

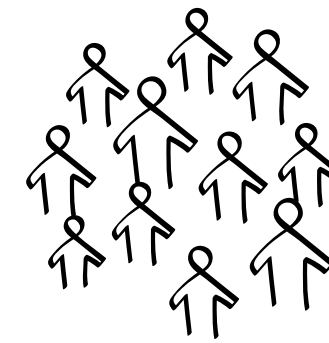


Annual Report 2022

Accelerating Towards Results

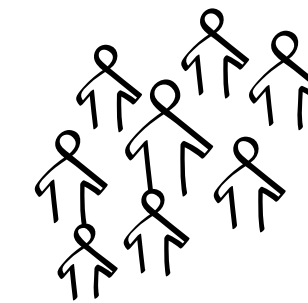
Working together to fight leprosy

1995



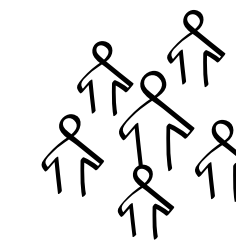
529.376

2005



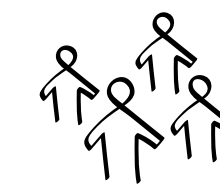
296.499

2015



211.973

2021



140.594



Towards a world free of leprosy and its consequences

Globally, 140,594 new leprosy patients were reported in 2021, reflecting a 10% increase compared to the previous year. This indicates that leprosy control activities have been resumed and/or intensified since the impact of COVID-19 faded. However, the current number of newly recorded patients remains significantly lower than the reported number (around 200.000) before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: [World Health Organization](#)

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Vision, mission, story



Focus on Prevention of Leprosy



Our donors

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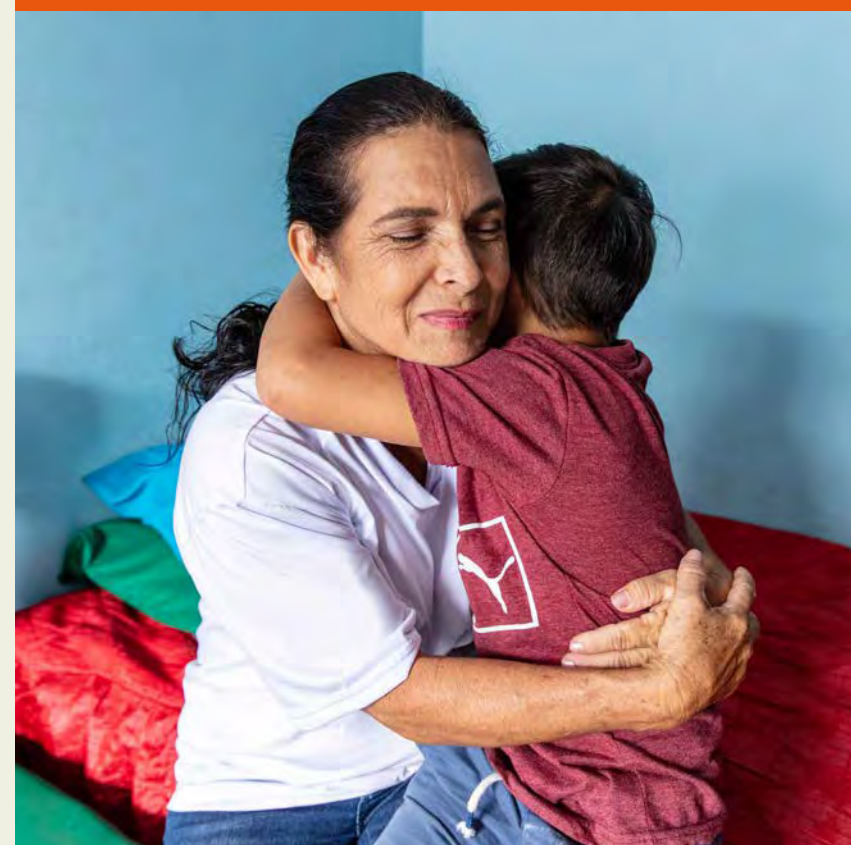
Cooperating with institutional donors



Individual donors & Volunteers



Raising awareness for leprosy



Zero Leprosy

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Our road



Zero Transmission



Zero Disability



Zero Exclusion



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Enhanced preventive treatment in Brazil, India, Nepal and Bangladesh



Earlier detection through health workers



NLR Indonesia strengthens ties with The Leprosy Mission Australia



PEP4LEP skin camps enable timely diagnosis and treatment



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Integrity



Governance



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Financial Highlights 2022: income



Financial Highlights 2022: expenses



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NLR Budget 2023



2022 in brief

until No Leprosy Remains

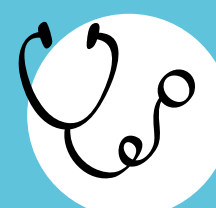
The year 2022 truly marks the beginning of NLR's post-COVID-19 phase. In 2022, we were able to restart most activities and speed up flagship projects that had stalled in the previous years. 2022 is best described as a year in which NLR was accelerating towards results. National ownership and leadership of endemic countries is rising. Mutual advice, support, and knowledge-sharing between countries and organisations is increasing. In tandem, these factors result in a strong global sense and need to eliminate leprosy fast and for good.

Zero Transmission



33.743

New leprosy patients detected



4.703

Health staff trained on leprosy



308.105

Persons who received SDR-PEP

Zero Disability



543

Health staff trained on prevention of disabilities

Zero Exclusion



1.066

Local actors better voicing concerns and needs



3.237

Persons affected with improved socio-economic situation



5.030

Health staff sensitised on stigma

Our highlights

Enhanced preventive treatment in Brazil, India, Nepal and Bangladesh

Contacts of persons affected by leprosy receive the newly enhanced preventive treatment (PEP++).

Mozambique: Earlier detection through health workers

Health workers in peripheral health facilities can more accurately refer people they suspect of having leprosy.

NLR Nepal started as a national NGO

NLR Nepal is the first national NGO with its own board and registration independent from NLR in the Netherlands.

NLR Indonesia strengthens ties with The Leprosy Mission Australia

NLR Indonesia signs contracts with the Leprosy Mission Australia for two new projects: 'Leprosy Friendly Village' and 'Urban Leprosy'.

PEP4LEP skin camps enable timely diagnosis and treatment!

Skin camps were combined with the distribution of preventive medications for leprosy (SDR-PEP) in order to increase the health impact and efficiency.

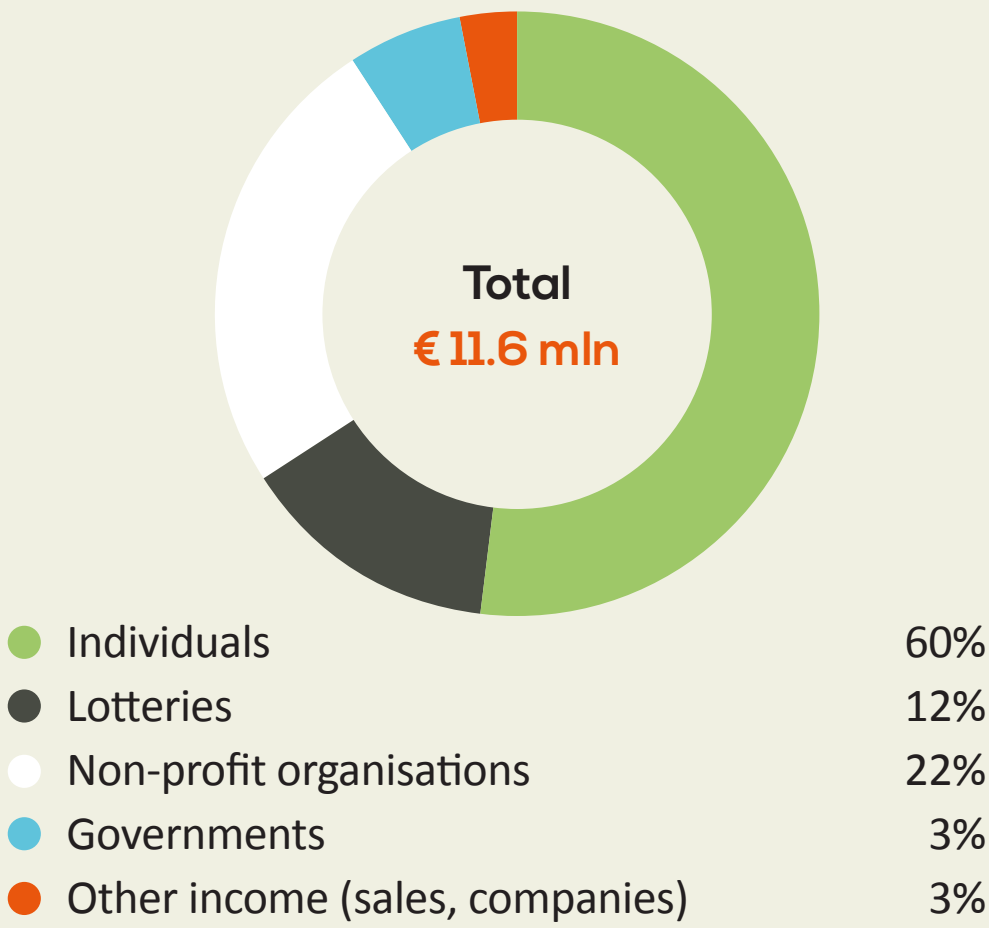
How did we spend our money in 2022?

In 2022, we received a total of €11.6 million income. We spent €11.1 million on our objectives, which is 83% of our total expenditures of €13.4 million. The continued support of our institutional and individual donors is vital as it enables us to diagnose, treat and cure persons affected by leprosy across three continents. Throughout the Netherlands, we received support from more than 46.500 donors and around 100 volunteers. NLR receives an annual contribution of €1.350.000 from the Dutch Postcode Lottery and its participants. This is much appreciated, particularly as it is unearmarked income which we are free to allocate where and when it is most needed.

Other details concerning our income and expenditures are shown in the Annual Accounts.

Annual accounts

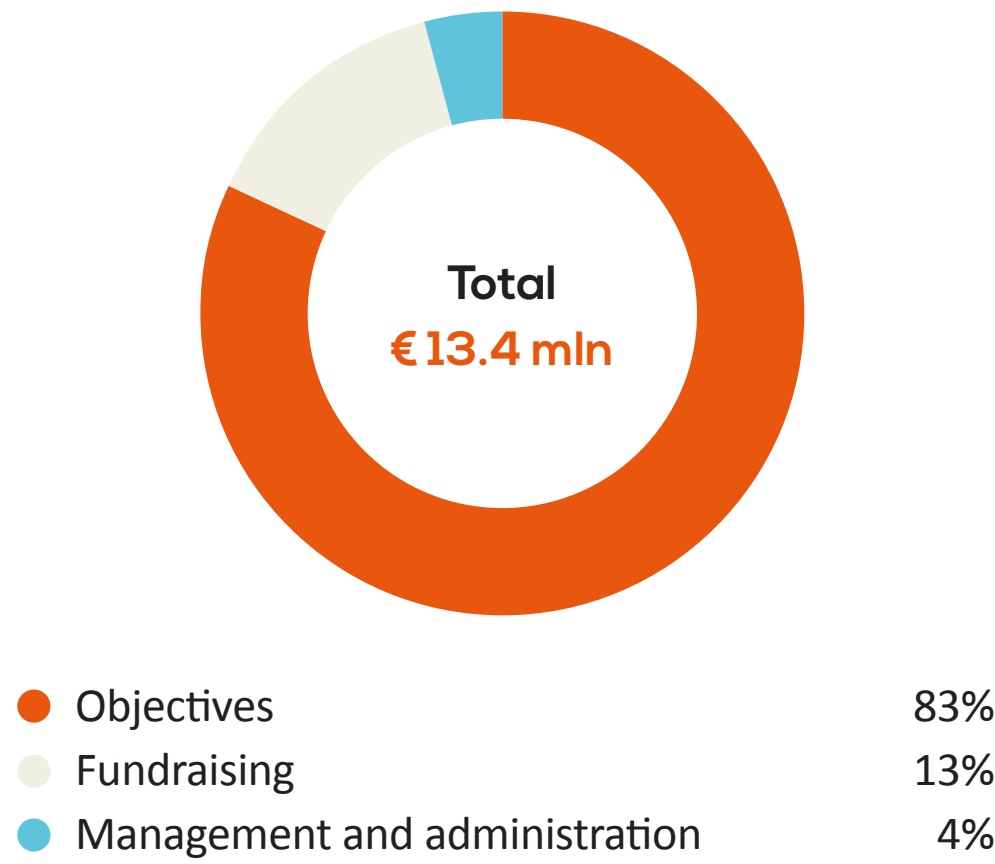
This was our income in 2022



In support of our mission, these were our reserves and funds in 2022



This is what we spent in 2022



This is what we spent on our mission in 2022



We are NLR



2022 in review

As the great philosopher Seneca once said, “Every new beginning comes from some other beginning’s end.” The year 2022 truly marks the beginning of NLR’s post-COVID-19 phase. In 2022, we were able to restart most activities and speed up flagship projects that had stalled in the previous years. 2022 is best described as a year in which NLR was **accelerating towards results**.

