

## E-Newsletter

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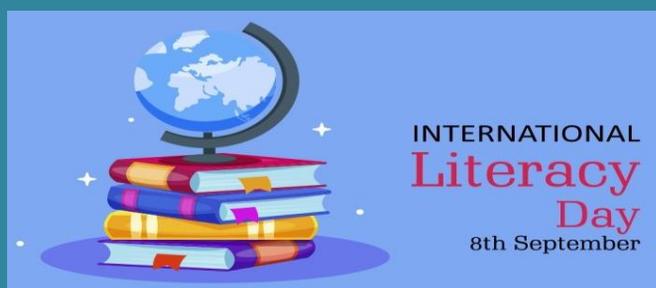
### INSIDE STORIES



*Lutheran World Service India Trust* is a Christian, ecumenical organization promoted jointly by the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India and the National Council of Churches in India.

Registered formally in 2008, the organization began work as the India program arm of Lutheran World Federation/ Department of World Service in 1974 offering relief services to the refugees of the 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence.

The organization works on issues of Sustainable Livelihoods, Community Resilience, Education and Health with Gender and Peace as cross-cutting themes. It's development work is concentrated in the states of Assam, West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand, while it responds to disasters on a pan-India basis.



## PROJECT UPDATES

*Teach us to  
number our days,  
that we may gain  
a heart of wisdom.*  
Psalms 90:12



International  
Literacy Day

International Literacy Day (ILD) 2021 was celebrated under the theme “**Literacy for a human-centred recovery: Narrowing the digital divide**”.

**International Literacy Day 2021:** September 8 was proclaimed International Literacy Day by UNESCO in 1966 to remind the international community of the importance of literacy for individuals, communities and societies, and the need for intensified efforts towards more literate societies. ILD 2021 explored how literacy can contribute to building a solid foundation for a human-centred recovery, with a special focus on the interplay of literacy and digital skills required by non-literate youth and adults.

The COVID-19 crisis has disrupted the learning of children, young people and adults at an unprecedented scale. It has also magnified the pre-existing inequalities in access to meaningful literacy learning opportunities, disproportionately millions of non-literate young people and adults. Even in the times of global crisis, efforts have been made to find alternative ways to ensure the continuity of learning, including distance learning, often in combination with in-person learning. The pandemic, however, was a reminder of the critical importance of literacy. Beyond its intrinsic importance as part of the right to education, literacy empowers individuals and improves their lives by expanding their capabilities to choose a kind of life they can value. It is also a driver for sustainable development. Literacy is an integral part of education and lifelong learning premised on humanism as defined by the Sustainable Development Goal 4. ‘Quality Education’, therefore, is central to a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

LWSIT also observed programs in its project areas to remind people that literacy is essential and raised awareness about the importance of literacy as a matter of human rights and dignity.

**CAP-R Project, Assam Unit:** On 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2021, the Project observed the International Literacy Day. The day was observed keeping in mind the theme of the year for 2021. Programs were organized at four different zones (Gossaigaon, Kashiabari, Patgaon and Sidli) by the staff members of LWSIT in their respective areas. Altogether 409 people from 11 communities participated in the four programs. School teachers and local leaders were invited to the programs as guests to address the gathering emphasizing the importance of literacy.

As part of program, some activities viz. rallies, games, sports, quiz, drawing competition, extempore speech were conducted for the participants to make the programs lively. Short speeches were delivered by the guests and the staff members of LWSIT highlighting the significance of the day and on promoting education awareness in the communities. The LWSIT Assam Unit has always been trying to create education awareness and promote better education in the communities it is working with through various activities and support programs.





**STEER Project, Bankura Unit:** On 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, a program was organized to observe the International Literacy Day in an operational community name Sebapur community under Saltora Block of Bankura District with the peoples of backward tribal community. Though the panic situation of transmission of Coronavirus has made the people very anxious, then they have attended the program enthusiastically and actively. 9 men and 23 women, boys-12 & girls-19 of 10 groups from 5 communities attended the program. LWSIT personnel explained the importance of the day observation by describing the theme of this Year “Literacy for a human centered recovery: Narrowing the digital divide” focusing on ensure quality education through digital system. The Project Coordinator said that, everyone should work together to protect the children’s education through a proper, safe & healthy educational environments in the family & study areas (including local tuition times) for our own benefit. Coronavirus has been threatening our health. She also emphasized on the girl child education and change in our mindset towards girls, migrant workers and SHG members for mass rally.



**STEER Project, Mayurbhanj:** International Literacy Day was also observed by the CBOs in both the Zones under the Bangriposi Block of Mayurbhanj District by following COVID-19 guidelines. After the rallies which took place at the venue, there was a General Knowledge test for students up to Class VIII, followed by a Mathematics competition for students up to Class VIII and a Handwriting Competition for adult women. This was followed by a Presentation on behalf of CBOs on their performance and an address given by SHG & CBO Leaders, School Teachers & Students. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, there has been a complete halt in case of formal education for almost last two years. It was felt that, steps have been taken to bring down irregularity & dropout in formal schools especially in case of Girls. Some steps are taken to bring down illiteracy among women & men also, but the results are far away from the expectation. A long way to go in this direction. However, there are quite a good number of Girls in higher education and skill development now. The members focused their expectation for an improvement in the present status in the near future.



