



LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE INDIA TRUST

(An Associate program of Lutheran World Federation, Department for World Service, Geneva)

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NEWS LETTER

**This is the first news letter published
by Lutheran World Service India Trust.**

**Henceforth, the News Letter will be published once every three months
covering important events / activities of the organization.**

LOCALIZATION

LWS India was registered as Lutheran World Service India Trust in the month of September 2008 and completed all the formalities related to its registration from the Government of India towards the end of 2009. The Trust, a National, Christian Ecumenical Organization will be an Associate Program of LWF/DWS and as its successor will proceed with the programs of LWS India.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr. Vijayakumar James was appointed as the first Executive Director of Lutheran World Service India Trust in August 2009.

PARTNERS PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNTRY STRATEGY WORKSHOP

The LWSIT Country Strategy 2010 - 2015 Workshop took place in September 2009 in Kolkata, in which the donors, partners and board of trustees participated. His Excellency Mr. M. M. Rajendran, former Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu and former Governor of Orisa, who was the Chief Guest, delivered the keynote speech. Mr. Anders Salomonsson (CoS), Ms. Anu Riikonen (FCA), Ms. Nina Ilona Ellinger (DCA), Rev. Richard Sarker (ELCA), Mr. Oddvar Holmedal and Mr. Svein Granerud (Normisjon) attended the Workshop. The final Country Strategy document of LWSIT for the period 2010-2015 was circulated to LWF/DWS Geneva and other related agencies.

Funding partners, Board Members with few staff of LWSIT at CSW



INTERNATIONAL EVENTS ATTENDED

- ▶ Four staff members attended AZEECON, EETV held in Nepal in April 2009.
- ▶ Dr. S. C. Garai, Training Co-ordinator attended SIDA conducted International Conference "Commitment to Climate Change and Justice" in Sweden in May 2009.
- ▶ Four staff members attended AZEECON customized training on 'Women and Child Protection and Human Trafficking' in June 2009, at RDRS, Bangladesh.
- ▶ Four LWSI staff members attended AZEECON meeting in September 2009 in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- ▶ Two staff members attended an AZEECON, EETV on "Climate Change in Right Based Approach Perspective" carried out in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in October 2009.
- ▶ Ms. Anjana Biswas, Assistant Programme Co-ordinator attended an ACT Gender Group meeting in Geneva in June 2009.
- ▶ Three staff members attended NCA Partners meetings in Rangpur, Bangladesh in September 2009.
- ▶ The Executive Director attended the Country Director's Meeting in Geneva in November 2009.
- ▶ One staff member attended a seminar on "Human Rights with special focus on Minority Groups",

organized by Normishon in Bangladesh in February 2009.

- ▶ One staff member attended a regional conference on "Climate Change in Asia Pacific" organized by Bread for the World / DKH at Khulna in Bangladesh in February 2009.
- ▶ One staff member attended the training conducted by UNHCR on "Camp Management and Coordination" in Bangkok, Thailand in January 2009.

AZEECON MEETINGS HOSTED

LWS India hosted the 4th AZEECON, EETV of the year in Kolkata from 2-6 November, 2009. Human Trafficking was the theme of the Program. 20 staff members attended the EETV program.

CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE AT COPENHAGEN

Mr. B. N. Biswal, Project Coordinator, from Puri attended the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen as a member of the LWF delegation in December 2009.

LWSIT STAFF AS RESOURCE PERSONS

Two staff members acted as Resource Persons and supported the training program on Community Based Disaster Preparedness, organized by WWF in November and December 2009.

NORDIC AMBASSADORS VISIT

Five Nordic Ambassadors visited LWSITs project locations in Orissa. Their Excellencies Ole Lonsmann Poulsen, Ambassador of Denmark, Lars-Olof Lindgren, Ambassador of Sweden, Terhi Hakala, Ambassador of Finland, Gudmundur Eiriksson, Ambassador of Iceland, Ann Ollestad, Ambassador of Norway, along with Miss Dorte Bech Vizard, the Political Counsellor from Denmark, visited LWSIT programs at Kalahandi District. Kalahandi is one of the most socio-economically backward districts in Orissa. The spouses of the Ambassadors of Sweden and Denmark also accompanied them. The Ambassadors expressed their appreciation to LWSIT for its untiring efforts.



