

New Grant Program to Support Communities of Persons Affected by Leprosy During Coronavirus Pandemic Has Long-Term Goal of Strengthening Their Organizational Capacity

TOKYO, Oct. 29, 2020 -- Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative will launch a US\$340,000 grant program on November 1 to support communities of persons affected by leprosy around the world that have been hard hit by the effects of the novel coronavirus. Through the program, which will be implemented by organizations of persons affected by leprosy themselves, Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative aims to strengthen the capacity of these organizations to address the many issues that persons affected by leprosy face, while providing their communities with essential support during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Members of PerMaTa, an Indonesian organization of persons affected by leprosy, carry out door-to-door visits in South Sulawesi Province to deliver leaflets on COVID-19, soap and masks.

Twenty-two (22) organizations from 14 countries (see below) have been selected to receive grants following a review of applications received. The program, which is based on the results of pilot projects conducted from May to September this year in Indonesia, Bangladesh and Nepal, will be implemented based on the following four pillars:

The Four Pillars of the New Grant Program

1. Responding directly to community needs

This includes:

- Distributing food, medicine and other relief supplies, and small loans for livelihood security
- Providing supplies necessary to continue academic studies and for self-care activities
- Advising on how to protect against the novel coronavirus, and giving information on

leprosy

- Creating a hotline to serve persons affected by leprosy, and offering counselling

2. Advocating with government

This includes:

- Ensuring that persons affected by leprosy have access to existing government support schemes
- Requesting additional measures to address current difficulties that persons affected by leprosy are facing amid the coronavirus pandemic

3. Disseminating information

- Publicizing activities through SNS and other channels to increase organization's visibility, attract new supporters and strengthen PR capabilities

4. Enhancing capacity through training

- Participating in courses on fund-raising, crowd-funding, social business, etc., in order to enhance the sustainability of the organization

Program period: November 1, 2020 – October 31, 2021 or November 1, 2020 – February 28, 2021.

Program scale: 22 organizations (22 projects) / Total funding US\$ 340,000

Commenting on the new grant program, WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination Yohei Sasakawa said: "Finding solutions to the issues that persons affected by leprosy have to confront requires their voices to be heard. It is important that their organizations become increasingly vocal and active. We hope this grant program will help address the difficulties their communities are currently facing during the coronavirus pandemic and provide a stepping stone toward the sustainability of their organizations."

Grant Recipients

Grants issued on the basis that organizations are supported in their activities by an NGO partner.

	Organization/ Branch	Supporting Organization	Country
1	Advancing Leprosy and disadvantaged peoples Opportunities Society (ALO)	The Leprosy Mission International - Bangladesh (TLMI-B)	Bangladesh
2	Association for Integration Dignity and Economic Advancement (IDEA) Nepal	The Leprosy Mission (TLM) Nepal	Nepal
3	Association for Integration Dignity and Economic Advancement (IDEA) Niger	The Leprosy Mission (TLM) Niger	Niger

4	Association of People Affected by Leprosy in Mozambique (ALEMO)	The Leprosy Mission (TLM) Mozambique	Mozambique
5	Association Senegalaise de Lutte Contre La Lepre et Les Maladies Tropicales Negligees (ASCL/MTN)	Action Enfance Senegal (AES)	Senegal
6	ATAM Swabhiman	Jago Foundation	India
7	Bogra Federation	Lepra Bangladesh	Bangladesh
8	Dhanusha, Mahottari, Sarlahi and Sindhuli Self-Help Group Federations	Nepal Leprosy Trust- Lalgadh Leprosy Hospital and Services Centre (NLT – LLHSC)	Nepal
9	Ethiopian National Association of Persons Affected by Leprosy (ENAPAL)	-	Ethiopia
10	IDEA Refaco KENYA Foundation	Interconnected Health Solutions	Kenya
11	International Association for Integration, Dignity and Economic Advancement (IDEA) Nigeria	Leprosy and TB Relief Initiative Nigeria	Nigeria
12	MORHAN Amazonas	MORHAN Nacional	Brazil
13	MORHAN Bahia and Ceara	MORHAN Nacional	Brazil
14	MORHAN Rio de Janeiro	MORHAN Nacional	Brazil
15	National Association of Persons Affected by Leprosy (NAPAL)	German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association (DAHW)	Sierra Leone
16	PerMaTa Indonesia, East Java	Institute for Research and Community Service Jember Islamic University	Indonesia
17	PerMaTa Indonesia, East Nusa Tenggara	Yayasan Transfigurasi Tabor Mulia (YTTM)	Indonesia
18	PerMaTa Indonesia, South Sulawesi	Yayasan Dedikasi Tjipta Indonesia (engl: Dare This Indonesia)	Indonesia
19	PGH Hansen's Club	Philippine Leprosy Mission, Inc.	Philippines
20	Purple Hope Initiative Nigeria	German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association (DAHW)	Nigeria
21	Saksham Kushthantey Swabhimani Sanstha	Association for Leprosy Education Rehabilitation and Treatment India	India
22	Tanzania Leprosy Association	National TB and Leprosy Program	Tanzania

For more information on the grant program, see www.shf.or.jp/information/9375?lang=en.

Webinar Series on Leprosy (Hansen's Disease)

Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative is hosting a series of webinars on leprosy, beginning on Friday, October 30. The first webinar is titled: "Schemes to support organizations of persons affected by leprosy during the coronavirus pandemic and their significance" (www.shf.or.jp/information/9552?lang=en) For more information about this and future webinars, and for details on how to participate, see www.shf.or.jp/other_activities/webinars?lang=en.

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About Leprosy (Hansen's Disease)

Leprosy (Hansen's disease) is a chronic infectious disease that mainly affects the skin, peripheral nerves and eyes. Over 200,000 new cases are reported worldwide each year. The disease is completely curable, but if treatment is delayed or interrupted, progressive nerve damage can lead to muscle weakness, numbness in the hands and feet, and cause severe disabilities and blindness. Because of deep-rooted misconceptions about the disease, millions of people continue to experience discrimination because they or a family member have or once had leprosy. This can affect their opportunities for education, employment and marriage, and limit their participation in community life.

About Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative

Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative is a strategic alliance between the [Sasakawa Health Foundation](http://www.shf.or.jp), The [Nippon Foundation](http://www.nippon-foundation.org) and [WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination Yohei Sasakawa](http://www.who.int/goodwill-ambassadors/yohei-sasakawa) for the purpose of achieving a world without leprosy. The Nippon Foundation (founded in 1963) and Sasakawa Health Foundation (founded in 1974) have been actively involved in initiatives against the disease for over 45 years. The chairman of The Nippon Foundation is Yohei Sasakawa.

Yohei Sasakawa tweets at [@SasakawaYohei](https://twitter.com/SasakawaYohei) and blogs at <https://blog.canpan.info/yoheisasakawa/>