



DR. ASHOK AGARWAL

Message from **ILEP India Coordinator**

Welcome to the issue of ILEP India Newsletter Vol-II

I hope you have enjoyed reading our Newsletter Vol-I. The intent behind issuing this newsletter is to highlight the progress and work that ILEP India has done during last quarter. All the nine ILEP agencies are working jointly towards achieving the common goal of “An India free from Leprosy”.

During this quarter, ILEP along with Central Leprosy Division (CLD), WHO and Sasakawa India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF) took steps towards contributing in developing National Strategic Plan for leprosy. The engagement meetings were conducted with Association of Persons Affected by Leprosy (APAL) and ILEP working groups, and the Capacity of NLEP consultants was strengthened on data analysis through training.

The entire ILEP family has worked shoulder-to-shoulder with government to support in the field; the details are included in the newsletter.

We wish you happy reading.

Kindly share your feedback at
feedback.ilep@nrlindia.org

A. Key activities done by ILEP India

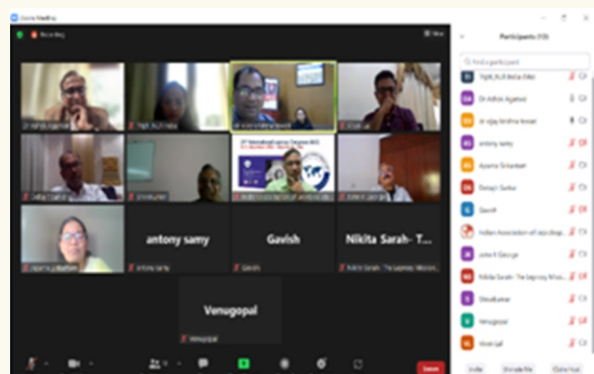
1. Development of National Strategic Plan for Leprosy

WHO & ILEP had drafted a methodology which was discussed with the NLEP partners on 24 August 2021. The Deputy Director General (Leprosy) along with ILEP had an introductory meeting with Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL) on 11 Feb 2022. In a meeting on 14 Feb 2022, CLD requested ILEP, WHO and SILF to assist in development of the National Strategic Plan (NSP) for NLEP to end leprosy by 2030 in line with end TB strategy document.

- The document will also be used to award the States/UTs with good performing districts (2022-2024) & beyond.

On 2 March 2022, a meeting was held with NLEP partners; chaired by Dr Bisworanjan Dash, Assistant Director General (Leprosy), Central Leprosy Division. Objective of the meeting was to kick start the process of developing NSP and inform all the concerned stakeholders, identify teams to work on different sections and to agree on methodology and timeline presented.

The subsequent meeting was held on 3rd March to discuss the activities to work on, decide the team and the leaders, and to finalise the timeline for these activities.



NLEP partners meeting to discuss NSP

2. Progress on advocacy towards repealing discriminatory laws

- ILEP India effort with Association of Persons Affected by Leprosy (APAL), Hind Kusht Nivaran Sangh (HKNS), Sasakawa India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF) and Central Leprosy Division (CLD) continues
 - Through periodic meetings we energized the process from primarily TLMTI to TLMTI plus (other ILEP partners, APAL, HKNS and SILF)
 - HKNS wrote letters to all states
 - APAL got appointment for meeting some state officials
 - NLEP consultants are regularly following up in their states
- On 14 Jan 2022, NHRC issued an Advisory on Identification, Treatment, Rehabilitation and Elimination of Discrimination of Persons Affected by Leprosy.
- Laws are in different stages of repeal process; from Tripura and Karnataka we should soon hear success.

3. Engagement with APAL

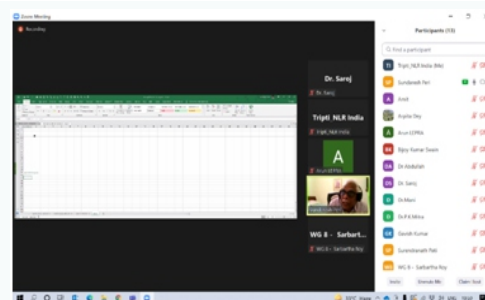
A meeting with Sri Venugopal ji, CEO, APAL was held on 27 Dec 2021. Decision taken to connect the state leaders of APAL with ILEP.

