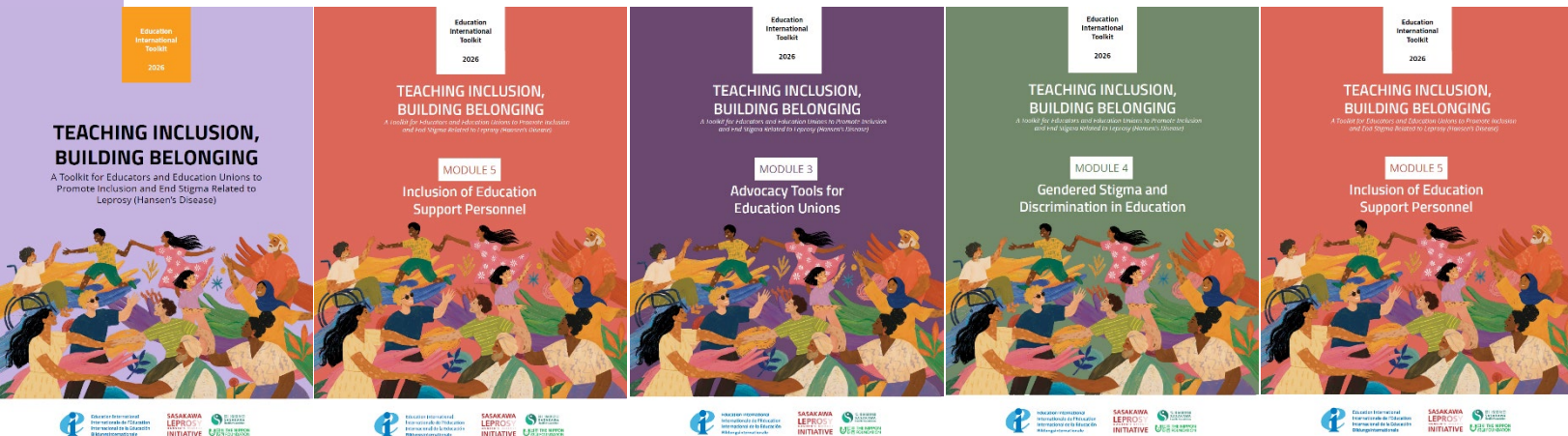




Teaching Inclusion, Building Belonging

A Toolkit for Educators and Education Unions to Promote Inclusion and End Stigma Related to Leprosy (Hansen's Disease)



What is this toolkit for?

Education has a vital role in challenging stigma and discrimination, promoting inclusion, and ensuring that every learner can participate fully and equally. This toolkit approaches leprosy (Hansen's disease)¹ not as an isolated health topic but as part of a broader effort to strengthen inclusive education, challenge discrimination, and promote dignity through education. It recognises that stigma, discrimination, and exclusion—not leprosy (Hansen's disease) itself—are often the greatest barriers to education.

The toolkit equips teachers, education support personnel, school leaders, and education unions with practical, user-friendly guidance to create inclusive learning environments, prevent and respond to stigma and discrimination, and advocate for policies

and practices that uphold the rights, dignity, and participation of persons affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease).

While the examples throughout the toolkit focus on learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and learners with disabilities, the inclusive education strategies presented are relevant to all learners, particularly those who experience exclusion because of poverty, gender, race, ethnicity, language, health conditions, or other forms of disadvantage.

Who is this toolkit for?

- Teachers
- Education support personnel
- School leaders
- Education unions and union representatives

¹ In this toolkit, the term "Leprosy (Hansen's disease)" is used as the internationally recognised terminology. This formulation acknowledges both the globally established term "leprosy" and the preferred term "Hansen's disease" used in some countries, including Brazil, where the word "leprosy" may be associated with historical stigma and discrimination. At the same time, some have raised concerns about

naming the disease after Dr. Hansen, as this can shift attention away from the people directly affected by it. The term "Leprosy (Hansen's disease)" reflects current international practice while recognising ongoing discussions about person-centred language and the experiences of people affected by the disease.



It may also be useful for teacher educators, education officials, school counsellors, and others working to promote inclusive education.

What does the toolkit include?

