



# IMPACT REPORT

2022

# ABOUT GPZL

The Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL) is a coalition of people committed to ending leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease. GPZL facilitates alignment of the leprosy community to accelerate effective collaboration toward the goal of zero leprosy. GPZL consists of 80 partner organizations and 600 individual members.

## **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee consists of the Leadership Team chair, representatives from donor institutions, and nominated members of the Leadership Team.

## **Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team (LT) consists of leaders from partner organizations and stakeholders engaged in zero leprosy research, programming, and advocacy. The LT provides direction, oversight, and support to the secretariat to meet strategic plan objectives, engage working groups, and advocate with key stakeholders.

## **Pillar Groups**

In 2022 we established three pillar groups: country partnerships, research, and resource mobilization and advocacy. These groups, which consist of Leadership Team members and subject matter experts, inform the direction of each of our workstreams.

## **Secretariat**

The GPZL Secretariat, located at the Task Force for Global Health, supports partnership work through the coordination of Leadership Team meetings, working group facilitation, and collaboration with groups working in NTDs, disability, and other infectious diseases in the global health field.

## **Working Groups**

The Leadership Team establishes working groups to address priority areas. Experts from the global leprosy community participate in GPZL working groups.

## **Action Framework**

GPZL coordinates action in three areas: supporting national leprosy programmes, accelerating research, and increasing advocacy and resource mobilization.

# 2022 IN ACTION

## Dr. Benedict Quao

Ghana's Zero Leprosy Action Plan integrates leprosy programming with other NTD programs and has united new and existing partners around a common goal. In the past year, we have seen many elements of this strategic plan come to fruition.

In July, we received seed funding from GPZL to implement an SDR-PEP pilot project which we initiated in August. We have also begun revamping our Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP) program as well as using the output of a prior geo-localization project, to inform site selection for our SDR-PEP program.



Implementing the Zero Leprosy Country Model has brought new visibility and commitment to leprosy work in Ghana. The government has increased its investment for leprosy control activities with the construction of a research facility and renovation of our national headquarters and referral hospital; the Ministry of Health has also included leprosy in a recent economic modeling project which includes some of the new interventions within our action plan; the vice president is also expected to champion a high-level event to publicly launch the Action Plan and National Zero Leprosy Partnership in the coming year.

Ghana has benefited from exactly what GPZL offers countries: tools to take stock of needs and the convening power necessary to renew the commitment and involvement of national and international partners to end leprosy.

In turn, GPZL has much to learn from countries that travel the path to zero leprosy, as each faces different challenges and brings new ideas to the table. I am eager for other countries to join us on this journey.





# OUR WORK IN 2022

## Country partnerships

### **Launch of the Zero Leprosy Country Model**

Over the past year, the Country Model Working Group and Country Partnerships Pillar Group worked with consultants to develop the monitoring and evaluation framework for the Country Model. We launched the Zero Leprosy Country Model in May after Mozambique and Ghana piloted it and the global leprosy community validated it.

### **Côte d'Ivoire**

The National Leprosy Programme of Côte d'Ivoire developed its Zero Leprosy Action Plan in May and launched it in June.

### **Uganda**

The National Leprosy Programme of Uganda, which completed its Zero Leprosy Country Review and developed a Roadmap in 2021, convened stakeholders in May to develop a national Zero Leprosy Action Plan.

### **Tanzania**

The National Leprosy Programme Tanzania developed its Zero Leprosy Roadmap and Action Plan in May. The findings of the Country Review, which was conducted in November 2021, informed the development of the new strategic plan.



*Above: Assistant Commissioner Dr. Stavia Turyahabwe presents Uganda's Zero Leprosy Action Plan to the Ministry of Health's Director of Public Health in May 2022.*

# OUR WORK IN 2022



## Country partnerships

### Cambodia

The National Leprosy Programme of Cambodia developed its Zero Leprosy Roadmap and Action Plan in June.

### Nigeria

The National Leprosy Programme of Nigeria conducted its Zero Leprosy Country Review in October. Development of the Roadmap and Action Plan immediately followed the review. The programme anticipates that the Ministry of Health will approve the new plan in 2023.



### Seed funding

We awarded grants to the National Leprosy Programmes of Ghana and Mozambique to further priorities identified in their national action plans. The grants funded Ghana's plans to pilot SDR-PEP implementation and Mozambique's priorities for capacity building.

