



LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE INDIA TRUST

(An Associate Program of The Lutheran World Federation, Department for World Service, Geneva)
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NEWS LETTER

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Cyclone Phailin

On October 12 2013, Phailin, said to be the second strongest after the disastrous super-cyclone of 1999, struck Odisha coast, bringing in its wake torrential rains and wind speed of over 200 kmph. Cyclone Phailin and subsequent floods caused heavy destruction and misery to the people in eastern India's coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.



Lutheran World Service India Trust has sent a joint Preliminary Appeal along with another ACT India Forum partner, which was approved by ACT Alliance (IND 134) to address immediate as well as early recovery and rehabilitation needs of the worst affected target population in Ganjam district of Odisha. Hence, LWSIT launched IND 134 relief program in Phailin affected region in Ganjam.

By December 2013, LWSIT has provided food ration (rice, dal, oil, sugar, tea, nutrela, etc), biscuits and nutrimix for children, HDPE tarpaulin sheets and non-food items (hygiene kits, woollen blankets etc) to 1,200 families who are most affected and vulnerable. Agricultural assistance in the form of groundnut seeds (514 farmers) and green gram seeds (746 farmers) were provided to restore crop loss. Since women headed families bore brunt of the cyclone, efforts are made to revive their economic conditions for which a sizeable number of backyard poultry birds were given to 100 women. While 20 utensil sets have been assisted for community kitchen in the same number of villages, 30 elevated tube well platforms were constructed to prevent intrusion of contaminated water during high flood in future.

After the immediate relief, some rehabilitation measures are continuing during the reporting period.

Vulnerable communities empowered through support from CLWR and PDA

Integrated Rural Development Project in South 24 Parganas, West Bengal: LWSI/LWSIT implemented CLWR/CIDA supported Integrated Rural Development Project in 170 disadvantaged communities in most backward blocks of Mathurapur-I and II of South 24 Parganas district in West Bengal. This project was operational since 2005 till March 2013 (of which till 2007 it was the pilot phase).



During the project period, the major emphasis was given on capacity building programs; establishing linkages with other resource agencies and transfer of responsibilities towards sustainability of SAGs and its development programs by fulfilling 3 major objectives: (i) promotion of just and democratic civil society; (ii) poverty reduction and building healthy and vibrant community.

Impact of the project-

- 16 social security schemes were mobilized for the marginalised by the partner communities



- 94% of the operational community in Project operational areas have access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities through Installation of tube well and sanitary family latrine, as a result water borne disease has been significantly reduced.
- 62% child deliveries have been institution-alized and rest is conducted by trained Midwives.
- 76% of families are consuming nutritional food regularly and as a result, malnourishment is reduced from 45% to 10%
- 53% of boys and 57% of girl students are availing educational stipend from the government.
- 66% of farmers are practicing sustainable agriculture practices by using traditional variety of seeds and organic/vermin manure.

Chief Minister of Odisha accolades CBDMT

Kantiagarh Community under the Palibandha Panchayat in Ganjam block under Ganjam district is one of the underprivileged communities, which was terribly hit by Cyclone 'Phailin' during October 2013. This community is very close to the sea (Bay of Bengal) which is flanked by natural forest and large area under green vegetation.



LWSIT trained CBDMT members of the village and took all precautionary measures by informing all families in the village to take shelter in safe houses – those that are permanent in nature. Since they had a list of vulnerable persons in hand such as- physically challenged, pregnant women, lactating mothers, children below five years of age, elderly and the crippled, they were given priority to evacuate to the safer buildings. All the residents of the area were able to take shelter either in safe buildings or in multipurpose cyclone shelters, thus the loss to human life was considerably reduced and the people of the area were able to escape the force of the cyclonic storm. Such preparedness and effective evacuation plan helped the people of Kantiagarh community to save their lives.

