



# LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE INDIA TRUST

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NEWS LETTER

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## Rio +20

Advocacy Messages on climate change were sent to the Embassy of Poland as advised by ACT Alliance ahead of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), also called Rio+20. □

## Board meeting

1. An Emergency Board Meeting of LWSIT was held at Chennai.
2. The LWSIT Board Meeting was held at Kolkata. A woman NGO practitioner was invited to be part of the board meeting as an observer. □

## Executive Director's visits

1. The Executive Director attended the 10th HAP Assembly at Geneva. Later, he visited Netherlands at the invitation of drs Christiaan Minderhoud, former Director of LWSI, and held discussions with a few agencies including ICCO.
2. The Executive Director visited Church of Sweden at Uppsala for bilateral discussions.
3. The Executive Director visited the PDA supported project unit in Tamilnadu. □

## Evaluation

1. Evaluation of the Normisjon supported Development Support Programme for Stone Quarry Affected Communities in West Bengal and Jharkhand was held between 12th and 16th April, 2012.
2. Ms. Alex Snelgrove, a Canadian expert completed the food security evaluation of the CLWR/ CIDA supported project in South 24 Parganas, West Bengal. □

## Stone quarry

A high level meeting of the three partners of the Normisjon supported Stone Quarry Project (ESAF, MCH/NELC and LWSIT) was held at LWSIT National Office on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2012 to finalize the project proposal for next phase of the project cycle (2013-2017). □

## World Environment Day

The 2012 theme for World Environment Day is Green Economy: Does it include you? Evidently, there are two parts to this theme, the first tackles the subject of Green Economy, while the latter provokes us to think about our contribution towards it. The UN Environment Programme defines the Green Economy as one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive. But what does all this mean for us? If the Green Economy is about social equity and inclusiveness then technically it is all about us!



A young Santhal girl contributes to restore green cover

Most of LWSIT's operational areas are hard hit due to different ill practices such as deforestation, mining and quarrying, use of chemical fertilizers and indiscriminate use of ground water which have adverse effect on the environment.

### Consequences of ill practices:

**Deforestation:** Most of the operational areas have very rich vegetation, forests and wildlife. The green cover is fast decreasing due to deforestation. The shrinkage of forest cover has affected the climate adversely. The rainfall has become erratic, the temperatures have risen and in many places, the sign of desertification has set in. The process of deforestation in various geographical regions is destroying the environment. Consequently, many animals and plants that live in the forests face the specter of extinction. This rapid destruction of forest has various effects on forest dwellers and animals. When an area of trees/forest is either cut down or destroyed, it results in various climate changes; such as:

- Increase in temperature extremes
- Moist humid region changes to desert

**LWSIT Units:** Assam, Western Odisha along with other operational areas are worst hit due to deforestation. Rampant deforestation has led to erratic rainfall leading to crop failure resulting in drought like situation, forcing people to migrate in search of work. The LWSIT project units have initiated plantation drive in the communities, an effort to restore the green cover, to contribute towards climate change mitigation measure.

**Mining and quarrying:** Mining affects the environment and associated biota through the removal of vegetation and topsoil, the displacement of fauna, and the release of pollutants. The environmental impact of mining includes erosion, formation of sinkholes, loss of biodiversity, and contamination of soil. Land degradation is one of the significant impact arising out of quarrying or mining activity which is mainly in the form of alteration of land structure due to excavation, stacking of top soil and loss of land due to dumping of mine waste and overburden soil. Stone quarrying causes damage to adjacent huts and village settlements, depletion of ground water, loss of fertile top soil, degradation of forest land, adverse effect on the aquatic biodiversity and public health. Mining and quarrying either open

## Shelter for Urban Homeless

LWSIT's application for setting up shelter for urban homeless in Ultadanga (under STEER-Urban, Kolkata Unit) was approved by the Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal. LWSIT already operates a night shelter in the complex from early 1980's. □

## Visits

A staff team from LWF Nepal visited LWSIT rural development project South 24 Parganas for cross learning on the concept and functioning of Grain Banks. The Nepal Program expressed keen interest to learn about the effectiveness and management of the Grain Banks, at community level.



