About TLM Myanmar

In recent years TLM’s Myanmar programme has grown in size and it is now recognised by the government, the UN and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as the leading disability organisation in Myanmar.

In July 2012, TLM Myanmar signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Social Welfare. This agreement signifies the co-operation between TLM Myanmar and the government.

TLM Myanmar aims to: strengthen the capacity of leprosy and disability services; implement and support community-based rehabilitation for leprosy- and disability-affected people through a network of Disability Resource Centres (DRCs); support the expansion of prevention of disability programmes in the DRCs and encourage the inclusion of people with leprosy-related disabilities into mainstream programmes; work in partnership with other NGOs around issues such as vulnerable people groups, food security and education, advocating for full inclusion of people with disabilities; and will look at building capacity of staff members of DRCs in accordance with recommendations from the Annual Country Learning in 2013.

Country Focus: Myanmar

Prayer points

Mon: A number of recommendations have been made as a result of last year’s Annual Country Learning and Country Office Audit. Pray for stronger leadership and implementation of those recommendations in a timely and comprehensive manner.

Tues: Harman Kool, volunteer advisor to the head of programmes will be developing Standard Operations Procedures during his six months stay in Myanmar which began at the end of 2013. Pray for Harman and his wife Marja to adapt well to the culture and learn the language.

Weds: Mawlamyine Christian Leprosy Hospital has proposed a number of building projects to upgrade the hospital. Pray for those involved in identifying potential donors who can support this request. Pray for the MCLH team to come up with a concrete business plan to implement these initiatives.

Thurs: The Eastern Shan State Leprosy Mission team continues its work in leprosy villages in far flung mountainous regions bordering with Thailand. The majority of the staff are based in rural villages. Pray for good communication between those in the field and the leadership team based in Tachileik Town.

Fri: TLM Myanmar needs to build the capacity of its physiotherapists. Pray that they will find someone who has the skills and experience to train local physiotherapists to maintain expertise within the organisation.

Sat/Sun: Give thanks for the surgical camp that took place at Mawlamyine in February 2014, led by Wim Theuvenet of the Netherlands. Pray that it will have built capacity of the local doctors to carry out reconstructive surgeries.

Top and below: Win Htay, a leprosy-disabled person in Myanmar. TLM Myanmar made some adaptations to his house for better access.
Country Focus: Spain and Portugal

‘Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.’
Matthew 6:34

About TLM Spain
TLM Spain receives support from individual donors and churches. They continue to raise funds through the sale of a children’s book about a young boy with leprosy, and have recently written an article about leprosy and the Bible to increase people’s knowledge about the disease. They plan to visit churches and schools to share the vision of TLM and are looking for more volunteers to help with their work.

About TLM Portugal
There has been a TLM support group in Portugal for 23 years. During this time, support has been received from churches and individuals interested in the work of The Leprosy Mission. TLM Portugal has also sought to raise up prayer support.

Prayer points

Mon: Pray for the team working for TLM Spain, especially Vivian Calderón, the new executive secretary.

Tues: Pray that TLM Spain will attract new support, particularly from churches, and pray that people will be willing to donate monthly to support the work of TLM.

Weds: Pray that TLM Spain will build up good contacts with businesses and government agencies and that, through these contacts, they will be able to access funding for TLM’s work.

Thurs: Pray for TLM Spain as they visit churches this year. Pray especially that people will generously support the work of TLM despite the difficult financial situation in the country.

Fri: Pray for Patricia Bento, the national director of TLM Portugal, as she promotes the work of TLM through ‘Christian Algarve Lay Link’ and other Christian groups.

Sat / Sun: Praise God for those in Portugal who support TLM’s work. Continue to pray for an improvement in the financial situation in Portugal and that more people will support TLM through prayer and financially.

Team

Spain
Mr Miguel Torralba – President
Mr José Manuel Carballo – Vice President
Ms Vivian Calderón – Executive Secretary

Portugal
Ms Patricia Bento – National Director

Top: Miguel Torralba, president of TLM Spain
Country Focus: Thailand and Sri Lanka

About TLM’s work in Thailand
TLM supports the ministry to leprosy patients in Thailand through partnership with McKean Rehabilitation Centre, founded in 1908, a service centre of The Church of Christ in Thailand. McKean offers care to leprosy patients, physically disabled people, and those needing aged-care. TLM supports some of the leprosy services including community-based leprosy case finding and treatment and prevention of disability among marginalised and disadvantaged people groups in outer areas.