The district administration of Ganjam including Revenue and Disaster Management Ministry of Government of Odisha has acknowledged the efforts of CBDMT for their outstanding efforts made by Baba Bateswar DMT of Kantiagarh for rescue and shelter management at the time of cyclone. Taking into consideration the herculean efforts taken by CBDMT, the Minister declared that CBDMT as the 'Best DMT in the State of Odisha'. In a special function, the Chief Minister of the State of Odisha awarded a citation with seal to CBDMT which was greatly appreciated by the audience and the State Government officials.

(Due to inadequate space in October-December 2013 Newsletter, this news article have been included in this Newsletter)

Workshop on Exit Strategy

An Exit Strategy Workshop was conducted at Xavier Institute of Management Bhubaneswar from 13th-16th January 2014. Unit Managers from all the project units, staff members from Program & Finance departments participated in the four day intensive program. It was facilitated by eminent faculties of XIMB, and some experienced professionals who worked with the Government of India as development consultants and senior officials from CARE India.



The program was inaugurated by Dr. Bhagabanprakash a senior consultant who worked with Government of India and Commonwealth Youth consultant.

The stimulating discussions focussed on proper project management with effective monitoring. It is imperative to build the capacity of the communities with clear cut vision based on mutual understanding on sustainable development. The project needs to be implemented in such a way that it ensures successful exit. The exit strategy needs to be planned from the beginning of the project and strategy needs to be incorporated in the project design with time frame.

Forthcoming events

- AZEECON Disability Inclusive Meeting at Laos from May 5 - 9, 2014.

Gender Audit

As part of Gender Audit, a two day workshop was organised on 6th and 7th March. It was attended by 15 male and 11 female staff of LWSIT. In the workshop a situational analysis of gender in LWSIT was done. Through various exercises gender in LWSIT program and in organisational policies were analysed thoroughly. As an outcome of the Gender Audit, LWSIT Gender Policy is revised.

Vulnerable communities empowered through support from CLWR and PDA

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- 54 seed banks of indigenous variety of paddy seed has been established in different communities.



- Women are now aware of the equal ownership rights of land and property. Not a single case of domestic violence was reported during the year 5.
- Communities have planted mangroves on the embankment, the survival rate is 80%.

Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) and Coastal Protection Project: This project was implemented in Tamilnadu for a period of three years which includes both core phase (2 years) as well as follow-up phase (1 year). It was supported by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) The overall objective of this project was to reduce disaster risks, vulnerabilities and enhance resilience through effective community based disaster risk reduction and coastal protection measures. The project was initiated in October 2010.

The aim was to enhance the coping capacity among partner communities to combat major disasters in the region such as; floods, tropical cyclone and/or tsunami in these coastal communities.

This project focused its program in 30 coastal communities predominantly belongs to Fisher Folk, Scheduled Caste (Dalits) and Tribal communities of Cuddalore and Nagapattinam districts in Tamilnadu.

Impact-

- 1,176 persons were trained on disaster management capturing the essence of skill development in terms of search and rescue, early warning, first aid, which were extensively practiced during mock drills at different intervals in respective communities.
- 455 families received livelihood support which includes both farm and non-farm based income generation program.
- Importance on different kinds of community level capacity building program, sharing of information on rights and entitlements among right holders, focus was also on the most excluded persons in the communities



such as disabled, aged, widows. More than 5,000 persons were sensitized during course of project period.

- Toilet support was provided to 780 families.
- School DRR program: 1,025 students and teachers were trained covering 10 schools from the project communities
- Five multipurpose community halls were constructed at the cost of Rs 750,000 per hall. These halls are widely used by respective communities particularly for social functions, community meetings and also as shelter at the time of disaster situation.

LWSIT partners with Tata Capital

The staff of Tata Capital, Bhubaneswar spent some quality time with slum children from LWSIT operational



communities. They planned a drawing competition in LWSIT Community Centre in Bharatpur in Bhubaneswar. The time spent by Tata Capital staff with more than 60 children, helped in enhancing confidence amongst the community children.