*Left: The international review team in Nigeria: Dr. Gilbert Ayelo, Dr. Alphonse Um Boock, Ms. Carolyn Maholo, Dr. Benedict Quao, and Mr. Adebayo Peters.*

# REFLECTIONS FROM UGANDA

Dr. Rose Kengonzi

We went through the process of the programme review, and the stakeholder engagement, and the workshop on action planning. It's been a very good experience because it has exposed the programme to some opportunities.

The biggest opportunity was engaging the top management in the Ministry of Health. They have been very supportive, especially the Director-General of Health Services, who is like the technical advisor in the Ministry of Health.

We had an opportunity with the help of the Director-General to be involved in stakeholder engagement, which initially was only for TB. We had a chance to present at the stakeholder meeting. Some people were surprised that leprosy still exists in Uganda. We then had another opportunity to combine a TB CAST campaign with leprosy, through which we identified 70 new leprosy cases.

Even now cases of leprosy have increased, from 200 to 388 people diagnosed. Case finding has increased because we are advocating for leprosy work and raising awareness of leprosy.

[Watch the video >](#)





# OUR WORK IN 2022

## Advancing research

### The 21st International Leprosy Congress

The Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy participated in the International Leprosy Congress, which took place in Hyderabad, India from 8 to 11 November. The theme of the Congress was “Better Knowledge – Early Diagnosis – Improved Care.” GPZL co-hosted a plenary and was involved in several sessions, including an epidemiology session of modeling for leprosy control, and two thematic sessions where the co-chairs of our Leprosy Diagnostics Working Group presented the two target product profiles for leprosy diagnostic tools.

**Read our editorial:** [Improving funding transparency to advance leprosy research >](#)

### Diagnostics advancement

The development of a roadmap for our two target product profiles for leprosy diagnostic tools began in 2022 and has been completed.

### NTD NGO Network (NNN) Conference

In partnership with ILEP, we led a session at the NNN Conference focused on the integration of leprosy programming with other NTDs.

### Factsheets on SDR-PEP and leprosy reactions

In collaboration with the ILEP Technical Commission and Infolep, we developed the first two resources in a series of factsheets that summarize leprosy research for non-academic audiences. The first factsheet summarizes the latest large-scale, international research studies on [SDR-PEP](#). The second factsheet outlines how to classify and manage [leprosy reactions](#).



*Above: Dr. Sundeep Chaitanya presents one of two target product profiles for a leprosy diagnostic tool at the International Leprosy Congress (ILC) in November.*  
[Read more about GPZL at ILC >](#)



# RESEARCH NOTES

Bill Simmons

The resources and energy that are being poured into leprosy research are amazing. Researchers and public health workers often wonder, is there anybody out there who is interested in my idea? After hearing presentations from leaders of organizations that fund leprosy research and seeing the numbers, it appears the answer is yes.

The research working group of GPZL published the set of research priorities describing the research questions that must be answered to reach zero leprosy. But reaching zero takes more than identifying priorities. It also takes great researchers and health workers like so many in the ILC audience. We at GPZL look forward to offering a transparent look at the scope of funding in the leprosy research community each year. Connecting the funder to the research is an important step toward ending leprosy.

**View the research funding data >**

*Left: Participants of the Research Funding session, including Takahiro Nanri, Subhojit Goswami, Linda Hummel, Bill Simmons, David Schollard, Suzan Trienekens, Andie Tucker, Stefanie Weiland, and Anna Giné.*





# OUR WORK IN 2022

## Resource mobilization and advocacy

### Côte d'Ivoire's Zero Lepre event

On June 1 and 2, the National Leprosy Programme of Côte d'Ivoire hosted a high-level meeting. Partners first joined a technical meeting and then attended the Zero Lepre event, which was headed by Prime Minister Patrick Achi. Partners signed the Abidjan Declaration, a commitment to mobilize the resources, both national and international, necessary for the implementation of the interventions of the Zero Leprosy Action Plan. A gala followed. More than 12 million euros were committed by the government and partners to fund the action plan activities.

[View photos from the event >](#)



### International Advocacy

GPZL submitted statements to WHO Regional Committee Meetings. Our Secretariat Director attended the SEARO meeting in-person in Bhutan in September and delivered a statement highlighting the importance of reaching persons affected by leprosy in the context of universal access to health care.



# OUR WORK IN 2022

## Resource mobilization and advocacy

### **Nepal aims to eliminate discriminatory law**

The National Leprosy Programme of Nepal held a meeting in Kathmandu focused on repealing Nepal's Civil Code 2074. The civil code outlines divorce parameters and specifically names leprosy as a reason for divorce. The meeting drew attention to the stigma created by calling out leprosy in the law. The Law and Justice Ministry and the Prime Minister's Office have prepared an amendment and will file it once the newly elected Parliament is in office.

