

14 April 2025

**Submission to the 25th WHO Expert Committee on Selection and Use of Essential Medicines: SPF50+ broad-spectrum sunscreen  
Application number A.25**

Dear WHO Expert Committee Members,

CBM Global Disability Inclusion supports the application to add SPF50+ broad-spectrum sunscreen to the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines and Model List of Essential Medicines for children, for persons with albinism. This application is being made by the UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of Rights by Persons with Albinism together with the Global Albinism Alliance and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change and it is supported by a list of other stakeholders.

This application is submitted specifically for persons with albinism, whose condition results in greatly increased risk of the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation on unprotected skin.

Sunscreen is a critical public health intervention for individuals with albinism, particularly in regions with intense ultraviolet (UV) radiation. This group faces significant health inequities due to their biological vulnerability to UV-induced skin damage, compounded by limited access to protective measures in low-resource settings.

While sunscreen use is recommended for everyone, the public health relevance for persons with albinism to protect their skin from UV radiation is an imperative, especially in sunny climates such as on the African continent and considering reported increase in UV radiation due to climate change.

It is also a matter of addressing the inequalities that persons with albinism and their families face. In a 2023 UN report, the Independent Expert on Albinism emphasised that sunscreen is a vital, life-saving medical product for people with albinism, not a cosmetic. Activists from the Albinism community highlight how the price of sunscreen \$15–\$20—equates to roughly what many families earn—forcing difficult choices between basic needs and protection. Adding sunscreen to the WHO essential drugs list would help regulate prices and ensure access, especially in marginalized rural communities.

The inclusion of sunscreen on the WHO EML is a necessary step to help address this unmet public health need.

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**CBM Global**

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CBM Global, an organisation working alongside persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, some of whom who are led by persons with albinism, strongly supports the application to add SPF50+ broad-spectrum sunscreen to the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines and Model List of Essential Medicines for children For Persons with Albinism.

We believe this is a human rights issue, a public health imperative and is at the very heart of what climate justice means.

We ask the committee to consider and approve this request.

Sincerely,



David Bainbridge  
Executive Director

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