Intern

Ms. Annabel Dulhanty, a PhD student at University of New South Wales was on a study visit focusing on Dalit women in India from 12th to 24th January, 2014.

Felicitation of LWSIT staff

The Bhumi Putra Bahumukhi Samabaya Samiti (Bhumi Putra Multipurpose

cooperative society) a registered NGO formally named as Coastal Odisha Eco Foundation, Paradeep. Each year on 3rd January, the organi-



sation on its foundation day facilitates a person who has meaningfully served the society.

Ms. Sarita Manjari Dash, staff at Puri unit received the Bhumi Putra Bahumukhi Samabaya Samiti felicitations, for outstanding social work, for creating awareness among on education, climate change, environment. Ms Sarita is working in LWSIT since 2004.

40 years of serving humanity

During our 40th Anniversary celebration we immensely missed our founder Director Late Dr Olav Hodne who died in September 2009 and former Director Mr Edwin Ramathal who died in February 2013. Three former Directors (drs Christiaan Minderhoud, Mr Howard Jost and Mr Neville Pradhan) were present to celebrate 40 years with the staff in Kolkata on 7th December 2013.

As we received the message of Dr Brian W Neldner, Former Director, Department of World Service, after the 40th Anniversary souvenir was printed, below is the message he sent.

Dear Dr James,

As you approach the celebration of 40 years of Lutheran World Service India, I extend greetings to you, your staff, and to the Board of Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) and your partners.

Reading some of your recent annual reports and reflecting on the earlier years of the programme, with which I was associated at the Geneva level (from 1973 to 1995), it is pleasing to read of the continuing relevance and emphasis of the programme to the needs of the poorest and marginalised, and the confidence you have with the government and other local partners. Your very structure, now as an Indian Trust evolving from an LWS country Field Office, is significant. It affirms a longstanding principle of Lutheran World Service, since its creation of 1952, to hand over programmes to local structures and management at an appropriate time.

The very beginning of LWSI was made possible by prior tasks, well done, in aiding people to return to their homeland immediately following the independence of Bangladesh, especially from Cooch Bihar district.

First and foremost we must recognise the dynamic leadership of the late Olav Hodne, a passionate worker in the service of the poor, untiring in his personal efforts to the point of utter exhaustion at times, and, his ability to assemble outstanding staff teams and establish relations with government officials and authorities at local, state and national levels.

Olav not only captured the imagination and hearts of people in his own country, Norway, to respond to his many appeals for aid, through letter or direct TV appearances, but also to the wider donor community of the world-wide church community. He was awarded The Nansen Medal – for outstanding services to the cause of refugees – Geneva, 1976. He became the personification of the core function of Lutheran World Service (LWS).

to “conduct...relief, rehabilitation, development and resettlement services with particular reference to refugees, emergency situations and areas of endemic need....”...“for the benefit of people in need irrespective of race, sex, creed, nationality or political conviction:” (quoted from the Terms of Reference- Lutheran World Service)

After ‘accompanying’ the refugees home to Bangladesh he returned to West Bengal and re-assembled a trusted and tried staff group, including such as Col. Simon and Col Dey and Mr V S C Bonerjea for aid to the rural landless who were moving the urban areas, the long term street dwellers, and other groups marginalised in society. He consulted with appropriate governmental authorities about possible projects. We could respond to those early requests, even if documentation by today’s standards were minimal, because we had confidence that Olav and his team “would deliver”, and indeed deliver they did.

These programme priorities were overlaid by the almost constant cycle of natural emergencies, such as flood, cyclone or drought, in various districts of West Bengal and the neighbouring states, brought on by inter actions of the powerful natural forces of the Bay of Bengal and the Himalayas. Even now as you prepare for your celebration I am conscious that your teams are responding to flooding in the coastal area.