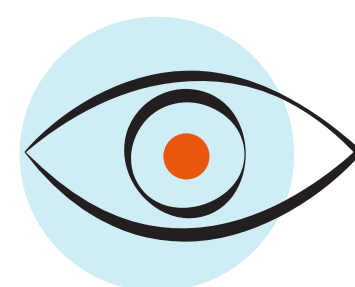
Our “Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project (PEP++)”, funded by the Dutch Postcode Lottery through their Dream Fund, restarted and gained traction in 2022. The clinical trial is now running in three countries, a remarkable achievement. In some countries, we had to wait a long time before (re)starting our research into enhanced preventive treatment (PEP++), whereas in others we were able to start promptly. Through these multi-country projects, where there is much at stake, the organisation is constantly learning how to improve and adapt. Flexibility, persistence, and resilience are crucial to move forward.

An important acknowledgement for our frontrunners’ role in the prevention of leprosy was expressed by the Additional Director General of Health Services from the Indian Ministry of Health at the International Leprosy Congress in Hyderabad, India. He claimed that PEP++ is the new promise for leprosy elimination. At this congress, it became evident more than ever

that national ownership and leadership of endemic countries is rising. Mutual advice, support, and knowledge-sharing between countries and organisations is increasing. In tandem, these factors result in a strong global sense and need to eliminate leprosy fast and for good.

The road towards Zero Leprosy on a country level is filled with many obstacles. Encouragement and checks must be in place along the way. To this end, NLR’s Medical Director, working together with the WHO, developed the Leprosy Elimination Monitoring Tool. This tool will accompany the technical guidance on interruption of transmission and elimination of leprosy. The toolkit was launched at the International Leprosy Congress, and in the next 10 years it will assist 120 countries in declaring themselves free of leprosy!

Through vigorous research and with ample experience, our understanding of the costs of leprosy prevention in different settings is increasing. Also, our knowledge of what it takes to scale-up preventive treatment and make medication available in the right place at the right time has improved. This requires constant attention and deliberation on global, national, and district levels, and in 2022, several challenges hindered our progress. For various reasons, medication for prevention and treatment of leprosy was not always available in all the countries we work in. We work hard to mitigate the impact of these setbacks.



One key area we’ve focused our attention on is maintaining leprosy expertise, medical-technical knowledge, and programmatic expertise while striving to reach our objectives. Despite a tight labour market, we were able to recruit new and young talent. Fresh energy is needed for these upcoming decades until the elimination of leprosy. To keep staff on board, working with NLR must be appealing, and so too must our mission and vision of working towards a world with Zero Leprosy.

Naturally, our transition into an alliance of national NGOs has had great impact on our organisational structure and operations. NLR Nepal was the first office to become an independent national NGO, in January 2022. NLR India and NLR Indonesia also completed the full transition process in 2022 and achieve that same status as of 2023. NLR Moçambique and NHR Brasil have also started the transition, founded their national entities, and written their by-laws. In 2023, it will be assessed if they are operationally ready to move forward as independent national NGOs.

Lastly, it goes without saying that none of this would be possible without the loyal support of our donors. With them, NLR has achieved our income objectives and remained a financially healthy and stable organisation. We are able to attract financial support from institutional funders for large projects and unearmarked income from individual donors to meet our urgent priorities. For this, we are very grateful. In 2022, we were finally able to organise an in-person donor meeting again. It was a great experience in which we shared and celebrated our successes.



Linda Hummel
Chief Executive Officer

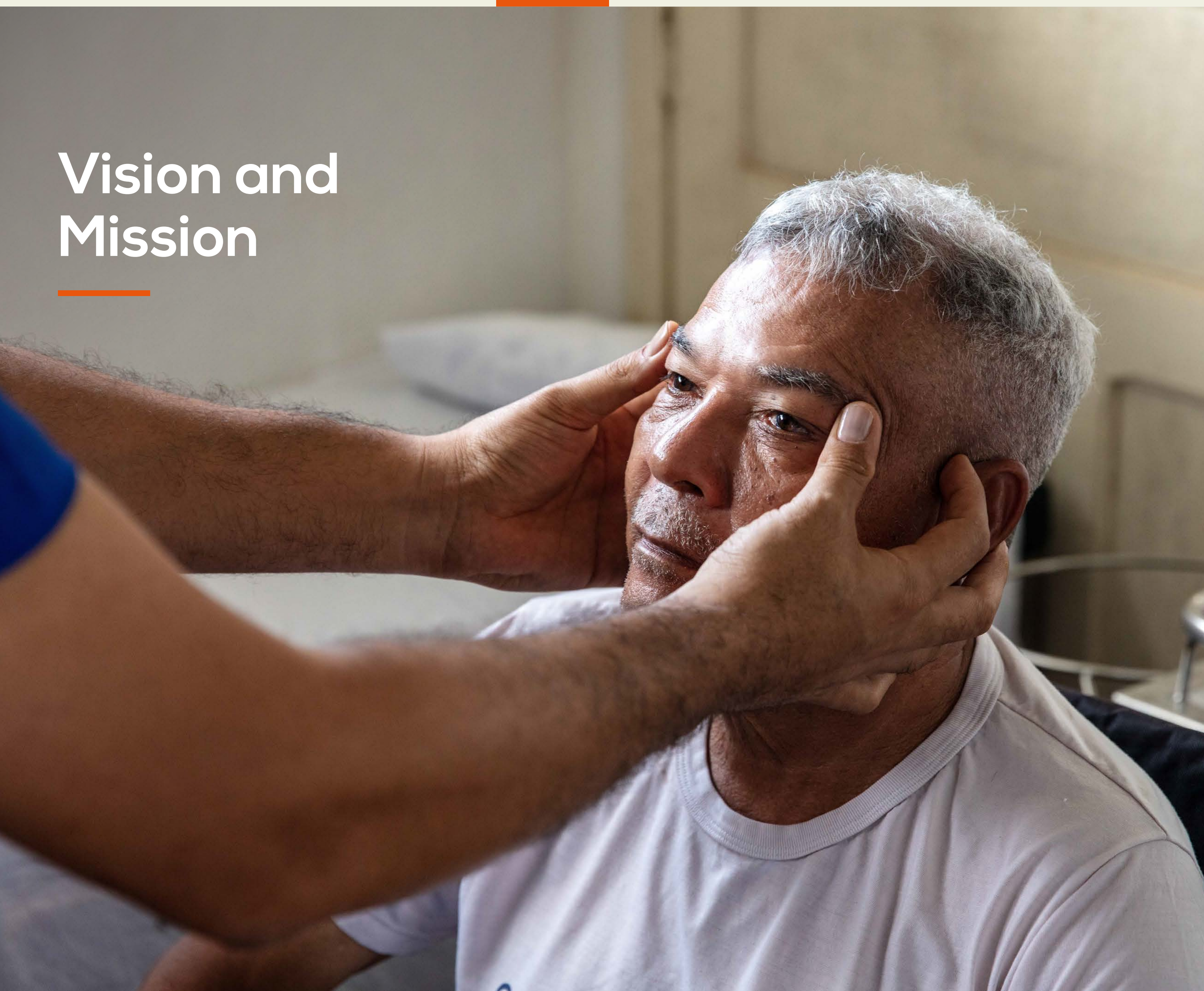
Linda Hummel



Bram van Ojik
Chair of the Supervisory Board

Bram van Ojik

Vision and Mission



In 2022, we started to develop a new multi-annual strategy. Strategies may change, but what remains is our clear vision and our guiding principles, which are supported by our mission statement.

We are convinced that the end of the road to Zero Leprosy is achievable within one generation. We will continue until **No Leprosy Remains**.

Vision

A world free of leprosy and its consequences.

This is our dream. At NLR we work hard to achieve that goal and eliminate leprosy within one generation.

Mission

In pursuit of our vision, our mission is **to prevent, detect and treat leprosy and support health, ability and full inclusion in society for persons affected by leprosy.**

Where we work

In 2022

● New leprosy patients detected in NLR intervention areas — 33.724 (1.609 children)

● Endemic areas with PEP support — 257

● People received SDR-PEP — 308.105

● Health staff trained on leprosy, prevention of disabilities and stigma — 7.590

○ Local actors voicing concerns and needs of persons affected by leprosy — 1.066

● Persons affected by leprosy with improved socio-economic situation — 3.237

Brazil

● 431 (18)
● 2
● 853
● 1.245
○ 20
● 40

the Netherlands

Nepal

● 756 (0)
● 77
● 57.834
● 1.113
● 140
● 452

Nigeria

548 (35) ●
26 ●
10.860 ●
719 ●

Mozambique

1.021 (67) ●
7 ●
6.429 ●
99 ●
88 ○
139 ●

India

● 30.437 (1.447)
● 124
● 174.127
● 1.656
○ 449
● 1.284

Indonesia

● 541 (32)
● 21
● 58.002
● 2.758
○ 360
● 1.322

[Read about our indicators](#) →

Focus on Prevention of Leprosy

Leprosy remains an important health problem in many countries, particularly among disadvantaged and marginalised populations with limited access to medical care and other resources. And despite being curable, leprosy continues to cause physical disabilities and social stigma for those affected.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, we see that accessibility to health care is still impaired for communities in which neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) such as leprosy are prevalent. In 2021, 140,546 new leprosy patients were detected globally; this number was 202,488 prior to the pandemic in 2019, suggesting that many leprosy patients remain undetected. Undiagnosed patients are a source of infection for their family and friends, resulting in continuous transmission of the disease. In 2021, over 6% of all newly diagnosed leprosy patients were children. A similar percentage of newly detected patients had already developed disabilities at the time of diagnosis. These disabilities could have been prevented if the diagnosis had been made sooner and if leprosy treatment had started in time. It is therefore important to intensify activities that focus on prevention and timely recognition of early leprosy symptoms.

NLR aims to halt the spread of the leprosy bacteria by developing and applying innovative measures such as preventive antibiotics. In addition, we invest in training health workers to recognise and treat the disease. During these training sessions, the NLR SkinApp is used to support health workers in detecting and treating skin diseases. In 2022, NLR's SkinApp has been adopted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and was merged into the WHO Skin NTD App. Moreover, we conduct research and implement projects to reduce discrimination and physical and mental health problems amongst persons affected by leprosy.

To be successful, NLR closely works together with partners, such as the WHO, ministries of health, disabled people's organisations, universities, and other leprosy and NTD organisations. NLR plays an active role in international networks such as the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP) and the Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL). Within these and other networks, we make a significant impact towards achieving our goal: Zero Leprosy in 2040!

Our interventions closely link to the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SGD 3** Ensure good health and wellbeing for people, including universal health coverage.
- SGD 10** Reducing inequalities
- SGD 17** Partnership for the goals

“No one is disabled if they have mental and willpower and action power.”

Mr. Lank, Nepal

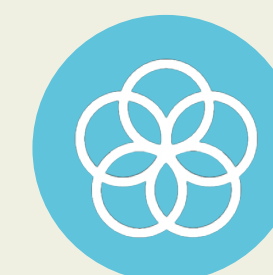
SDG 3



SDG 10



SDG 17



¹ The official number of new cases is reported each year by the WHO in September of the following year. Therefore, we cannot yet provide the official numbers for 2022. It is expected that the number of newly detected cases is higher than 2021 but still lower than normal, as the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted case finding.

Our Donors



Cherishing Continued Loyalty

During the last few years, it has become clear that global instability has limited impact on the loyalty of our donors. Income granted to NLR remained stable, enabling us to continue our work towards Zero Leprosy. In 2022, for the first time in decades, a war on the European continent between Russia and Ukraine resulted in skyrocketing inflation and energy and fuel prices.

We expected a decrease in donations because of these circumstances. Fortunately, our donors remained loyal, which makes us very proud and grateful. Their steady donations and support enable NLR to truly make a difference for persons affected by leprosy. We highly value our supporters, partners, and donors and ensure that we keep them informed and connected to our progress.

Read some testimonials from our partners, donors and volunteers about why they support NLR.



“I work at a UNESCO school that focuses on peace and human rights. We chose NLR as the charity we wish to support. The involvement among colleagues and students in leprosy control is very high.”

Peter Euser, Ambassador of NLR



“Through the work in the thrift shop that donates all income to NLR, all our volunteers contribute to the detection and cure of persons affected by leprosy, this makes me feel good.”

Alie Kattenbeld,
Volunteer at the Leprosy Charity Shop in Deventer



“Leprosy often prevents people from pursuing their own livelihoods independently. This, in turn, creates structural poverty and social exclusion. If you contribute to fighting leprosy, you are in fact also contributing to poverty reduction in large parts of the world.”

Mayor Hans van der Pas, Chairman and player in the Dutch Mayors' Soccer Team (NBE)



“Personally, I think NLR is a great cause. NLR achieves great results and has very concrete goals: a world without leprosy in 2040. Donors often tell me that this makes it very clear for them what the impact is of NLR's work and how the money is spent. I am very proud to be a fundraiser for NLR and will continue to do so in the future.”

Henk, door-to-door fundraiser for NLR

Cooperating with institutional donors for long term impact

Partnerships with foundations, governments, multilateral organisations, and other international NGOs are crucial to reach Zero Leprosy. The financial resources received from these institutions help NLR create long-term impact. And as partners with expertise and networks, they contribute greatly to our mission. In 2022, we continued working with dedicated partners such as the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP), Coalition for Operational Research on Neglected Tropical Diseases (COR-NTD), the Dutch Postcode Lottery, and Leprosy Research Initiative (LRI).

