Research

About TLM’s Research

There are many unanswered questions in the field of leprosy, from the mechanism of transmission, to the reasons why some people get severe nerve damage despite good treatment. To best ways to reduce the stigma of leprosy in a community.

Because of the cost of research and the scarcity of other resources needed (in particular, skilled staff and the appropriate patients and settings for a worthwhile clinical study) it makes sense to collaborate with others to support the best projects. TLM has very good access to people with leprosy, through its various institutions, and this makes it a valued partner in many research projects. The leprosy programme at Nilphamari in northern Bangladesh has provided evidence for the use of rifampicin, one of the ingredients of the multi-drug therapy used to treat leprosy, as a preventative treatment for family, friends and other close contacts of people recently diagnosed with leprosy. Studies of the new leprosy vaccine are also planned there over the next few years.

In partnership with several other members of the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP), TLM is part of the Leprosy Research Initiative (LRI), through which funds for research are pooled.

ILEP; this means he will retain links with TLM, but have a wider remit relating to health service support by ILEP members.

Fri: A new leprosy vaccine has been developed with funding coordinated by our sister organisation, American Leprosy Missions. Human trials are to be carried out over the next few years. Please pray for success in reducing the transmission of leprosy through this and related strategies.

Sat/Sun: Give thanks for the large number of presentations made by TLM staff at the International Leprosy Congress in Beijing in Sept 2016. Pray that links made at that meeting will bear fruit in lasting and productive related to strategies.

About TLM South Sudan

In South Sudan, TLM is mainly involved in community development and providing psychosocial support in collaboration with the local church in Juba to people affected by leprosy and other disability in former leprosy colonies. With the German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association, TLM is involved in supporting the South Sudanese Government’s National Leprosy, Buruli and Tuberculosis programme with technical skills and in maintaining leprosy expertise within Government institutions. However, TLM’s work and its three staff in-country are affected by the chronic instability and threat of civil war in the country. In 2017, TLM South Sudan hopes to bring associations of persons with disability in close collaboration with people affected by leprosy to enable the latter to develop into a viable association.

Top: TLM Country Leader Dr Yousif Deng Riak Deng with his wife Awuoi.

Top left: Ruby from the Mycobacterial Research Lab in Nepal with TLM ‘Unfinished Business’ research booklet.

Top right: Young Scientist Award winner Pankaj Gupta (left) with former TLM General Director Geoff Warne at the International Leprosy Congress 2016

Prayer Points

Mon: A workshop on operational research will be held from 6-10 February at ALERT medical facility and training centre, Ethiopia, to help train the next generation of field staff in research methods. Following the workshop, various ILEP members, including TLM, will act as mentors. Please pray that this will produce good results and an upsurge in high quality research in Africa.

Tue: Thank the Lord for the valuable research carried out at Nilphamari and the DBLM Hospital in northern Bangladesh. At present the political situation in the country is worrying: in addition, the remote situation makes it unattractive to well-qualified staff. Please pray for dedicated leaders for this challenging but worthwhile work.

Wed: Praise God for Drs Upal Sengupta and Mallika Lavania, heading up the Stanley Browne Lab in Delhi, and Dr Deanna Hagge, leading the Mycobacterial Research Lab at Anandaban in Nepal. Both TLM research laboratories have strong portfolios of current research and a number of students in training.

Thu: Please pray for Dr Pim Kuipers who has been a member of TLM’s International Research Committee for some years and has recently been appointed as the Project Coordinator for ILEP; this means he will retain links with TLM, but have a wider remit relating to health service support by ILEP members.

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About TLM Sudan

The Leprosy Mission supports the leprosy control programme of the Federal Ministry of Health in Sudan through the Department of Neglected Tropical Diseases, providing national diagnostic skin smears, and operating a national training centre for the treatment and diagnosis of leprosy. Through collaboration with the Episcopcal Church of Sudan, TLM’s Aburoff Clinic provides eye care, wound care and reaction management for people affected by leprosy across the country. In 2017, TLM hopes to develop a livelihood programme for people affected by leprosy and other disabled people within Khartoum, Sudan’s capital.

Prayer Points

Sudan

Mon: Please pray for God to lead TLM Sudan in finding the right person to fill the vital post of Program Coordinator. The team are looking for a Christian, a challenge in Sudan — pray for God’s provision and favour in the eyes of the Government to allow the process to pass without interference.

Tue: Please uplift John Kuku as he works closely with ophthalmologists to conduct eye care outreach in Khartoum. Pray too for Seela Kajo Shalluka as she runs Aburoff Clinic.

Wed: Pray for IDEA Sudan, an association of people affected by leprosy, as they undergo a change of leadership in May. Pray for God’s guidance and provision of dedicated new leaders who will forward the cause of people affected by leprosy in Sudan.

South Sudan

Thur: Pray for peace, safety and security for TLM South Sudan staff (Yousif, Mary and Wilson) and people affected by leprosy around Juba. Please pray for healing and reconciliation throughout South Sudan.

Fri: Pray for the various partner organisations and the church involved in the livelihood project in Luri Rokwe (former leprosy colony), that they will be committed and work together to meet the needs of individuals and families affected by leprosy in the area.

Sat/Sun: Pray for TLM South Sudan team to engage actively with Government in Jonglei state and in Juba to keep leprosy and neglected tropical diseases on the agenda. Please pray for stability in Jonglei so that people affected by leprosy can be effectively served through the leprosy control project.

