



LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE INDIA TRUST

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NEWS LETTER

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AZEECON SUMMIT

The AZEECON summit along with a workshop on 'Communication' was scheduled from 5th to 9th December 2011 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Executive



Participants at the AZEECON Summit, 2011

Director along with three colleagues represented LWSIT in the meeting and workshop. There were participants from Myanmar, Nepal, Indonesia, Cambodia, Bangladesh along with India.

Executive Director's Overseas Visits

Church of Sweden extended invitation to attend International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM) organic conference at Seoul, Korea to Dr James. Extending the visit, he met with the officials of the Asian Rural Institute (ARI), Japan Evangelical Lutheran Association (JELA) and Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC) in Japan to discuss mutual cooperation and collaboration. This was facilitated by Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

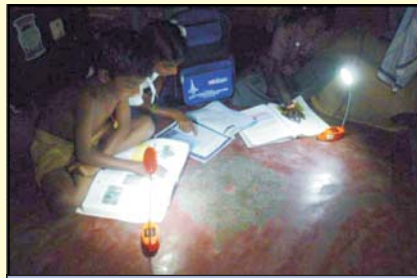
Cooch Behar Blind School

Mrs. Brit Hodne wife of Late Rev. Dr. Olav Hodne, founder Director of LWSI started the Blind School at New Cooch Behar on 10th January, 1965 with a view to support poor blind girls in and around Cooch Behar. It is Mrs Hodne's wish that LWSIT takes over the administration of the school. The Executive Director along with two colleagues visited the school run by Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church (NELC) with Normisjon support, in the month of November. Negotiations are underway with NELC and Normisjon for LWSIT to take over the administration of the school.

Families Going Green with Solar Lights and Smoke Efficient Ovens

Solar Lights :

The remote areas of Cuddalore district spend the evenings in complete darkness. The grid power has not reached the communities yet, and where ever it has reached it is so erratic that it is as good as not being there. The worst affected are the children and women. The children loose out on more study hours and the women are forced to cook in the darkness. This situation had put



Lighting up their future

the education of children on the back seat. Furthermore, with the popularity of telecommunication, use of mobile phone is getting popular in every village. The villagers travel miles to recharge their mobile phones. Looking at all these inconveniences, especially the educational need of children and the safety of women, Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) put priority to support Solar Lights amongst needy families in operational communities in Cuddalore. Now, the children get extra hours to study in the evenings, women can cook meals in light, can engage in alternative income generation initiatives after dark, and also the mobile phones can be recharged. The LWSIT project staff conducted awareness campaign in the communities on the basic concept of solar energy, solar light and its difference from electricity. 900 families in the operational communities have benefited from solar energy.

Smoke Efficient Ovens:

R Kamala, the 36 year old woman flashes an innocent smile and says that she no longer have to cover her nose while cooking nor her children have to go elsewhere while she cooks because of the smoke. The smoke efficient ovens are acceptable in the local communities and particularly women are very happy using it. The



Cooking in smoke efficient oven

materials are collected from local market, assembled at community level and the necessary trainings were arranged by LWSIT. After the use of this oven, women are very happy and appreciated LWSIT for such assistance. The rooms are now pollution free and all the family members including women and children are happy with the change. There are 100 families who were assisted with smoke efficient ovens. Other families in the operational communities are contemplating on having smoke efficient ovens in their households.

'Witnessing Christ in a Multi-religious Space', book published

LWSIT published a book titled "Witnessing Christ in a Multi-religious Space", co-authored by Rev. Dr. Joshva Raja and Rev.



Rev John released the book

Dr. Anugrah Daniel Ramble. The book aimed at promoting relationships and dialogue at the grassroots among multi-religious communities to remove myths and ignorance about each other. It was released at the Christmas function of LWSIT. Rev. Dr. Joshva was present at the function.

Christmas Celebration at the National Office



Distribution of blanket to the orphan girls

Sad Demise of Staff

1. LWSIT profoundly grieved at the sad demise of Ms. Chandana Biswas, Senior Community Officer attached to the South 24 Parganas Unit, at midnight on 30th November, 2011. She was a spinster and suffered from cervical cancer.
2. Mr. Madan Dalui, an ex-LWSI colleague in the Emergency Department expired on 25th December, 2011 after protracted illness. He was 59 and survived by wife and two children.
3. Mr. Louis Pope, one of the earliest employed staff of LWSI expired after prolonged illness (prostate cancer) in December, 2011.

