



# A Huge Heart for Others.

Sheldon with the Townsville Support Group.

## "Just checking in..."

With words like these Sheldon demonstrates his deep interest in the wellbeing of people in his orbit. Checking in on their personal wellbeing, their professional wellbeing, their spiritual wellbeing, Sheldon shows compassion, insight, and his love for Jesus in all that he does.

It is these aspects of Sheldon's personality that have been foundational in his role as CEO over nearly a decade of leadership. Speaking to staff, volunteers, and international colleagues, it is clear that *"his servant heart", "brilliant mind, clothed with humility", and "stability at a difficult time",* have allowed The Leprosy Mission *"to know what our organisation really does and stands for, and to focus ourselves on these activities and goals, while still keeping us centred on Christ."*

Sheldon leaves the organisation in a stable financial position. This is in part due to his disciplined approach to work. His daily routine *"includes a rigorous regime of reading, reflecting, and praying,"* which sets him up to meet the complex needs of the organisation. It is also in part to his *"amazing capacity to take tons of data and convert it into a clear list of recommendations for change, based on evidence."* Seeing a multitude of graphs posted on the walls the first time I walked into his office – thought I was visiting a statistician!

Sheldon always leads by example, whether through encouraging staff to think through different perspectives, *"putting out the chairs in the meeting room"* for National Council or

listening to people carefully and thoughtfully. *"His time as CEO of The Leprosy Mission Australia (TLMA) has made us strong and resilient, with goals that reflect the love and grace of the Lord we serve."*

Sheldon has achieved much in his time at TLMA but *"his devotional message at the Nepal ACL which led to Amar coming to Christ – achievements don't come much bigger than this!"* Amar, affected by leprosy and shunned by family, found peace through the love of Jesus and the work of The Leprosy Mission.

Sheldon has meant many things to many people. One which comes up time and again is that of mentor. Perhaps this may be his greatest legacy. The time he invests in people's lives to set them up for success also sets up The Leprosy Mission for success. In developing mature, thoughtful, caring, and dedicated staff and volunteers, Sheldon leaves TLMA in a position to provide leadership and direction as we work together with the Global Fellowship to make leprosy a thing of the past.

*"Thank you, Sheldon. You will be greatly missed."*

Give thanks for all that God has been able to achieve through Sheldon. Pray that The Leprosy Mission will continue to be blessed by his dedication to working for and alongside those affected by leprosy and disability.

Pray for Sheldon as he approaches retirement. Pray for the blessing of time to spend with family and friends, to make room for other interests and goals.

Pray for The Leprosy Mission Australia in this time of transition that God's will be done.

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The Leprosy Mission Australia

## Your Prayers Bring Dreams Alive!

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So I say, "My strength has perished,  
And so has my hope from the Lord."  
Lamentations 3:18

Urmila, who lives about 400km from Anandaban, may well have felt like the author of Lamentations as she suffered the horrible effects of leprosy.

In Urmila's words leprosy has meant a totally different life for her. *"I cannot go to fetch water or do work properly...I can walk, but I'll develop wounds very quickly."*

*"My hopes are dead."*

For many years Urmila has had to deal with a persistent ulcer that would just not heal. The pain from the sores and prolonged stays in hospital and in the Self Care Unit meant that she fell behind at school. Her hopes and dreams seemed at an end.

Thankfully, that was not the end of Urmila's story.

Thanks to your faithful, prayerful support her hopes are no longer dead. Thanks to the dedication of experts in treating ulcers there is great cause for us to echo the words of Lamentations 3:20-23:

I remember well all my troubles,  
and I am very sad.  
But then I think about this,  
and I have hope:  
We are still alive because  
the LORD's faithful love never ends.  
Every morning he shows it in new ways!

For Urmila this means the use of pioneering treatment that can heal ulcers like hers in weeks rather than months or years. Thanks to your prayers, breakthroughs like this have given hope to many people suffering leprosy and other skin diseases.

