

NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM ILEP INDIA COORDINATOR

Welcome to the issue of ILEP India Newsletter Vol-V.

I hope you are enjoying reading our newsletter. Each quarter we share with you the highlights of ILEP India work; this issue of the newsletter captures the activities of the quarter October – December 2022.

During the quarter, ILEP India continued contribution in development of the National strategic plan for leprosy and support to the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) in states and districts; periodic ILEP India partners meeting was held towards the end of the year to share progress of ILEP India activities and to discuss plan and budget for the coming year 2023; ILEP co-organized and supported the International Leprosy Congress (ILC) 2022, and made a good number of presentations. The ILEP India website <https://ilepindia.com> was launched on 2nd October 2022.

Kindly read the detailed description of the activities in the newsletter.

We wish you happy reading.

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



Dr Ashok Agarwal

Key Activities

1 National Strategic Plan and Road Map to interrupt transmission by 2027

- The quarter was very crucial for the development and shaping of National Strategic Plan (NSP); WHO and Central Leprosy Division (CLD) organized a review meeting in Gurgaon, Haryana including all the important stakeholders. ILEP India (NLR India Foundation) engaged a consultant with WHO funds to assist in drafting of the plan. The thematic group representatives, higher officials from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), ILEP representatives etc. provided their feedback to the draft.

- The NSP Roadmap was presented by the Additional Director General Health Services – Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the International Leprosy Congress (ILC) 2022 on 11th November 2022.
- Review and revision meeting was called on 29th November by Additional Director General Health Services and Central Leprosy Division – Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; WHO and ILEP participated and discussed the plan in detail.
- The detailed review and revisions were made by WHO, ILEP and few stakeholders at WHO country office – India during meetings on 19th, 26th and 28th December 2022.

2 ILEP India in ILC 2022

- India was fortunate to host 21st International Leprosy Congress 2022; ILEP India members took part very actively in various activities.
- A number of ILEP India CEOs were part of organizing committees of ILC.
- ILEP India also financially supported the ILC.
- Total 165 officials participated from ILEP India organization along with 69 international CEOs and colleagues; 25 sessions were chaired while 15 lead talks given; 164 abstracts were submitted out of which 132 abstracts were presented; total 77 posters were presented while 20 people affected by leprosy and 04 government officials were supported for attending/submitting abstracts.
- ILEP’s member assembly was hosted by ILEP Global secretariat; 14 Global head of ILEP agencies, 09 heads from ILEP India agencies, heads from Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL), WHO and UN special rapporteur attended the assembly.
- Special session on ILEP India was delivered by ILEP India Country Coordinator Dr Ashok Agarwal and member from other ILEP India organizations on 11th November 2022



Image 1 From left to right: Dr Ashok Agarwal (ILEP India Coordinator), Mr Vijayakrishnan (Fontilles India) and Dr Jose Manikathan (AIFO India) delivering special session at ILC 2022

- Informal discussion between ILEP Global secretariat, Global CEOs of ILEP organizations, ILEP India Coordinator and Additional Director General Health Services, MoHFW – Govt. of India was held on 9th November to strengthen the efforts in India.

3 ILEP India partners meeting

- ILEP India partners meeting was conducted through hybrid mode at New Delhi on 14th December 2022 to discuss the ILEP India progress on the activities, budgetary aspects and activity plan for 2023. This meeting is conducted every four months.



Image 2 ILEP India meeting and stakeholder consultation with Govt. officials, WHO and APAL

- Same day, ILEP India CEOs had a meeting with Additional Director General Health Services (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India), WHO and Association of persons affected by Leprosy (APAL) to share and seek guidance on progress and activity plan for 2023.
- ILEP India CEOs, ILEP India working group leaders, ILEP India secretariat, WHO, APAL and Additional Director General Health Services attended the meeting.
- The highlights of the discussion were digitalized training, backlog clearance of RCS, ILEP India activity progress and plan 2023, digitalized directory of leprosy experts, research priorities in leprosy, addressing the needs of persons with disabilities (PwDs) etc.

4 Review of ILEP's NLEP consultants

- The meeting was scheduled between ILEP India secretariat, Central leprosy division and ILEP's NLEP consultants on 14th October; the meeting was chaired by Dr Sudarshan Mandal, Deputy Director General-Leprosy (DDG-L), MoHFW.

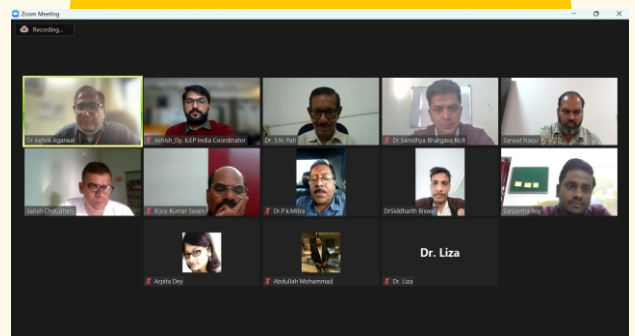


Image 3 Year-end review meeting between ILEP India secretariat and ILEP consultants

- The progress on the NLEP activities were discussed while DDG-L also requested consultants to report drug situation in the states.
- Year-end review meeting of consultants was organized on 15th December with Dr Ashok Agarwal, ILEP India Coordinator. The consultants shared their achievements in terms of activities being conducted in their states during 2022; all the consultants also shared their plans for 2023 in their states of responsibility.