Visits from the Related Agencies Sweden

1. Mr. Anders Olund from Church of Sweden visited the Western Odisha projects and the National Office. He was impressed by the impact of the watershed projects carried out till last year. At the National Office, Mr. Olund shared the climate change and environmental aspects with staff.
2. Ms. Sarah Harisson from Church of Sweden (ACT Alliance) visited the flood response project being implemented (ASIN 111) in Kendrapara/Jajpur and Puri districts on 30th November and 1st half of 1st December, 2011. She had a debriefing meeting with LWSIT Executive Director and the Programme team after her visit to the ACT Alliance Flood relief programme in Kendrapada and Puri districts in Odisha.
3. 20 students and teachers from Ljungskile Folkschool in Sweden made a half day study visit to the Urban Project in Kolkata. The school sends such study visit groups to India every year.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Mr. Henry Pirade from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) made a monitoring visit to the Tsunami Follow on Project in Tamil Nadu and held discussions with the Executive Director and the Unit staff, and expressed satisfaction on the progress of the PDA supported project.

Dan Church Aid

Ms. Aditi Ghosh, Mr. APB Mallick and Mr. Mudasir Wani from Dan Church Aid (DCA) visited LWSIT and conducted an orientation for European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO)/DCA supported Flood Response Project.

Ms. Aditi Ghosh from DCA visited the Odisha Flood Relief Project. Later, she along with Mr. Mudasir Wani visited the National Office.

Canadian Lutheran World Relief

Ms. Elaine Peters, Program Director, Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) with her daughter, visited the CLWR/CIDA supported Rural Development Project in South 24-Parganas.

Observance of Human Rights Day, International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women, World AIDS Day

This quarter all LWSIT units across India observed Human Rights Day, International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women, and World AIDS Day with equal dedication and vigour. The observance of these important days in the units gives an opportunity to the community to learn about their rights and empower them further to lead a dignified and respectable life. All the partner communities observed and organised the programs for the day with guidance from LWSIT. The government officials present during the program, thanked LWSIT for their selfless service for the downtrodden of the society.



A young woman participating in the discussion on Violence Against Women

On December 17, 1999, the United Nations General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Resolution 54/134). Each year, a particular theme is decided. Theme for 2011 was eliminating discrimination against women in order to end gender-based violence. This campaign reminds us that violence against women is one of the most widespread human rights abuses in all countries.



Awareness Camp on HIV and AIDS

World AIDS Day is held on 1 December each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died.

This year the theme of World AIDS Day 2011 is intense as it pledges to fight HIV and AIDS with renewed vigour. The theme rightly is "Getting to Zero," which essentially means Zero New HIV Infections, Zero Discrimination and Zero AIDS Related Deaths.

Visits from the Related Agencies

Bread for the World

A four member group of visitors (Ms. Ursula Hildebrand, Ms. Angela Hesse, Mr. Roland Deinzer and Mr. Dieter Weber) from Bread for the World, Germany visited the STEER-Rural Bankura Unit. On return they shared their experiences and appreciated the visible changes in the lives of the assisted households.

Norway

1. A 12 member group from Normisjon's Askim branch in Norway visited the Stone Quarry Project supported by Normisjon in Dumka district of Jharkhand State.
2. Mr. John Nathan, Mrs. Muriel Nathan (both former staff members of LWSI) and Fr. Sigrud Markussen from Norway visited the Urban Project in Kolkata, and had discussions with the Executive Director.
3. Mr. Trygve Nesse, a Norwegian student made a study visit to the Stone Quarry Project supported by Normisjon.

European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO)

On 2nd December 2011, the delegates of ECHO mission to Kendrapara and Puri were, Ms Maria J Ralha, Mr Peter Burgess, Mr Elio de Bonis and Mr S M Aftab Alam (AA) ECHO.

Consequent to the flood devastation in Odisha, LWSIT appealed for assistance from international agencies through the ACT Alliance (IND 111) and also to ECHO through Dan Church Aid.

ECHO-emergency proposal development meeting was held on 1st Oct. 2011, at LWSIT office Kolkata. A second orientation meeting was held at the national office in which three DCA staff and 12 LWSIT staff participated.

