

# SAMIKSHA

BY LEPROSIS SOCIETY



## PRASANT'S MESSAGE

November has indeed been a whirlwind of activity for us. Firstly, I am pleased to report the successful completion of the Physical Verification for NABL at the Blue Peter Public Health Research Centre. This accomplishment underscores our commitment to maintaining the highest standards in our research and operations. In addition to this, we have inked significant partnerships by signing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Footwear Design & Development Institute (FDDI) and No Leprosy Remains (NLR). These collaborations mark the

beginning of what I am confident will be mutually beneficial relationships, and we are eager to explore future collaborations with organizations that align with our mission and values.

I am delighted to announce that our Physio Care Assistants can now practice at Maharani Hospital, Jagdalpur. This expansion of our services not only enhances our reach but also allows us to make a meaningful impact on the well-being of the community.

Our recent PULSE meeting with our esteemed chairman, Dr. Vishwa Mohan Katoch, was a valuable opportunity for us to gain insights and guidance. Dr. Katoch's wisdom and experience continue to be instrumental in shaping our strategic direction.

Lastly, our Managing Committee (MC) meeting was successfully concluded, where we shared updates on our various initiatives and celebrated the progress made. It is heartening to see the collective efforts of our team translating into tangible results.

As we reflect on the achievements of November, let us carry this momentum into the future. The journey ahead holds exciting possibilities, and I am confident that, together, we will continue to make a positive impact on the lives of those we serve.

### DIGITAL MEASUREMENTS FOR PADUKA (FOOTWEAR) FOR LEPROSY AND ELEPHANTIASIS PATIENTS (DIMPLE) – PILOT INITIATIVE

LEPRA DiMPLE is a pilot project that aims to digitize the process of measuring and making footwear for people with leprosy and elephantiasis. It uses a digital tool called Koobtool to capture the foot dimensions of the patients and send them to the footwear makers. This way, the patients can receive customized footwear that fits their needs and preferences. LEPRA has been providing specialized shoes or MCR (microcellular rubber) footwear to people affected by leprosy and elephantiasis for over 32 years. In 2014, LEPRA DiMPLE is an extension of this service that leverages digital technology to make it more efficient, accurate and for



greater reach of patients. The necessity for digitization arises from challenges such as the difficulty for patients with debilitating conditions to travel to referral centers, the lack of customized protective footwear, inadequate reach, high resource intensity, and the inefficiency of paper-based recording systems.

Through the pilot project, 3 shoe technicians were trained to use the DiMPLE Kobotoolbox application, collecting foot measurements from over 322 patients in leprosy colonies and referral centers. The protective footwear were prepared based on the precise measurements and accompanying pictures of patients' left and right feet at the Referral Centre Shoe Unit. The initiative has resulted in a digital database containing soft copies of foot measurements and corresponding images, ensuring easy retrieval of patient data.

Looking ahead, LEPRA aims to consolidate the learnings from the DiMPLE pilot, expanding efforts to train more shoe technicians, increasing the reach to supply footwear to a greater number of patients, and envisioning the development of the DiMPLE Footwear Mobile Application integrated with Artificial Intelligence for an even more sophisticated approach to custom footwear provision.

[Click here to watch DiMPLE video](#)

**EXCLUSIVE**

## STATE WISE UPDATES

### ANDHRA PRADESH



• Smt. Koneru Sathya Priya, LIDCAP Director, distributed footwear at Utukururu PHC, benefiting 25 patients and staff. In the previous month, she generously donated Rs. 10,000.

- Rotary Club, Tenali, President, and Rotarians distributed footwear in the Filaria unit, Tenali, benefiting 25 individuals with Leprosy and LF infections, alongside staff members.
- Lepra AP is conducting a School Survey program, assessing schoolchildren for Leprosy symptoms, providing education on signs, and collecting funds. The active involvement of

Vijayawada RC staff enhances the success of this initiative.

- Demonstrations and hands-on practice of self-care practices took place at Merakamudidam PHC in Vizianagaram Dist.
- A support group meeting was held at Kothapet UHC under Vijayawada RC jurisdiction, addressing beneficiaries' rights and issues. Lepra staff actively discussed and submitted representations on behalf of the beneficiaries at the Mandal/District level.