About TLM’s work in Sri Lanka
TLM works with project partners in Sri Lanka to improve the quality of life of leprosy and disability-affected people. In Colombo, Batticaloa and Galle TLM supports a micro-finance project. Vulnerable people are given small loans to help them establish small businesses such as carpentry, fishing, or bicycle repairs. In Jaffna and other towns, TLM has helped to establish a goat-rearing project. The goats are distributed on a revolving loan basis – once a beneficiary’s goat has had kids, these are passed on to another set of beneficiaries.

Mon: Give thanks for McKean Rehabilitation Centre’s 105 years of service to leprosy patients and other needy groups in the community. This milestone was celebrated last year by an event for 430 bicycle riders, and by the opening of the remodelled McKean museum, sharing the stories and lessons of the past with the young and future generations.

Tues: Pray for the extension of effective leprosy and health work amongst migrant workers and non-citizens, as Thailand anticipates the effects of plans by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for an open border with neighbouring countries.

Weds: Pray for God’s guidance, blessing and wisdom on the Jaffna Leprosy Project in Sri Lanka. Pray that the work carried out there will improve the quality of life for people affected by leprosy and disabilities.

Thurs: Pray for competent new leadership and staff to fill some key positions in McKean’s work that’s connected to the Thai church.

Good Friday
Fri: Pray for the wise development of the multi-tiered aged-care services at McKean while continuing effective treatment and rehabilitation services for people experiencing leprosy and disability.

Easter Sunday
Sat / Sun: Pray for the success of the small businesses in Sri Lanka that are started from micro-loans, such as carpentry, fishing and bicycle repairs.

Team
Thailand
TLM representative – Heather Smith

Top: A sculpture to commemorate 105 years of service by Mckean Rehabilitation Centre, Thailand
Hope Restored

Reconstructive surgery brings hope and restoration to leprosy-affected people, as Afsana’s story shows

At 13, Afsana, the eldest of four siblings, often helped with household chores around the house before or after school. One day she was boiling milk on the stove. As she poured the hot milk into a cup she spilt some on her hands but she didn’t feel a thing. The skin blistered quickly, so her parents took her to a local doctor. He gave her ointment for her damaged skin.

A few days later the doctor visited her home – he told Afsana that she might have leprosy. Although Afsana’s mother cried when she heard the news Afsana didn’t fully understand what the diagnosis meant.

By the time Afsana was taken to a government hospital for treatment, her fingers had already started clawing and she was having trouble gripping certain objects. Asfana had to drop out of school because she could no longer hold a pen. Even eating food became a challenge.

After a course of multi-drug therapy at the government hospital, Asfana was referred to a TLM hospital in Naini in the north of India. Here she will undergo reconstructive surgery to straighten her fingers so that she will be able to return to school.

TLM’s surgeon at Naini Hospital, Dr Premal Das, is very optimistic that the surgery will be successful and that Asfana will bounce back. Asfana will return home without the disfigurements that marked her out as someone who has had leprosy. She feels positive about the future – she is looking forward to going back to school and continuing her education.
Country Focus: India – Northern Region

States: Delhi, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh

About TLM’s work in Northern India
In this part of India TLM works in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh which still have pockets where leprosy remains a highly prevalent disease. TLM India provides treatment for leprosy, reconstructive surgery, training on leprosy for physiotherapists and other medical staff and also supports government medical staff under the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP).