5 Repealing discriminatory laws

- Based on the advisory issued by National Human Rights Commission to all the states and union territories during January 2022; ILEP India initiated the follow up request to State Disability Commissioners.
- 10 states were sent official requests by ILEP India in the last quarter; ILEP India shared the official request to all the remaining states for repealing the discriminatory laws. Total of 21 official requests were made by ILEP India to state and chief disability commissioners.
- ILEP is planning to do more advocacy along with APAL on repealing these laws.

6 Towards launching ILEP India website

- On 153rd birth anniversary (2nd October 2022) of our father of the Nation – Mahatma Gandhi; ILEP India launched the website dedicated to ILEP’s members organization’s work in India.
- It also hosts literature related to leprosy, IEC materials, media files, ILEP’s structure and team in India, Govt. guidelines under National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) and many more.

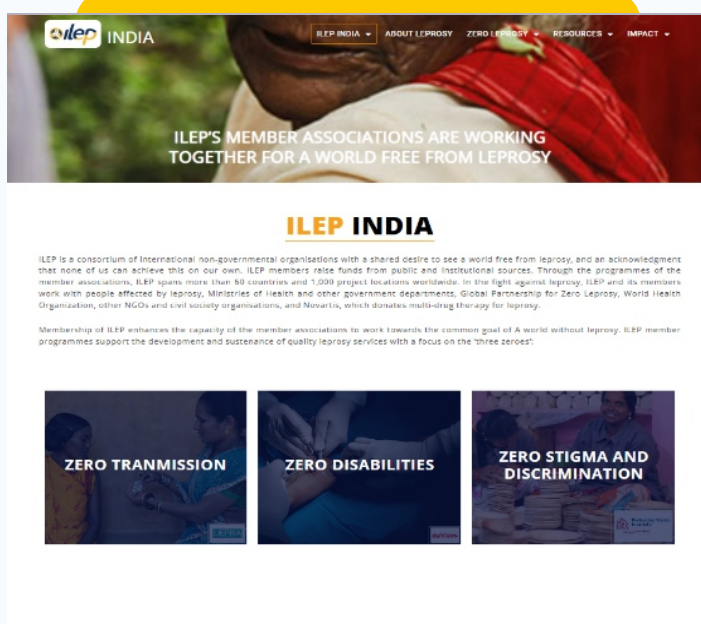


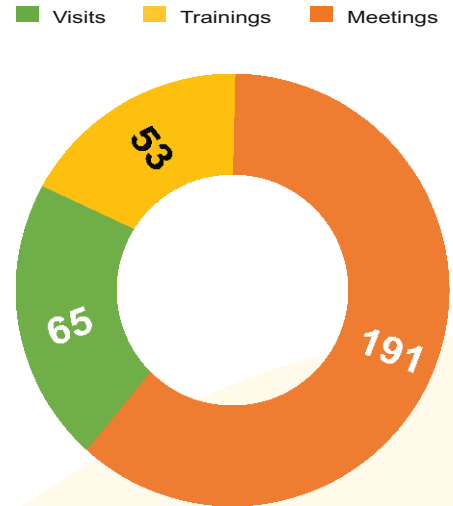
Image 4 ILEP India website home page

Please visit for more information

<https://ilepindia.com>

Key activities in field

The ILEP agencies continued to support field and policy level assistance to National Leprosy Eradication Program (NLEP) through their 14 NLEP consultants across 18 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 activities. During October to December 2022, state and district level programme was supported through 65 advocacy and program implementation meetings; 53 trainings; and 191 visits to district, different health facilities and leprosy colonies.



1 Workshop with Leprosy champions

Ahead of the International Leprosy Congress, The Leprosy Mission Trust India co-hosted an event with the LEPRA society in Hyderabad. The event, which was well attended by leprosy champions from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil, Nadu, Odisha, Bihar, and from Nepal and Brazil, saw discussion on current challenges faced by persons undergoing leprosy treatment or are cured of leprosy. The champions deliberated on the ways discriminatory attitudes are affecting quality of life. Alice Cruz, UN Special Rapporteur on Elimination of Discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members, addressed the gathering.



Image 5 Leprosy champions with TLMTI and LEPRA society officials at ILC 2022

2 Leprosy Case Detection Campaign Monitoring by ILEP India

Leprosy case detection campaign monitoring was done by the NLEP consultant, Rajasthan (Dr Sanidhya Bhargava, NLR India Foundation) in Jaipur district between 13th-16th Dec. The objective of the monitoring was to support the state and even the districts field resources to look out for cases and to disseminate the knowledge about leprosy as a public health issue. Daily report was provided directly to the state leprosy officer so that there is no communication gap between the state and District health department. The ASHA's of the district played a vital role and wherever any information was lacking, the NLEP consultant explained them and provided the required information for better information dissemination and case detection among the public.