The toolkit is organised into the following modules:

- **Module 1: Understanding Leprosy (Hansen's disease), Disability, and Inclusion:** Provides basic information about leprosy (Hansen's disease) and explores how stigma and discrimination affect learners and education systems. It helps educators and union representatives develop a shared understanding and language to address these issues.
- **Module 2: Classroom Guidance for Educators:** Provides practical strategies to address stigma, discrimination and bullying, particularly affecting learners with leprosy or disabilities. It includes approaches such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), reasonable accommodations, positive discipline and social-emotional learning, and promotes collaboration with families, communities and education unions through a whole-school approach.
- **Module 3: Advocacy Tools for Education Unions:** Provides practical guidance for education unions to promote inclusion and combat stigma and discrimination. It includes strategies for making unions more inclusive, engaging members and partners, planning and monitoring advocacy efforts, and using policy engagement, partnerships and collective bargaining to promote inclusive education and the rights of people affected by leprosy and other marginalised groups
- **Module 4: Gendered Stigma and Discrimination in Education Affecting Women:** Explores how gender shapes experiences of stigma and discrimination in education and education unions. It examines how gender bias and stereotypes can affect women educators and girls, including their participation, leadership, opportunities and safety, and how these experiences can intersect with disability, leprosy-related stigma and other forms of marginalisation.
- **Module 5: Supporting the Inclusion of Education Support Personnel:** Explores the role of education support personnel (ESP) in creating inclusive, safe and supportive schools, focusing on how their daily interactions with learners, families, teachers, school leaders and communities contribute to inclusion. It examines their role in removing barriers and promoting accessibility, as well as the challenges they may face in their work. It also emphasises the rights and inclusion of ESP, particularly those affected by leprosy, disabilities, gender-related discrimination or other forms of stigma.
- **Annexes:** The toolkit also includes Annexes containing additional reference materials, practical tools, guidance for adapting the toolkit to non-endemic contexts, and optional learning activities that facilitators may use to reinforce learning.

How to use this toolkit

The modules are designed to build on one another. **Module 1** provides the foundation for understanding leprosy (Hansen's disease), disability, inclusion, and stigma, and should be completed first. **Module 2** focuses on practical strategies for educators, while **Module 3** focuses on advocacy and the role of education unions. Although Modules 2 and 3 each have a primary audience, both contain concepts and strategies that are relevant to all education stakeholders. **Modules 4 and 5** are supplementary modules that provide additional guidance on specific topics.



How the modules are structured

To make the toolkit easy to navigate and highly practical, each module follows a consistent, user-friendly structure:

- **Module Overview & Learning Objectives:** A brief introduction to the module's focus and a clear list of the key skills and knowledge that users are expected to acquire.
- **Units in the Module:** Each module is divided into focused Units. Every unit begins with its own Unit Overview, Learning Objectives, and Outline (Subtopics) so users know exactly what each unit covers.
- **"Try This!" Boxes:** Found throughout the content, these highlighted boxes offer immediate, ready-to-use strategies, actionable tools, and templates for school, classroom, or union application.
- **Practice and Application:** Located at the end of key topics and at the end of every unit. These activities allow teachers and education unions to check their understanding and apply newly learned concepts directly to their daily practice.
- **Unit Summaries & Annex References:** At the end of each unit is a quick wrap-up of key takeaways, alongside signposts pointing to the Annex for deeper learning, adapted guides, and additional resources.
- **References & Endnotes:** A comprehensive list of citations and source documents located at the very end of each module.

Note on contextualisation

This toolkit is designed to be adapted to different countries, education systems, and learning contexts. Facilitators are encouraged to use local examples, policies, terminology, and support services to make the content more relevant and meaningful for participants. While the core concepts and human rights principles should remain unchanged, activities, case studies, and

discussions may be modified to reflect local realities, cultures, and available resources.

For example, facilitators may:

- refer to national laws, school policies, and child protection or safeguarding procedures;
- include information on local health, social, and referral services for persons affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and persons with disabilities;
- adapt classroom examples, case studies, and scenarios to reflect local teaching practices, social norms, and common forms of stigma, discrimination, or exclusion; and
- draw on participants' own experiences and existing good practices to encourage peer learning and practical application.