Projects include:
• The Leprosy Mission Community Hospital, Shahdara, Delhi
• Stanley Browne Immunology Laboratory, Delhi
• The Leprosy Mission Hospital, Barabanki
• Empowering Village Women in Rural Uttar Pradesh, Barabanki
• Faizabad Community Hospital and Snehalaya (care home), Faizabad
• Wellesley Bailey Vocational Training Centre (VTC), Faizabad
• The Leprosy Mission Hospital and Snehalaya (care home), Naini
• Diana Princess of Wales Health Education and Media Centre, Noida
• The Leprosy Mission Snehalaya (care home), Almora
• CALL advocacy project

‘As I leave TLM Naini today I am going back, taking so many good things from this hospital – a new hope, a smile on my face, I can think of the future and have taken one step forward,’
Radha, 18, a reconstructive surgery patient at TLM Naini Hospital

Prayer points

Mon: Pray for the recruitment of dedicated doctors who are willing to serve the Mission.
Tues: Pray for awareness and positive attitudes of families and communities towards leprosy-affected people so that they are respected and able to live with dignity in their communities.
Wed: Pray for a successful nationwide reach of the Heal India campaign launched by the Diana Princess of Wales Health Education and Media Centre last year.
Thurs: Pray for the training of private medical practitioners on leprosy, so that the network of sound diagnosis and correct treatment and care is extended.
Fri: Pray that staff will provide good quality and loving care (physical, emotional and spiritual) for the elderly patients at Snehalayas (care homes).
Sat/Sun: Pray that TLM will be able to overcome the challenges and begin accessing funding from the government and other non-governmental organisations.

Key Staff
Dr Selvasekar Abraham – Superintendent, TLM Hospital, Delhi
Dr Premal Das – Superintendent, Naini Hospital
Dr Timothy Maximus – Superintendent, Faizabad Hospital
Mrs Shyla Francis – Principal VTC, Faizabad
Mr Pradeep Failbus – Superintendent, Barabanki Hospital
Mrs Nikita Sarah Singh – Head of Media and Advocacy, Delhi
Mr Jacob Oommen – Team Leader, CALL Project
Mr Anand Singh – Administrator, Leprosy Mission Snehalaya, Almora
Mr Naushad Ansari – Programme Manager, Women’s Empowerment Project, Barabanki

‘As I leave TLM Naini today I am going back, taking so many good things from this hospital – a new hope, a smile on my face, I can think of the future and have taken one step forward,’
Radha, 18, a reconstructive surgery patient at TLM Naini Hospital

Top: Radha after her reconstructive surgery at TLM Naini Hospital
How TLM works with people with disabilities

How is TLM involved with disability?
TLM works with people who are disabled due to leprosy and other causes. Unfortunately many people affected by leprosy are diagnosed late and so have already developed impairments. Leprosy reaction (inflammation in the skin, nerves and eyes) can cause nerve damage and lead to disability. Most of TLM’s projects have a disability component to them, whether through medical rehabilitation or speaking up for the rights of persons with disabilities. In addition, TLM collaborates with other organisations through membership of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC).

Prayer points

Mon: As TLM celebrates its 140th anniversary, thank God for the millions of people who have been reached and helped by TLM’s ministry. Praise God for those who have been helped by the Mission to prevent and manage impairments and disability.

Tues: The Leprosy Mission continues to actively participate in the work of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) to promote disability inclusive development in the countries where it works. Pray for Jannine Ebenso, TLM International programme advisor, as she represents TLM at IDDC meetings.

Weds: Pray for the doctors, nurses and physiotherapists who work hard to detect, treat and manage leprosy reaction, an acute episode of inflammation that many people affected by leprosy experience and which is the main cause of impairment and disability.

Thurs: Over 230,000 new cases of leprosy were identified in 2012*, of which six per cent already had visible impairments at diagnosis. These people are at high risk of developing further problems and often experience stigma from their communities. Pray that leprosy can be detected early, before nerve damage occurs and so prevent impairment and reduce stigma.

Fri: The Leprosy Mission works hard alongside people with disabilities to ensure they are part of mainstream society. Praise God for the success of TLM’s advocacy in Myanmar which has resulted in specific questions about disability being included in the 2014 national census. Pray for a successful census and data that will be useful to TLM and other agencies as they seek to help disabled people in Myanmar.

Sat/Sun: Praise God for partnerships with other Christian organisations such as CBM and Tearfund to promote disability-inclusive Christian communities and also to include disability as a subject in theological training institutions.

Key dates

2014

14–16 May: IDDC General Assembly, Cambridge, UK

3 December: International Day of Persons with Disabilities

*According to World Health Organisation

Top: Aleya Khatun, a self-help group member in Bangladesh
Above: An ophthalmologist visits a leprosy-affected person in Mozambique