In connection with the ongoing Odisha flood relief operations, two ECHO partners' meetings were held at Bhubaneswar on 11th and 24th November, 2011. LWSIT was represented in the meetings by the Unit Manager of STEER-Urban, Bhubaneswar.

The Deputy Manager - Emergency attended the kick start of the ECHO supported Odisha Flood Relief program along with DCA representatives in Puri and Kendrapara on 16th and 17th November, 2011.

It is a clarion call to the government to perk up access and ensure basic rights to HIV victims while also giving additional focus to prevention, treatment, care and support for HIV victims. With complete support of the United Nations, the "Getting to Zero" campaign is scheduled to run until 2015 striving to see an end to AIDS related deaths.



Role-play by the participants commemorating Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day is celebrated annually across the world on 10th December. Human Rights Day in India is also observed enthusiastically by supporters and other human rights activists by carrying out peaceful protest movements across the country and also to share a day in common

Ambition urges Rizia to dream big...

21 year old Rizia Khatun is an emblem of courage, determination and ambition in Methopara slum under the Rajarhat Gopalpur Municipality. Rizia knows well what it calls for to be the eldest amongst six other siblings. Her two younger sisters are married, two brothers work in a shop as helper and the youngest two brothers are studying in classes V and III respectively. Rizia's education came to a jolting halt when she was in class VIII, her rickshaw puller father found it difficult to continue her education. With it her ambition of being a graduate and becoming a teacher was nipped in the bud. She was determined not to let her ambition of becoming a teacher die a natural death, hence she started teaching young children in the neighbourhood.



Rizia with her books, her prized possession

It was during this time she caught the attention of the LWSIT staff in Methopara, who could not but help notice the high level of motivation and dedication in Rizia. Rizia became actively involved in various community development initiatives of LWSIT. With the guidance of LWSIT, Rizia convinced a group of 10 women to form Self Help Group for their empowerment.

Rizia also took the Pre-Primary Instructor Training from LWSIT and joined as a Pre-Primary Teacher at Methopara centre which was initiated by LWSIT. She could foresee her ambition being fulfilled. She was keen on finishing her education but her father was reluctant to give the permission to do so. She sought the help of the LWSIT staff who convinced her father for Rizia's further education. Rizia got admission in Bishnupur Rabindra Open School and appeared for her school leaving examination.

She has also taken training on tailoring initiated by LWSIT. With a loan from the Self Help Group (SHG), she has bought a sewing machine, with which she stitches new clothes for the young girls in and around her slum. Now she juggles her time between her education, work as a teacher and tailoring.

Rizia cannot abstain from thanking and praising LWSIT for helping her shape her future and giving a meaning to her life. She prays and hopes that LWSIT would continue to bring hope to many more lives like hers.

Distribution of gumboots to the Municipal workers

Hand Gloves and Gum boots were distributed to the Kolkata Municipal Garbage collectors of Ward No 54. This programme is in continuation to the Green Entally program.



Councillor distributing hand gloves and gum boots to the workers

11 such workers are provided these materials as it is seen that most of the collectors collect garbage with their bare hands. It is necessary to provide some basic protection to them, in doing their work and thus this initiative was undertaken by LWSIT. We hope that the local councillor will be motivated and provide the same to all the other workers, and this in turn influence the government to take up some steps for the betterment of the garbage collectors.

Heavy rainfall in Tamil Nadu

Several spells of heavy, incessant rains inundated many districts in Tamil Nadu including the State capital Chennai. LWSIT offered logistics and human resources support to ACT Alliance India Forum member UELCI, in case it comes up with a relief programme.

Interns

1. 04 students from Bishop's College, Kolkata were placed on short-term practical work exposure at Kalahandi and South 24-Parganas projects of LWSIT. Another student from Tata Institute of Social Sciences underwent a practical work programme in one of the projects.
2. Ms. Berith Karasch, a German intern is doing research on collective identity of tribals in India with special focus on Birbhum (West Bengal) and Kokrajhar (Assam) district.
3. 03 MSW students from Netaji Subhas Open University did internship with the Project Unit in Bankura. 02 students from Bishop's College completed their two month's internship in the Rural Project in Kalahandi.