Urmila will soon finish this treatment and return home with specially designed shoes to prevent further injury. She will also take a new confidence and dream for the future.

"I will go and learn to weave 'Dhaka' patterns (which is a weaving technique famous in the eastern part of Nepal) on clothes and shawls and open a shop in future."

Thank God for the provision of new techniques and treatments which reduce the suffering of people affected by leprosy. Pray that with more breakthroughs we will see less people with disabilities and more people free to live full lives.

Pray for Urmila as she rekindles dreams that she once thought dead. Pray that her ulcer will be a thing of the past and that she may celebrate each new day.

To learn more about the Self Care Unit and help another person like Urmila find their hopes and dreams please follow the link or scan the QR code.

<https://www.leprosymission.org.au/projects/Nepal-Self-Care-Unit>







# Your Integrated Mobilisation of People for Active Community Transformation project in Nepal is really making an IMPACT!

Your IMPACT project supports people to recover from leprosy, obtain sustainable livelihoods, and increase their inclusion in society. The project also provides health education on water and sanitation hygiene, and education on gender-based violence.

## COOPERATIVES

One of the major parts of the IMPACT project is the cooperatives. These groups form when a number of Self-Help Groups join together. As government registered organisations, cooperatives provide stability by allowing people affected by leprosy and disability to gain skills, education, and access loans in order to start or grow businesses (such as the ones pictured below).

Ram (pictured on opposite page with her new ankle foot orthosis (AFO) provided by the IMPACT project) is just one of the people who have benefited from joining a cooperative. The cooperative manager knew of her difficulties and encouraged her to join their group. You can read more about her life in a future Keeping In Touch Newsletter.

People in the wider community look favourably on the cooperatives as they are receiving training and resources (e.g. prosthetics, COVID PPE) and can obtain support from project staff whenever needed. This is different to other local cooperatives who often have to wait for government support and training. One council leader suggested that the cooperatives consider



Off season grain selling



Goat rearing



Bead making



Banana plantation



Ram with her new ankle foot orthosis (AFO) provided by the IMPACT project

grants for social and community activities, which are better for the community compared to other cooperatives who are mainly focused on money generation.

## MINI LEPROSY ELIMINATION CAMPAIGNS (MLECs)

Another important activity for the IMPACT team is to hold local community screening sessions to help uncover new cases of leprosy. These sessions typically find 2 or 3 new cases each. One case found at a recent MLEC was 15-year-old Karuna (pictured, pink jumper) who had a faint patch of skin on her left wrist where she did not feel any sensation. You can read about her heartbreaking life in the next edition of Keeping In Touch.

Your prayers are needed to keep IMPACTing Nepal!

Praise God for all the lives being transformed through your prayers for those with leprosy and disability. Praise God for the good name the cooperatives have within their local communities. Pray that will reflect on the work of The Leprosy Mission Nepal as a whole and help in making the love of Jesus known to many.



Karuna's leprosy was discovered during a Mini Leprosy Elimination Campaign (MLEC)

Pray for the cooperatives as they grow in size and numbers. Pray they will become increasingly independent of the IMPACT project, able to sustain and support one another financially, and as a community.

Pray for the IMPACT team as they provide the training and other support needed to bring about the opportunities for a fuller, healthier, more productive life.

Pray that the IMPACT team will be able to hold more MLECs and uncover further cases of leprosy. Pray for those who are diagnosed to access the medication and support needed to be cured and go on to live fruitful lives.

Pray for The Leprosy Mission Nepal as they oversee the range of projects in Nepal. Pray they will continue to have the resources necessary to help make leprosy a thing of the past.

If you would like to support this project financially please follow the link or scan the QR Code  
<https://www.leprosymission.org.au/projects/integrated-mobilisation-active-community-transformation>



This project is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). Thanks to ANCP and our supporters, this project is able to help improve the well-being of people affected by leprosy and disability in Timor-Leste.