The Leprosy Missions Australia (TLMA) was one of our new funding partners in Indonesia. They had always considered working in Indonesia, and after coming across an article that focused on NLR's leprosy-friendly villages, working alongside us became their priority. Andrew Newmarch, International Programme Manager at TLMA, said, "We want to be involved in defeating leprosy. With this collaboration, we are supporting an organisation that has good technical and research capabilities and one that has established sound relationships with the government."

New Pooled Funding Initiative

Our cooperation within the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP) has long been strong. In 2022, NLR developed two relevant proposals for ILEP and participated in a third. All were awarded by funds from ILEP's reserves. The three projects include a self-assessment tool for meaningful participation of persons affected by neglected tropical diseases; a global mapping initiative of persons affected by leprosy; and a capacity building solution for the global dwindling of leprosy expertise. Geoff Warne, CEO ILEP, recently reflected on these three projects:



George Warne, CEO ILEP

Why is it important to include persons affected by leprosy in projects?

"ILEP-members have made a policy commitment to meaningful participation of persons affected by leprosy in their organisations, but until now, there has been no tool for measuring changes in participation over time. One of the newly funded projects pilots such a tool. We expect the benefits to include greater awareness of people's right to participation, more transparency, and an impetus for actions that will enhance participation."

Why focus on capacity building and strengthening?

"Diminishing leprosy expertise is one of the greatest challenges we face on the road to Zero Leprosy. NLR tackles this challenge by ensuring that we have a suite of updated, modern materials, and by proposing contemporary learning approaches that are feasible and effective. The 'proof of concept' will be through piloting these resources in a diverse range of countries, after which the hope is to roll out the programme internationally."

What advantages do you expect to see from ILEP partners in this pooled funding approach?

"Collaboration and coordination are the 'heartbeat' of ILEP. Achieving a future without leprosy is too big a challenge for an individual organisation, but we can see tangible progress when we work together. The strategic benefit is that the pooled approach enables ILEP members to tackle larger, multi-country, multi-year, game-changing projects that would be beyond the capacity of individual member associations."

Capacity Building for National Fundraising

In 2022, NLR continued to strengthen capacity in institutional fundraising across the alliance. To gain more insight into the key gaps for successful fundraising, we carried out an extensive analysis of each alliance member and the international office. The general recommendations included stronger cases for support, more focus on specific markets, and to be more on top of tracking opportunities. Each office will be able to use its specific recommendations to adjust its fundraising efforts. This will lead to stronger, more focused, more proactive fundraising within the alliance in 2023, and to stronger alliance members in the future.



The Dutch Postcode Lottery

The Dutch Postcode Lottery is one of NLR's most important partners. We have been a beneficiary for 26 years, receiving an annual contribution in 2022 of €1,350,000. With this contribution, we come closer every year to our dream of a world without leprosy. And because it is unearmarked income, we are free to allocate it where and when it is most needed. We greatly appreciate the Dutch Postcode Lottery's unwavering commitment and their ongoing contributions to our mission to fight leprosy. With their continued support, we are more able to raise awareness of our cause among a broader public.



Dream Fund

In addition to this annual contribution, we received €9,375,000 from the Dutch Postcode Lottery's Dream Fund in 2017, which funded our multi-year "Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project (PEP++)". This ground-breaking research project seeks to halt the transmission of leprosy in India, Brazil, Indonesia, Nepal, and Bangladesh by way of an enhanced preventive treatment. These countries account for around 80% of all new leprosy patients. The Leprosy Mission International funds the work done in Bangladesh. For more information about this project, please see [page 23](#).





Individual Donors and Volunteers

Connecting and communicating with our individual donors

Thanks to the support of more than 46,500 individual donors from the Netherlands, we were able to help thousands of persons affected by leprosy in various parts of the world. Through their contributions, we realised a budgeted income of €2.9 million. Our donors contributed generously, especially during the holiday season in December. The door-to-door recruitment of structural individual donors remains a priority and was successful. And in 2022, we recruited 4,335 new structural donors (235 more than in 2021).

During the last four decades, NLR volunteers have gone door-to-door with collection boxes in the week before World Leprosy Day. But due to COVID-19, this initiative was not possible in 2022. Unfortunately, our three largest collection groups stopped their volunteer work after COVID-19, as there was no succession for the coordinators who supervised the volunteers. We are very grateful for years of commitment by this special group of volunteers. Naturally, we have organised a fitting farewell for the coordinators.

Close Contact

We find it very important to involve our donors and inform them of the results of our work and any other relevant developments. We use various forms of communication to keep them updated, including a donor magazine, email newsletters, and our website. Ultimately, in-person meetings bring us closer together. We were very happy to organise two donor meetings in April at the Central Museum in Utrecht. These were attended by many donors and facilitated by NLR staff

Needs-Based Information

We like to honour the special wishes and interests of our donors by tailoring the content of our communications accordingly. We conduct frequent donor surveys to gain insight into how we can improve the information and leprosy topics our donors are most interested in. In 2022, we started to prepare for our next survey, which will be disseminated in 2023. Whenever we welcome a new donor, we call to thank them personally for their contribution and to ask them how they valued the door-to-door conversation. We value communication with our donors greatly, as they contribute significantly to our goal of a world without leprosy. As a smaller organisation, we are also able to make personal calls and send handwritten postcards to thank them for their donations.

Investments in fundraising and donor recruitment are being done with care and connection. We developed a special welcome programme in 2022 that tailors information to different needs as much as possible. This process seems to be successful, as many donors remain loyal after the first year. We also started developing contact strategies for structural donors after the first year and for major individual donors. For all these initiatives, we use a donor-centred approach.

Solving Complaints

We take complaints very seriously and strive to address them in a satisfactory manner. The donor service desk is available during office hours to answer all questions and complaints. In 2022, we administrated 12 complaints, all of which were mainly related to door-to-door recruitment. An important learning point for us is to indicate even more clearly that we request long-term support and not a one-off donation. Naturally, we have stopped direct debit payments for those who do not want to donate periodically. All complaints were promptly dealt with and, depending on the nature of a complaint, either explained or investigated.



Charitable legacies

Last year we received € 4.0 million from 74 legacies. That is € 2.4 million more than we forecasted. We consider legacies to be very special gifts and feel honoured that many donors entrust us to spend their legacies after they have passed away for the benefit of persons affected by leprosy.

To inform people of the possibility to include NLR in their will, we continued methods of communication that we saw success with in the previous year. Such methods included our own donor magazine, website, TV guides, and specials and ads in the Dutch national newspaper, Trouw.

By using testimonials from loyal donors and interviews with experts in the field of leprosy, we inspired people to think about their ideals and how to pursue them by means of legacies and structural donations.

We also created online campaigns on Facebook and developed tools that helped people think about their legacy and how to arrange legacy donations via a notary. We conducted this operation in line with the Dutch code of conduct regarding legacies.

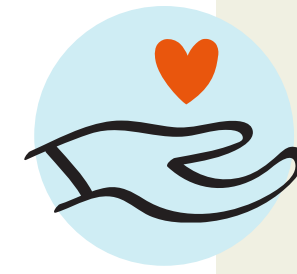
Named Funds

Some donors have specific goals in mind that they wish to contribute to, as they find a certain aspect in leprosy control important. This could mean they wish to donate specifically to early detection and treatment, preventative treatment, research, innovation, capacity building, improving livelihoods, or leprosy control in a specific country. For instance, many Dutch people have a connection with Indonesia. For these people, a named fund can be made so donations are tailored to his or her specific wishes. For NLR, this is an attractive donation form because it involves longer commitment and amounts that are typically higher. In 2022, NLR successfully registered its first named fund.



“Uncle Ad had a relatively secluded life himself, but was engaged with others.”

Renske, Uncle Ad's niece and executor



A conversation with Uncle Ad's niece and executor, about his life and motivation to include NLR in his legacy

"Uncle Ad was a modest man. He lived for 97 years in his family home, which he left almost as it was built. Uncle Ad enjoyed his lifestyle, and he lived in simplicity and was not materialistic. He had a limited social life but was caring towards others. Thus, he donated to charities during his lifetime and even included some in his legacy, including NLR.

Uncle Ad was intelligent and well read. He devoured the newspaper every day, underlining some sentences, cutting them out and even hanging them up to think about later. Renske, Uncle Ad's niece and executor, said of Ad, "Encyclopaedias were always within reach. He ploughed through everything and liked to look at subjects from different angles."

"When he was 95, I approached him to inquire about his wishes for when he passed away. Although a difficult question to ask, it was important to give this some thought because of his age. He simply replied that I should take care of the arrangements when the time comes. But he also

mentioned his desire to support various charities through his will. To ensure this, we decided to visit a notary together to legally document his wishes. I told him, 'You get to decide who receives what.' It was a great honour to be entrusted with the role of executor, but it also came with a significant amount of responsibility."

"In his will, he indicated that he wanted to express his social commitment. In his view, leprosy was awful; he did not understand how this disease still occurred. Especially when for €35 you can treat and cure a leprosy patient and prevent further infection. For people who are well off here, that is a small amount. "

"Uncle Ad lived his life in a completely unique way. I think that is admirable and deserves respect. His interest in the world and his compassion for others indicate that he was a special person. With this interview, my family and I want to express our appreciation for him. He deserves this."

Raising awareness for leprosy in the Netherlands

Approach and results

We continue successful communication for leprosy and the Leprastichting—our Dutch name—in the Netherlands. Our donor magazine is very much appreciated. The number of e-mail newsletter subscribers increased by about 70% in 2022.

During certain periods of the year, we utilise multiple communication channels such as TV, national newspapers, and websites of external parties. For example, we commonly use such varied forms of communication during World Leprosy Day and the—traditionally—important giving months of November and December. To generate brand awareness, an advertising campaign runs on Facebook throughout the year. By using various ads, we try to reach as many people as possible and introduce them to the work of NLR. In 2022, we reached 195,772 people using advertising on Facebook, and over 7,000 people visited the website through these ads.

Concrete Goal

We find that our goal of a world without leprosy by 2040 is incredibly appealing to our donors. In November, we deployed a small campaign with this message through various channels (website, e-mail newsletters, Trouw, our own social media, and third-party websites). We learned that such online campaigns contribute to awareness, but generation of new contacts or donations is hard amongst persons who are not yet familiar with leprosy and our work. Digitalisation is constantly and rapidly changing. NLR tries to keep up, but it is sometimes challenging to stay up to date and ensure that we can reach our supporters and donors effectively.

Leprastichting: Online channels in 2022

	2021		2022
<div>f</div> <div>Followers on Facebook</div>	2.253	↗	2.345
<div>🐦</div> <div>Followers on Twitter</div>	1.443	↘	1.426
<div>in</div> <div>Followers on LinkedIn</div>	772	↗	839
<div>🌐</div> <div>Unique website visitors</div>	89.458	↗	90.590
<div>▶</div> <div>Youtube views</div>	15.250	↗	41.800
<div>📖</div> <div>Newsletter subscribers</div>	4.905	↗	8.415

Results Leprastichting/Dutch website and social media



Wereldlepradag

Een wereld zonder lepra. Het moet. En het kan.

Help je mee?

www.leprastichting.nl/wereldlepradag



De Klepper

Augustus 2021

“Ze missen het contact met lotgenoten”

Leprapatiënten zijn erg geïsoleerd bij zelfzorggroepen. Door de COVID-19 pandemie kunnen echter veel bijeenkomsten niet doorgaan. Dit trekt een flinke wissel op de deelnemers. Zo ondervindt ergotherapeute Rebeca Buarrique, uit Brazilië.

Rebeca (33) werkt in de stad Cabo de Santo Agostinho, aan de oostkust van Brazilië. In 2016 nam ze het initiatief tot het starten van een zelfzorggroep voor leprapatiënten in haar stad. Rebeca: “Door een groep te vormen wij als ergotherapeuten meer mensen bereiken en helpen. Tegelijk hebben de deelnemers veel steun aan elkaar en leren ze van hun lotgenoten. Dat is echt de toegevoegde waarde van een zelfzorggroep.”

De Leprastichting ondersteunt haar met zelfzorgartikelen zoals verhalen, zeep en wastelijzen en ook bij het organiseren van activiteiten voor de groep. Rebeca: “Dankzij de voorraden van de Leprastichting kunnen we normaalgesproken elke maand onze activiteiten organiseren en zijn we niet afhankelijk van de gezondheidsdiensten van de gemeente.”

Grote impact door COVID-19
Nu met de COVID-19 pandemie zijn de bijeenkomsten

helaas opgeschort. Dat heeft veel impact op de deelnemers. Rebeca: “De groep is een plek waar mensen kunnen praten en waar ze gehoord worden. Ze missen de vrienden die ze er hebben gemaakt en de contacten met lotgenoten.”