The team from Nepal interacting with the villagers

The team comprised of Mr. Krishna Basaula, Mr. Dinanath Poudel, Mr. Rakesh Rai, Mr. Prem Bahadur Luhar, Ms. Yasodhara Pokharel, Ms. Mohini Chaudhary, Mr. Gopal Dahal and Mr. Surendra Bahadur Thapa. □

## Visits from related agencies

Mr. Lars Hofgren and Ms Emma Gustavsson from Church of Sweden visited LWSIT on 20th April, 2012 to share the results of the baseline and partner survey in connection with HAP accountability benchmarks. □

## Sustainable environment leads to sustainable development

The women of 3 Self Help Groups - Raj Laxmi, Jaba Baha and Sing Chandu Swanirvar Dal were determined to save their immediate surrounding land from falling into the clutches of owners of stone quarries. Mathurapahari under Bharkata Zone (Birbhum, in West Bengal) falls under the stone quarry belt of the district. The wasteland of the area were rampantly being usurped to establish stone quarries and crusher units. The communities around the area were bent on bringing a halt to the



Women at work in the orchard

land usurping spree, but did not know how, with the guidance of LWSIT they decided to undertake orchard plantation in the available wastelands.

The communities around the quarries and crushers were wrapped in thick layers of dust, which contaminated their drinking water, gradually left their land infertile and dangerously affected their health and well being. Many villagers were diagnosed with acute respiratory diseases. The idea of developing the wasteland into orchard plantation was a boon to the community who was yearning for some green cover around their habitation. The villagers who were accustomed to the chirping of birds were bombarded by noise pollution from the



Arahar plant blooming

quarries. The thought of a picturesque orchard plantation brought a sense of tranquility amongst the community

The groups anticipated five benefits of the mango orchard: (i) save the land from getting engulfed by the stone quarry and crusher units; (ii) make the wasteland productive; (iii) the trenches around the plantation will to some extent recharge the ground water level; (iv) creation of green

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cast or underground, destroys landscape and forest ecosystem.

Air pollution is a common environmental problem in all mines and quarries especially open cast operations. Air pollution spreads beyond mine sites, thus affecting the buffer zone to a large extent.

Dust, noise have been an issue for many years. Dust is whipped up from the quarries themselves and by lorries carrying stones which directly affect the nearby communities. It causes direct damage to people who inhale dust and are exposed to loud sound. Dust is the most common and the most extensive air pollutant from quarries and stone crusher units. It also wrecks havoc to bio diversity.

**LWSIT Units:** LWSIT operational communities in Keonjhar and Birbhum are directly affected due to indiscriminate mining, quarrying and crushing practices. The villagers suffer from respiratory diseases, air and noise pollution, water contamination and other health hazards. The pollution is affecting arable land leading to very low crop yield. To stop further acquisition of land by different quarry owners, the SHGs have undertaken orchard plantation along with seasonal vegetable cultivation in uncultivable wastelands. Another noteworthy initiative of the SHG is that they have started pisciculture in the abandoned stone quarries.

**Use of chemical fertilizers:** As an ingredient in fertilizers, nitrogen helps to feed some millions of people. The usage of the fertilizer wrecks havoc on the soil, gradually stripping it off its fertility. Moreover, the farmers do not know



Vermi compost prepared and used by the community

the proper dosage of the fertilizer leading to more damage on the land. **Groundwater Pollution:** Plants can only absorb a certain amount of nutrients. So if chemical fertilizer is applied, not all of the chemically synthesized nutrients within it will actually contribute to the plant's health and growth. Instead, the unused fertilizer will seep into the ground, where it can be carried by rain and irrigation ditches into streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and oceans. The chemical compounds in the fertilizer can contaminate drinking water supplies and disrupt ecosystems.

**LWSIT Units:** All LWSIT operational communities are vulnerable to the use and effect of chemical fertilizers. Through various awareness programs the communities are educated about the different hazards of using chemical fertilizers. The communities are imparted extensive training on the importance of organic fertilizers. They are supported and trained to make and use vermi compost. The communities have started using organic fertilizers and are gradually understanding the positive impact it is having on the soil fertility.

**Indiscriminate use of ground water:** The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has reported that decline in ground water levels in an area is a cumulative effect of ground water withdrawal for all purposes including domestic, industrial as well as agricultural sectors. As per assessment carried out by CGWB in association with the State Ground Water Departments, the share of agriculture in total ground water used in the country is 92%. Remaining 8% is used in domestic and industrial sectors. Borewells which once quenched the thirst of lakhs of people across the States, has now become mere showpieces in most of the districts. Over exploitation of underground water has made these wonder instruments almost redundant. With the monsoons playing truant, the process of groundwater recharge is a big question mark. It has left many borewells dry and has got the 'famine bomb' ticking.

**LWSIT Units:** LWSIT mobilized the operational communities to construct rain water harvesting structures and excavated small farm ponds in the agricultural fields to address their need for water during irrigation. This also helps recharging the ground water level in rural operational communities. □

## Sustainable environment leads to sustainable development

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cover amidst dust; and (v) economic enhancement of the members.

