

Newsletter

June 2024



pacific leprosy

www.leprosy.org.nz

A shower and toilet for Petelo

Last month we told you about Petelo Salue who had leprosy back in 1996 and subsequently two of his sons also contracted the disease. He suffers from disfiguration of his hands and fingers and from drop foot.

Petelo raised his five children while living at his wife's family compound at Moamoia but when his wife died, according to Samoan custom, he left the compound as he no longer had any rights to continue living there. He stayed at the homes of different family members for a few years and finally decided to settle down at the house of one of his daughters and her family at Falelanu, in a rundown one-room open shelter housing 11 people. Petelo wanted to live there to be close to his daughter and grandchildren.

The toilet and shower building were very unhygienic and ramshackle. Thanks to your help, the Foundation was able to fund a new one which was recently completed – apart from another coat of paint (when there is a dry day!).

Now something needs to be done about the one-room termite-infested house where Petelo lives. It is rundown, overly occupied and lacks any privacy. We will soon be arranging for some quotations and ideas about the best way to improve this. We will let you know how else you have been able to help Petelo and his family.



Trying the best seat in the house!



From this...



To This!!!



Peter Bendinelli (our representative in Samoa) poses with Petelo's family in front of the new building.

KIRIBATI INFORMATION

Some of you have contacted us about a newsletter mailout from The Leprosy Mission featuring a new project they are setting up in Kiribati. This project is funded by the NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It is a community wellness project, not a leprosy program and is confined to three outer islands. As you will read in this newsletter, our program is working exceptionally well in Kiribati in both the areas of welfare of people affected by leprosy, and leprosy cure and prevention. There is no cross over between The Leprosy Mission new project and our ongoing leprosy program.

Opening of the Skin Clinic extension in Kiribati

During a recent regular visit to the Leprosy team in Kiribati, a ceremony was held to formally open the extension to the Skin Clinic which is largely funded through your help. The event was attended by the staff of the Clinic, representatives from the Foundation and the Minister of Health, who gave a moving speech. We are publishing his speech here so you can understand how much the work which you fund is appreciated by the countries in which we work. Thank you for your constant interest and support for that work.

General Manager for Pacific Leprosy Foundation, Mrs. Jill Tomlinson together with your team members from the Pacific Leprosy Foundation, Staff of the Ministry of Health, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Kam na bane ni mauri! (Hello to you all!)

Today, we gather to celebrate the completion of the new extension to our skin clinic, and I am grateful for the opportunity to address today's special occasion. This occasion reflects the unwavering commitment of each and every one present here today to the health and well-being of our community here in Kiribati. And at the heart of this achievement lies the invaluable partnership between the Pacific Leprosy Foundation and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.



Open for business (still decorated for the ceremony!)

To the Pacific Leprosy Foundation team, your support has been nothing short of extraordinary. Through your generosity and dedication, you have not only helped us build physical infrastructure but have also transformed lives and strengthened our healthcare system in profound ways. From funding crucial positions within our leprosy program to providing essential medications, equipment, and logistical support, your contributions have been instrumental in enhancing our ability to diagnose, treat, and prevent skin conditions, including leprosy.

Furthermore, your assistance extends beyond financial aid. The provision of medications, topical treatments, Rifampicin drugs for leprosy prevention, alongside essential equipment such as laptops and the establishment of a comprehensive patient database, has significantly enhanced our diagnostic and treatment capabilities. Additionally, your support in staff



Hon Dr Tinte Itinteang, Minister for Health and Medical Services in Kiribati gives a speech at the opening of the Skin Clinic Extension.

transportation, the provision of contract nurses, and facilitating the transportation of skin biopsies for laboratory analysis in New Zealand has further fortified our healthcare infrastructure.

However, it is the PLF's unwavering commitment to providing welfare support to Kiribati's leprosy-affected population that truly embodies the spirit of compassion and solidarity within our healthcare community. Your resolute dedication to enhancing the lives of those in need serves as a guiding light of hope and inspiration for us all.

As we celebrate the completion of this new extension, let us not merely acknowledge the physical structure before us, but also the collaborative spirit and generosity that have made it a reality. Together, we have exemplified the

potency of partnership and the profound impact it can wield on the health and well-being of our people.

In conclusion, I extend my deepest appreciation to the Pacific Leprosy Foundation, as well as all our partners, stakeholders, and dedicated healthcare professionals who persistently strive towards ensuring a healthier future for Kiribati. Let us persevere in our pursuit of excellence in healthcare delivery, guided by our shared commitment to serving our communities with compassion and integrity.

I leave you with the blessings of our nation – Te Mauri (Health), Te Raoi (Peace), ao te Tabomoa (Prosperity).

Kam bati n rabwa. (Thank you all!)



The Skin Clinic team with Jill.

Lala's Office

This August, I will have been working for the Foundation for 18 years – where has the time gone? I love my job – it is hugely varied, and no two days are the same! One item of my work of which I am most proud, is my development of a database to enable the Kiribati leprosy team to keep track of the 2000 patients and their household contacts dating back to 2010. Increasingly, we are getting requests from the other countries in which we work to make a database for them.

It is important now that we "future proof" these databases so that they can be managed by the clinics themselves, rather than relying on me – I'm not getting any younger! This work means that I will have limited time to travel for the next few months – compounded by the imminent arrival of two more grandchildren! However, you can be assured that I think about you all every day, and I am so grateful for your interest in and support for the work of the Foundation. I look forward to seeing you again soon!

Lala

DONATION RECEIPTS

Do you donate to us regularly? If so, you might prefer to receive just one receipt for your donations at the end of the financial year. If so, please feel free to call us (03 343 3685) or email us at admin@leprosy.org.nz to let us know – and if you have an email address, let us know that too and save the exorbitant cost of snail mail!

GETTING UP TO DATE!

This week we will be launching our completely updated website. Like many things, websites can become dated and lose functionality, if not changed to keep up with technology and new trends in how we access information.

I hope you will enjoy the new look and feel, and above all the updated shop feature where you can make a donation, or browse and buy our books and stationery items using a fully secure payment system.

Happy browsing!



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Donate now

Help us on the road to zero.

Our goal: No children with leprosy by 2035.



Information

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

We currently manage projects to assist those affected by leprosy in the following countries:

- Fiji
- Tonga
- Samoa
- Vanuatu
- Solomon Islands
- Kiribati
- New Zealand
- Tuvalu

Thank you so much to all of you who make this work possible through your interest and generosity.

DIRECT CREDIT

We are happy to receive donations by direct credit.

If you wish to use this option, please use your surname and donor number (six figures to the right of your name and address on our appeal coupon) as a reference, so that we know where to send the receipt.

The bank account number is: 02-0800-0037987-000

BIC SWIFT CODE: BKNZ222 Bank of New Zealand,

60 Waterloo Quay, Pipitea, Wellington 6011 New Zealand



pacific leprosy

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Thank you so much for your continuing interest in and support for our work all over the Pacific.

Yours sincerely

Jill Tomlinson
GENERAL MANAGER

Yes, I would like to make a gift to Pacific Leprosy

My Gift of: \$ is enclosed

OR

Please debit my: Bankcard/Mastercard Visa American Express Diners Club

Card Number

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If you would like to make your gift by direct credit, our bank account number is:
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Do we have your correct email address? Please update if incorrect.



Please send me information about:

- Leaving a bequest to the Pacific Leprosy Foundation
- Making a regular monthly donation

Founded in 1939 by PJ Twomey MBE
Leg of Hon. JP. Incorporated under the
Charitable Trusts Act 1957

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