'Home At last: Home Sweet Home'

Whenever Mayadhar and Dilip Podh (of Khetupada village of Takarla Gram panchayat in Kalahandi district of Odisha) have a village lad dropping by in the evenings at their home, for getting some help to migrate to a far away state to earn a living, the brothers sway their heads in disagreement to the proposition and counsel/motivate the lads to stay in the village and earn a decent living.

Not long ago, the Podh brothers were migrant workers, in distant Rajkot (in the state of Gujarat). They had 3 acres of land where they cultivated cotton and paddy, but that was not sufficient to feed the family, leaving them no option but to become migrant workers.

Last year, LWSIT Kalahandi Unit formed a Self Help Group (SHG) in which Ahalya Podh (wife of Mayadhar Podh) became a member. Ahalya sought the help of LWSIT whose staff counseled, motivated and gave technical guidance to the brothers to cultivate

vegetables in their farm land. LWSIT supported the family with improved variety of vegetable seeds, bio fertilizers and the like. Though it was difficult to make the brothers see the bright future through the endeavour, nonetheless the relentless counseling by the Staff bore fruits. Through LWSIT advocacy on the different government programmes for the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, the Podh family bought a diesel pump at half the rate to draw water from a nearby tank and irrigate their piece of land. The brothers were able to produce vegetables like brinjal, tomato, bitter gourd, onion and many more.

The brothers earned Rs 3,800 from selling the vegetables in the weekend market and are motivated to further better their cultivation. The children along with other members of the family are getting to eat these nutritious vegetables which in their wildest dreams also they never dreamt of having, as this BPL family could never afford the expensive vegetables. The brothers gradually noticed the improved health status of the family.

One evening when LWSIT staff walks into the Podh hut, they are warmly welcomed by the brothers. The brothers cannot stop thanking the LWSIT staff for helping them. The children are happy to have their father home and not away for months, Sushila, youngest daughter flashes a smile and proudly proclaims her father and uncle are the best cultivators in the whole village, at a distance Ahalya could not help but proudly nod her head in agreement. The brothers together say in unison 'its good to be back home....., home sweet home'.



The brothers sowing the seeds of their future

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

Trainings:

1. 01 lady staff attended the ONergy conducted "Training of Trainers on Solar technical skill".
2. 01 lady staff attended a Media Interface on "Mainstreaming persons with Disability in DRR practices" and "Making children and young people participate in DRR".
3. 01 male and 01 female staff attended a Global Training on "Value Chain and Logical Frame Work organized by CLWR/CIDA in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
4. 06 male and 01 female staff attended a Training on "Process Documentation relating to Right to Food Project" organized by the STEER-Rural, Kalahandi.
5. 01 female staff attended training on "Globalization, Women and violence in South Asia".
6. 01 male staff attended Training on "Impact Monitoring".
7. 01 male staff attended training on "Mainstreaming DRR in Development".
8. 02 male staff attended training on Rights of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi.
9. 10 male and 02 female staff attended training on Climate Change and Addressing the Loss of Traditional Livelihood Practices.
10. 01 female staff attended a Trainers Program on Fuel saving stove/smokeless cooking stove at Ullan conducted by Switch ON-ONergy, Kolkata & TIDE, Bangalore
11. 06 male and 03 female staff attended training on Human Rights, Rights Based approaches to Development and Advocacy Lobbying.
12. 01 female staff attended training on solar lamp fitting at LWSIT National Office facilitated by ONergy.

Meetings:

1. 01 male and 01 lady staff attended a meeting on "Early Child Education".
2. 02 male and 03 lady staff attended an Orientation meeting with regard to the DCA/ECHO supported Flood Response Project at National Office.
3. 01 female staff attended two meetings of ECHO Partners.
4. 01 female staff attended meetings on National Rural Health Mission facilitated by Health department in Keonjhar.
5. 01 female staff attended a District level Farmers' meeting in Keonjhar
6. 02 male staff attended a Block level NGO forum meeting.
7. 01 male and 02 female staff attended two meetings on National Rural Health Mission.
8. LWSIT participated in the CII's (Confederation of Indian Industry) SDCA Sub committee meeting in Kolkata.

Workshops:

- 02 male staff attended a workshop on "Review of Green revolution and new scheme of Rabi cultivation".