Image 6 LCDC monitoring by ILEP consultant in Bihar



Image 7 LCDC monitoring by ILEP consultant in Rajasthan

In Bihar, ILEP organizations (Damien Foundation India Trust, NLR India Foundation and LEPRASociety) and WHO were part of the state core team responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of Leprosy Case Detection Campaign; conducted during 8th – 17th October in all 38 districts of Bihar. State-level workshops chaired by State Leprosy Officer for Additional Chief Medical Officers (ACMOs) and District Nucleus team (DNT) members regarding the implementation of the LCDC in coordination with ILEP partners and WHO were conducted. The final report of the LCDC was later submitted to the Central Leprosy Division by State Leprosy Office – Bihar.

3 Step towards addressing issues of migration in leprosy

FAIRMED India initiated a panel discussion on “Migration & Leprosy: Lessons learnt in Covid-19”, a symposium on migration in leprosy on 8th November 2022, the panel discussion conducted via virtual mode during the 21st International Leprosy Congress held in Hyderabad.

Mr. John Kurian George, Country Coordinator of FAIRMED India, chaired the session. Dr Anil Kumar (Additional Director General of Health Services, MoHFW – GoI), Mr. Venugopal (Chief Executive – APAL India), Dr Pemmaraju Rao (Acting Team Leader – Global Leprosy Program, WHO), Dr Rashmi Shukla (National Professional Officer – Leprosy, WHO India) and Dr Benoy Peter (Executive Director, Institute for Migration & Inclusive Development) were the eminent panellists who shared their thoughts on this very important topic.

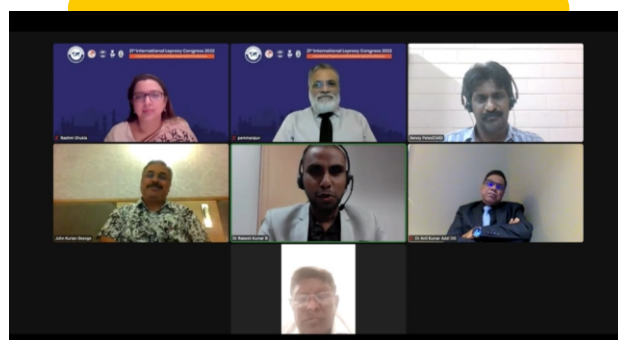


Image 8 Panel discussion on migration and leprosy at ILC 2022

New diagnostic tools, sustainable leprosy services during emergencies, documentation of migratory population, availability of complimentary epidemiological data, master database linked to unique identity number of the patients including migrants, vulnerability associated to migrants etc. were some important aspects put forward in the discussion.

4 Workshop on Mental Health Counselling and Training

A mental health workshop was conducted by The Leprosy Mission Trust India under Replicable Model Project on 27th-28th October to support and strengthen National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) in Janjgir-Champa district of Chhattisgarh. The officials from district health and leprosy administration were the chief guests.



Image 9 Mental health counselling workshop at Janjgir-champa, Chhattisgarh

Rural Medical Assistants (RMAs), Non-Medical Assistants (NMAs), Reproductive Health Organizer (RHOs), Psychiatric Social Worker, District Nodal officer – Mental Health, District Hospital and Multi-Purpose Staff (MPS) participated in the training workshop. The workshop was focussed on providing inner wellbeing services for the person affected by leprosy and assessment of wellbeing of each participant using WHO scale. Introductory sessions, sessions on inner wellbeing, consequences, common mental health issues (anxiety disorder and depression) and management were delivered.

The action plan for each block was prepared based on the need by the block participants in group including Pamgarh, Akaltara, Nawagarh and Baloda block. Pre- and Post-test were conducted before and after the sessions to assess the learning.

5 Towards delivering leprosy care package to Persons affected by Leprosy

Damien Foundation India Trust (DFIT – an ILEP member organization) implemented Leprosy control programme in seven states, through its three hospitals, nine partnership project hospitals, 18 Disability Preventions and Medical Rehabilitation field teams and two rehabilitation home for persons affected by leprosy. During the quarter, organization provided services to 26485 OPD patients among which 208 new leprosy cases were detected; 18 persons were detected with grade 2 disability and 89 patients were female patients. DFIT provided services for 531 inpatients during the period covering 16,078 bed days; 87 patients treated for lepra reaction.



Image 10 Livelihood support provided by DFIT

Deformity corrective surgeries were delivered to 96 patients while MCR footwear for 288 persons were provided. DFIT reached out to 3,494 patients through its field activities and counselled them for self-care practice among them 2515 persons are practicing self-care.

As part of care after cure programme, DFIT provided educational support to 15 children; provided small business support for 28 persons and house construction support was provided to three families.

UPCOMING PRIORITIES

- 1 Assist in National Strategic Plan (NSP) finalization
- 2 Assist in roll-out of NSP
- 3 Contribution in observing the World Leprosy Day
- 4 Support in conduct of the 13th National pidemiological Association conference on leprosy and other public health priorities
- 5 Repealing the discriminatory laws