

THE LEPROSY MISSION  
GLOBAL **ADVOCACY** STRATEGY  
2019 – 2023

# THEMATIC AREAS

# KEY MESSAGES



# INTRODUCING OURSELVES

We are an international leprosy-focused Christian organisation and a key player in the fight against leprosy. We are a Global Fellowship with Members from 29 countries.

We work with people of all faiths and none to defeat leprosy and bring transformation in the lives of persons affected by leprosy. We work through partnerships with key stakeholders in leprosy, including local churches.

## WHAT IS THE 'CHANGE' THAT WE WANT TO SEE?

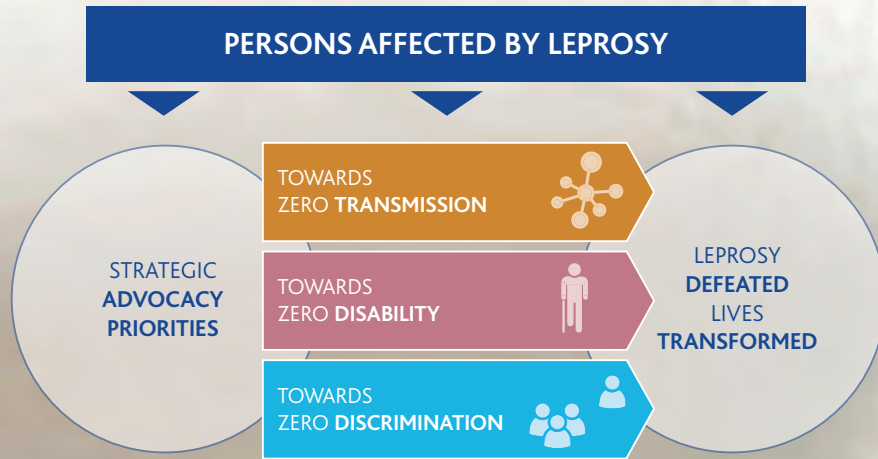
Our main priority is to bring an end to leprosy transmission. We have a long-term goal of seeing **zero transmission** of leprosy by 2035.

We are also working towards **zero disability**. Our goal is to reduce the disability burden and to work for the transformation of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. Disability is not an inevitable consequence of leprosy, but when leprosy is not treated quickly and when people affected by leprosy are not given the right self-care tools, it can lead to disabilities such as clawed hand, amputations, and more. Around 20-25% of persons affected by leprosy experience disability.

We are working towards **zero discrimination**, as well. Because of a lack of understanding surrounding leprosy, many people affected by leprosy are discriminated against, both socially and legally. There are still 148 laws in 38 different countries that legally discriminate against persons affected by leprosy, preventing them from enjoying certain fundamental human rights. Leprosy is the oldest disease known to mankind and we have the power to end it in our lifetime.

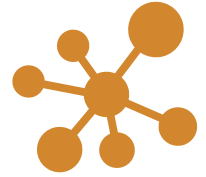
In the long term we aim to see a world where leprosy has been defeated, but in the short term we would like to witness a world where persons affected by leprosy live with dignity and enjoy political rights, economic equality, and social justice on a basis that is as equal as any other citizen of their country.

# A VISUAL FRAMEWORK OF OUR PEOPLE-CENTRED ADVOCACY



# TOWARDS ZERO TRANSMISSION

## KEY MESSAGE 1



The ultimate responsibility to detect and treat leprosy lies with the respective national governments of the leprosy endemic countries. With the majority of these countries declaring elimination of leprosy, there has been a reduction in resource allocation for leprosy control programmes.

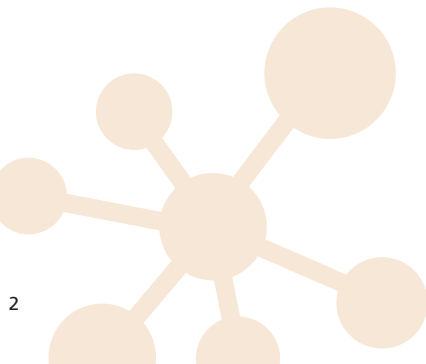
### THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE:

#### GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF LEPROSY DETECTION AND TREATMENT

- The Leprosy Mission want to see an increase in government ownership of leprosy detection and treatment in the form of an increase in resources for leprosy control and elimination programmes.
- We also want to see the integration of leprosy services within general health systems so that new cases of leprosy are detected earlier and treated sooner.

