



Passing the baton to the next-generation on TLM-PNG's 60th Anniversary

I am in your hands...



TLM-PNG's 60th Anniversary

It was exciting to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of TLM-PNG at the end of August. Gillian Whitley (LMNZ), Nalome Rongong (TLMi), along with our partners, patients and project participants celebrated with us. We were able to 'pass the baton' to the younger generation. We also thanked our partners and volunteers for joining us on the road to zero leprosy transmission.

TLM's 150th Anniversary

The 150th Anniversary of TLM internationally was celebrated in Delhi, India on 15th November. It was a grand event, with over 500 people in attendance. Nearly all TLM countries were represented. So were many former and current staff, country leaders,

board members, donors, partners and friends.

The Wellsley Bailey awards were given to 4 leaders affected by leprosy. These were all current champions for the cause of people affected by leprosy in their countries. An experiential 'Leprosy Hospital' was also set up. Attendees participated in a leprosy diagnosis and treatment simulation.

It was great to catch up with former colleagues, Bunmi and Loveth Oluloto (from Niger/Nigeria), and Helen Fernandes (now a TLMi Board member).

For those who pray, please thank God for:

- The provision of new projects and funding.
- Excellent Anniversary celebrations.
- The approval of TLM's new 6-year strategy.
- Ongoing support from our partner countries and

donors: New Zealand, Australia, and the International Office.

Please pray for:

- Safety and security of all staff as they travel to implement projects in the communities.
- For our team of 25 staff who are based in the 6 high endemic provinces of PNG.
- For the Senior Leadership Team as they develop their leadership skills.

Thank you and God bless you!

You can contact Natalie Smith at nataliesmith.tlm@gmail.com OR sign up to receive her newsletter by emailing engage@leprosymission.org.au

Support the work of Natalie Smith in Papua New Guinea:
<https://leprosymission.org.au/nat-in-png/kit2>



Kamala was at the Self-Care Unit at Anandaban Hospital in Kathmandu waiting for a prosthetic leg to replace the one leprosy had taken.

The Self-Care Unit is a place of transition. Staff encourage patients to practice their training and to request help as needed. After the day's activities, no staff remain there overnight. This regains their independence and dignity and stretches the value of your investment here.

Patients also learn how to protect themselves from the ulcers and infections that leprosy can cause, leading to disfigurement as you see in Kamala's twisted hands.

She was ready to go home when the landslide struck.

"I had been here at the Hospital nearly a month when the landslide came.

I was supposed to go home, but I couldn't because of the rainfall. Throughout the day it just kept raining. So, I had to stay here.

In the evening the rains increased and refused to stop."

323mm of rain in just 24 hours.

Around midnight Kamala was praying and reading her bible. She began to hear loud noises all around her. Trees began to fall, some sliding right past

her window. Mud and debris smashed through the back windows, smothering the kitchen, storeroom and bathrooms, and cutting the Unit off from the rest of the hospital.

Inside, Kamala was trapped. There was nowhere for Kamala to go.

The only female leprosy patient left in the Unit, she moved from bed to bed to escape the mud and water, all the time holding her Bible and praying:

**"If you save me, I am in your hands.
If I die, then I am also in your hands."**

Her faith gave her strength and courage all through that night, as she continued to pray.

"There was landslide everywhere. It looked like a river running through the hills...The landslide never stopped throughout the night. It went on until 8am in the morning!"

"I felt that God would save me and that nothing would happen to me."

"I asked God to send people to rescue me...when nobody came, I started crying and said to God, 'Why don't you send anyone to rescue me?'"

INSIDE: Read the rest of Kamala's story... and how you can help!



Eventually two of the staff who care for patients, and build and fit prosthetics, came to Kamala's rescue. All her clothes and belongings were soaked in mud, but she was at peace. She thanked God for saving her and "asked Him to make this hospital one big rock, so that it won't be swept away."

"When I was rescued, I felt at peace, and gave thanks to the staff for rescuing me."

She was rescued, and the Hospital and Self-Care Unit were not swept away.

But there was damage to the Self-Care Unit.

The steel-

reinforced foundations poured 18 months ago, held strong. Now, the mud and debris need to be cleared away. Structural integrity checked. But the surrounding landscape has changed forever!

As I share this news with you, I hope you see how precious you are to people with leprosy – especially right now, as we start the hard work of restoring services, repairing, or even relocating after this disaster. There's never been a more important time for your prayer for Anandaban, the staff and for the patients.

First, we must complete the engineers' assessment to decide what's next before we can welcome leprosy patients back to the Self-Care Unit!

PRIORITY ACTION LIST

- Determine if ground and building is stable
- Repair SCU or relocate and rebuild to a more stable site
- Replace damaged and destroyed furniture

If we can repair the SCU on the current site, then we need to rebuild storage areas, build new accessible pathways, re-do floors and walls, put in new windows and restore the security system.

First, we must complete the engineers' assessment to decide what's next before we can welcome leprosy patients back to the Self-Care Unit!

Just like Kamala, you know the power of prayer. I am so thankful for your prayers as our mission takes us into challenging places. I truly believe God was with us through this disaster.

Kamala and others like her are so grateful for your prayers and support. Each prayer ensures they go back to their community strong and confident. Thank you.

Please continue to pray for the patients, staff, and volunteers at Anandaban. Pray for peace and comfort following the traumatic events of the landslides. Pray for the structural integrity of the Self-Care Unit.

Give thanks for the resilience and faith of people like Kamala who demonstrate love and trust in God in all circumstances.

Give your Hands On Help to people in need like Kamala:
<https://leprosymission.org.au/hands-on/kit2>



Nat's News

All the latest from Leprosy Mission Papua New Guinea

From Natalie Smith

For those who don't know me yet, I am the Country Leader for The Leprosy Mission Papua New Guinea (TLM-PNG). Leprosy Mission Australia supports me in my role. I lead a dedicated group of staff and volunteers to find and support people affected by leprosy.

With so much on I was not able to do my usual Christmas news, so I'm sending an early-in-the-year update instead.

I hope you all had a restful Christmas Season, New Year and Holidays. I have lots to update you on. There is new project funding, TLM-PNG's 60th Anniversary and TLM Global Fellowship's 150th Anniversary.

New Leprosy Patient Management System for PNG

TLM-PNG and the National Leprosy Programme are launching an exciting initiative. TRIAS is an Indian Christian company, new to PNG. As part of their ministry, they have already improved health data systems at Kompam and Kujip mission hospitals.

After seeing their success, we are collaborating with TRIAS to create a new electronic database, using fingerprints to register patients. Then we can record their leprosy or skin-Neglected Tropical Disease information.

This will help us gather data and track monthly leprosy treatment. As you can imagine, paper-based systems in PNG pose many challenges.

We secured funds through the German Embassy in Australia to support part of this project. We are still fundraising for the rest. I was able to meet with the TRIAS team in Bangalore recently, while I was in India for the TLM Meetings.



Natalie Smith (left) meeting with the TRIAS team in Bangalore, India.

Nat's News continues on the back page!