Sudan and South Sudan

To the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

Revelation 3:7 (NIV)

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India – Countrywide

About The Leprosy Mission Trust India

The Leprosy Mission Trust India, headquartered in New Delhi, is the largest leprosy-focused non-governmental organisation in India. TLM India works with people affected by leprosy and other neglected tropical diseases, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

TLM operates programmes in nine states of India, through 14 hospitals, 6 Vocational Training Centres, 5 residential facilities (Snehalayas) for care of elderly people severely disabled by leprosy, a molecular biology research laboratory, advocacy and communication functions, research and training functions and multiple community empowerment projects. It conducts its programmes in collaboration with Central and State governments in India, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP) and Community-Based Organisations.

TLM India has developed a three-year country strategy (2016-18) to achieve its Vision, ‘People transformed, inclusive society that has overcome leprosy’. The Operations Team comprising the Executive Director, two Directors and eight Domain Heads lead the organisation in achieving this Vision.

Key Staff

- Dr Sunil Anand – Executive Director
- Dr Mary Verghese – Director of Operations
- Dr P L N Raju – Director of Resource Mobilisation
- Dr Jerry Joshua – Head of Health Programmes
- Mrs Tina Mendis – Head of Sustainable Livelihoods and Empowerment
- Mrs Nikita Sarah – Head of Advocacy and Communication
- Dr Anamna John – Head of Research and Training
- Mr Samuel V Thomas – Head of Finance
- Mr Melvin Moras – Head of Human Resources
- Dr Shyamala Anand – Head of Learning and Development
- Mr Benison Solomon – Head of Audit and Risk Management

Prayer Points

Mon: TLM India has developed a three-year Country Strategy (2016-18). Pray for God’s guidance in implementing the strategy which calls for changing society’s mindset on the issue of leprosy and attitudes to people affected by the disease.

Tue: Pray for TLM to find ways to develop new partnerships with the Government at all levels and with other like-minded organisations, to eradicate leprosy in India.

Wed: In India, every year more than 125,000 people are newly diagnosed with leprosy. Praise God and thank Him for helping The Leprosy Mission to work with people affected by leprosy across nine states. Pray for God’s grace to continue the work more effectively.

Thu: Pray for strategies and methods to increase the financial sustainability of the Organisation through fundraising, project development and internal revenue generation by TLM’s various project teams.

Fri: TLM conducts its programmes in India in collaboration with Central and State Governments, WHO, ILEP, grassroots-level organisations, and national and international development and research bodies. Please pray for God’s wisdom and guidance in working together.

Sat/Sun: Pray for the organisational leadership development programmes at TLM’s national and project levels in India. Pray that those attending will develop their leadership and functional skills, which are crucial to achieving the objectives in their Country Strategy 2016-18.

About World Leprosy Day

World Leprosy Day is observed globally each year on the last Sunday in January, with the aim of raising awareness and knowledge about leprosy, the fact that it can be cured and to change attitudes that stigmatise and marginalise people affected by the disease.

Within TLM it is celebrated by a variety of activities appropriate within each country. In some places where leprosy is a health issue these may be about public education and advocacy, and in others they may be about raising funds and praying for the programmes that support people affected by the disease and its consequences.

In some countries where we work, TLM is taking a flexible approach and inviting supporters to celebrate a Leprosy Sunday in the months surrounding World Leprosy Day. This will give more opportunity for leprosy to be promoted in churches, schools and other communities.

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Prayer Points

Mon: Pray for England and Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and any other TLM Members inviting churches to hold a Leprosy Sunday event. Pray that many churches will choose to recognise people affected by leprosy in an event or service and that the materials TLM has prepared will engage and inspire congregations to greater support.

Tue: TLM Nigeria’s 2017 World Leprosy Day celebrations will be marked with events such as lectures, advocacy visits, a press conference and visits to communities of persons affected by leprosy; all these will be done in collaboration with the Federal and State governments, ILEP partners and volunteers. Pray that these events will further strengthen the fight against leprosy and its consequences.

Wed: In South Sudan, people affected by leprosy are working with the assistance of their local disabled people’s organisation to form their own association. Pray for good partnership and collaboration as they organise and celebrate both World Leprosy Day and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Thur: Praise God for the growing number of churches who participate in World Leprosy Day. As we reach new congregations and new denominations, may we effectively communicate the unique ministry God has called us to live out, creating the sense of excitement that they too can make a difference in the far corners of God’s world.

Fri: Pray for World Leprosy Day celebrations in India. All TLM India’s projects and centres across the country will be celebrating the day. Pray for the Government, individuals and organisations that come together for the celebrations and that they will result in increased awareness about leprosy, leading to early diagnosis and decreased stigma.

Sat/Sun: Give thanks for the success of Cuppa for a Cure, a World Leprosy Day initiative of TLM Australia. Cuppa for a Cure invites supporters to host a morning or afternoon tea, talk about leprosy and raise funds for people affected by leprosy, at some point during the year. In its first six months, 60 events were hosted around Australia.

Top: Pam Lake, TLM Australia’s National Relationship Manager (middle-left) with women of Maffra Uniting Church holding a ‘Cuppa for a Cure’ event.

Below: Staff and students of TLM’s Bill Edgar Memorial Vocational Training Centre in Bankura, India, in a rally organised by the centre on World Leprosy Day 2016 to raise public awareness about leprosy. Residents of TLM’s Snehalaya (nursing home) in Bankura also took part.