Frameworks can be useful to help us understand, plan and evaluate tasks and issues. Sometimes they help us think about what might be missing or what needs to be done. The ILEP Triple Zero approach helps frame our campaign and keeps us focused on the big-picture tasks towards zero leprosy. Among NGOs working in the area of Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), the BEST framework is gaining attention. So, an important question for us is “Does BEST align with the Triple Zero focus we have chosen in ILEP?”

As you would expect, the BEST framework is strongly focused on prevention of tropical diseases and parasites, however the two overlap constructively.

The first part of the BEST framework relates to behaviours. It includes physical behaviours to prevent NTDs such as hygiene initiatives like WASH and vector control. In the leprosy framework, it aligns with treatment-seeking behaviours, which come under Zero Transmission. Community and individual attitudes are recognised as very important in both frameworks because they can lead to stigma and misconception. They are a target of Zero Discrimination. Likewise the BEST focus on institutional behaviours, such as improving treatment systems, aligns with calls for system strengthening, which are integral to the Zero Transmission and Zero Disabilities campaigns.

The environment dimension of BEST includes things like sanitation, vector management and control, and infection control. In the leprosy world, the focus is more on addressing environmental factors such as poverty and inequality under the Zero Transmission focus. Two other important environment dimensions that aren’t specifically mentioned under BEST, are well highlighted in Triple Zero. Environmental adaptations such as disability aids, appliances and environmental
supports are an aspect of Zero Disabilities, and the social, legal and policy environments are specific focus points of Zero Discrimination.

The BEST focus on social inclusion emphasises universal health coverage and access to health care for populations at risk. This is also vital within both Zero Transmission and Zero Disabilities. The commitment to addressing barriers to participation and mainstreaming inclusion in health and other services aligns with the leprosy goals under Zero Disabilities and Zero Discrimination. Similarly, the focus on empowering communities and addressing stigma and discrimination which are core to social inclusion are also core to the Zero Discrimination focus.

Finally, the treatment aspect of BEST includes a commitment to strengthen health and other systems under universal health coverage which aligns with the focus under Zero Transmission and Zero Disabilities. The core focus of the Zero Transmission goal in the leprosy world, aligns very closely with actions towards functional disease surveillance and preventive chemotherapy. Approaches like surgery, disease management, self-care and rehabilitation are all core activities for reaching Zero Disabilities. Likewise, where self-care and disease management include addressing causes of poverty, stigma and exclusion, they align well with the focus on Zero Discrimination among leprosy organisations.

So, from an ILEP perspective, the BEST framework is a reminder that:

- Reaching Zero Transmission will require changes in treatment-seeking behaviour, addressing the environment of disadvantage, ensuring socially inclusive health coverage for those at risk, and treatment activities such as surveillance and preventive chemotherapy.

- Reaching Zero Disabilities will necessitate strengthening institutional behaviours for more effective services, ensuring adequate environmental supports, aids and appliances, maximising social inclusion and participation in services and society, and providing treatments which include disease management and rehabilitation.
Reaching **Zero Discrimination** likewise will require due attention to the social behaviours and attitudes of others, clear action in the social, legal and policy environment, ensuring social inclusion in communities by addressing stigma, and developing treatment systems which empower and build people’s capabilities.