

## 1 THE VOICES OF PERSONS AFFECTED BY HANSEN'S DISEASE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

### Methods:

Moderated Focus Group  
Discussions led by persons affected by Hansen's disease in 3 rural communities



### Reach Summary:

- Total reached: 193 people
- Women: 103 / Children: 9 / Teenagers: 21 / Older people: 60
- 100% from rural villages

## 5 ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Methods used:

Virtual meeting of expanded executive council members

### Participants:

- 1 Board member
- 5 Executive Council Members of IDEA Nigeria
- 6 Zonal Coordinators
- 9 State Chairmen
- 9 General Members
- 1 Facilitator (Consultant)
- 1 Human rights activist

## 2 PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS FINDING

- 2 out of the 3 communities do not have health care facilities close to them
- All the people consulted cannot conveniently afford medical bills
- 21 out 193 had faced severe mental health issues
- Most of the rural communities do not have access to MDT
- 4 of the persons consulted have active psychiatric issues
- 80% had no access to rehabilitation services as these services were not available in most rural communities
- Mental health services absent in 100% of rural settings
- 45% of the people are discouraged by stigma from seeking medical care

## 6 GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Lack of skilled personnel for handling projects
- No financial resources to fund projects
- Limited level of involvement of persons affected by Hansen's disease in decision-making
- Members in rural areas have zero access to programmes
- Weak governance structure and information dissemination system
- Limited partnership with other stakeholders
- Inadequate networking within and with other organisations
- Poor documentation and reporting of activities

## 3 HUMAN RIGHT AND DISCRIMINATION FINDINGS

- 34 out of 60 men and 53 out of 103 women faced discrimination in hospitals
- Persons without fingers find it difficult to obtain national ID cards and bank verification numbers
- Most of the children are often excluded from schools due to their family background. This is a major cause of mental health in children
- Older men face the least forms of discrimination. This could be due to their low level of interaction with the public

## 7 CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS RECOMMENDATIONS

- Support and mentorship on proposal writing and project management
- Training of members on effective leadership
- Building a robust partnership with relevant organisations and stakeholders
- Networking with other organisations for experience sharing and learning best practices
- Advocate for policy changes

## 4 LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Lessons for the World

- Discrimination is still very active in hospitals, schools, and places of work
- Rural women face the most severe forms of discrimination
- Children who are not directly affected face social exclusions based on their family backgrounds

### Recommendations

- Activate and implement state-based laws against discrimination with strict punishment
- Set up a unit within the National human rights commission to protect the rights of persons with disabilities
- Set-up a mechanism for ease of reporting of cases of discrimination

## 8 PLANS BEFORE NEXT ILC

- Our members acquire leadership and project management skills
- Network with other organisations to allow our members undertake internship so they can be trained.
- MDT should be available in all rural communities
- A special unit within the National Human Rights Commission is set up to protect persons with disabilities
- Discrimination against persons affected is significantly reduced
- A well defined mechanism for reporting discrimination is in place