Hartverscheurend
De COVID-19 pandemie heeft gevolgen voor de hele bevolking. Maar helemaal voor mensen die een gezondheidsprobleem hebben, zoals leprapatiënten. Zij zijn economisch extra kwetsbaar en hebben veel moeite om aan voedsel en hulpmiddelen te komen of om een baan te vinden. Ze leven daardoor vaak in grote armoede. Rebeca: “Soms zie ik mensen in mijn praktijk die de hele dag nog niets gegeten hebben, dat is echt hartverscheurend. We zijn daarom al snel gestart met het uitdelen van voedsel en zelfzorgartikelen aan de meest kwetsbare leprapatiënten zodat ze in ieder geval in hun basisbehoeften kunnen voorzien.”

Nu de zelfzorggroepen niet bij elkaar kunnen komen, gaat Rebeca soms op huisbezoek of ze gebruikt haar mobiele telefoon om contact te houden. “Ik vertel en voorzie ze van zelfzorgartikelen. Maar natuurlijk is dat niet hetzelfde als een bijeenkomst van de zelfzorggroep,” aldus Rebeca.

Raising awareness for Leprosy internationally

NLR is transitioning into an alliance of national NGOs. Together we are working towards the same goal, albeit with different focus areas on how to get there. This raises brand management issues and challenges. To this end, it was important for us in 2022 to confirm our international brand strategy. We aimed this strategy at establishing a uniform brand identity, providing adequate communication support to staff and projects, increasing visibility, and boosting the internal brand experience.

Uniform Brand Identity

In 2019, we developed NLR’s new visual brand identity. And this year, after three years of working with a new brand manual, it was time to evaluate how communication staff and designers can work with the document in practice. Feedback was gathered from different countries for this purpose, resulting in an updated brand manual with clearer guidelines on several brand-related issues regarding logo, organisation name, colours, social media, and more.

Visibility

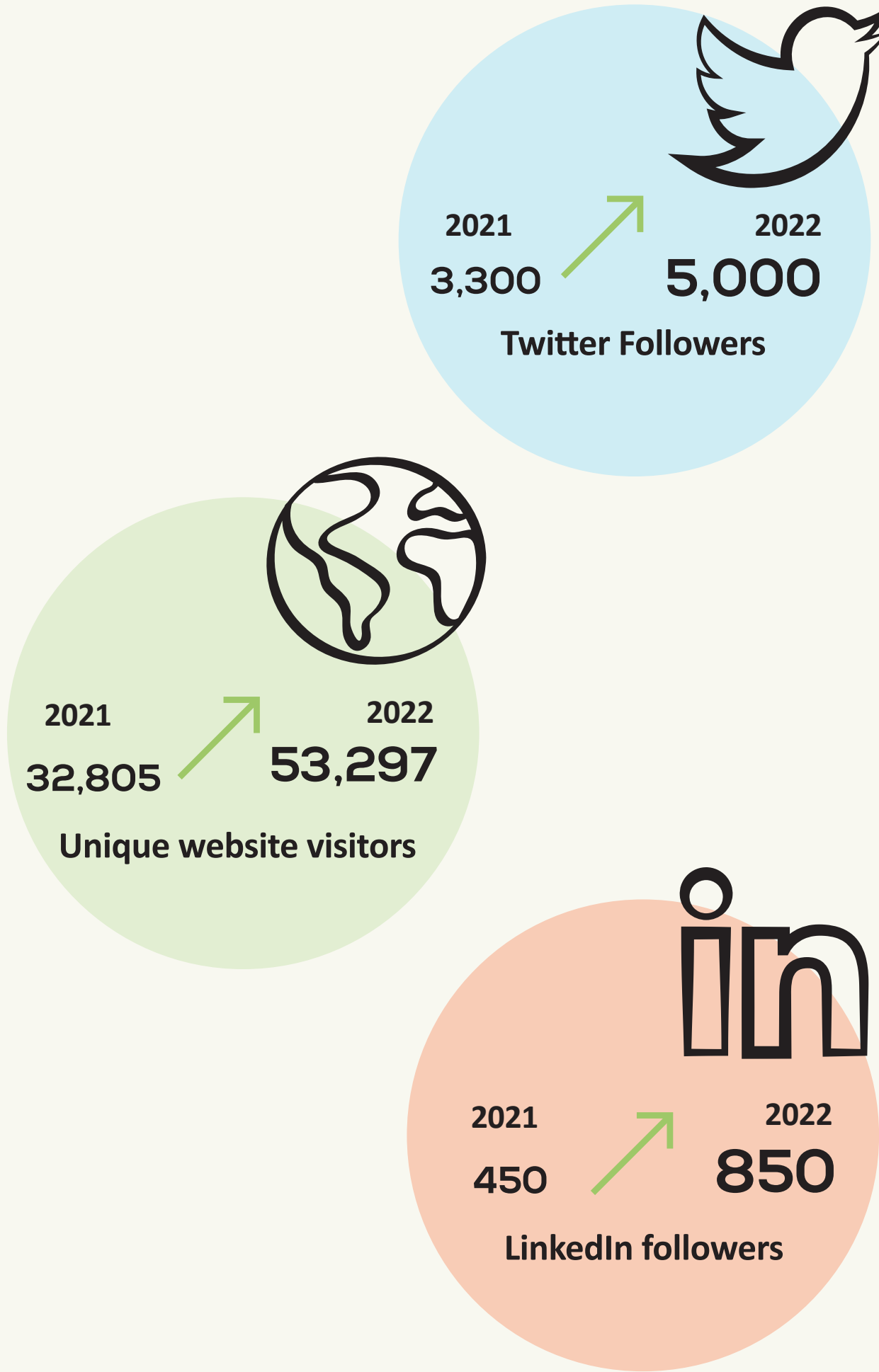
In 2022, we continued to invest in social advertising in an effort to generate more visibility. Naturally, quality content is essential. We’ve created an internal blog team to produce high-quality blogs, which we can disseminate to engage our stakeholders. This resulted in a substantial increase in traffic to our international website and to our follower bases on Twitter and LinkedIn. Another highlight of 2022 came at the International Leprosy Congress, where NLR staff presented on our flagship projects. Naturally, these moments were shared through our social media channels.

Boosting Brand Experience Among Staff

Life after COVID-19 brought staff around the globe back to the office. With that a world map including NLR’s working areas and results per country was brought back to life too. The map showcases achievements of alliance members in an effort to inspire and inform colleagues of what we contribute to while working towards Zero Leprosy. In addition, a group of NLR staff met monthly to discuss relevant new items and to ensure our achievements were shared with donors and other stakeholders. This led to many communication opportunities and a Top 10 List of NLR’s greatest results in 2022. This was shared both internally and externally and was highly appreciated.

Overall, we managed to stay connected with and grow our (online) audiences. NLR’s online channels attracted more visitors and established a greater follower base than it had in 2021. An interesting indicator for our success to engage with our stakeholders is that the percentage of returning website visitors doubled to around 20%.

NLR: Online channels in 2022



Zero Leprosy



Three Zeros Strategy

NLR's work aims at accelerating the road towards Zero Leprosy. To accomplish this, we have developed three strategic programmes to tackle the different aspects of the disease and its consequences: Zero Transmission, Zero Disability, and Zero Exclusion.

Zero Transmission



Our Zero Transmission programme aims to break the chain of transmission of the leprosy bacteria, focusing on early case detection and treatment and preventive medication for contacts of persons affected by leprosy

Zero Disability



Our Zero Disability programme aims to prevent persons affected by leprosy from developing new disabilities during or after treatment and to contribute to their mental well-being.

Zero Exclusion



Our Zero Exclusion programme aims to promote inclusive societies and improve lives for persons affected by leprosy by strengthening organisations that voice their rights and needs and by removing barriers to services and community activities.



Zero Transmission



Our Focus

NLR's goal is to help stop the transmission of leprosy by accelerating a decline in the number of new patients detected annually. The organisation has been actively involved in proving the effectiveness of SDR-PEP and preventive treatment against leprosy, and in integrating this innovative approach into leprosy control programmes. Contacts of leprosy patients are screened for the disease before receiving SDR-PEP, which helps to detect new patients early and to prevent disabilities.

When SDR-PEP is administered, it kills most leprosy bacteria in those who have been infected but have not yet developed the disease. Therefore, SDR-PEP also prevents the risk of further leprosy transmission. Since the WHO endorsed the implementation of SDR-PEP in 2018, NLR has been a vocal proponent of its expanded use. With the use of preventive medication and early diagnosis of leprosy patients, NLR is committed to achieving Zero Leprosy by 2040.

What we do

NLR advocates for the widespread implementation of SDR-PEP and supports endemic countries in adopting this preventive medication by providing technical advice, sharing practical tools, and offering lessons learned. The organisation leads several international projects that focus on improving early case finding and the implementation of preventive treatment in diverse contexts. NLR is also studying a new regimen to enhance the effectiveness of preventive medication.

Zero Transmission

Flagship projects

From the field

“I don’t want to stay alone at home. This will make me sad if I have to lock myself in the room because of this leprosy. I go to school every day to become a doctor so that I can cure people in my village.”

Laura* (13), Indonesia

* For the privacy and protection of minors we changed the name. Real name is known with NLR.

Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project (PEP++)

“[The Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project \(PEP++\)](#)” reached a major milestone in October 2022, as all five countries had started enrolment in the enhanced preventive medication regimen clinical trial. After many months working to attain final ethical approvals, political clearance, and drug shipments, the study advanced to full implementation in Nepal and India, joining Brazil, where it started in 2021. Bangladesh and Indonesia conducted smaller-scale pilot tests that gave them experience in running the trial procedures. The full implementation of the project is now a reality after years of preliminary studies.

While it is positive that all countries have included close contacts of persons affected by leprosy in the clinical trial, the study is still behind its implementation targets. The end of the year saw a total of 9,806 enrolments—those listed by persons affected by leprosy and located by research assistants. Of these, 7,744 were effectively included in the study after taking



either the new enhanced PEP++ regimen or SDR-PEP. The annual totals were less than expected, an effect caused by various factors including bureaucratic challenges in Indonesia, India, and Bangladesh; the transfer of research staff in Brazil; and rifampicin shortages in several countries. This longer duration has an impact on budget projections for coming years. Furthermore, a series of adjustments has been made to reduce costs and increase financial support moving forward.

This NLR flagship project is a source of great excitement in the leprosy world. It provides hope for a major new tool to achieve the dream of Zero Leprosy. At the 21st International Leprosy Congress (ILC) in Hyderabad, India, in November 2022, the Assistant Director General of Health of the Government of India, Dr Anil Kumar, called this study “the next big promise for leprosy prevention” and announced that “the world is eagerly awaiting our results as evidence for further roll-out.”



Zero Transmission

Flagship projects

From the field

“This approach could increase the chance of finding hidden leprosy patients and also significantly reduce discrimination against leprosy patients.”

Marga*, Ethiopian Nurse,
working in skin camps

* Pseudonym

PEP4LEP

PEP4LEP researches the best methods in screening and preventing leprosy in Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Tanzania. Thirty thousand contacts of leprosy patients in the three countries are being screened for leprosy and other skin diseases, and they receive SDR-PEP when eligible. The project involves two interventions, community-based "skin camp" and a health centre-based approach.

Project partners include four knowledge institutes (Erasmus MC the Netherlands, Lúrio University Mozambique, CUHAS University Tanzania, and AHRI Ethiopia), the German Leprosy and Relief Association, and the Ministries of Health in the three African countries.

Currently, the project is still experiencing medication shortages because of the aftermath of COVID-19 and global challenges in the production of pharmaceuticals. Nevertheless, the project team is proud to announce that in 2022 the 50% milestone of participants' inclusion was reached!

Other 2022 project results include:

- In April, the first PEP4LEP skin camp in Mozambique was organised under a mango tree in Cazuzo, Murrupula district. All three PEP4LEP countries are now implementing both study interventions.
- In all countries combined, 9,318 contacts of leprosy patients were screened for leprosy and other skin diseases. Of these contacts, 8,439 received SDR-PEP.
- A total of 144 new leprosy patients were detected through the PEP4LEP project.
- In addition, 4,455 people were diagnosed with skin diseases that were not leprosy. These contacts received topical skin medication or were referred to specialised care when needed.
- Six articles were published and made freely available (open access) in medical scientific journals.
- Early project results were presented on various platforms, including the 21st International Leprosy Congress 2022 in Hyderabad, India.



Zero Transmission

Flagship projects

From the field

“I have never seen an intervention that benefited us like this. In addition to providing me with treatment, all my loved ones have received a medicine that will protect them. Two other people close to me have been identified with leprosy and have been treated.”

Kamal*, Leprosy patient,
Chaichai community Nigeria

* Pseudonym

Ready4PEP

In Ready4PEP, we implement SDR-PEP in Mozambique and Nigeria and improve care for persons affected by leprosy. In 2022, Nigeria and Mozambique faced many challenges that hampered the continuation of activities, including cyclones and heavy rains, security issues, and delays in medication deliveries in both countries. Government officials continue supporting the project as they acknowledge the added value of Ready4PEP for leprosy control. A major success was the peer exchange visit to Nigeria in September. There, the Mozambique and Nigeria teams shared lessons learned, developed ideas for how to overcome challenges, assessed field activities, and made plans for advocacy opportunities.

