It’s the people who are neglected more than the diseases: why Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) should be part of the disability conversation

A Global Disability Summit Side-Event organized by The Leprosy Mission

Side Event Code: 76
Date: Thursday, February 17
Time: 5:30pm CET/4:30pm GMT
Registration Link: https://bit.ly/NTDsAtGDS

Background: Globally, more than one billion people are affected by Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs). This group of infectious diseases is varied in their causes and impact, but they all primarily affect the poorest communities of the world and most cause disabilities. There is a tendency for NTD-related disability to be framed mainly as a medical problem. However, social and environmental factors including societal attitudes, stigma and access are as important to address and overcome for people affected by NTDs as for anyone else. The medicalization of NTD-related disability, combined with the poverty and added stigma associated with these conditions means that people affected are often themselves neglected in conversations and action around disability. With the commitment to “Leave No One Behind”, it is therefore vital that the Global Disability Summit 2022 gives voice to people with NTD-related disability.

People affected by NTDs have much to contribute to Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and to the fight for full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For example, Organizations of Persons Affected by Leprosy (OPALs) in several countries have successfully lobbied for the repeal of discriminatory laws and for inclusive health services. However, there remains much to be done to ensure people the rights of people with NTD-related disability are fully implemented. This event will showcase the work of people affected by NTDs in advocating for their human rights, highlight the need for further action to ensure people with NTD-related disabilities are not neglected and discuss how OPDs and organisations of people affected by NTDs can work together to achieve this change.

Chair: Mathias Duck, Global Advocacy Lead, The Leprosy Mission

Guest Speaker: Alice Cruz

Alice Cruz is the first UN Special Rapporteur on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members. She is a Portuguese anthropologist dedicated to leprosy, also known as Hansen’s disease. She has been collaborating for nearly fifteen years with the Brazilian social movement of persons who have experienced Hansen’s disease - MORHAN.
Panellists:

Faustino Pinto, Vice National Coordinator, Movimento de Reintegração das Pessoas Atingidas pela Hanseníase or Movement of Reintegration of Persons Afflicted by Hansen’s Disease (MORHAN)

Amar Timalsina, Nepal President for International Relation, International Association for Integration, Dignity and Economic Advancement (IDEA), Nepal/Global Network Coordinator for IDEA International

Jayashree P Kunju, Vice Chair, Lepra Society, Member of Board, International Association for Integration, Dignity and Economic Advancement (IDEA)

With messages from:

Pastor Chigulla Elisha, Advocacy Lead, Brighter Future Development Trust, India

Md. Kamal Uddin, President, ALO Society, Bangladesh

Taranath Sigdel, Employment Counsellor, Fuelling Opportunities for Unemployed Nepalis with Disabilities