- A joint meeting of APAL representatives and ILEP NLEP consultants was held on 6 Jan 2022. They resolved to work together for the benefit of the persons affected by leprosy both in the colonies and community.

4. Training on data management

ILEP India data analysis group conducted 2 hours virtual training on 29 March 2022 for the NLEP consultants.

- Excel based analysis with particular focus on Pivot Table was discussed with Practical Exercises.
- Dr. Sundarsh Peri was the resource person.



Data management training of NLEP

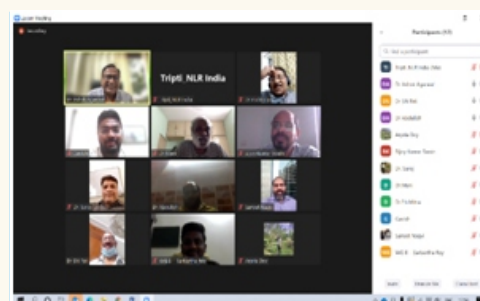
5. Internal meetings of ILEP

- 2 Monthly meetings held with the NLEP consultants

- 28 February and 31 March

These meetings were organized to review the progress in terms of repealing discriminatory laws, assessing the capacity of consultants in data analysis and strengthening the role of consultants under state NLEP.

- Three new NLEP consultants have joined: Dr. Mohammad Abdullah (NLR), Uttar Pradesh; Dr. Sidhartha Biswaal (NLR), Jharkhand; and Mr. Satish Chaudhary (LEPRA), Madhya Pradesh.



NLEP consultant's monthly meeting with ILEP India Country Co-ordinator

- Meetings with ILEP India working groups

- Research group: 7 March 2022

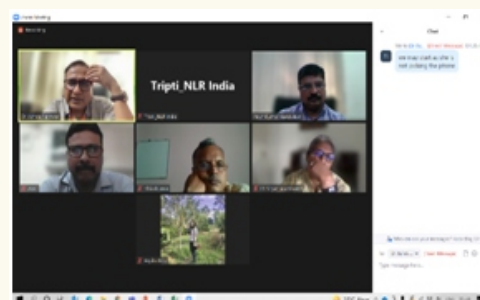
The meeting was to discuss plan for the abstract preparation for submission to the International Leprosy Congress (ILC) 2022; define the research aspect of National Strategic Plan; and to define leprosy research priorities of India.

- Communication and Advocacy group: 15 March 2022

This meeting was organized to facilitate the communication and advocacy aspects of ILEP India 2022 activities i.e. Repealing discriminatory laws, Documentation support for best practices, facilitate inter-ministerial collaboration, Compiling IEC materials etc.

- Data Analysis group: 21 March 2022

The meeting facilitated the discussion on capacity building of NLEP consultants in data analysis, improving quality of data at grassroots level, reviewing the Nikusht and come up with the recommendations etc.

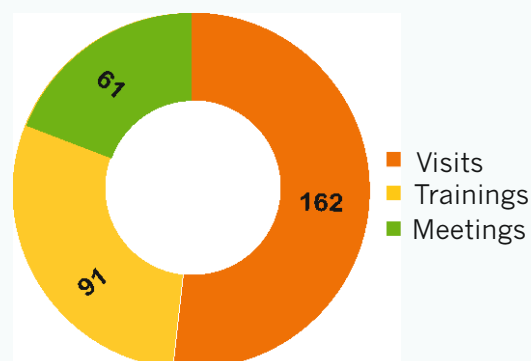


ILEP India Data Analysis group meeting

B. Key activities in the field

The ILEP agencies provided field and policy level assistance to NLEP program through their 13 NLEP consultants across 22 endemic states. These consultants routinely visit the Health care facilities, organize Self-care camps, assist District and State leprosy officers, train the self-help groups, monitor the drug availability in the districts and assist in active case detection. During January to March 2022, state (SLO) and district (DLO) level leprosy administration was supported by 61 meetings organized by NLEP consultants for advocacy

NLEP related activities conducted



and program implementation; 91 trainings were supported by these consultants to strengthen the NLEP program and 162 visits to districts, various health facilities, leprosy colonies and medical facilities were conducted to assess and support the NLEP program.