In Mozambique, meetings were organised with the National Leprosy Programme and provincial supervisors to discuss further upscaling the project. Capacity building activities continued and included trainings on clinical management of leprosy and SDR-PEP administration for health professionals in three new districts. SDR-PEP administration started in all seven districts, and the team is now starting community campaigns (home visits) to reach close contacts of persons affected by leprosy who are most at risk of developing the disease. In addition, the lack of a drug management system

and shortages of leprosy medication resulted in further delays and a lower number of contacts that could otherwise be included. Although four new self-care groups were created and four more were revitalised, more groups need to be set up. If established, such groups will help persons affected by leprosy take sufficient care of their affected eyes, hands, and feet.

Nigeria has scaled-up activities to 14 new local government areas. We have also seen considerable progress towards the three key project outcomes: the national programme included SDR-PEP and combined self-care groups as part of the national leprosy and disability prevention strategy; all 26 local government areas have (partly) functioning leprosy services; and there is an increased change in behaviour of stakeholders across all levels. Moreover, significant improvement in wound care has been observed in 41 self-care groups, and members of such groups expressed positive impact on their lives. Successful capacity building activities were conducted, such as training leprosy staff at various levels. Although activities were hampered due to rifampicin shortages, the team was able to screen and treat 10,860 contacts this year.



Zero Transmission

Flagship projects

Leprosy Vaccine: LepVax

While working alongside the Infectious Disease Research Institute in Seattle, Washington, U.S., the American Leprosy Missions (ALM) initiated the development of a leprosy-specific vaccine. The objective of this vaccine is to protect contacts of leprosy patients from the disease and reduce transmission. Investments by multiple partners—including ALM, NLR, and the Leprosy Research Initiative—resulted in LepVax. Up until now, LepVax study results are not only promising for leprosy prevention, but are also showing to be a potential treatment option for leprosy patients.

NLR's medical director is a member of the LepVax Vaccine Advisory Group, which provides recommendations for the LepVax research trajectory. Vaccine development is a very lengthy trajectory for most diseases. The phase of clinical safety trials of LepVax in healthy human volunteers has finished, and the vaccine is—after a long COVID-19 delay—heading into the next trial phase: testing it among those most at risk of developing leprosy. Fiocruz, the Institution of Science and Technology in Health in Latin America, based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, supports the execution of this new project phase.



Stefanie Weiland,
Executive Vice President
of Programs American
Leprosy Missions

“When I recently spoke with Artur Custodio Moreira de Sousa, MORHAN National Coordinator and Member of the Health Surveillance Commission of the National Health Council from the Ministry of Health in Brazil, he said, ‘We need innovation like this vaccine to end Hansen’s disease.’ I keep remembering his perspective as a representative of people affected, of the urgency and need and it drives me forward. We have an exceptional team of people involved in the development and trial of LepVax and I am confident that with their diverse expertise, we will take the potential of this tool as far as it can go to help end leprosy and leave a lasting legacy.”





Zero Disability



Our Focus

Leprosy can cause lasting nerve damage and physical disabilities, including blindness and impairments to hands and feet. NLR focuses on preventing the development of disabilities or the worsening of existing ones by promoting early diagnosis, adequate treatments, and self-care. We also focus on ensuring the mental well-being of persons diagnosed with leprosy. Many persons affected by leprosy experience depression, anxiety, and/or suicidal thoughts at some point in their lives, even long after they have been cured of the disease. Mental illness is a debilitating factor, potentially impacting people's day-to-day lives in the long term.

What we do

In 2022, we have intensified our actions in strengthening health systems to diagnose leprosy patients earlier and provide adequate support and care to people affected by leprosy both during and after treatment. We have been piloting approaches, training health workers, and advocating with authorities for better services to prevent disabilities. In 2022, we were able to more frequently visit and support newly created and existing self-care groups, allowing us to improve their results and link them to other community organisations. These groups—which also include persons affected by other diseases—support individuals in the management of the disease, its consequences, and the necessary treatment.

Last year, we also finalised and shared the main findings of the research and pilot projects on counselling approaches to ensure the mental well-being of persons affected by leprosy. We have collected additional data on mental well-being in different settings and started to integrate this aspect into other interventions, such as self-care groups or training of health workers.

Zero Disability

Flagship Projects

“Together with the local health centre’s leprosy worker, we regularly visit her and other persons who already completed the medical treatment to check their condition in order to avoid disability, any potential reactions and social problems.”

Dr Teky Budiawan,
NLR Indonesia
Senior Technical Advisor



House Visits and Counselling for Treatment of Disabilities Due to Leprosy in Indonesia

In Sulawesi, Indonesia, a project is being implemented to follow persons affected by leprosy who are at risk of developing (further) disabilities. Even after having been treated for leprosy, existing nerve damage or impairments may still worsen, or leprosy immune reactions may occur. To prevent this health deterioration, NLR Indonesia, together with local health clinics, set up a system of semi-active surveillance by trained health workers.

In 2022, 208 patients who completed their leprosy medication were supported to prevent the occurrence and worsening of disabilities. About 68 persons affected by leprosy visited the clinic of their own accord for a health check. For 123 people, it was difficult to visit the clinic for various reasons (e.g., they presumed they were not at risk, or they were suffering from ulcers on their feet, thus impairing their mobility). These 123 persons were visited at home by a health worker, who examined them and provided counselling. For these reasons, more persons who have been treated for leprosy are now convinced to visit their local health centres for regular check-ups.



Zero Disability

Flagship Projects

“NLR India supported me a lot. NLR’s officials regularly visited my place and also my school along with the government health staff. They sensitized and generated awareness among school teachers, students, and villagers on leprosy. They also taught us self-care techniques for eye, hand and feet to prevent them from further damage. Now I am practicing the exercises regularly at home and have started gaining the sensation and strength in my hand.”

Sana* (14), India

* For the privacy and protection of minors we changed the name. Real name is known with NLR.

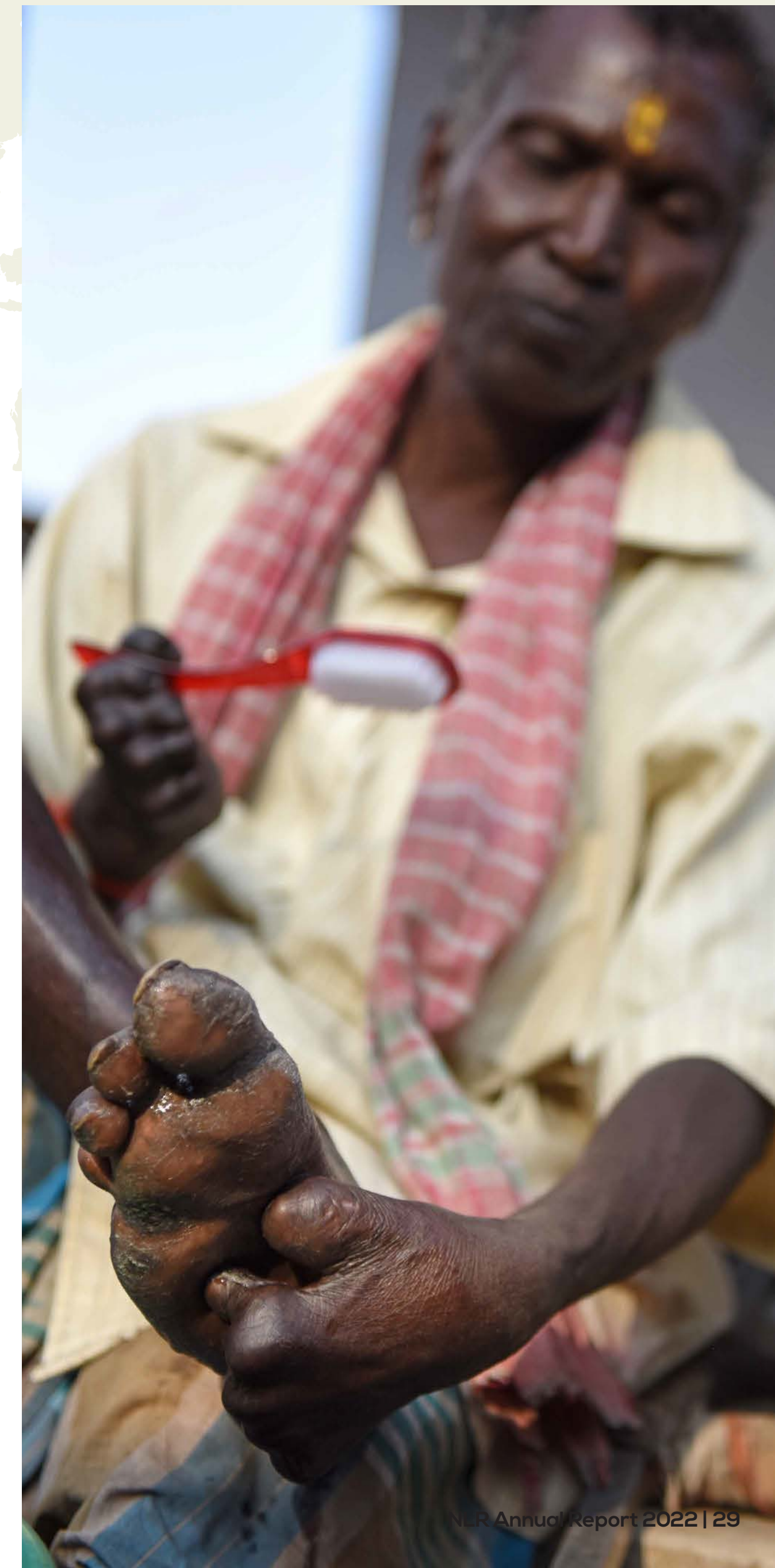
Self-Care Camps in India

In 2022, a total of 20 self-care groups were formed. These groups comprised 475 persons affected by leprosy and 86 persons with lymphatic filariasis. Staff at these groups were all trained in self-care practices. The number of health staff trained on self-care and nerve and muscle testing in this project was 175. A total of 263 community health volunteers were trained on the identification of disabilities due to leprosy and lymphatic filariasis.

Improvement in the condition of skin sores (ulcers) can be taken as an indicator of persons practising self-care. During 2022, a total of 116 persons affected by leprosy reported having ulcers in these self-care groups. But thanks to the self-care they practiced, ulcers healed in 95 (82%) of the group members.



A total of 57 members of community-based organisations and representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions were also trained on the identification of disabilities caused by leprosy and lymphatic filariasis. In this project, one component was to facilitate reconstructive surgery for persons with a disability due to leprosy by counselling on the procedure. In 2022, NLR in India facilitated 51 persons with disabilities to undergo reconstructive surgery. Also, 455 persons with a disability were supported to receive assistive devices such as mobility aids.



Zero Exclusion



Our Focus

Persons affected by leprosy are often deprived of fundamental human rights, excluded from social and economic community activities, and cannot access basic medical services. NLR focuses on addressing multiple factors that contribute to this unfortunate situation, including discriminatory laws and regulations, barriers due to impairments caused by the disease, and stigma coming from family, community members, and even health workers. Moreover, persons affected by leprosy often experience feelings of low self-esteem and self-worth, which only further exacerbates their isolation. NLR therefore also pays attention to other interconnecting social factors that may exacerbate exclusion, such as gender, ethnicity, poverty, and lack of education.



Eduardo

“I see that our minds are open, we can see something when it is not done well, and it harms the rights of people with disabilities.”

What we do

In 2022, NLR alliance members continued to support leadership trajectories of persons affected by leprosy and strengthen their groups and associations to further drive change. We aim to expose and remove structural barriers to persons affected by leprosy and aid them in exercising their power. NLR has also engaged partner organisations and social actors to work towards disability-inclusive community models. In addition, we supported economic and business development initiatives to break the vicious cycle of leprosy, poverty, and exclusion. We also intensified our presence in (online) media to raise awareness of leprosy and its consequences, share anti-discrimination and advocacy messages, and offer a platform to persons affected by leprosy. Groups and organisations of persons affected by leprosy often work closely with more general organisations of persons with disabilities. This enhances the impact of advocacy and lobby efforts for more inclusive laws and policies.

Zero Exclusion

Flagship Projects

“ I know that it is very difficult for us to accept each other, first of all, to accept our condition and accept how others look at us. This is a disease that is historic and is carried with prejudice and a lot of bad things. But we have to change this view. And if we don't start with ourselves, the ones who are affected by leprosy, how do we expect others who are not affected to see it differently? First, we have to come to understand that it is a disease. It has treatment, it has a clinical cure, but we have to change our internal view of it.”

Tiago (30), India

Local Inclusive Development in Brazil

The Inclusive Development project in Brazil addresses the needs of persons affected by leprosy at the local level. The project aims to work in a multisectoral approach, improving the linkage between the Ministries of Health and Social Affairs at the municipal level. Persons affected are organised in groups and receive psychological support, which became even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic. They often encounter difficulties to earn a living and are therefore trained to develop economic activities such as making and selling bio jewellery.



They are empowered and informed about their rights and how to stand up to defend these rights. With support from the Ministry of Health, an (online) Empowerment and Self-Care Guide with practical activities for the group coordinators has been published. This guide is also based on NHR Brasil's experiences with such groups.