- 86 CRPs in Lily cluster, Kalyanpur Block, Samastipur, facilitated 27 hydrocele

### BIHAR



- surgeries through referrals after a mutual learning meeting.
- The Jagruti project facilitated 500 NTD individuals (Leprosy-77, LF-423) in obtaining UDID cards, enabling access to government schemes, including National Disability pension benefits.
- In collaboration with NLEP Delhi, a Health Camp cum IPOD camp at Lok Mata Kusth Ashram Patel Nagar Delhi facilitated self-care demonstrations for 105 people with leprosy and caregivers, distributing 24 pairs of protective MCR footwear and 36 self-care kits.
- Participated in a two-day NLEP Review Meeting cum Workshop for High Priority States/UTs organized by Central Leprosy Division and World Health Organisation.

### CHATTHISGARH



- Enhanced DPMR Clinic & Self-care camp at Bakawand CHC, with 17 disability beneficiaries learning self-care, and distribution of 10 MC

footwear and dressing kits.

- Conducted Ulcer Management Training on 19.11.2023, attended by 14 beneficiaries and 14 service providers (HWS/ASHAs) at which they learned about wound care management.
- Leprosy Forum Formation meeting at Malegaon village convened with the participation of 14 parents and PRI members

### MADHYA PRADESH



- The Samarth Project in Chhatarpur successfully organized 30 mindfulness sessions in Rajnagar and offered 346 individual peer counseling sessions in the Lavkusnagar block, exemplifying its dedication to community well-being..

- As a foundational initiative, the project facilitated 100 regular Self-Help Group (SSG) meetings in the past month, spanning Lavkusnagar, Rajnagar, and Gaurihar blocks, fostering community engagement and empowerment.
- The SJLC Center's recent activities include the initiation of a case examination program, successfully identifying 2 new cases last month, and the proficient management of ulcer care, with 4 patients undergoing treatment. Additionally, the center actively contributed to community education by conducting leprosy awareness sessions in schools, reaching 786 students and identifying 1 suspect case of pulmonary leprosy (PB).
- two field training sessions were held for ASHA workers in Gaurihar and Lavkusnagar blocks, with 32 participants. The training encompassed essential information on leprosy, self-care practices, and insights into lymphatic filariasis (LF), addressing potential complications, and highlighting SSG (Self Support Group) intervention benefits for beneficiaries.
- the LCDC campaign took center stage, with Lepra staff actively engaged in project locations, conducting examinations, providing information on leprosy signs, symptoms, and self-care practices, as well as organizing school surveys and awareness initiatives.
- Mr. Amarnath Ji and Rohit Ji, conducted a school survey in Alirajpur district, offering leprosy information and examinations, while the final image portrays a case validation visit in a patient's home by the same team

[Click here for Leprosy Dashboard](#)

[Click here for LF Dashboard](#)

## STATE WISE UPDATES



### ODISHA

- Jamada block of Mayurbhanj, our engaging folk theatre initiative creatively imparts essential information about leprosy, including symptoms, treatment, and the significance of community support.
- In support of lymphatic filariasis (LF) patients' self-care, LEPRAs distributed 22 Self Care Kits at the Pancharida Health and Wellness Center in Nayagarh on November 23, 2023. With backing from RED CROSS and the presence of key local healthcare figures, including the Health Supervisor and State NCD Consultant, this initiative underscores LEPRAs dedication to empowering LF

patients through practical self-care resources.

- Throughout this month, 167 health staff, including 8 doctors, received comprehensive sensitization on morbidity management and acute attacks at Astaranga CHC, Brahmagiri CHC, Gop CHC, and Kakatpur CHC in Puri district. Arun Kumar Dash, LEPRAs BHC, played a pivotal role in leading the sensitization efforts, emphasizing the significance of elevating awareness and expertise among healthcare professionals.
- Conducted a community awareness program in Dokanda revenue village and Odasamalla village, Purisadar, which aimed to promote Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP) services, with a particular focus on increasing Hydrocele surgeries. Active participation from both women and men in Dokanda village underscored the importance of raising awareness, reaching a total of 70 individuals in the community.
- The Slit Skin Smear Training organized by Kandhamal District Health Society included participation from Project FC/LT as a Resource Person, where 12 LTs were trained on the collection and examination of skin smears.
- Two PMP/RMP Sensitization programs were conducted in Bargarh (Kalahandi district), sensitizing 46 individuals on Lep/LF.
- Six Integrated DPMR Clinics and Self-care camps were organized in the project area, benefiting 74 individuals with leprosy-cured disabilities through provisions such as footwear, ulcer kits, and adoptive and protective devices.

