

**PRAYER FOCUS:**

# Leprosy Research

**FACT**

**TLM has been involved in leprosy research for more than 50 years**

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

TLM research staff in Bangladesh, Nepal and India are working incredibly hard in laboratories and through field projects, and in collaboration with global partners, to understand more about leprosy and how we can prevent transmission, reduce the number of people with leprosy-related disabilities and bring an end to stigma and discrimination.

There are innovative projects in all three countries, including using self-care groups to deliver leprosy treatment, through to investigating how faith communities and traditional healers can assist in identifying and referring leprosy cases. All this can help people receive timely, regular treatment and halt transmission of leprosy.

Newly-developed smartphone applications enable easy access to leprosy and disability knowledge and services, as well as allowing more efficient data collection. And by investigating the causes of stigma and the barriers to accessing rights such as disability pensions, we can find better ways to reduce discrimination.

In this issue of **PRAYERFUEL**, we want to ask you to pray for all our research staff around the world who are working to bring greater healing, restoration and dignity to leprosy-affected people.

## Give thanks to God:

- For the dedication of TLM research staff in India, Bangladesh and Nepal. Many of them work tirelessly behind the scenes in hospital laboratories to discover new ways of treating, diagnosing and preventing leprosy.
- That for more than 50 years, TLM has made many significant contributions to the way in which leprosy is treated and how surgical intervention improves the lives of leprosy-affected people (you can read more about this on pages 6-7 of our summer 2019 INTouch magazine).
- That TLM is an integral part of the global leprosy research community, collaborating with many other agencies to discover the key to preventing the spread of leprosy and to thereby achieve TLM's goal of zero leprosy transmission by 2035.

## Pray for:

- All the necessary funding to be received, through research grants and supporter donations, in order for all our research projects to be well-resourced and for staff to be well equipped to carry out their essential and potentially ground-breaking work.
- God's inspiration in the lives of the research staff as they seek to make fresh discoveries about the way leprosy is transmitted from person to person and work on how to prevent this from happening. Pray that God will guide their thoughts and lead them in new directions.
- A renewed focus on maintaining and improving leprosy expertise. Many medical training programmes don't automatically include training on leprosy. Without a new generation of healthcare professionals knowledgeable about leprosy, and governments in endemic countries willing to invest in training, there is a risk that progress in eliminating leprosy will be slowed. Pray for a greater global commitment and partnership between governments and leprosy agencies to completely eradicate the disease.
- Deanna Hagge, TLM's global research adviser, based in Nepal. Give thanks for her skill, leadership and dedication to The Leprosy Mission. Pray that she will see God's hand clearly through her work and the work of the staff she oversees.
- Breakthroughs that will help achieve zero transmission by 2035, zero disability and zero discrimination – TLM's three core goals so that we can achieve a leprosy-free world for future generations.



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