Raising awareness and disseminating accurate information is crucial—not only for persons affected by leprosy, but also for other community members and local authorities who must assume their responsibilities. In Sobral, Brazil, a local football team was enlisted to assist in strengthening community education efforts. The local government body responsible for coordinating human rights and the local Council of Persons with a Disability responded by including needs of persons affected by leprosy in their advocacy. Leprosy and its consequences were mentioned for the first time as a point of attention in a local decision-making forum.



Zero Exclusion

Flagship Projects

Towards Inclusion at National Level

In **Brazil**, we contributed to medical guidelines for the Ministry of Health, which were launched in 2022. These guidelines include the need to address stigma and discrimination, as well as to set-up strategies to improve the mental well-being of persons affected by leprosy.

In addition, NHR Brasil developed a leadership course to train leaders of groups and networks of persons affected by leprosy and other NTDs to improve their advocacy skills. NHR Brasil further facilitates their participation in a yearly forum that is part of the national Tropical Medicine Congress. In 2022, these group asked to attend the event for the first time and presented a declaration that included their demands on improving the lives of persons affected by leprosy to the president of the congress. Some weeks later, the congress president was nominated as the new Minister of Health for Brazil.

In **Indonesia**, we developed partnerships with Indonesia's national disability networks to bring the challenges faced by people affected by leprosy to the government's attention. In July 2022, the disability network FORMASI, in collaboration with NLR Indonesia, submitted a report to the national government citing specific challenges faced by persons affected by leprosy. NLR Indonesia was asked by the Ministry of National Development Planning to assist the provincial governments in developing regional action plans for persons with disabilities and help ensure that persons with disabilities due to leprosy be involved.

In **India**, NLR India—as national coordinator of the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP) and in collaboration with the Association of People Affected by Leprosy (APAL)—has been active against discriminatory laws towards persons affected. NLR India submitted official requests at the national and state level to repeal these existing laws. A positive response in terms of taking action has been received from six out of 20 states. Currently, India still has 95 discriminatory laws that the joint ILEP members continue to advocate against.



Our Impact in Numbers

To understand the progress towards zero leprosy and further enhance our impact, we monitor and evaluate our projects. We use a set of standard indicators and several customised indicators that enable us to gauge the implementation of our projects and the achievement of our targets and milestones. We complement these indicators with qualitative information to understand how our actions truly change services, policies, behaviours, and attitudes. We aim to further expand our capacity and the quality of our monitoring and evaluation system and continuously use the information gathered to shape our future actions.

New leprosy patients are detected and reported both by health workers trained by NLR and employed in health systems and by specific activities conducted by NLR and its partners. In 2022, in most countries we have seen a slight increase in the number of detected leprosy patients, after the decline in 2020 and 2021 which we had attributed to the impact of COVID-19 on health systems during those years. The increase in patients reflects the reactivation of health care services, the increase of trained healthcare providers in health facilities, and the active case-finding approach in community campaigns. One of the key strategies we are promoting to stop the transmission of leprosy is the adoption of SDR-PEP as an integral part of leprosy programmes. In 2022, we have intensified our support to health authorities in endemic areas to identify and screen contacts of leprosy patients.

This has led to a higher number of contacts who received SDR-PEP and the introduction of SDR-PEP in new areas (districts, provinces, municipalities). The expansion has been limited by the challenges of many countries to ensure availability of the necessary drugs to prevent and treat leprosy. Production and distribution of drugs remain a global issue due to the lack of raw materials and the contraction of logistic services in past years.

We focus on training health workers to improve their competencies and their ability to provide quality services. In 2022, we trained 4.730 health staff in leprosy diagnosis, treatment, and SDR-PEP, and 543 to prevent disabilities of persons affected by leprosy. We have sensitised 5.030 health staff to issues of stigma.

We also work to engage locally relevant organisations, communities, and institutions (local actors). For example: self-help groups,

Organisations of People with Disabilities, media, and village committees. We sensitise them to issues of stigma and support them in taking action to voice the rights and concerns of persons affected by leprosy so that they can contribute to more inclusive societies. In 2022, more groups involving persons affected by leprosy could gather again in-person in group settings, and new ones could be activated and supported by NLR. Naturally, improving the socio-economic participation of those affected by leprosy is an important part of our Zero Exclusion initiative. We consider equal participation in society as a basic human right. We monitor this by keeping track of how many persons affected by leprosy improved their socioeconomic situation. Thanks to advocacy efforts of different actors and NLR, persons affected by leprosy were able to attend schools and access services, loans, and agricultural inputs.



Partners and Collaborations

To achieve Zero Leprosy, collaboration with various partners is vital. NLR plays a significant role in the following partnerships, which make substantial contributions to our mission.

Infolep and InfoNTD

[Infolep](#) and [InfoNTD](#) are two online platforms for leprosy and NTD professionals, making knowledge and information more easily accessible. Infolep, focusing on leprosy, contains over 31,400 publications and attracted 40,800 unique visitors from all over the world in 2022, an increase of 28% compared with 2021.

InfoNTD is a one-stop platform that covers cross-cutting issues in neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). Continuously growing, and attracting over 42,900 unique visitors in 2022, the InfoNTD portal offers access to more than 6,400 publications, most of which are open access.

In 2022, a practical tools portal was developed on both platforms. This portal aimed to share training materials, information leaflets, and other free non-scientific tools with a bigger audience. NLR supports the mission of both portals by managing and housing the Infolep and InfoNTD team, and by financially contributing to both portals.

Leprosy Research Initiative (LRI)

The [Leprosy Research Initiative \(LRI\)](#) plays a key role in strategically funding leprosy research, strengthening research capacity, and facilitating uptake of research findings into policy and practice. NLR was a founding partner of the Initiative in 2013 and has remained a strong partner ever since. The CEO of NLR is also the Director of LRI and chairs the Executives Group, LRI's highest decision-making body; NLR's Medical Director is also a member of the Steering Committee; and NLR's Supervisory Board oversees the proceedings of the LRI. In 2022, a total of 24 ongoing and seven new research projects from various countries received funding support, including several NLR research groups. At the end of 2022, a new research capacity strengthening grant was launched that aimed to support early career researchers. The annual LRI Spring Meeting was organised as a virtual event, with 195 participants from 48 countries. LRI organised a data analysis workshop in Nepal, where NLR was represented by participants and tutors.

World Health Organization (WHO)

NLR values its fantastic and long-lasting collaboration with the WHO. In 2022, NLR's Medical Director continued his work on technical guidance based on proceedings from the WHO Task Force on Criteria for Elimination of Leprosy. A success of this Task Force is the design of the Leprosy Elimination Monitoring Tool, which was presented at the International Leprosy Congress (ILC) in Hyderabad, India. NLR helps the WHO in making this tool more broadly available and user friendly for leprosy programme managers and technical staff in endemic countries. Furthermore, the NLR SkinApp has been adopted by the WHO and will be merged into the WHO Skin NTD App—an incredible result that shows how much we value our relationship with the WHO!

Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy (GPZL)

The [Global Partnership for Zero Leprosy \(GPZL\)](#) is a coalition of organisations and individuals committed to ending leprosy. Because of the wide representation of stakeholders, GPZL plays an important role in lobbying for the strengthening of leprosy programmes through collaboration, innovation, and increased resources. NLR staff is part of the Leadership Team, taking part in activities across GPZL's pillars of Country Partnerships, Advocacy, and Research. Since 2021, LRI's coordinator has worked as a consultant to the Global Partnership to support implementation of the research agenda.





International Federation of anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP)

[ILEP](#) is a key international player on the road towards Zero Leprosy. NLR staff plays an important role within ILEP: the NLR CEO is part of the ILEP CEO group, NLR’s medical director chairs the ILEP Technical Commission (ITC), and several NLR staff are members of working groups within the ILEP. Other senior NLR staff liaise closely with ILEP member colleagues regarding availability of medicines, leprosy programmes, fundraising, and communication. NLR has shared its expertise by supporting other ILEP partners on request to help implement SDR-PEP, develop joint proposals, assist with medical technical support, or facilitate training sessions. We are also proud to announce that NLR is taking the lead in two new ILEP-funded projects that started in 2022: Lift Leprosy Learning (2022-2025) and From Words to Action. NLR is also taking part in a third new joint ILEP project: Global Leprosy Mapping Initiative.

Dutch Coalition for Disability in Development (DCDD)

NLR’s Head of Fundraising and Communication is a board member of the Dutch Coalition for Disability in Development (DCDD). This Coalition encompasses more than 20 organisations and professionals who lobby the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for better policies about the inclusion of people with disabilities, including those affected by leprosy.

Dutch Global Health Alliance (DGHA)

The Dutch Global Health Alliance is a network of Dutch NGOs working together on matters of global health. The Alliance and its members are dedicated to raising awareness surrounding the need for more concerted global health action. They also focus on working towards concrete policy options for the Dutch government, which will contribute to stronger health systems worldwide. Since its inception, the Dutch Global Health Alliance has been advocating for the Netherlands to adopt a global health strategy. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently released the first draft of its Dutch Global Health Strategy 2023-2030: “Working together for health worldwide”. This draft is the first step taken by the Netherlands to strengthen the country’s approach to global health. NLR, as part of the DGHA, will continue to monitor the development of the Dutch Global Health Strategy.

Coalition for Operational Research in Neglected Tropical Diseases (COR-NTD)

COR-NTD is a community of researchers, country partners, and programme implementers with the mutual goal of promoting research to optimise the control and elimination of NTDs. COR-NTD is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, USAID, and UK Aid and is a programme of the Task Force for Global Health. It funds operational research projects on NTDs. NLR received funding from COR-NTD for projects in Mozambique and India. In the annual COR-NTD meeting, NLR played an active role in presenting research results and practical tools.

The NTD NGO Network (NNN)

The NTD NGO Network (NNN) is a global forum of over 80 organisations working towards the control, elimination, and management of consequences of NTDs as outlined in the WHO’s NTD Roadmap 2021-30. NLR staff members actively participate in the NNN’s cross-cutting working groups, including the DMDI (Disease Management, Disability, and Inclusion) Group and the Skin NTD Cross-Cutting Group. In September 2022, NLR presented lessons learned with other NTD partners during the 13th Annual NNN Conference in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Erasmus MC

NLR has a longstanding research partnership with Erasmus MC that includes collaborations on major international studies on leprosy prevention such as COLEP and LPEP. Their ongoing work includes joint efforts on the “Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project (PEP++)”, the PEP4LEP project, leprosy incidence modelling, and the mapping of persons affected by leprosy. Erasmus MC also provides dermatological expertise for the NLR SkinApp. Additionally, NLR and Erasmus MC collaborate to build the capacity of international PhD students in the field of leprosy.

Highlights



1.

Enhanced preventive treatment in Brazil, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh

The biggest achievement for the [Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! \(PEP++\)](#) project in 2022 was the start of the randomised controlled trial of the enhanced post-exposure prophylaxis regimen in all countries involved.

After an extensive preparation phase, the project is now well underway. Contacts of persons affected by leprosy receive the newly enhanced preventive treatment (PEP++), which is expected to have an even stronger protective effect than [SDR-PEP](#).



2.

India: Scale-up call-centre-based follow-ups of leprosy patients

NLR India celebrates the successful scale-up of call-centre-based follow-ups of leprosy patients still under treatment. The state government of Rajasthan plans to support this initiative further with approval from the government of India. As a result, monitoring of the treatment no longer needs to take place in a health centre, which significantly increases efficiency.

Dr Ashok Agarwal, CEO of NLR India, shared his thoughts on the achievement, saying: "The sustainability of any programme increases once it is owned by the government. In this case, the government has not only accepted the model, but they are also putting the model into practice through their own system and budget."

3.

Mozambique: Earlier detection through health workers

As a result of health worker training sessions provided by NLR projects, health workers in peripheral health facilities now can more accurately refer people they suspect of having leprosy to advanced forms of medical care. As a result, the capacity to diagnose leprosy has increased, meaning more people are diagnosed and treated in time. This is in large part due to the interventions linked to our preventive implementation project: [Ready4PEP](#).



4.

Brazil: In defence of democracy and rights for neglected populations

After two years of virtual meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 7th Brazilian Social Forum for Confronting Infectious and Neglected Diseases brought together leaders from various organisations and social movements to highlight the rights of people and communities affected by diseases like leprosy.

In addition to NHR Brasil, the Forum is held with the support of Doctors Without Borders in Brazil, Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi), Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM), Cuida Chagas, Federal University of Ceará (UFC), Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), the University of the State of Pará (UEPA), and the Ministry of Health of Brazil.

5.

Nepal: NLR Nepal started as a fully functioning national NGO

In December 2021, NLR Nepal completed the transition process in full and signed the first collaboration agreement with NLR in our Alliance! As per January 1, 2022, NLR Nepal is the first national NGO with its own board and registration independent from NLR in the Netherlands.

As the chair of the board of NLR Nepal, Mr Prakash Wagle says, "We are independent, but at the same time I look at NLR as interdependent NGOs working together towards the same goal within an alliance. After thorough preparations in the past five years, this is a great step for all of us. I am very happy to be part of it!"



6.

NLR Indonesia strengthens ties with the Leprosy Mission Australia with new projects

NLR is currently transitioning into an alliance with national NGOs. This also means that these NGOs take more responsibility related to diversification of fundraising and financing of leprosy activities. On that note, it was extremely encouraging to see NLR Indonesia sign contracts with the Leprosy Mission Australia for two projects:

- Leprosy Friendly Village: Ensuring Community Participation in Leprosy Case Finding
- Urban Leprosy: Increasing Health Seeking Behaviour on Leprosy



7.