- In an effort to broaden outreach services, a program initiating weekly dressing and self-care practices has commenced in the Sanjay Gandhi Nagar leprosy colony, located in Moulali, Medchal district.

### TELANGANA



- Conducting orientation sessions on leprosy for Medical Officers, Health Assistants, and ASHA Workers in preparation for the upcoming LCDC, scheduled to commence on November 20, 2023.
- Implementing a capacity-building program for UPHC staff and ASHA through case demonstrations at UPHC, Amangal, Rangareddy district.
- Conducting pilot testing for the Digital Foot Measurement Application at Devapally leprosy colony, Dichpally, Nizamabad district. The LSHO programs team facilitated the event, with implementation led by the NTDRU, Telangana team.
- Dr. Ravinder Naik, Addl. Director (Leprosy) visited NLRC center, Hyderabad for in-depth understanding of Referral centers in Telangana. He along with LEPRAs team unveiled the health education/IEC material.
- Awareness programme on leprosy to community members and primary school students at Muthyampet village, Kagaznagar



### BPHRC

- An ICMR project orientation meeting took place on October 27th at the DLO office in Hyderabad, featuring Dr. Aparna Srikantham, Head of Research at BPHRC, Dr. Michael Sukumar, Research Medical Officer, and other dignitaries, addressing field-level activities, sample collection, and timelines with ADM and HO (Aids & Leprosy) staff.
- 17pairs of MCR footwear provided to Diabetic patients at Osmania hospital, Hyderabad.
- With the excellent team work, on 15th November successfully completed the NABL surveillance audit

[Click here for IEC & Photo Gallery](#)

[Click here for Major Updates](#)

# Team LEPRAs was inspired and motivated by Chairman, Dr. Vishwa Mohan Katoch's address on "Journey towards Leprosy Free India." and his 5 Mantras (principles)



The PULSE (Projects Update for Learning and Sharing Experiences) session of November 2023 was a special occasion for Team LEPRAs, as Team LEPRAs had the honour of listening to the LEPRAs Society Chairman, Dr. Vishwa Mohan Katoch, on his vision for a "Leprosy Free India." He shared with us 5 Mantras (Principles) that can help us achieve this noble goal. We learned a lot from his insights and experience, and we are grateful for his guidance and support.

## 1. Comprehensive Understanding:

To work effectively in the field of neglected tropical diseases, one needs to have both in-depth knowledge and holistic awareness. In-depth knowledge means having a comprehensive understanding of the causes, transmission, symptoms, diagnosis,

treatment, and prevention of the diseases, as well as the social and economic impacts they have on the affected communities. Holistic awareness means being aware of the broader context of the diseases, such as their interactions with other health conditions, their links to poverty and stigma, and their implications for global health and development. For example, one should be familiar with not only Leprosy, but also other diseases, such as LF, HIV, and TB.

## 2. Community Connection

To build trust and rapport with the community, we need to listen to their stories and understand their needs. We need to show them that we care about their well-being and respect their opinions. We also need to involve them in the decision-making process, asking for their feedback and suggestions on how to improve our interventions. By creating a feedback loop, we can learn from the community and adapt our strategies accordingly.

## 3. Programmatic Proficiency:

To work effectively in the field of public health, you need to be aware of the existing national control programs that are relevant to your area of interest. You should learn about their goals, methods, challenges and outcomes, and how they differ from one state or region to another. You should also aim to align your interventions with the broader public health strategies that are in place, and make sure they can be integrated smoothly into the current frameworks. This will help you avoid duplication, confusion and conflict, and enhance the impact and sustainability of your work.

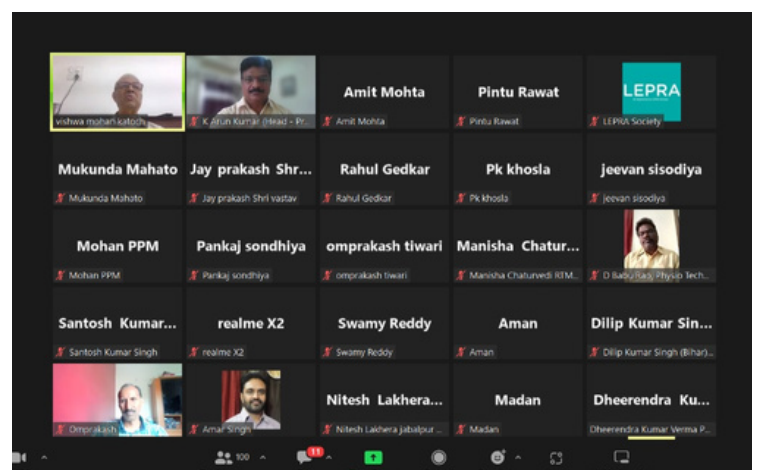
## 4. Impactful Interventions

We aim to go beyond short-term outcomes and ensure that our actions have lasting benefits for the people we serve. We monitor and evaluate the effects of our interventions on public health, and align them with broader health objectives.

