

WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination

YOHEI SASAKAWA

Japanese Government Goodwill Ambassador for
the Human Rights of Persons Affected by Leprosy



Yohei Sasakawa is a catalyst, a bridge-builder, and an advocate who has worked steadfastly toward a leprosy-free world for over forty years. The WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination is appointed by the World Health Organization's Director-General to contribute to its efforts to raise awareness of leprosy-related problems and solutions. Based on his philosophy that solutions are found in the field, as WHO Goodwill Ambassador he has visited around 100 countries to see the situation for himself and met with more than 150 national leaders to convey why leprosy still requires their attention if we are to achieve a leprosy-free world.

Role as WHO Goodwill Ambassador

- Advocates for leprosy to be given priority on the health agenda
- Raises the profile of leprosy in the media
- Promotes efforts to end leprosy-related discrimination
- Hears directly from persons affected by leprosy about the issues they face

Honors



Recent honors include:

- 2022 WHO Director-General's Award for Global Health
- 2021 Grand Official Prize, Republic of Ecuador
- 2019 Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun, Japan
- 2018 Gandhi Peace Prize (Awarded in 2019)
- 2017 Health and Human Rights Award, International Council of Nurses
- 2017 Health-for-All Gold Medal, WHO
- 2014 The Rule of Law Award, International Bar Association
- 2010 Ordem de Timor-Leste, Timor-Leste
- 2006 International Gandhi Award (Awarded in 2007)

Books

Fumihiko Takayama, *The Last and Longest Mile: Yohei Sasakawa's Struggle to Eliminate Leprosy* (London: Hurst Publishers, 2021)

Yohei Sasakawa, *No Matter Where the Journey Takes Me: One Man's Quest for a Leprosy-Free World* (London: Hurst Publishers, 2019)

Yohei Sasakawa, *My Struggle against Leprosy* (Tokyo: Festina Lente, 2019)

“Don't forget leprosy.”

Even amid the coronavirus pandemic,
we must not allow leprosy to be forgotten.



Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative

The Initiative is a strategic alliance that links together the WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination, Sasakawa Health Foundation, and The Nippon Foundation for the purpose of achieving a leprosy-free world.

Major contributions and achievements



US\$200 million in funding

Supporting WHO's Global Leprosy Programme since 1975 including free distribution of multidrug therapy (MDT) from 1995 to 1999.



Promoting human rights

Advocacy leading to adoption of landmark 2010 UN General Assembly Resolution on elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members.



Empowering persons affected by leprosy

To date has supported 37 organizations of persons affected by leprosy in 22 countries, helping to empower them and promote their social and economic rehabilitation.

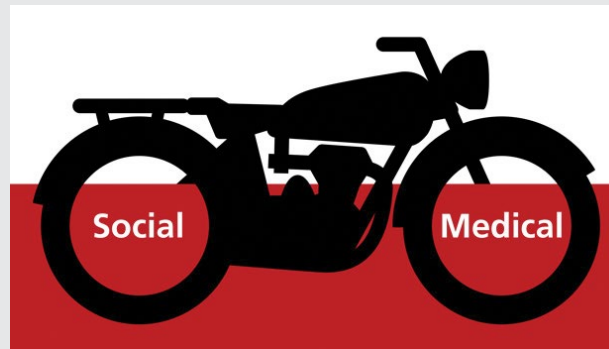


Raising awareness

Organizes conferences, symposiums, workshops and annual Global Appeal to End Stigma and Discrimination against Persons Affected by Leprosy with support of high-profile individuals and organizations.

Join us on the last mile to end leprosy

Efforts to tackle the disease and the discrimination it causes are like the two wheels of a motorcycle.



The front wheel represents efforts to cure the disease, and the back wheel the fight against stigma and discrimination. Both wheels must turn at the same time if we are to make progress toward our goal of a leprosy-free world.



@SasakawaYohei



WHO GOODWILL AMBASSADOR'S

LEPROSY BULLETIN



Sasakawa Leprosy (Hansen's Disease) Initiative

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