Showcasing NLR projects at international congresses and conferences

In September 2022 and November 2022, NLR was present at the Global Conference on Neglected Tropical Diseases in Kathmandu, Nepal, and at the International Leprosy Congress in Hyderabad, India. NLR was an active contributor at both events. For example, our organisation gave (keynote) presentations, set up an information booth, organised side meetings, and hosted conference sessions. Early career researchers from Mozambique, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, India, Brazil, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Indonesia — who are involved in NLR research projects such as “Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project (PEP++)”, PEP4LEP, and Ready4PEP — were there to present their work. In addition, the WHO Leprosy Elimination Monitoring Tool, which was developed by the WHO with joint support from NLR, was presented in Hyderabad.

8.

PEP4LEP skin camps enable timely diagnosis and treatment

In Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Tanzania, skin camps were combined with the distribution of preventive medication for leprosy (SDR-PEP) in hopes of increasing the health impact and efficiency. The effects of these skin camps are being studied as part of the PEP4LEP project. Half of the visitors of skin camps in these countries were suffering from skin diseases; these were people who were otherwise not likely to be timely diagnosed and treated. Since the start of the PEP4LEP skin camps, 166 new leprosy patients were detected. Over 13,000 people received preventive medication for leprosy after their skin was screened during these community events. The project is funded by the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and supported by the European Union and the Leprosy Research Initiative.

9.

Donor meetings in the Netherlands

In April 2022, NLR organised donor meetings to inform our donors and show our appreciation for their support towards a world free from leprosy and its consequences. In the Central Museum in Utrecht, we informed donors of current leprosy-related issues and updated them on progress relating to specific projects they have contributed to. After two long and often strenuous years dominated by COVID-19, it was great to meet our donors in-person again and hear their thoughts about why our cause is so important.



10.

Thanks to all our supporters, partners, and donors

In 2022, we reconnected with colleagues, partners, and donors in real life and restarted fieldwork and research projects.

To be more specific, we welcomed 6,000 new donors in the Netherlands in 2022. Now, a total of 46,500 individual donors support and amplify our work towards a leprosy-free world. Loyalty from all our supporters enables NLR to keep working towards a world without leprosy and its many consequences.

On behalf of all persons affected by leprosy, NLR staff members, NLR’s trusted partners, and NLR as a whole, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all your continued support. With your trust and collaboration, we can continue until **No Leprosy Remains.**

Our Organisation





Achieving Zero Leprosy requires a solid, goal-oriented organisation that allows flexibility to change when necessary. We were able to support and stay connected with persons affected by leprosy during the second year of the pandemic. This was made possible through the dedication and hard work of our office and field staff, NLR's Supervisory Board, donors, volunteers and partners. We are very proud of their resilience, expertise and perseverance. In most countries we worked mainly from home. This was another year in which we achieved results and kept our eyes on the goal of a world free from leprosy and its consequences.

“We aim for the day that the world will celebrate Zero Leprosy, that wonderful day when NLR will close shop, mission accomplished! ”

Staff Composition

NLR's international office is based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, where at the end of 2022 our staff comprised 37 employees (33 full-time equivalent) and 100 volunteers. In 2022, the management and implementation of activities was delegated to four professional country offices located in Mozambique (17 employees), India (80 employees), Indonesia (58 employees), and Brazil (48 employees). NLR Nepal (49 employees) was part of the alliance as an independent member. Altogether, 252 people are employed through NLR.

Sickness Absence Rate

The national average absence rate in the Netherlands in 2022 was 5.0%. NLR's target maximum is set at 4.1%. The overall absence rate in 2022 was 5.6%, a decrease from 9% in 2021.

Four employees dealt with long-term sickness due to various reasons, which accounts for more than 90% of the total sickness absence. This high rate of long-term sickness absence has been monitored closely by HR and management.

In December 2022, we also started (on a voluntary basis) a Periodic Medical Examination (PMO) for our staff. The purpose of this examination is to prevent or reduce potential employee health risks, thereby increasing mental and physical well-being.

Working Place and Conditions

During the first quarter of 2022, we were still facing certain obstacles brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Luckily, COVID-19's impact in 2022 was less severe than in previous years, and hybrid working was progressing seamlessly. The “work from home” arrangement has been adapted to suit our new situation as of 2022.

Plans for related changes to the office and new ways of working are moving forward.



Employee Representative Body

Employee participation in the international office is a great asset for NLR. The Employee Representative Body (PVT) is entitled to advise NLR's CEO on planned changes within the organisation, labour conditions, and any terms of employment that affect more than 25% of staff at the international office.

Through the PVT, employees can influence decisions that are important to them and provide insight to the CEO regarding plans across the organisation. In 2022, the main points of attention included (1) the staff survey and its outcomes, (2) long-term sickness absence, (3) the impact of inflation on staff, and (4) the organisational transition.

The PVT provided advice on a new work-from-home policy, including travel compensation, which became effective in April 2022. Furthermore, the members developed new PVT regulations. The PVT also discussed several organisational developments and focus areas that impact staff with NLR's CEO and the Chair of NLR's Supervisory Board. Finally, a PVT evaluation was shared with all staff at the international office. The outcomes were overall very positive, and feedback was incorporated wherever possible.

Risk Analysis and Control

NLR's alliance members and the departments at the international office conduct an annual risk analysis. This analysis identifies the main threats to (the continuity of) our operations. To mitigate these risks, we identify and implement certain monitoring initiatives. We have systems in place to oversee both our financial progress and the progress of our leprosy projects. In 2022, four quarterly reports have been delivered, all of which were discussed by management and NLR's Financial Audit Committee and shared with the Supervisory Board.

In Control Statement

NLR has conducted a risk assessment by identifying potential risks, evaluating their probability of occurrence, and assessing their potential impact. Management has measures in place to monitor these risks, ensure early warning, and minimise the chance of their occurrence and impact. The Financial Audit Committee and the Supervisory Board expressed confidence that NLR has sufficient influence over the risks identified.

Quality System (ISO)

In October 2020, NLR received the extension of the ISO9001:2015 and the branch-specific ISO 9001:2015 Partos certifications for a further three years. We received the recertification in 2022 with a motivating message from the auditor, who described us as "A self-critical organisation that applies quality processes". The related audit highlighted several opportunities for improvement, all of which were or will be addressed in 2022/2023. A full audit is planned for September 2023.

The Netherlands Fundraising Regulator (CBF)

When a fundraising organisation is recognised by the fundraising regulator, you can trust that the organisation has been closely reviewed. In 2022, NLR supplied data for the Annual Check and Reflection of the CBF. In their Interim Test, the CBF checked whether any circumstances or events required NLR to take action to continue to meet their standards. No deviations from the standards of NLR's accredited scheme have been observed. So, our recognition continues.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Adhering to the General Data Protection Regulation is a huge focus for our organisation and a vital part of our day-to-day operations. We have appointed a data protection and privacy officer who monitors any issues that may arise related to data protection. Compliance and security measures we had in place were continued and consolidated in 2022. We ensured that all our suppliers and vendors operate in line with our GDPR. Agreements have been made with new cooperation partners regarding the compliant exchange of data and associated security measures.

One data security incident was reported to the “Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens” due to a hacking at one of our suppliers. The hacked information caused a disruption that impacted the availability of our financial software system, though it could not be linked to any personal data.

IT and Other Investments

Work was carried out to upgrade our financial system from Navision to Microsoft Business Central. We will finish this project in 2023. With this upgrade, we digitised our procurement processes.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued hybrid working. Our staff was able to work from home as well as in the office without disruptions. Small investments have been made to ensure our equipment remains up to date

Corporate Social Responsibility

In accordance with the Financial Management of Fundraising Institutions guidelines issued by Goede Doelen Nederland (the Dutch branch organisation for charities), the key goal in the management of our reserves and funds is to responsibly preserve our capital.

In line with our investment policy, we invest exclusively in financial products offered by governments and companies that respect human rights, reject child labour, and manage their operations sustainably.

NLR strives to operate on a carbon-neutral basis. As in previous years, in 2022 our CO2 emissions from air travel, office heating, and printing were compensated by contributions to sustainable energy projects. Total emissions in 2022 amounted to 127 tonnes of CO2, an increase compared to 36 tonnes in 2021. However, emissions in 2021 were heavily influenced by the fact that NLR staff travelled less due to COVID-19 restrictions.





Integrity

We work with vulnerable groups of people who must be treated with respect and dignity. Our donors entrust us with financial resources, which our staff and partners spend responsibly and handle with the utmost integrity. We set quality standards for the integrity policy framework for all NLR alliance members. These standards cover the following:

- The overall integrity policy
- The Code of Conduct
- Complaint and Whistle-blower Policy
- Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
- Policy on Inappropriate Behaviour
- Communication Policy and Crisis Protocol

In 2022, refresher workshops about our integrity policy were organised at the international office in Amsterdam and virtually for other staff. All chairs from the boards of the alliance met the integrity officer in-person in September. The confidential advisor(s) for the international office received no issues to report.

Per December 1, 2022, a new confidential advisor started at NLR.

Governance

Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board is NLR's highest governing body. It oversees the performance of NLR's CEO, Linda Hummel, as well as our policies and general course of affairs. The CEO is responsible for the organisation's management, and Mrs Hummel is supervised by the Supervisory Board. The division of responsibilities between the Board and management is specified in detail in our bylaws.

Supervisory Board members serve a maximum of two terms of four years each. The Supervisory Board meets the criteria of the Dutch Management and Supervision Act (Wet Bestuur en Toezicht) which, among other things, requires gender diversity. The NLR Supervisory Board comprised three female members and three male members in 2022.

In 2022 the Supervisory Board comprised the following members:

Mr A. van Ojik

Chair

Second term, until 1 January 2024.

- Chair, Window to Russia (Raam op Rusland)
- Chair, Covenant Dignified Livestock Farming (Convenant Dierwaardige Veehouderij)

Mr V. van Slingerland

Chair, Financial Audit Committee

First term, until 31 December 2025.

- Director, Deloitte Accountancy & Advisory B.V.

Mrs E. J. C. Bongers

Second term, until 19 May 2025.

- Executive Board, Beweging 3.0 and RIBW K/AM
- Vice-Chair, Supervisory Board of Dianet.
- Member of the Supervisory Board, Viattence.

Mrs D. M. P. J. Go-Feij

Second term, until 1 April 2023.

- Director and Owner, Caraz Consultancy.
- Member of the Exam Committee Management Studies, NCOI.
- Visiting Lecturer Fundraising, Grant Making & Sponsoring, University of Applied Sciences Windesheim.
- Member of the Board, Vereniging de Hollandsche Molen.
- Secretary of the Board, Teenstra Foundation
- Member of the Board, Stichting Hoormij

Mr M. R. A. van Cleeff

Chair, Technical Committee

Second term, until 1 June 2023.

- Director Van Cleeff Consult.
- Board member, Foundation for the Global Fight Against Tuberculosis.
- Member of the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease.

Mrs N. Tromp

First term, until 18 June 2025.

- Health systems advisor, KIT Royal Tropical Institute
- Member of The Netherlands Society for Tropical Medicine and International Health.
- Associate editor of the academic journal Human Resources for Health





Main activities and decisions of the Supervisory Board

Supervisory Board members were able to resume travel after COVID-19 measures had ended. To attend workshops with the national Supervisory Boards in India and Indonesia as part of the transition audit process, four Board member travelled to our offices in these countries. Three Board members were also able to visit leprosy projects during these visits. Supervisory Board members also joined the September live meetings for the Round Table and Council of Chairs in Amsterdam, which also included (former) staff members.

The Financial Audit Committee met four times to discuss a variety of finance-related issues in preparation for board meetings. Regular financial topics such as annual budgets, quarterly reporting, annual accounts, and updates on our investment portfolio were discussed.

In addition, we also debated our IT-programme, our transition process, and our investments in fundraising. The Technical Committee met twice. These meetings were held to advise the staff and Supervisory Board and to monitor and discuss the efficiency and impact of NLR's expenditure on leprosy programmes and projects.

In its 2022 meetings, the Supervisory Board addressed the following:

- Progress presented by the CEO on the execution of the annual plan and budget were discussed on a quarterly basis. In an extra meeting (and in a September strategy session) the Board also discussed the development of the next multi-annual strategy.

Further activities and decisions included:

- The progress of the transition process was discussed in every meeting. In June, the transition of NLR India and NLR Indonesia to independent national NGOs was approved after the successful completion of a pre- and final audit. In September, the agreement to start this transition process for NLR Moçambique was signed.
- In June, the Board approved the 2021 Annual Report and Annual Accounts of NLR and the 2021 Annual Report and Annual Accounts of LRI.
- In October, the NLR Staff Survey was presented and discussed. An update was also made to the statutes to incorporate new legislation.
- At its December meeting, the Board approved the 2023 Annual Plans and Budgets of NLR and the LRI. In the same meeting, adjustment of the statutes was approved and developments in the Dream Fund project “Stop the Transmission of Leprosy” (PEP++) were discussed.

