**ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST LEPROSY AFFECTED PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS**

**Questionnaire for**

**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**BACKGROUND**

In its resolution A/HRC/29/5, the Human Rights Council requested the Advisory Committee to undertake a study which reviews the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines for the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons Affected by Leprosy and their Family Members, together with the obstacles thereto, and to submit a report containing practical suggestions for their wider dissemination and more effective implementation and to submit a report at its thirty-fifth session.

The resolution also requests the Advisory Committee, in its elaboration of the report, to take into account the views of Member States and as appropriate relevant international organizations, including the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and relevant special procedures, national human rights institutions, and non-governmental organizations, as well as the work done on the issue by relevant United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, funds and programmes within their respective mandates.

In this context, the Advisory Committee decided, at its fifteenth session held in August 2015, to establish a drafting group in charge of the preparation of this study.[[1]](#footnote-2)The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information from non-governmental organizations in order to identify the current state of implementation of the Principles and guidelines for the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members (the Principles and Guidelines); how the Principles and Guidelines apply to different situations in different countries, especially the good practices that may be shared; and the major obstacles to implementation, including views on how best to further strengthen the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines.

.

1. Are you aware of the Principles and guidelines for the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2010(resolution 65/215)? If yes, how did it come to your attention?

*Yes we are aware of the Resolution A/RES/65/215. We saw it on the UN website*

1. What mechanism has the Government (Federal or State level) put in place to disseminate the Principles and Guidelines to its citizens? e.g. translation into national and local languages; media; or any other mechanism?

*As far as this resolution is concern very little, if any, has been done to disseminate is to the citizen.*

**3.** Have any policies, action plans or any other measures been taken at the national level to promote awareness-raising of the issue of discrimination against leprosy affected persons and their family members? Please provide details on measures taken.

*No policy on* *awareness-raising on the issue of discrimination against Leprosy affected person’s has been done by state actors at national level. However every year The German Leprosy/TB Relief Association (GLRA) has been doing awareness raising campaign across the country. The National Commission for Person with Disability was setup in 2012 to promote awareness-raining n the issue of discrimination against Person’s with disability in general.*

1. What measures have been taken (Federal or State level) to modify, repeal or abolish discriminatory laws, policies or practices, including terminating forced segregation, in order to eliminate discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members? Is freedom to choose where to live ensured for persons affected by leprosy and their family members?

*The Persons with Disability Act 2011 in its article part 8 clearly prohibited all forms of discrimination against person with disability of all categories and everywhere in Sierra Leone. Even though the Act exists, the society still continues to discriminate against persons with disability in many ways especially those affected by leprosy who are often seen as diseased because of their disability*

1. Which is the terminology originally used in your native language in respect of persons affected by leprosy? Please also provide, aside from the specific terminology in your native language, a translation of it in English. Are there any popular myths associated with persons affected by leprosy? Please provide a short description.

*The Leprosy affected persons are always refer to as “Da leper man/woman” Meaning the man that is diseased with leprosy, especially if there is physical disabilities. It is sometimes believe that leprosy is a curse from God. Or associated with witchcraft.*

**6.** Are those affected by leprosy and their family members being consulted with and/or actively participating in the decision-making processes that deal with matters related to them?

*This is not often common especially when it involved financial contribution that they are unable to demonstrate in addition to their disabilities that obstruct their consideration; however their family members are call upon to witness discussions about them. The relatives are always involved to assist the PAL to take safety measures so that the disability will not deteriorate. GLRA as an NGO is promoting participation of PALs and their families.*

**7**. What measures have been taken at the national level to ensure persons affected by leprosy enjoy fully and equally rights with others regarding the rights of citizenship; obtaining identity documents; the right to vote; the right to stand for elections; the right to serve the public in any capacity or other civil and political rights?

*Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues (SLUDI) is Fostering PWDs and their families’ participation in political discussions, memberships in political parties, promoting right to vote and be voted for through advocacy.*

*The Persons with Disability Act 2011 in its article part 5 clearly stated that no one should be discriminated against persons with disability of all categories in all aspect of live. Even though the Act exists, persons with disability continue to suffer discrimination on the account of either poverty, illiteracy or that of their disabilities especially the PALs.*

**8.** What measures have been taken to ensure persons affected by leprosy enjoy equal rights with others with regard to the rights to work and education; establishing a family; access to public places, including hotels, restaurants; and buses, taxis, trains and other forms of public transport; access to cultural and recreational facilities; access to places of worship or any other economic, social and cultural rights?

*The Persons with Disability Act 2011 in its article part 5 (Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disability) clearly stated that there should be access to all the above public places. Recently PWDs who have met tertiary requirement received sponsorship from the government but the scholarship was barely limited to their tuition.*

**9**. What actions have been taken to promote and protect the human rights of (a) women; (b) children; (c) the elderly; (d) members of other vulnerable groups who have or have had leprosy, as well as their family members? Please provide details. option

*Advocacy campaign is being done to promote awareness on individual rights especially by Non-state actors*

**10**. What actions have been taken at the national level with regard to discriminatory, labelling and offensive languages directed at leprosy affected persons?

*The Persons with Disability Act 2011 in its article part 8 (Offences and penalties) Any person who commits an offence under this act is punishable by law, either imprisonment or a fine not exceeding five million Leones*

**11**. Have Governments drafted and/or adopted a national action plan to implement the Principles and Guidelines? Please attach a copy. Has a national committee been established? Please provide some details as to its mandate, size and composition of members.

*The Government of Sierra Leone has established the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) twelve Commissioners have been appointed*

*The Chairperson is visually impaired*

*This Commission will monitor the implementation of programmes and activities for persons with disabilities including the protection of their rights*

*However the Commission is yet capacitated to carry out its function in terms of logistics and technical responsibilities*

**12.** What major obstacles, if any, have Governments faced in implementing the Principles and Guidelines for the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members?

*The major obstacle of government is funding/ Logistic. The EBOLA invasion in our country brought economic crises and the primary focus of the government now is the EBOLA recovering strategy.*

**13.**  In your view, what follow-up mechanisms should be put in place at the national and international levels to effectively implement the Principles and Guidelines?

*1: Majority of the People Affected by Leprosy are uneducated there are some who still believe that leprosy is a curse. There is need to strengthen PAL groups to better advocate for their rights*

*2: To encourage self-help groups at community/ regional/national or international level to form higher-level associations representing and defending disabled persons rights and interests*

*3: Nationally support PWDs, DPOs and PALs to advocate for the implementation of the act*

**14**. Are there any concrete measures taken by Governments at different levels that you clearly can share with us regarding actions taken to eliminate discrimination against leprosy affected persons and their family members in your country?

*No specific action except that of the (NCPD)*

**15**. Please provide identified cases of discrimination experienced by leprosy affected persons and their family members in your country, disaggregated by its different forms, including de facto discrimination.

*PALs with grade 2 disabilities are facing the worst form of discrimination within and in the society than those with no physical deformities. Some relatives will isolate PALs by building a room beside the main dwelling house and everything that the PAL uses like cups, plates will be kept separate from the rest of the other family members. Some house owners refuse to let their houses to PALs*

*PALs with grade 2 disabilities are still viewed as people with Leprosy diseased and many people especially the upper class discriminate them. A PAL was refused admission into a boarding school because of his grade 2 disability.*

**Deadline for submission of responses:**

All parties are encouraged to submit their responses via email or fax as soon as possible but no later than **30 October 2015** to:

**hrcadvisorycommittee@ohchr.org**[Subject: HRCAC Elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy]

or

Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee

Attn. Ms. Dina Rossbacher

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Fax: +41 22 917 9011

Thank you in advance for your contribution.

1. A/HRC/AC/15/L.3 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)