Nordic Ambassadors at the LWSIT's work area

AILA RECOVERY PROJECT

On 25th May, 2009, cyclone AILA devastated many places in West Bengal, causing large scale destruction and death. The velocity of the cyclone was estimated to be more than 120kmph. The cyclone hit mostly the Sunderban areas. Over half a million people were affected in North and South 24-Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly and East Midnapore districts of West Bengal. The cyclone killed more than 210 people in the flood-prone regions. Over 1,000 villages in the six blocks of South 24 Parganas district namely Basanti, Gosaba, Mathurapur 2, were badly affected. Patharpratima, Sagar and Namkhana in South 24 Parganas district was totally inundated by overflowing rivers and high tides. LWSIT immediately sought rapid relief fund (RRF) from ACT CO to assist the victims especially in South 24-Parganas. LWSIT assisted more than 3,000 affected families from 11 severely affected Gram Panchyats in the South 24 Parganas district. LWSIT provided each family with staple food packets consisting of 14 kg rice, 2 kg lentils, and 1 litre of

edible oil. One HDPE Polythene sheet per family was also provided to be used as temporary shelter. DanChurchAid gave USD 30,000 worth of material assistance to LWSIT to help the victims. LWSIT could mobilize resource support from the corporate sector through Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) for relief operation for AILA affected areas.

LWSIT has initiated the "AILA Recovery Project" from February 2010 for AILA affected communities of Patharpratima Block with fund support from ECHO through DCA.

AILA Devastation



RELIEF OPERATIONS

1. KANDHAMAL

LWSIT distributed 2500 family kits containing one sari (women's wear), one lungi (men's wear), two bed-sheets, two blankets, one set of children garments for boys and one set of garments for girls, to the riot victims of Kandhamal district of Orissa.

Two Habitat for Humanity India officials visited LWSIT and had discussions with the Executive Director and other senior staff on possible collaboration in the area of house construction in orissa. LWSIT intends to construct 100 houses for the Kandhamal riot victims with support from Habitat for Humanity India. But due to some restrictions laid out in the District Collector's approval letter, LWSIT is in discussions to sort out the contended issues.

2. KARNATAKA, ANDRAPRADESH AND TAMILNADU

Incessant and unprecedented rains for several days in the state of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu caused several deaths and severe damages. Poor people's property was totally destroyed. Initially LWSIT decided not to intervene directly but offered logistics and manpower support to UELCI and CASA for its relief efforts in the state. ACT CO appreciated the stand taken by LWSIT. This is the first time LWSIT completed an operation with the cooperation of the Church of South India, the largest Church in Asia.

TAMILNADU FLOODS

ACT International granted a Rapid Response Fund (RRF) towards Tamil Nadu floods emergency. Activities under this project include relief measures for the landslide victims in Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu. Distribution of relief items for the victims was completed in February, 2010.

As per the expressed interest, LWSIT is in discussion with CLWR about possible cooperation in extending relief assistance to the famine caused by bamboo flowering in North East. A Concept Note has been submitted to CLWR.

PROGRAM FOR THE AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN WEST BENGAL AND JHARKHAND



Women working in the stone quarry in Birbhum district

ECHO/DCA LWSIT – AILA

A three day workshop for staff on – 'Early Recovery Support for AILA Victims of South 24 Parganas' was organized from 10th to 12th march' 2010 in which DCA and LWSIT program and procurement staff participated. This project was supported by the European Commission through its Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO). LWSIT is implementing the project in partnership with DCA from 15th February 2010.



Remembering Dr. Olav Hodne

The news of Dr. Olav Hodne's death on 29th October' 2009 came as a shock to all at LWSIT. LWSIT staff paid respects to the great visionary and Founder Director of LWSIT on 30th October 2009.

