



ANCHOR

#ZeroLeprosy - Rooted in Partnership, Driven by Change



Message from the Executive Director



I am pleased to share this update on the momentum we have built together in 2024. Since I joined the Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy in August 2024, I have been inspired by the strength of this

global consortium having like-minded partners, experts and the unwavering voices of people affected by leprosy.

This newsletter reflects not just achievements but a shared vision taking shape, and our collective efforts are setting a strong pace for the future. It has also been a time for registering GPZL as a legal entity, strengthening our operations, and laying the groundwork for deeper engagement with stakeholders. Together, we continue to move toward our shared goal: Zero Disease. Zero Disability. Zero Discrimination. Thank you for being part of this journey.

Warm regards,

Dr. Ritu Ghosh
Executive Director

Year's Highlights on the Road to #ZeroLeprosy

The Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL) reflects on pivotal milestones that have advanced our collective mission of ending leprosy transmission. These achievements mark significant progress in innovation, collaboration, and person-centered advocacy.

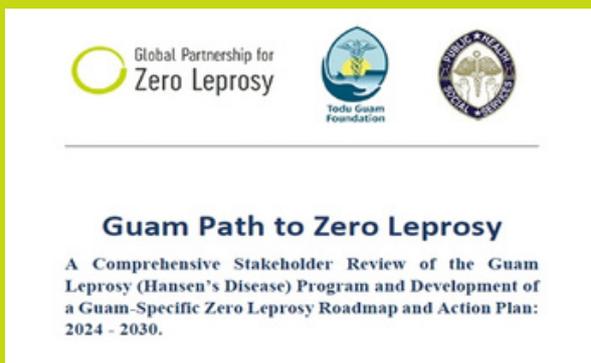
Zero Transmission Symposium – A Collaborative Breakthrough

Held in May 2024, the Zero Transmission Symposium was a landmark event co-hosted by GPZL and partners. It brought together global stakeholders to share knowledge and develop best practices to interrupt leprosy transmission. The outcomes have shaped ongoing advocacy and technical discussions, with a final report expected in 2025.



GPZL Zero Transmission Symposium: University of Bergen, Norway, 23-25 May 2024

GPZL Model in Action: Guam Leads with First Self-Guided Zero Leprosy



Released in November 2024, the Guam Path to Zero Leprosy Roadmap and Action Plan 2024–2030 is a landmark document in our shared mission to eliminate leprosy in Guam. This strategic plan, formally endorsed by Ms. Theresa Arriola, Director of the Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS), marks a critical milestone in our collective efforts.

Guam is the first country in the Western Pacific Region to adopt and implement the self-guided, country-specific model of the GPZL Zero Leprosy Framework—demonstrating its leadership and commitment to eliminating leprosy through locally tailored, evidence-based strategies.

Through the application of GPZL's country model tools, Guam conducted its first comprehensive leprosy review, identifying national priorities and developing strategic actions to achieve zero leprosy.

Guam's pioneering experience offers valuable lessons for GPZL and partner countries on how to effectively apply and support the self-guided implementation model to accelerate progress toward a leprosy-free future.

TPPI and TPP2 manuscripts published in WHO Bulletin

TPPI and TPP2 manuscripts published in the WHO Bulletin, offering critical guidance for developers and researchers working on leprosy tools aligned with the WHO NTD Roadmap.

These documents define the minimum and ideal requirements for new products. Meanwhile, the TPP3 working group was launched and is progressing toward manuscript finalization.

MDT supply chain Challenges Assessment Working Group

A working group under the Country Partnerships pillar was established to assess Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) supply chain challenges. An action plan elaborating the entire process was developed. The working group held its first meeting in December 2024 to review the action plan and identify countries for assessment.

Prioritising people pillar group formed

The Prioritizing People Pillar Group was formally launched to ensure the voices and rights of people affected by leprosy are central to GPZL's work. Since its formation, the group has initiated the development of a Patients' Checklist (rights and responsibilities) for the leprosy care, mapped community-led organizations across countries, and begun a needs assessment to guide capacity-building support of the organization run by affected people

Diagnostics Working Group Mobilized to Drive Innovation

The GPZL Diagnostics Working Group was formally activated, marking a key step in advancing diagnostic innovation for leprosy. The group quickly established a 2025 work plan and held its inaugural meeting in December.