### **NTD Patient Advocacy Project**

As part of the MacArthur Foundation's Bold Solutions Network, GPZL received a Swift Grant to develop an advocacy curriculum for persons affected by neglected tropical diseases. With the input of grassroots organizers and advocates from the leprosy community, GPZL worked with colleagues at two other Task Force for Global Health programmes—The NTD Support Center and the Focus Area for Compassion and Ethics (FACE)—to develop an online self-guided curriculum. The curriculum will be piloted in 2023.

### **New Resource Mobilization strategy**

Development of our new resource mobilization strategy began this year. We look forward to launching the strategy in 2023.



# COMMITMENT IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Dr. Roch Christian Johnson

In June 2022, leprosy community members came together in Abidjan to endorse Côte d'Ivoire's Zero Leprosy Action Plan and to raise funds for its implementation at a fundraising event chaired by Côte d'Ivoire's Prime Minister, Patrick Achie. Through our collective efforts, the resources mobilized during this event amount to 12 million euros. These resources will support the financing of Côte d'Ivoire's plan to end leprosy by 2030.

This is the first plan of its kind in Côte d'Ivoire. It is country-owned, informed by a comprehensive district-level review, and developed by all major leprosy community partners, including the Ministry of Health, organizations of persons affected by leprosy, and national and international organizations working to eliminate the disease. We aim to reduce the number of new leprosy cases by 70% by 2030. This is an ambitious goal.

*Left: Oleg Ouss, Dr. Roch Christian Johnson, and Pierre Velut stand outside of the Raddison in Abidjan, the location of the resource mobilization event.*

At the event in June, it was invigorating to see so much excitement and commitment in one room. It is clear that the government and the international community dream of seeing Côte d'Ivoire free from leprosy. Now, with the support of government officials and partners, we will have the resources needed to implement the activities prioritized in the action plan.

We know what it will take to achieve zero leprosy in Côte d'Ivoire. We have much work ahead of us, and we have the energy and commitment to succeed.





# ORGANIZATIONAL ADVANCEMENT

## **New Leadership Team members**

In May we welcomed six new members to our Leadership Team, including representatives of national leprosy programmes, organizations of persons affected by leprosy, individual members, and organizational members.

## **Pillar Group structure**

The Leadership Team established three pillar groups to guide each of our workstreams: country partnerships, advancing research, and resource mobilization and advocacy.

## **Meetings in London and Hyderabad**

For the first time since 2019, the Leadership Team met in person in Brentford, London in June. They discussed strategic direction and the purpose and structure of new pillar groups that would guide the Partnership's three workstreams.



*Above: The Leadership Team and guests meet in London.*



# LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT DIRECTOR

Bill Gallo

In 2022 we brought the leprosy community together in new ways. We expanded our Leadership Team to include more representation from national leprosy programmes, organizations of persons affected, the global health community, and our broad membership base of individuals and organizations committed to achieving zero leprosy.

We stood up pillar groups, comprised of our Leadership Team members and subject matter experts, to guide our three workstreams. And we met in person for the first time in more than two years, first in London and then in Hyderabad, to shape the future of the Partnership.

We worked with the national leprosy programmes of Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda, Tanzania, Cambodia, and Nigeria to develop and launch roadmaps and action plans which address each country's unique challenges. I saw firsthand the shared ownership and strong commitment that forms when all partners are able to contribute to one comprehensive and integrated plan.

In June, Côte d'Ivoire launched its Zero Leprosy Action Plan and raised more than 12 million euros to fund it. It was inspiring to witness such enthusiasm and dedication from national leadership and international partners at the event in Abidjan. A strong National Zero Leprosy Partnership ensures that the support needed to launch an action plan is sustained throughout the implementation process. We look forward to continuing to work with each of our partners as they bring these plans to fruition.

In the past year, we also brought the research community together in new ways. Concept notes from the workshop on early detection of leprosy were developed into proposals and were submitted for funding consideration, one of which was funded in 2022. Additionally, several members of our Leprosy Diagnostics Working Group engaged in the development of a roadmap for our two target product profiles for leprosy diagnostic tools. In November at the International Leprosy Congress, we collaborated with the Leprosy Research Initiative and invited leprosy research-funding institutions to the stage. Our partners offered a transparent look at the funding they make available for leprosy research and the priority areas that they finance. By making this information available to everyone, we will be better positioned as a community to answer the research questions that will get us to zero leprosy faster.