LWSIT has initiated a pilot project - "Development Support Program for Stone Quarry Affected Communities in West Bengal and Jharkhand" with support from Normisjon and NORAD (Norwegian Government's Aid Department). The project aims to reduce vulnerability of the communities due to open cast mining and stone crushing in the border districts of Dumka in Jharkhand State and Birbhum in the State of West Bengal. The project focuses on human rights issues, environment protection and regeneration, improved health conditions etc. Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church (NELC) and one of its collaborating organizations are co-partners of this project. The project was launched on 1st March, 2010.

LWSIT has an operational Rural Development Project in Birbhum District, in eight Gram Panchayats of the drought prone Block of Mohammedbazar at the foot of the Chhotanagpur plateau. The predominantly SC (Scheduled Castes) and ST (Scheduled Tribes) communities of the area face chronic food insecurity. The region has numerous stone quarries and crusher units. Instead of migrating to distant places, people work in the stone quarries, adjacent to their villages.

LWSIT- STEER PROJECTS

LWSIT has changed the nomenclature of its Urban and Rural Development Projects to "Social Transformation, Economic Empowerment and Risk Reduction" Projects-Rural and Urban. Disaster Preparedness has been incorporated as cross-cutting issue and merged with STEER - Rural and Urban.

STUDY/ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS WITH PARTNERS

LWSIT assisted DanChurchAid to organize a course in Kolkata for APRODEV partners, in collaboration with Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi. The theme of the course on climate change was "Global Warming in a Still Unequal World".

As assigned by Bread for the World, Mr. Klaus Sieg and Mr. Joerg Boethling, journalists made a study visit to Educational Programmes under Rural Development Projects in Birbhum and Bankura.

Ms. Kristiina Mikkola together with an Indian Consultant, conducted an Impact Assessment of Sustainable Livelihood and Economic Empowerment of Urban Development Projects funded by FinnChurchAid.

LWSIT participated in the HAP's (Humanitarian Accountability Partnership) Complaints and Response System Workshop held in Bhubaneswar from 29th March and facilitated the field testing of CRS mechanism at two of the LWSIT operational communities.

LWSIT hosted two Organizing Committee Meetings of the West Bengal State DRR Congress. Many Inter Agency Group partners and State Government officials attended the preparatory meetings.

TRAINING IN AGRICULTURE

LWSIT organized 5 days of training on "Scope and Diversification in Agriculture with respect to Food, Climate and Income Security" at KVK, Nimpith Ramkrishna Mission Ashram. 16 staff and 07 progressive farmers from South 24 Parganas district participated in the training. Ms. Elaine Peters and Mr. Abdon Aguillon from CLWR also attended training sessions.

TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS

Two centralized training programmes were organized for LWS India staff. In the training program on "Communication, Networking and Visibility", 19 staff participated. In the second training programme on "High Impact Monitoring & Evaluation Through Winning Environment for Development Organizations" 21 staff participated.

A three days' workshop on PMIS Database Management was conducted by CLWR for LWSIT staff from 19th to 21st March.

A number of LWSI staff attended multiple training/workshops organized by external agencies. After return, the participants shared the learning from such trainings with colleagues in their projects. Some staff members facilitated training/workshops for other NGOs, Members of Panchayati Raj Institutions, etc..

