**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-1) 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. Fontilles has taken the message as soon as it was received by us from various agencies including WHO and ILEP to our partner NGOs and projects.**

**2.** 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?

**Government level efforts were either minimal or not visible to our understanding. However, in India some of the discriminatory laws were repealed as a result of combined movements of NGOs and organisations of the people affected by leprosy which is unrelated to the implementation of the UN Principles and Guidelines to end discrimination against people affected by leprosy.**

**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.

**Yes, most of the activities were initiated by NGOs in consultation and collaboration with government.**

**4.** 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?

**People affected by leprosy have a better situation now in choosing place to live in comparison to the past years. However stigma exists even among educated people.**

**5.** 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.

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**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?

**In India the organisation of people affected by leprosy is strong though they are from leprosy colonies and are familiar with problems of people living in leprosy colonies. This organisation is invited in several consultations and meetings by WHO, ILEP and the Government. In Bangladesh also there were efforts to organise people from leprosy colonies.**

**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?

**The current legal system permits equal rights to people affected by leprosy on civil and political participation. The subtle ways of discrimination still exists and a full participation of people affected in civil and political institutions will dependent upon reduction of stigma and stronger involvement of people affected in fighting stigma.**

**There is lot of improvement in civic amenities in leprosy colonies. But welfare measures benefitting people in the general communities are mostly limited to the NGO project areas.**

**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?

**There is improvement in the situation. But discouraging personal experiences keeps many of the people affected withdrawn from social life.**

**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.

**……**

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

**Use of offensive terms has reduced among the health workers – especially who are associated with leprosy.**

**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.

**…**

**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?

**……**

**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?

**Yes**

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

**……….**

**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.

**No such instances in our notice**

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