1. Training of physiotherapists and district nucleus team

Five Days Institutional training to the physiotherapists and one selected District Nucleus Team (DNT) member was held at The Leprosy Mission, Muzaffarpur from 28th Feb to 04th March and from 7th March to 11th March. One Physiotherapists from all 38 districts and one DNT members from Damien Foundation Trust India supporting 28 districts participated in the training. The training was conducted in three batches.

Topics covered during the trainings were Clinical signs and symptoms of leprosy, differential diagnosis, how to conduct Voluntary muscle testing & Sensory testing, Nerve inspection, Different treatment modalities, Reaction and its management, Disability prevention, Ulcer, Reconstructive Surgery, Case history taking, role of physiotherapists in Secondary Level Referral System, Referral Mechanism and how it functions. Group sessions included patient demonstration where participants were given patients for complete inspection and case history presentation.

After the conclusion of the training a WhatsApp group was formed including all the participants where they can share their patient related experiences and discuss for better understanding and support to the programme.



Strengthening Secondary Level Referral System

2. Leprosy awareness campaign

Touch leprosy awareness' campaign was launched on 30th January 2017, the death anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. The district magistrate Sri BN Singh, Moradabad flagged off the Sparsh leprosy awareness campaign under the National Leprosy Prevention Program. As a part of this campaign, NLR India staff along with government health workers went door-to-door and distributed pamphlets. Posters were also pasted in many areas of the district. Dr. Bharam Singh, District Leprosy Officer (Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh) arranged to distribute pamphlets of information on leprosy to the patients who came for treatment at Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs) and District Hospital.



Spreading leprosy related awareness in health centres and villages

3. Self-care camp for leprosy affected



Released from treatment certificate distribution to beneficiary by Dy.CMHO-Alwar during self-care camp

NLR India Foundation team successfully conducted self-care camps for leprosy affected persons in Alwar of Rajasthan District during the third week of March. This was preceded by sensitisation of key district officials on Disability Prevention and Medical Rehabilitation (DPMR) services with special focus on self-care of eye, hand and foot. Altogether 12 beneficiaries and around 18 ASHA attended the camp.

4. Training on Active Case Detection & Regular Surveillance

NLR India team conducted Active Case Detection and Regular Surveillance (ACD&RS) training for ASHA and GHC staff along with training of MOs on early case detection and management in Alwar, Dausa, Jaipur and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan. Altogether, 133 MOs and 155 GHC staff and 243 ASHA were trained on ACD&RS. Field monitoring was also done along with district officials in these districts.



Training on Active Case Detection and Regular Surveillance (ACD&RS)