VISITORS TO THE PROJECT

- ▶ Over the reporting period, LWSIT have had quite a number of visitors to the Program.
- ▶ A DCA team comprising Ms. Lea Stayre Bohr, Mr. Soren Bur and Mr. Peter Rasmussem from Copenhagen together with Mr. Pradip Kumar Sharma, from DCA New Delhi, made a Private and Corporate Fund Raising visit to RDP-Kalahandi in Orissa. The objective of the team's visit was to learn about LWSIT's work for the poor in the hunger belt of KBK (Kalahandi, Balangir and Koraput), learning development process and approach adopted for elimination of hunger and food insecurity. Of the three above mentioned districts, LWSIT has operational projects in Kalahandi and Balangir.
- ▶ Ms. Lene Ejj Jarbol, Journalist in DCA Media Group, made a brief visit to LWSI office. Ms. Jarbol was in Kolkata in connection with a Training on Climate change organized by APRODEV Climate Change Secretariat in Copenhagen and DCA. She also visited the cyclone AILA hit areas in South 24-Parganas district in West Bengal.
- ▶ Mr. Richard Sarker and Dr. John Lunn from ELCA, Ms. Elaine Peters and Mr. Abdon from CLWR; Mr. Anders Salomonsson and Mr. Joacim Carlson from Church of Sweden visited the organization.
- ▶ Mr. Roland Schlott, Program Officer Asia for Humanitarian Affairs LWF/DWS, Geneva, visited LWSIT Head Office, STEER (Social Transformation, Economic Empowerment and Risk Reduction) - Urban Project in Kolkata and Bilateral Project in South 24 Parganas from 15th to 16th January, 2010.



Roland Schlott is in the field visit

CROSS LEARNING

LWSIT encourages students from learning institutions in India and abroad to undergo practical training/internship in its projects.

Two Brazilian students from Geneva underwent their internship during January and February, 2010.

60 final year students of MSW along with teachers from the Martin Luther Christian University, Meghalaya visited the Urban Project in Kolkata mainly for an orientation on urban development programmes. The team had a very good interaction with the staff. Many of the students expressed their interests for doing internship at LWSIT

Five Bachelor of Divinity students from Bishop's College, Kolkata completed their internship for periods ranging from two weeks to two months.

Five Finnish students made exposure visits to the Rural Development Projects in Bankura and South 24-Parganas.

LWSIT staff are given opportunities to visit other project areas as a part of study and exposure to different activities.

GLOBAL LAUNCH

ACT alliance was launched in New Delhi on 24th March 2010. Rev. Dr. Augustine Jeyakumar President, Board of Trustees, LWSIT and Dr. Vijayakumar James Executive Director attended the global launch.

PARTNER PROGRAMMES

Executive Director attended the DCA Partners meeting which was held in New Delhi. He also attended the SPHERE meeting and Bread for the World Partners workshop on "Right to Food" in the National Capital.

Two senior staff members attended DanChurchAid's DRR Platform meeting and Climate Change Training held at Kathmandu, Nepal.

International day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women was observed on 25th November in many LWSIT projects. Women in India are subjected to discrimination not just based on gender but on numerous other factors such as caste, community, religion etc. The concept of gender equality continues to be alien to many communities at the local level. Tribal people are less educated and poor in economic status. Dependency of these people on more powerful groups in the community encourages exploitation and violence against women who are discriminated within communities. Leaders from CBOs, SHGs and their Apex Bodies, members from the Panchayati Raj Institutions, collectively organized various functions. LWSIT staff facilitated the programs, emphasising the rights of women, empowerment, literacy status, self-reliance, etc. Cultural events like sports, debates, song competitions were held as part of the celebrations.

PERSONNEL

Appraisal of all LWSIT staff was completed on 31st March after a gap of 6 years. The President of the Board of Trustees and two other Board members were part of the appraisal team for the senior staff and took immense interest in the organization's development and to make LWSIT a reality.



ACT Alliance Global Launch attended by Executive Director and President of LWSIT.

TREE PLANTATION IN THE OFFICE PREMISES

BADMINTON AFTER OFFICE TIME



Staff Members play badminton at the office premises after office hours as part of relaxation and exercise.

Planting a tree has long been a suggestion to better the earth, possibly even preceding the outcry and warning of global warming, water crisis, etc. It was always one of those quaint ideas opted for to mark a special occasion, or to simply make one's landscape a little prettier. Single tree can soak up as much as 48 pounds of carbon dioxide in a year and produce enough oxygen to sustain two human beings. What one can do to help is to plant a tree. LWSIT as part of greening the campus, several trees were planted in the office.

Mr. Anders Salomonsson church of Sweden plants a sapling



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