In June 2011, the women planted 700 mango saplings in an area of 2 acres. After plantation, the women have dug trenches around the plantation so as to protect it



A woman nurturing the plant

from domestic animals. This is also recharging the ground water level to some extent. On the bunds of the trenches they have started growing some vegetation to maximize the use of the land. They started cultivating Arahar (pulses) on the bunds, the trees are drawing water from the trenches. The women bought 2Kg of Arahar seeds @ Rs. 80/- per Kg. with their group funds. They monitored the plantation in rotation, which increased their individual ownership.

In the month of November 2011 the group members harvested the Arahar plants (which was cultivated in the month of July 2011) leading to production of 2qtl. 30Kg. The groups sold 2qtl. Arhar in the market @ Rs. 40/- per Kg. and earned Rs. 8,000/- while the remaining 30kg was distributed amongst themselves

Motivated, they further purchased 350Kgs Kavur Yam seed amounting to Rs. 4,500/- for intercropping in the next season. Another Rs 1,000/- was utilized by the women for the maintenance of the orchard.

In the month of April, 2012, they cultivated the 350 kg of Yam seeds in 400 pits of the orchard area. Till date, the growth of the yam seedling is satisfactory, the women expect to get at least 5 kg of yam per pit resulting 2000 kgs of Yam which they can sell @ Rs 15 per Kg amounting to Rs 30,000/- in the month of November this year.

The women have set classic example of environmental protection and management leading to sustainable development. The local government as well as adjacent communities are motivated to follow their footsteps and bring about a green cover in the area. □

## AZEECON EETV on 'Renewable Energy'

Asian Zone Environment Emergency Co-Operation Network (AZEECON) is a network of country and associate programs of LWF/DWS in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Nepal. It aims to strengthen the capacity, performance, quality and effectiveness of AZEECON partners to integrate development and

emergency components in all the country and associate programs. It focuses on co-operation and co-ordination amongst the regional partners. Every year AZEECON organises four Exchange Exposure Training Visits (EETV) amongst its member countries, which gives the staff a platform to both share and learn on important contemporary issues.

During 2012, LWSIT organised an EETV on 'Renewable Energy' which enabled the different country programs to take initiative to promote renewable energy which would empower their operational communities to adapt climate change adaptation measures.

The need for alternative energy sources is getting urgent. As the fossil fuels are fast depleting in a rapid rate and are harder to retrieve, we are facing energy crisis which would get more acute in the future. The energy prices are gradually sky rocketing and are not available for many. This is affecting the development of small economies. As the energy prices for crude oil are going through the roof, these countries suffer even more. Many of these countries need crude oil for their electricity and means of transportation. These high oil prices have their effect on almost everything. The monthly electricity costs for households increase among others like transport cost and prices for



Dr Salima Rahman, Country Director of RDRS inaugurating the EETV

basic products. Hence, these high oil prices make it harder for these small countries to grow their economy. To avoid this doom scenario we need to find alternatives and use them to their full potential.

Moreover the fossil fuels that are widely used today are harmful for the environment. The earth is warming up and climates are changing which are having direct impact on the lives of the resource poor. There are parts of the world where there is less rain and sunshine wrecking havoc in the agriculture sector. Another negative effect is that the ozone layer is getting thinner which leads to the warming up of the earth.

The solution for the above problems can be resolved by renewable energy. Our beautiful planet gives us the opportunity to make proper use of sunlight, flowing water, strong winds, and hot springs and convert these into energy. These energy sources are abundant. We must be sure that we convert the energy the right way, without causing other problems that can again hurt our environment and have adverse effect on our lives.

The three day long sessions focussed on the global scenario of energy crisis, climate change, and the need to generate renewable energy. It also focussed on how the different country programs can explore alternative energy sources in their countries. The objective of this EETV was to give an overview on renewable energy to the participants and to explore various alternative energy sources.

On the third day, an exposure visit was organised for the participants to see 100KW solar power station installed in an educational institute. The participants also visited LWSIT urban development unit in Kolkata to see the assembling of solar lights at the workstations established by LWSIT. The lights are assembled by women from the operational communities.