The gathering featured powerful testimonies—such as a woman’s inspiring journey from starting school at 21 to becoming an Assistant Pharmacist—and critical discussions on rights advocacy, resource needs, and strategic gaps.

Dr. Ritu Ghosh Appointed Executive Director of GPZL

The Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL) proudly welcomed Dr. Ritu Ghosh as its new Executive Director in August 2024. Dr. Ghosh brings over 25 years of public health leadership experience globally.

Dr. Ghosh’s appointment marks a significant step in advancing GPZL’s mission to achieve Zero Disease, Zero Disability, and Zero Discrimination. Her expertise in strategic planning, advocacy, research, and resource mobilization has already brought renewed energy and focus across the organization’s operations.

Participants enlightened with WHO updates, donor strategies, and progress from pillar groups, while shaping the 2025 business plan through inclusive group work.



GPZL Leadership Team Gathered to Advance Zero Leprosy Goals in Kathmandu, Nepal



Key takeaways included prioritizing fewer countries for targeted impact, enhancing support for organizations of persons affected, and strengthening GPZL’s role as a platform for knowledge exchange. With renewed energy and commitment, GPZL moves forward in pursuit of zero disease, zero disability, and zero discrimination.

In October 2024, the GPZL Leadership Team convened for a dynamic two-day meeting in Kathmandu, bringing together diverse voices from across the globe to align efforts toward ending leprosy.



A Journey of Resilience: Prima Gharti Magar’s Story

“Leprosy is curable, but the stigma and discrimination that surround it are the true barriers to healing. It’s not just medicine we need but compassion, awareness, and inclusion,”
Prima Gharti

Born in a remote village in mid-western Nepal, Prima Gharti Magar's early life was marked by hardship and stigma. Yet, through every challenge, she held fast to hope and determination. Diagnosed with leprosy at age 10, she faced isolation from her family and community. But rather than surrender to despair, she chose to fight for her health, her future, and eventually, for others like her.

After completing treatment, Prima stayed close to the hospital for care and support, even when that meant living alone. Her unshakable dream of getting an education led her to start school at 21. With the support of organizations like IDEA Nepal, and TLMN, she not only completed secondary school but went on to study pharmacy.

Today, Prima runs her own pharmacy and serves as a leader with IDEA Nepal, using her voice to uplift and empower other women facing the same challenges. "I want to inspire and support other women," she says with pride. Prima's story reminds us that with support and courage, healing is possible, and hope can flourish even in the toughest of places. Well done Prima for courageously fighting for not only your life but dedicating your life to provide care and support leprosy community.

GPZL Article Published in WHO Goodwill Ambassador's Leprosy Bulletin

In a powerful reflection shared in the WHO Goodwill Ambassador's Leprosy Bulletin, Dr. Ritu Ghosh, the Executive Director of the Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL) said one of her primary focuses at GPZL is to strengthen health systems in the public and private sectors. She said this will positively impact the lives of individuals with lived experience of Hansen's disease. Dr Ghosh further noted that she would like GPZL and its partners to direct resources where they can have the greatest impact, ensuring that underserved communities receive the care they need, and this involves scaling up research that looks beyond the medical aspects of the disease. She emphasised that there is a need to examine the social determinants, such as water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH), nutrition, and gender equity

"My vision for GPZL includes expanding our resources by drawing the attention of the private sector, particularly corporations, to leprosy elimination issues so they can invest their resources in leprosy field. Additionally, I want GPZL to build stronger partnerships at the country level by collaborating with governments, businesses, local leaders, and like-minded organizations to amplify our impact," said Dr Ghosh

Read the full story in the WHO Goodwill Ambassador Bulletin here: [Leading GPZL to new heights in the global fight against Hansen's disease.](#)



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