This is not intended to be a staff testimonial, as it would be very long indeed! Others will speak of the staff who have and are serving with distinction in later

years, but I wish to mention one more name of the earlier years, the indefatigable PC Joseph, the long serving coordinator of emergency services and trainer of scores of staff to become competent leaders in this field.

It is one thing to recount the contributions staff have made through their hard work, dedication and competence, but in such a retrospect it is also important to reflect on their legacy, their vision, inspiration and the principles they established which guided them and their staff. Their legacies are in your current programmes. They built staff teams to follow them and we see the results in Lutheran World Service India Trust as it is today. A major asset of a service agency is its staff and how they can motivate the people they seek to serve to be the major partners in their own uplifting. It is a vehicle through which the disadvantaged or marginalised are empowered to develop their own potential and this has certainly been the hallmark of LWS India and is now carried forward in the Lutheran World Service India Trust. May you long continue in this vocation.

I extend my personal greetings as you mark the 40 years of service, together with local partners, your Board of Directors, the international group of donor partners, and the people you seek to serve.

Brian W Neldner AM

Message received from former Director of LWSI, Mr Mogens Jeppesen

Dear Dr. Vijayakumar,

Thank you very much to give me a chance to give my greetings, even if it is not possible for me to attend the celebrations:

Dear sisters and brothers. It gives me great pleasure to greet you and congratulate you with the 40 years of service for the poor and most vulnerable population in India. 40 years ago the work was begun as a response to suffering and despair, and since then the organization has responded to numerous situations of people in urgent need. Today, however, the headline of the work is first of all hope. – Hope based on the efforts of poor and vulnerable people to improve their life conditions through dialogue with competent staff and support from a global network of likeminded organizations and people of good faith. Evidently, there are still lots of challenges ahead for LWSIT and many other organizations. May the celebrations and the achievements of the past strengthen the enthusiasm and the determination to continue the work under the guidance of our good and loving God.

Kindly give my regards to those that worked together with me during my time in India already many years ago.

Yours sincerely,

Mogens Jeppesen

Message received from former Director of LWSI, Mr Aage Larsen

When I joined LWSI, the organisation was just 9 years old but was undergoing considerable changes. The organisation came into being in response to the human suffering resulting from Bangladesh being born out of the former East Pakistan. A large number of hindus fled into West Bengal and LWSI was started to help these refugees starting a new life. By 1980 a lot was achieved assisting these people. In the early eighties we started changing the focus from programs for people to programs which assisted people improving their own situation. This was done through programs which were largely run by people themselves, building up capital and organisation within villages.

At the same time the emergency section continued to organise relief to victims of the far too many natural disasters, floods, draughts and cyclones hitting West Bengal and Orissa far too often. The many successes experienced in this work was due to the dedicated staff who has always been the backbone of LWSI's work. Congratulation with the 40 years that passed, all my best wishes for the years ahead.

Women's Day Celebration



Visitors

1. A two member youth group from Acta in Normisjon visited the Stone Quarry Project at Birbhum
2. 12 students from Bjerkely folk-high-school, Norway briefly visited Stone Quarry Project in Birbhum and the RLA children's project at Kolkata.
3. Rev. Dr. Franklin Ishida from ELCA visited the STEER-Rural, Bankura Unit together with the Executive Director.
4. Mr. Anders Salomonsson from Church of Sweden visited LWSIT National Office and held discussions on CoS supported projects.

Training, Meetings and Workshops Attended by LWSIT Staff during the Quarter

1. In this quarter, 98 staff from across the organisation have participated in various workshops, meetings and training. Unit managers and accounts officers attended a workshop on how to strengthen synergy between programme and financial aspects. Some staff attended training on trauma counselling, participatory vulnerability capacity assessment and on humanitarian response. Staff also attended workshops on participative approaches in development mobilization and empowerment of communities; consultative workshop on CBDRR best practices; community forest rights; status of SHG movement and the like.