

LET'S TALK ABOUT LEPROSY

WHY SHOULD LEPROSY BE IN THE SPOTLIGHT?

Leprosy is one of the oldest diseases known to man. Today, the disease is treatable using multi-drug therapy (MDT), but patients are still experiencing stigmatizing and discriminating behaviour.^{1,5}

Pale patches on the skin are usually the first sign of the disease, but symptoms can take as long as 20 years to appear.^{2,3}

Almost **1** in **10** newly diagnosed patients are children, indicating continued transmission of the disease.⁴



Globally, almost **214,000** people were diagnosed with leprosy in 2014 – **that's one every two minutes**.⁵



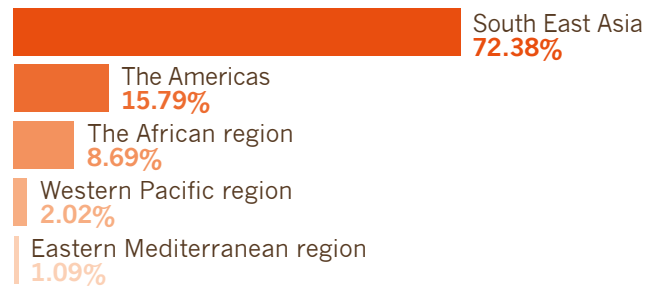
It is estimated that **1-2 million** people are visibly and irreversibly disabled by leprosy.¹

TODAY LEPROSY IS FOUND MAINLY IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

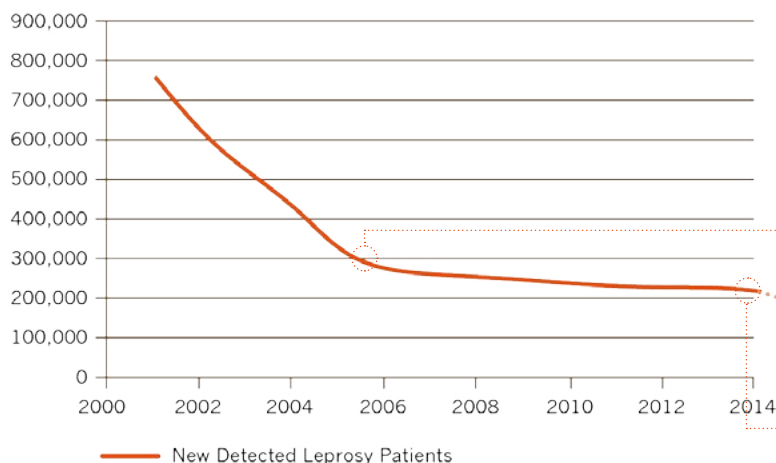


81 percent of new leprosy patients occur in **Brazil, India and Indonesia** which are the most highly endemic countries for leprosy.⁵

NEW CASES OF LEPROSY.⁵



WHY DO WE NEED TO ACT NOW?



The global burden of **leprosy** has been **reduced by 95%** since the 1980s.^{5,8}

But the number of **new detected leprosy patients** has decreased from 299, 036 in 2005 to 213, 899 in 2014.⁵

A new strategy is urgently needed.

THE LAST MILE

toward achieving elimination
is to interrupt transmission



The Novartis Foundation is working with partners around the world to execute a new strategy to interrupt the transmission of leprosy.

The strategy was developed with leading leprosy and disease elimination experts, who agree that a successful program requires:

- 1** Early diagnosis and prompt treatment for all patients.
- 2** Development of new diagnostic tools.
- 3** Contact tracing and preventative treatment/therapy for contact persons of those newly diagnosed with leprosy.
- 4** Strict epidemiological surveillance and response systems to monitor progress.



Novartis Foundation is collaborating with International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP) partners, to implement the leprosy post-exposure prophylaxis project (LPEP) and introduce preventative treatment for leprosy in several pilot countries across Asia, Africa and Latin America.⁹

Erasmus University Medical Centre Rotterdam and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute are providing technical support, specifically on surveillance systems.



Over the past 15 years, **Novartis has donated treatment to 6 million leprosy patients** and will continue donations throughout 2020.

About the Novartis Foundation

The Novartis Foundation is a philanthropic organization pioneering innovative healthcare models that can have a transformational impact on the health of the poorest populations. We work hand-in-hand with our local and global partners to catalyze scalable and sustainable healthcare models to improve access and health outcomes, and to accelerate efforts to eliminate leprosy and malaria by focusing on interventions that aim to interrupt transmission. Everything we do is grounded in evidence and innovation, and our work is a continuous cycle of evaluation, adaptation and application. In 2014, the operational budget for the foundation was CHF 12 million and our programs reached 3.6 million people.

References

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9. ILEP partners include: Netherlands Leprosy Relief, FAIRMED, the American Leprosy Mission and the German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association and national leprosy control programs.