### HOW ARE WE CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CHANGE?

- The Leprosy Mission is working with key partners on a combined approach to tackle leprosy in endemic areas.
- Through United Nations human rights mechanisms such as Universal Periodic Review and Special Procedures, we are advocating for scaling up and sustaining interventions for early detection, and the care and prevention of disabilities due to leprosy.
- We are using the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform to ensure SDG Goal 3.3 is achieved in the case of leprosy and other Neglected Tropical Diseases by 2030.
- We are working alongside governments to ensure leprosy is detected and treated, providing training and technical support.



# TOWARDS ZERO TRANSMISSION

## KEY MESSAGE 2

Leprosy and poverty go hand in hand. Persons affected by leprosy are amongst the poorest and most disempowered in their communities. They often face barriers in accessing services within Universal Health Care, which means they are forced to meet catastrophic health related expenses, trapping them in the vicious circle of poverty.

### THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE:

**UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES FOR PERSONS AFFECTED BY LEPROSY, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

### HOW ARE WE CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CHANGE?

- The Leprosy Mission is engaging with national and international human rights institutions including the United Nations to advocate for the realisation of the right to universal health care as a fundamental human right of persons affected by leprosy.
- We are ensuring accountability on the part of national governments in providing leprosy services as part of primary health care through measures such as the Universal Periodic Review, United Nations Treaty Bodies and the Special Procedures of the United Nations.



# TOWARDS ZERO DISABILITY

## KEY MESSAGE 1

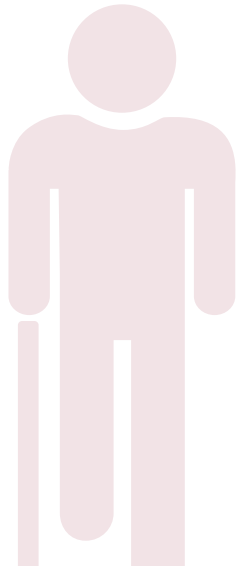
Leprosy endemic countries are not providing enough resources to leprosy control programmes, which is having an impact on the early detection of leprosy. This too often leads to leprosy being diagnosed too late to prevent complications and disabilities.

### THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE:

FACILITIES FOR THE EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT OF LEPROSY MADE AVAILABLE BY GOVERNMENTS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL SO THAT THERE IS A REDUCED DISABILITY BURDEN IN PERSONS AFFECTED BY LEPROSY

### HOW ARE WE CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CHANGE?

- The Leprosy Mission is supporting governments and partners in the early detection of cases, treatment and management of leprosy related complications.
- Our research centres in Bangladesh, India and Nepal are involved in studies to detect reaction earlier and identify new treatments for reaction to prevent disabilities, as well as looking at state-of-the art techniques to improve wound healing.
- We are working with governments and partners in addressing secondary impairments such as wounds, contractures and eye problems.
- Through our partnership with organisations of persons affected by leprosy, Disabled People's Organisations and other community-based organisations, we are promoting community-based self-care.



# TOWARDS ZERO DISABILITY

## KEY MESSAGE 2

The majority of persons affected by leprosy - especially women - are found to be in need of mental health support as a result of the stigma associated with the disease.

### THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE:

**PERSONS AFFECTED BY LEPROSY LEADING LIVES WITHOUT ANY MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITY**

### HOW ARE WE CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CHANGE?

- We are increasing our focus on the mental health of persons affected by leprosy in our work; knowing what symptoms to look for, how to provide support, and where to direct for professional help for those in need.
- We are using global platforms, such as the UN, to advocate for the realisation of rights to mental health services as an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals.



# TOWARDS ZERO DISCRIMINATION

## KEY MESSAGE 1

Persons affected by leprosy and their family members face pervasive exclusion and discrimination on account of the stigma that is associated with leprosy. Deep rooted myths and misconceptions around leprosy are the main cause of stigma and discrimination.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE:

AN END TO LEPROSY STIGMA AND GREATER INCLUSION OF PERSONS AFFECTED BY LEPROSY AT ALL LEVELS OF SOCIETY

HOW ARE WE CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CHANGE?

- The Leprosy Mission is building up the capacity of persons affected by leprosy to stand up for their human rights and become self-advocates.
- In partnership with persons affected by leprosy, we are actively engaging with national governments, National Human Rights Institutions, civil society organisations and UN agencies to ensure the effective implementation of the UN Principles and Guidelines to eliminate discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members.





# TOWARDS ZERO DISCRIMINATION

## KEY MESSAGE 2

Persons affected by leprosy are among the minority who are 'legally discriminated' against by law. There are still 148 laws in different countries that deny certain fundamental rights that are guaranteed under the constitution to citizens affected by leprosy.

### THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE:

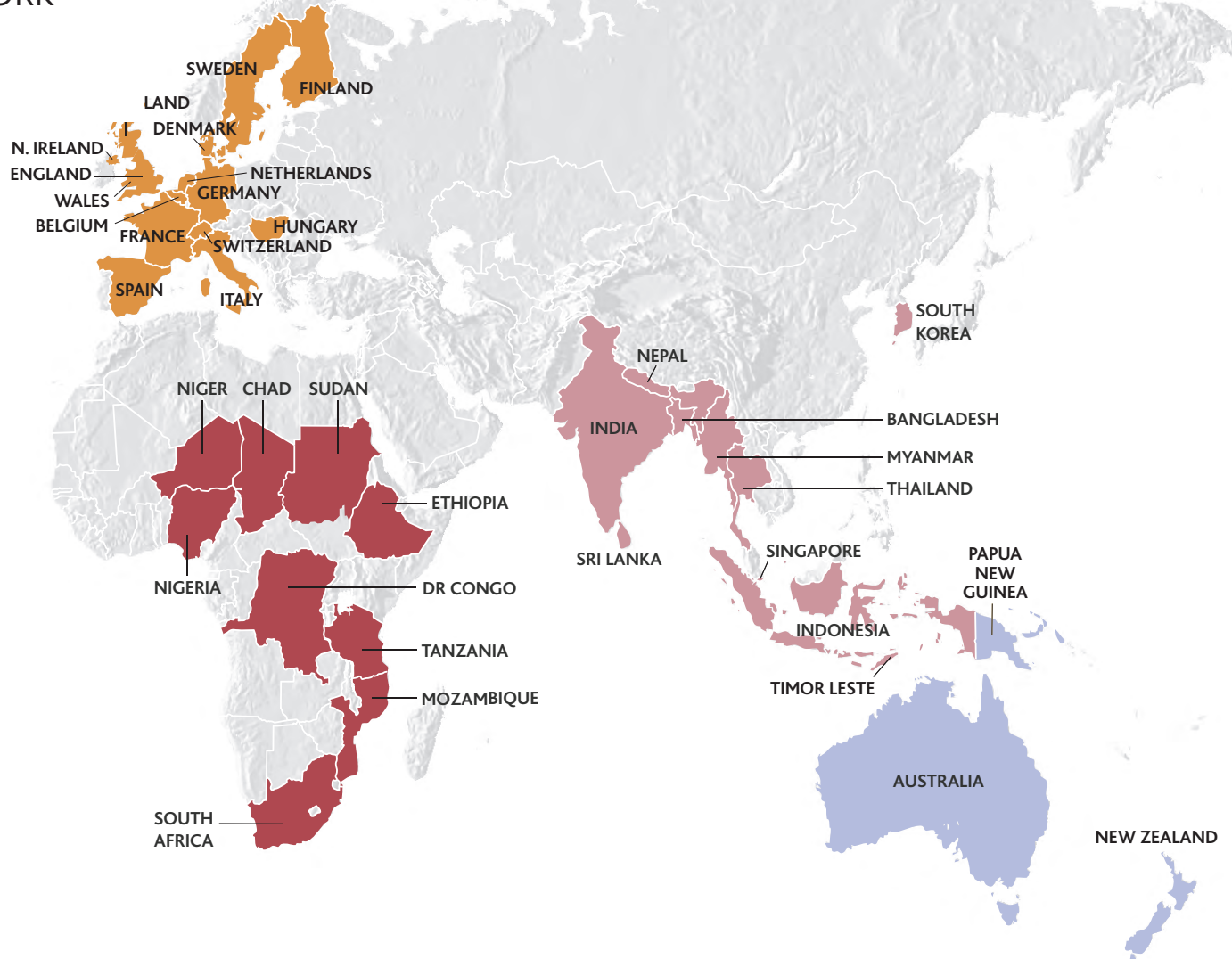
LEPROSY DISCRIMINATORY LAWS REPEALED AND PERSONS AFFECTED BY LEPROSY HAVING EQUAL ACCESS TO POLITICAL RIGHTS, ECONOMIC EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

### HOW ARE WE CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CHANGE?

- The Leprosy Mission is using existing national and international human rights mechanisms to end discriminatory laws.
- Through our global campaigns, we are appealing to political leaders, governments and human rights institutions to bring an end to discriminatory policies and practices.



# WHERE WE WORK





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 [advocacy@leprosymission.org](mailto:advocacy@leprosymission.org)

 [leprosymission.org](http://leprosymission.org)

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