working for the rights of people with disabilities.

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# BRILLIANT & RESILIENT

Celebrating the Power of Disabled Women Activists



Photo credit: Brian Lankester

PHOTO EXHIBIT & BOOK PROJECT

# Josephine Kalunda Kakoma

Kenya



Photo credit: Brian Lanker

“ WHEN I WAS YOUNG I TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE THREE TIMES, BUT FAILED. I became the talk of my village in Kenya, a girl who'd gone deaf at eighteen and whom nobody understood, not even her family. I was considered a curse, a disabled woman and a burden to everyone in the community. I was told to stop school and take care of the cattle and do what's called “donkey's work.” One day I ran off to stay with my brother and his wife in Nairobi, but after three weeks I was told to leave and ended up living on the street. I did seem to be cursed until I found the Karen Technical Training Institute for the Deaf, where they taught me sign language and how to live without being able to hear...

I've worked tirelessly to educate the government, policy makers, families, and society about the rights of women with disabilities: educational and employment rights, rights to health care and legal protection. We're making progress but rape is rampant for disabled women and often done by those who know the victims. It's usually covered up. I've advocated with the police and courts for disabled girls and women to live a rape-free life. My dream is to be a leader for women with disabilities—a leader, but not a boss. Working together, we will overcome the prejudice and fear. ”

The exhibition photographs were generously contributed by the late, Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer, Brian Lanker; humanitarian and photojournalist, Darcy Kiefel; and women's rights activist and photojournalist, Paola Gianturco.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

This unique exhibition and book project features a collection of photographs and personal stories of 50 women with different types of disabilities representing 41 countries, all alumni of Mobility International USA's Women's Institute on Leadership and Disability (WILD). Their powerful portraits and vignettes illustrate the issues that significantly impact their lives, including access to education, employment, political power, reproductive health services, and HIV/AIDS and violence prevention. The book accompanies the traveling photo exhibition. All materials are available in audio format.

Be a part of an international effort to revolutionize the status of women with disabilities worldwide! Revenues from the exhibition and book sales support the next generation of emerging women leaders with disabilities to participate in MIUSA's women's leadership trainings. MIUSA's women's programs support the implementation of Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which promotes the full development, advancement and empowerment of women with disabilities.

## HOST THE EXHIBIT

Bring the exhibition to your space! The exhibit includes 30 framed and wire-mounted museum quality photographs and vignettes. Available to tour national and international galleries and cultural spaces, the Brilliant & Resilient exhibition is an opportunity to bring together women leaders with and without disabilities, government officials, NGO development actors and other agents of social change. For more information about hosting, visit: [www.miusa.org/women/photoexhibit](http://www.miusa.org/women/photoexhibit)

## ORDER THE BOOK

The 120 page, full color, coffee table-style photographic book features powerful portraits and personal stories of 50 disabled women activists from 41 countries. Cost: \$24.95 To order the book, visit: [www.miusa.org/publications](http://www.miusa.org/publications)