5. Medical Officer's training in Nainital District of Uttarakhand



Training of medical officers

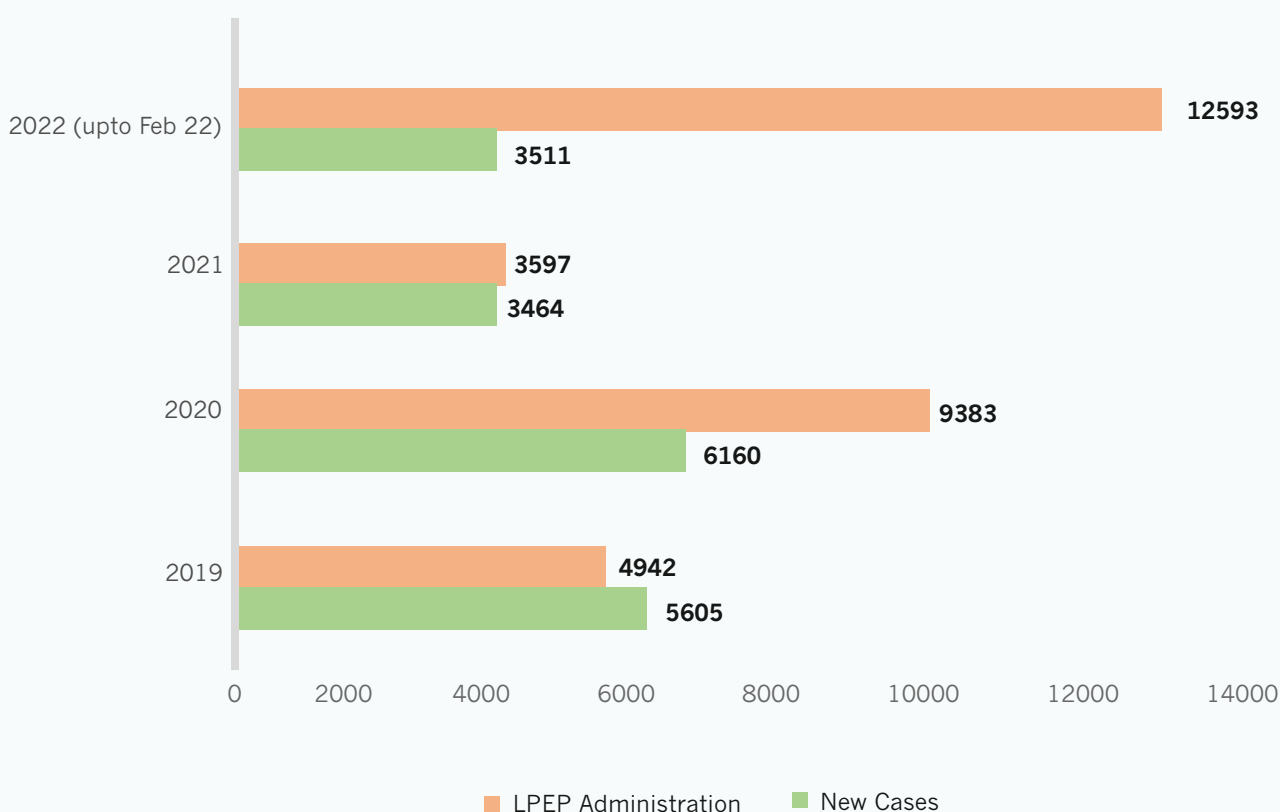
Two days (25th & 26th Feb.) training of Medical Officer's was conducted in Haldwani on NLEP programme guidelines, ACD&RS, Leprosy early case detection and management; 23 MOs participated.

6. Proactive approach by State Leprosy Officer improves leprosy post-exposure prophylaxis in Jharkhand

LPEP (Leprosy post-exposure prophylaxis)/SDR (Single Dose Rifampicin) administration is a strategy introduced by Government of India in 2018 to interrupt chain of transmission. It is a key activity to connect with contacts of new leprosy cases and administer SDR to the eligible contacts. Government of Jharkhand initiated this program as per directions of GOI. In 2019, 4942 eligible contacts were administered LPEP for 5605 new cases. In 2020, 6160 new cases were found & 9383 contacts were administered LPEP, In March'21, 3597 contacts were administered LPEP against 3464 new cases.

On review, the State Leprosy Officer noted, few districts were continuously registering high number of new cases & LPEP administration status was not good throughout the state; He called a partners meeting (including ILEP agencies & WHO) during December 2020. During the meeting, multiple challenges were found including capacity building of staff at Block & District level, procurement issues, planning & implementation. The solutions proposed were orientation of NLEP staff throughout the state, which will motivate staff & in turn can encourage community (in high endemic areas); second step was to support procurement process (including financial provisions, purchase & transport of medicine) and thirdly to validate the process via reviewing procurement, implementation plan during review & field visits and validating contact tracing surveys. The actions were reviewed monthly by SLO & District Leprosy Officers which resulted in

LPEP Administration



12593 contacts administered SDR/PEP till Feb'22 against 3511 index case & better knowledge level of National Health Mission staff for SDR/PEP administration. Hopefully this will be helpful in controlling disease burden by controlling transmission of Leprosy in the state.



ASHA worker along with male health staff in Dhumka district of Jharkhand supporting & validating PEP administration

7. ACMOH leads the way for supporting the persons with disability due to leprosy



ACMOH at Bolagarh Camp, Hoogly, West Bengal

Dr. Bandana Sarkar, Assistant Chief Medical Officer of Health (ACMOH) of Hooghly sadar subdivision with support of stakeholders successfully organised camps in three blocks i.e Padua, Polba and Balagarh. Disability certificates, food grains and other grocery items were distributed, and requests for repair of houses and registration for pension were collected during the camps.

UPCOMING EVENTS



1

Launch of ILEP India Website

2

Support in development of the National Strategic Plan (NSP) and Zero Leprosy Roadmap

3

Support to the International Leprosy Congress (ILC) 2022

4

Data Analysis training of NLEP consultants:
2nd Session

5

Define leprosy research priorities of India