



The Damien Foundation in Nigeria

Support for the National Leprosy and Tuberculosis Control Programme

We provide support in 2 of the country's 36 States, namely Osun and Oyo. Taken together, these two cover a population of more than eight million.

As opposed to leprosy, which is less endemic here than elsewhere in the country, tuberculosis is a major problem. The cure rate at 84.7% in the State of Osun and 85% in Oyo is good. However, the number of patients detected is too low. Especially in the rural environment, access to diagnosis and treatment for the population is lacking. This is a considerable obstacle. Currently, the programme covers only 18 of the 30 districts in the State of Osun and 22 in Oyo's 33 districts.

Expansion of the programme and cooperation with the private sector

The five-year programme for the Damien Foundation foresaw total coverage of both States by leprosy and tuberculosis departments for the end of 2006. However, realising this goal will need more time and quite a degree of perseverance, for what we have to face is a lack of political will on the part of the local health authorities.

In order to increase the level of patient detection, we are going to start actively cooperating in 2006 with 4 or 6 private institutions in each State. It will take the form of staff training, the supply of drugs and equipment. The proviso will be that these organisations agree to comply with national directives concerning tuberculosis control, while submitting to supervision and supplying treatment and follow-up to patients for free.

Cooperation on the tuberculosis-HIV front

The pilot cooperation project that took off in 2002, with two local non-government organisations active in the campaign against AIDS, has been providing encouraging results in recent years. In the town of Ibadan in Oyo and the town of Ilesa in Osun, we propose to all patients suffering from tuberculosis that they should address these non-government organisations in order to benefit from volunteer counselling and screening. In 2004, more than half of patients agreed to undergo the AIDS test. The positive reaction rate was 7.3% for Oyo and 7.9% for Osun. Patients doubly infected by both diseases received chemical prophylaxis and with cotrimoxazole for a period of 12 months, against opportunistic infection. The organisations sent patients suffering from AIDS to screening for tuberculosis by smear examination and radiography. If they were suffering from active tuberculosis, they received complete treatment. If this was not so, they received preventive treatment with isoniazide.

In 2006, we are going to extend our cooperation by taking in other non-governmental organisations in each of the two States, with a view to making the above-mentioned services more accessible to patients.

Summary

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| Start of the project | 1990 |
| Local partner | Ministry of Health, at federal level, and in the States of Osun and Oyo |
| Project type | Leprosy and tuberculosis |
| Population covered in 2006 | 8,647,637 |
| Patients detected and treated in 2006 | 4,414 tuberculosis patients 66 leprosy patients |
| Expenditure in 2006 | € 234,071 |