## 5. Legacy of Public Health Excellence:

Dent in the Disease is a program that aims to reduce the burden and impact of the diseases that affect millions of people around the world. By implementing evidence-based interventions, conducting rigorous research, and collaborating with partners, we strive to make a noticeable difference in the lives of those who suffer from these diseases. Public Health Advancement is our vision for the future of public health. We want to create a lasting legacy of improved health outcomes and community well-being by innovating, scaling, and sustaining effective solutions. We believe that public health is not only a science, but also an art and a passion.

[Click here for the recorded session](#)



## IMPACT STORY

Lokireddy Ramu, wife of Apparao, residing in Kummapalli village, Kalepalli Mandalam, Devarapalli. She is a mother of a son studying outside the village and a daughter in a hostel. The family is economically disadvantaged, primarily relying on farming for sustenance.



**Health Situation:** Lokireddy initially presented with raised patches all over her body, seeking medical attention at a private hospital. Despite the use of Hansepran 100 mg for months, her condition worsened, leading to severe gastrointestinal issues. Subsequently, she was referred to King George Hospital, where she was introduced to our Rehabilitation Centre (RC). At our RC, she was diagnosed with type 1 reaction, initiating Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) and Prednisolone 40 mg. Nerve function assessment revealed no impairments. However, after 14 days, she returned with severe wheezing, prompting admission to the skin ward. Relevant tests indicated anemia, leading to the discontinuation of dapsone and continued use of Prednisolone. Clofazamine was provided by Lepra.

Lokireddy faced social stigma due to skin discoloration and weakness, as others speculated about an untouchable disease. Economically impoverished, she struggled to afford Clofazamine and Prednisolone. The patient encounters difficulties in regular follow-ups, residing in a village without a mobile phone. Continuous medical support is crucial, emphasizing the challenges posed by the patient's circumstances.

Lepra has played a vital role in Lokireddy's journey, providing MDT and reaction treatment from the onset. The organization has addressed economic and emotional needs, offering counseling and guidance through the RC. **Post-LEPRA Intervention Changes:** Lokireddy attests that without Lepra's intervention, she might not be alive today. The affordability and accessibility of prescribed medications were made possible through Lepra's support, ensuring continuous care and improving her overall health. Grateful to the dedicated team at Lepra, she acknowledges their pivotal role in her recovery.

## STAFF INTERVIEW

Meet Mr. Dharma Das Kuriel, a seasoned footwear professional with five years of dedicated service at LEPRA. Previously a proprietor of his own shoe shop, Mr. Kuriel transitioned to the role of a mobile footwear technician during the Covid pandemic. This shift not only increased his self-sufficiency but also provided valuable learning experiences.



### **Q: How was your experience as a mobile footwear technician?**

A: Working as a mobile footwear technician was an enjoyable experience for me. I had the opportunity to travel to different parts of Telangana, thanks to LEPRA. Providing footwear on-site was particularly fulfilling as I could witness firsthand the comfort it brought to the patients.

### **Q: Can you share one experience of a beneficiary?**

A: Certainly. On one occasion, a beneficiary expressed how comforting the footwear was, sharing that it enabled them to walk back home with ease. The joy I felt knowing that the footwear not only brought happiness but also granted them the freedom to move comfortably was truly rewarding.

### **Q: Anything you want to say about LEPRA?**

A: LEPRA is commendable for its innovative use of technology, especially in the digitization of footwear. Through this initiative, I acquired skills in efficiently operating a mobile unit, contributing to my professional growth.

Mr. Dharma Das Kuriel's journey with LEPRA reflects a commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of individuals in need, showcasing the power of innovation and compassion in the realm of footwear technology.



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Thank you to LEPRA Society team for your unending support  
Facilitated by the programmes team

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