Participants of the EETV on 'Renewable Energy'

At the end of the EETV, three convergence points were summed up by the Executive Director of LWSIT which will be communicated to AZEECON, they are:

- ❖ A customized training will be organised for mainstreaming renewable energy.
- ❖ Budget needs to be allocated in the country programs to undertake projects on renewable energy.
- ❖ A collective initiative needs to be undertaken by AZEECON on renewable energy for the next three years. □

## Forthcoming events

1. Inauguration of the shelter for the urban homeless in Ultadanga (under STEER-Urban, Kolkata unit) on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2012
2. Visit to LWSIT from LWF/DWS Emergency Regional Hub to facilitate a contingency plan - July 30<sup>th</sup> – August 3, 2012.
3. NCA /Digni sponsored Regional Network Meeting on Environmental Capacity Building at Chiang Mai, Thailand August 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> (two participants from LWSIT will be attending).
4. AZEECON EETV and Customised Training on "Education in Emergencies" September 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, at Cambodia (two participants from LWSIT will be attending).
5. UELCI's 'Enlarged Executive Committee/ General body meeting' in Chennai on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September 2012. □

## From small beginnings come great things

Karunakar Naik, a poor and needy man, belonging to the Bhuyan tribe always aspired to be a successful farmer. With limited knowledge on farming and financial crunch, he never thought he will be able to realize his dreams, inspite of owning 1.66 acres of land.

Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) started intervention in Karunakar's village, Gopapur Goling Sahi, in Keonjhar district of Odisha, way back in 2003. Since then he has been actively involved with the organization in initiating and implementing various developmental activities in his community. He got immense



Karunakar amidst his yield

opportunity to explore his interest in farming through LWSIT interventions. He never let go of any opportunity to participate in different trainings on agriculture. LWSIT supported Karunakar by providing vegetable seeds and bio-fertilizers, with which he cultivated and got good yield. He was able to grow vegetables year round. This year he cultivated 1 acre of land, through which he earned an amount of Rs 25,000/-

Karunakar beams as he says how the villagers respect him and regard him as an agricultural expert. He provides guidance and training to many small farmers on the various good practices of farming.

He appreciates the support LWSIT provided him over the years, and hopes the organization would continue to touch more such lives in the years to come.

## Training, Meetings and Workshops attended by the LWSIT Staff during the quarter

### Training:

1. 01 male staff attended a Training of Trainers (ToT) on ACT Appeal Roll out organized by National Christian Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) and supported by ACT Alliance in Sri Lanka during 15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> May 2012
2. 04 female and 02 male staff attended an Exchange Exposure Training Visit program on Renewable Energy during 15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> May 2012 organised in LWSIT national office
3. 04 female staff and 3 male staff attended ECHO Training on Bee Keeping and Renewable energy on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at STEER Rural Keonjhar Unit
4. 02 female staff attended training on Resource Mobilization on EU Funding at Medan-Indonesia from 4<sup>th</sup> June to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012
5. 01 male staff attended training on Solar EDP (Entrepreneurship Development Program) from 17<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2012 at RUDSETI Berhampur, Murshidabad (West Bengal)
6. 07 male and 01 female staff attended training on Human Rights, Rights based approach to development, Advocacy and lobbying on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at STEER Rural-Nuapada unit
7. 01 male staff attended a training on Child Rights facilitated by Centre for Youth and Social Development at Patna on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2012

### Meetings:

1. 01 male staff attended Regional DRR Partners Platform Meeting organised by DCA in Puri, Odisha from 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> April 2012
2. 04 male staff and 01 female staff attended a "NGOs Coordination Meeting" organised by Utkal Sevek Samaj in Cuttack on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012
3. 01 male and 01 female staff attended a Consultancy Meeting on Right to Education at Sahid Sadan, Keonjhar organised by Shikshya Sandhan on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012

### Workshops:

1. On completion of the ECHO/DCA Project "Integrated Humanitarian Response to the most vulnerable flood-affected households in Orissa", a Lessons Learnt Workshop was held on 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> April at Bhubaneswar. LWSIT's National Office was represented by the Deputy Manager - Emergency along with two Community Officers and two Right holders each from Kendrapada and Puri units. Officials from ECHO and DCA were present in the workshop.
2. 01 male staff attended the District level Convergence Workshop on Vulnerability in Migration facilitated by Aide-et-Action International-South Asia in Balangir on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012.
3. The LWSIT Accounts Officers' Workshop on finance related matters was held on 12th and 13th April at National Office. 14 Field Accountants and 08 National office Finance and Procurement personnel attended the 2 days workshop.
4. 01 male staff attended the Multi Stakeholders Interface cum Workshop on implementation of Forest Rights Act (FRA), food and social security scheme on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 in Balangir.
5. 02 male staff attended a workshop on Revival of Traditional Soil Tolerant Paddy Cultivation in Sunderbans on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012.
6. 01 male and 01 lady staff attended the HAP Accountability Workshop in Chennai on 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> June 2012.
7. 04 male staff (Unit Managers and community organisers) attended an Exposure cum Orientation on Apiary from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> May 2012. □