



REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

NATIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

NATIONAL LEPROSY CONTROL PROGRAMME

Questionnaire Response

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PEOPLE AFFECTED BY LEPROSY AND THEIR FAMILIES

Maputo, Janeiro 2021

Dr. Francisco Guilengue, MD;
Leprosy Program Manager
in the Ministry of Health.
Teleph. +258 21326164, Ext. 343
Mobile: +258 847038604
E-mail: guilenguemz@gmail.com

Maputo – Mozambique

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PEOPLE AFFECTED BY LEPROSY AND THEIR FAMILIES.

In response to your request to answer the questionnaire on the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on people affected by leprosy and their families; root causes, consequences and the road to recovery, which will appear in the report to be presented at the 47th session of the Human Rights Council in June 2021, we have the honour to describe in detail the actual situation of those affected by leprosy and their families in Mozambique, as well as the activities being carried out with a view to measuring the effects of COVID-19 on this group of patients and their dependents.

In answering these questions, it is a clear sign of our informed consent, and we authorize that the information contained in this document can be shared for knowledge and public domain in the field of Human Rights.

Questionnaire Response

- 1. Please provide information on measures, including laws, affirmative policies and public-private partnerships, taken to ensure equal employment opportunities for people affected by leprosy and their families and to ensure their right to decent work and inclusion in the formal labour market.**

R: In Mozambique, for more than 20 years there has been a strong political commitment, thus the Government through the Ministry of Health has been carrying out community awareness activities, capacity building of people affected by leprosy as volunteers and community activists, involving local leaders mainly in leprosy-endemic areas, to support and integrate these patients in the general activities and their effective re-integration in the communities where they live together with their relatives.

These patients are also integrated into the Community Adherence and Support Groups (GAACs) (Selfcare groups), which are made up of patients affected by various disabling diseases, where they receive self-help and carry out livelihood activities for them and their families, with support from the Government and various social organizations, religions and NGO members of ILEP who support the Leprosy Programme in Mozambique.

Attached are photos illustrating the evidence of these activities:

Annex 1. Political and Partner Commitment (Minister of Health, Provincial Governor and

WHO Representative at the World Leprosy Day celebrations in 2019).



Annex 2. Support for Leprosy Patients and their Families



2. Please provide information on the social benefits put in place to specifically respond to the humanitarian crisis faced by the affected persons and their families as a result of the OVID-19 pandemic.

R: In relation to the social benefits to those affected by leprosy and their families, in Mozambique as mentioned above, there are specific community support programmers involving the Government and its partners, so that they organize themselves into community support and membership groups and receive hygiene material there, support to develop income activities for them and their families, mainly children of these patients (as illustrated in fig.2, where children of those affected by leprosy receive sowing machines).

These activities, carried out by health technicians and community activists, were resumed in September, after 5 months of reduction since April 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The country had to adapt to the new reality by producing Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material to raise awareness among patients and their families about the prevention measures of COVID-19. Also with the support of local partners, hygiene materials and masks were distributed to patients in the communities.

Figure 1. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Material



Annex 3: Visits to communities for further leprosy active case finding activities and provision of hygiene material including personal protection such as masks).



3. Please provide information on how the situation of people affected by leprosy and their families is taken into account in your recovery plans COVID-19.

R: Regarding COVID-19 recovery plans for those affected by leprosy and their families, the Ministry of Health has been working with all social actors, particularly NGOs and Community Based Organization's, to ensure that the activities already initiated to measure the effects of COVID-19 on leprosy-affected communities are intensified and/or improved so that all those affected by leprosy and their families are integrated in the GAACs and in all initiatives aimed at ensuring the self-support of families.

Thus we can state that in Mozambique, through the efforts of the Government and its partners, including the WHO, which has been promoting leprosy control for more than 20 years, specifically with community involvement, the affected patients and their relatives have been prevented from being discriminated against, and the communities where leprosy patients are integrated and coexisting with them are responding positively, especially in the Centre and North of the country, which are the most leprosy endemic regions in the country.

Maputo, January 2021