In December 2022, the Supervisory Board carried out a self-evaluation. In general, the Board is satisfied with the way it operates and continues to strive for a better balance in meetings between receiving information, discussion, and decision making.

Remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer

The Supervisory Board is responsible for NLR’s remuneration policy and determines the salary of our CEO. NLR complies with the regulations of Goede Doelen Nederland. Compared to positions of similar complexity and responsibility, the Supervisory Board considers the CEO’s current remuneration fair and reasonable.

Furthermore, the Supervisory Board regards the position of NLR’s CEO as more than a full-time job. It is a role with great responsibility that requires a high profile and professional performance. Every three years, the Supervisory Board reviews the remuneration of the CEO, with the most recent review having taken place in 2020. The regulation uses three criteria to define the maximum standards for annual income: size, complexity, and organisational context. In total, these criteria led to a total score of 465 points (based on the Basic Score Director position scorecard).

In 2022, this amounted to a maximum average annual income of €148,215 (compared to €141,765 in 2021). Meanwhile, Linda Hummel’s annual salary in 2022 was €122,492 (compared to €120,987 in 2021). The combined total of annual income, taxable allowances/additions, pension charges and pension compensation, and other (future) rewards amounted to €148,608, which remains below the maximum allowed in the regulations of €216,000 per year for 2022 (compared to a maximum of €209,000 in 2021).

Name	L. Hummel	L. Hummel
Function	CEO	CEO
Employment	2022	2021
Duration contract	Indefinite	Indefinite
Hours/week	40	40
Part-time percentage	100	100
Period	1/1-31/12	1/1-31/12
Remuneration in EUR	2022	2021
Annual Income		
Gross wages/ salary	109,368	107,220
Holiday allowance	8,749	9,478
End-of-year payment	4,375	4,289
Variable annual income	-	-
Total reward	122,492	120,987
Social security charges (employer's contribution)	10,151	9,474
Pension charges (employer's contribution)	15,965	15,106
Other remuneration	-	360
Total other charges and compensations	26,116	24,940
Total remuneration	148,608	145,927



Progress on Alliance Development

A major step forward in NLR's history took place in 2022: NLR India and Indonesia completed their transition requirements successfully and signed collaboration agreements with NLR in our alliance.

In 2023, both countries will begin to perform their activities as national NGOs with their own Supervisory Board and registration independent from NLR in the Netherlands.

The transition agreements with NLR Moçambique and NHR Brasil were signed in 2022, marking the start of a trajectory to install national governance in these countries as well. Both countries have statutes and a national board in place, and they both elected a Chair of their Supervisory Board.

Our transition into an alliance of national NGOs paves the way to more national ownership and leadership. This shift of power best serves persons affected by leprosy, as each individual office is more capable of adjusting their strategies to national contexts and needs. Together, we keep moving forward, and we all maintain the same mission and vision.

Looking forward

Delays due to COVID-19 are behind us. It is time to accelerate and speed up our projects. For the “Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project (PEP++)”, in which we test an enhanced preventive treatment (PEP++), it is time to enrol study participants fast and in great numbers. Over the course of the past year, NLR has worked on its new multi-annual strategy (2024-2028). In developing this long-term strategy, we collected input from external stakeholders. Many stakeholders provided direct input to identify NLR's strengths and future focus points. With clear objectives, we know where our organisation is heading and have a decision-making tool in hand to steer our efforts. The WHO described leprosy as one of four neglected tropical diseases to be eliminated within the next generation. That makes our vision of a world without leprosy in 2040 an inspiring and attainable goal to work towards.

We are evolving as an organisation. In the past, we were providing care and cure, after which we developed a strength in research and innovation. And in the future, we must continue to become stronger advocates for leprosy elimination and work even more closely with governments and donors. We must also keep working with and listening to persons affected by leprosy.

Our transition into an alliance with national NGOs is approaching its final phase. NHR Brasil and NLR

Moçambique are taking the necessary steps towards independence. We inspire others with both our approach and our concrete results, helping us to truly shift the power and solve problems where they occur.

Internally, we are retaining and sharing our programmatic and medical-technical skills. And at the same time, we are looking to train beyond the borders of our own organisation and take a leading role within the leprosy sector.

As is a given for most NGOs, NLR works with limited resources and limited time. For that reason, we need a clear focus to make headway towards zero leprosy. Therefore, income diversification is an important development area. We will invest in different—and new—forms of fundraising for each alliance member. External factors may positively influence our quest for financial support. The end of COVID-19 opens the space in national health systems to shift attention to different diseases, such as leprosy. A new president in Brazil may also represent an opportunity to gather donor and governmental support. In any case, we are, and strive to remain, a financially stable organisation able to invest in promising innovations, research, and developments to ensure sustainable results. We work with our hands and minds in the present, but we keep our eyes to the future until **No Leprosy Remains**.



Finances

Result 2022 in short

The annual accounts are a consolidation of the annual accounts of both NLR and the Leprosy Research Initiative (LRI). The total consolidated income in 2022 was €11.6 million (2021: €9.6 million), while €9.8 million was budgeted. Total expenses were €13.4 million (2021: €11.2 million), while €14.1 million was budgeted.

After subtracting the negative result of our financial investments (€1.0 million), the overall negative result for 2022 is €2.8 million (2021: €0.7 million negative result), which was withdrawn from our reserves and funds. We budgeted a negative result of €3.9 million including the budgeted expenditure from earmarked reserves and funds that had been set aside in previous years.

[This chapter provides a summary of our finances. Please see the annual accounts for more information and details.](#)

Financial Highlights

2022: Income

Overall Income

Total income in 2022 was significantly higher than last year and higher than budget. Income from individual donors was equal to budget and higher than last year. Income from legacies was significantly higher than last year. Once again, we were happy to receive our annual contribution of €1.35 million as a beneficiary of the Dutch Postcode Lottery. Our income from other not-for-profit organisations totalled €2.5 million. This was higher than last year but still below budget, as institutional donor income expected for 2022 shifted to the following year due to delays in the execution of projects caused by COVID-19 in early 2022.

Bonds and shares are valued at market value as of the balance sheet date. For listed investments, this is the market price at the balance sheet date. Realized and unrealized increases and decreases in value are recognized through the statement of income and expenditure. We reported an unrealized decrease of €1.0 million in 2022 in our statement of income and expenditure (2021: an increase of €0.9 million).

Fundraising in the Netherlands

In the 2022 budget, we anticipated income from our own fundraising (excluding income from legacies) to increase to €2.9 million. This was achieved as a direct result of an additional investment made in our successful door-to-door donor recruitment campaign. As a result of this campaign, the number of committed donors continued to grow in 2022, thereby strengthening our structural income in the coming years.

Legacies

We budgeted our 2022 income from legacies at €1.6 million based on the analysis of our income from legacies during the last 10 years. In 2022, we received €4.0 million from legacies. The number and the average amount from legacies were higher than in 2021 (€1.9 million).

European and Developing Countries Clinical Trial Partnership (EDCTP)

In 2018, a total of almost €3.2 million was awarded by the EDCTP for the PEP4LEP project. This multi-partner project began its steady implementation (over a period of 52 months) starting on 1 October 2018. On 31 October 2022, EDCTP agreed to extend the duration of this project for an additional 20 months (no-cost extension). In 2022, €490,000 was recognised as income from this grant.





Financial Highlights

2022: Expenditures

Overall Expenditure

Total expenditure was slightly below budget and significantly higher than last year, which was again the direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting our work. In 2022, we spent €11.1 million on our objectives, which was 83% of our total expenditure (2021: 82%).

International Leprosy Programmes

To fulfil our mission, we have operations in the Netherlands and nine leprosy-endemic countries. Despite our work being made difficult by COVID-19, we were able to spend €8.7 million on international leprosy programmes, which was below to our budget of €9.3 million.

Information and Awareness Raising

Total expenditure on information and awareness raising initiatives was €0.7 million, while €0.5 million was budgeted. This is higher than last year's expenditure.

Scientific and Operational Leprosy Research

In 2022, €1.7 million was spent on research projects and their associated running costs. Total expenditure was €0.3 million lower than budgeted. But it was significantly higher than the 2021 expenditure of €0.9 million.

Fundraising

Expenditure on fundraising was €1.7 million, whereas we had budgeted €1.8 million. We continued to invest in attracting more committed donors in an effort to secure future growth in fundraising income, which will enable expansion of our leprosy programmes in endemic countries.

Total spending on our own fundraising in relation to total income amounted to 15% (2021: 16%).

Financial Income and Expenditure

The balance of financial income and expenses of invested reserves was €1.0 million negative, mainly unrealised losses. This was a very substantial decrease against budget (€0.4 million positive) and last year (€0.9 million positive). The war in Ukraine, high inflation rates, and increasing interest rates had a very negative impact on our financial investments.

Expenses from our Earmarked Reserves

We spent a total of €1.4 million from earmarked reserves; €0.6 million on investments in our fundraising; €0.3 million on projects in leprosy-endemic countries; €0.2 million on transforming our branch offices into national NGOs; €0.1 million in medical technical capacity building; and €0.1 million on investments in our IT.

Expenses from Earmarked Funds

In 2017, we received €9.4 million from the Dutch Postcode Lottery for our Dream Fund: "Stop the Transmission of Leprosy! Project (PEP++)". The funds that remained unspent at the end of 2017 were placed in an earmarked fund. While the project was initially planned for a five-year period in three countries with coordination in the Netherlands, the Postcode Lottery agrees with the fact that the project takes longer than initially planned.

In 2022, activities were planned for a total budget of €1.7 million. A total of €1.6 million was spent, compared to €1.4 million in 2021. Earmarked funds at the end of 2022 amount to €2.0 million, which are due to be spent in 2023 and beyond.



Special Notes

Consolidated Annual Accounts

The Leprosy Research Initiative (LRI) was registered as a foundation under Dutch law on 1 June 2015. The LRI represents a unique model of cooperation and coordination in the funding of leprosy research. Partners of LRI include American Leprosy Missions (ALM), the German Leprosy Relief Association (GLRA), The Leprosy Mission International (TLMi), Damien Foundation, the Anesvad Foundation, and NLR. Together, these organisations remain committed to the fight against leprosy—and for that reason, they have combined their funding for leprosy-related research in the joint LRI fund. NLR manages LRI operations, implementing the decisions of the LRI Executives Group as they are overseen by the NLR Supervisory Board. The LRI and NLR Annual Accounts have therefore been consolidated.

Reserves Policy

NLR has drafted a reserves policy to ensure the continuity of our work and set aside funds for the future. This policy identifies three categories: continuity reserves, earmarked reserves, and earmarked funds.

Continuity reserves cover risks in the continuity of the organisation and help ensure it can meet its future obligations. According to the guidelines of the Dutch Charities Branch Organisation (Goede Doelen Nederland), this reserve can be a maximum of 1.5 times the annual organisation costs. NLR aims to have continuity reserves of between 0.5 and 1 times the annual costs of the organisation's work.

Earmarked reserves are funds that are set aside and approved by the Supervisory Board for specific purposes to spend in years ahead. The balance of the earmarked reserves is re-evaluated and redetermined by board approval on a yearly basis.

Earmarked funds are funds received from a third party to be used for a specific purpose in the future. They are therefore earmarked to be used for this purpose only.

Investment Policy

Our investment policy prescribes investments in sustainable, socially responsible, and low-risk bonds as well as in sustainable, socially responsible shares. The investment horizon is limited to 31 December 2040, and is in line with NLR's goal of zero leprosy in 2040. The portfolio has a defensive profile.

The portfolio bandwidth is as follows: shares 10-30%, bonds 50-90%, micro-loans 0-5%, and liquidities 0-50%. The portfolio is managed by Rabobank and the investment manager checks adherence to this policy twice a year. Quarterly reports on our portfolio are shared and discussed with the NLR Financial Audit Committee of the Supervisory Board.

To finance our ambitious plans for 2023, we are budgeting a total expenditure of €12.2 million. This will allow us to invest further in our expenditure on objectives and help us strengthen our fundraising income and organisational structure. From this total expenditure, €3.5 million is budgeted to be spent from earmarked reserves and funds.

Expenses	x €1.000
International Leprosy programmes	8.569
Information and awareness raising	989
Scientific and operational leprosy research	465
Spending on objectives	10.023
Fundraising expenses	1.748
Management and administration	450
Total expenditure	12.221
Balance of income and expenditure	-3.445
Financial Income and Expenses	-50
Balance of income and expenses	-3.495
Destination of the balance of income and expenses	
Additional / Withdrawal from	
Continuity reserve	-
Earmarked reserves	-2.490
Earmarked funds	-1.006
Total mutation of reserves and funds	-3.495

Colophon

NLR (known as Leprastichting), registered under Chamber of Commerce Number 41199723, resides at Wibautstraat 137k, 1097 DN in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

IBAN: NL84 INGB 0000 050 500

info@leprastichting.nl
leprastichting.nl

info@nlrinternational.org
nlrinternational.org



Design: BEELDR
Copy: NLR
Photography: NLR, Tom Bradley, LegHetVast, Marcelo Londoño, Sasja van Vechgel, Jan-Joseph Stok, American Leprosy Missions, Jacqueline van den Heuvel, Makmende Media

until
No Leprosy Remains