## CAP-R Project, Assam Unit:

As an initiative to prevent spread of Coronavirus among the community people, Assam Unit conducted 50 awareness programs on COVID-19 covering 52 numbers of communities. Altogether 1,141 people took part in the programs. Considering the need of the hour, the Project Unit also organized Digital Training programs on COVID-19 precautionary measures. The trainings were mainly given to youths as they have more knowledge to use internet services. Altogether 13 programs were conducted involving youths from 34 communities and participated by 301 youths. Since the outbreak of the COVID -19 Pandemic, several programs have been implemented by LWSIT which was supported by ELCA. The programs mainly centered around on COVID-19 Appropriate Behavior, covering 57 male, 60 female, 16 boys and 13 girls, apart from providing Unconditional Cash Transfer, support of WAS/Hygiene Kits to the families. The LWSIT Assam unit not only spread awareness on COVID-19 pandemic but also helped in formation of COVID-19 Task Force in 9 communities. The members of the task force are mainly youths from these communities. About 87 male youth and 34 female youth are at present involved with such Task Force. In the course of the training the members of the Task Force were taught various tools and measures that can be followed to face the challenges against COVID-19.



**DSSQC Project, Birbhum Unit:** The staff members of the Project Unit have organized different awareness and training programs, relief distribution (nutritional food value and hygiene kit) and support unconditional cash transfer to COVID-19 affected families, poor and needy daily wage earning families of the different operational communities in Shikaripara, Bharkata and Mashra zone areas. The Project Unit has got an opportunity to implement the activities of 3 different funded programs like Normisjon funded programs, ELCA supported programs and also ACT Alliance supported programs. The Project Unit has covered total 86no. of operational communities in 3 blocks of West Bengal and Jharkhand states.



## GEP Project, Bhubaneswar Unit:

Rally on COVID-19 awareness and safety practices to minimise the infection was organised with the active participation of 42 women of 10 Self Help Groups in Kathajodi Vihar slum. This awareness rally covers 800 populations of 3 Settlements of Kanthajodi Vihar slums. WASH/Hygiene Kit materials were distributed among women and girls in 6 settlements of Cuttack and 7 settlements of Bhubaneswar. Also, awareness regarding personal hygiene and sanitation practices were discussed in community meetings and SHG meetings. Training to Task Force members on prevention and protection from COVID-19 Pandemic was conducted involving 44 members from 16 communities in Bhubaneswar and 24 persons from 16 communities in Cuttack for the formation of task force in their community within their leadership. Besides, Unconditional Cash Transfer of Rs. 9,00,000/- being assisted through ACT Appeal mechanism (IND-211) to 150 Households those are very poor, vulnerable, migrant workers, and those are directly or indirectly infected or affected by Coronavirus Disease. Also, 100 families received Rs. 3,00,000/- through ELCA funding support. 300 families under ACT Alliance mechanism and 100 families under ELCA were provided Hygiene Kit and Face Masks, which helped the assisted families to combat COVID situation. 304 families were provided with hygiene kits under GEP project.



The objective of these awareness programs is to address how the women can become self dependent and motivated to gain financial freedom. They were also empowered to raise their voices against domestic violence, child marriage and educate their children especially the girl child.

2 Sensitization programs on financial inclusion and other identity were conducted in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar operational areas taking 71 female and 13 transgender participants. In this program networking with Government and Non-Government agencies and knowledge sharing of various other schemes and its eligibility and availing procedures were discussed.

Also, 2 awareness programmes were conducted on community resilience for the impact of COVID -19 and 6 awareness camps were held on prevention, cause and impact of COVID- 19 in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar municipal area. The program was organized with 119 participants in the likeminded communities. Also awareness programs were conducted in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar regarding role of parents in COVID-19 context in 5 communities with 98 participants.

## GEP Project, Kolkata Unit:



Food Material support: Total 2 times to 20 Girl children of CCI and their Families supported by ELCA and JELA ( 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021) with: Rice - 40 kg, Dal - 5 kg, Cooking Oil – 05 litre, , Horlicks - 2 kg (nutritional health drink), Iodized Salt -1 kg, Ghee 1 kg, Egg-30pc. to individual children. Unconditional Cash Transfer: Total 20 children received Cash @Rs.5000/- each in their individual Bank Accounts. Face Mask: Along with 25 face masks to each child, 10 pairs of hand gloves and 10 head caps were given to the children. During this reporting period support 263 Hygiene kits were given to 263 families of 9 communities to combat COVID-19 second wave and organize the awareness program on COVID-19, and demonstrated the strategies for preventing transmission of the disease.

### **Humanitarian Assistance to COVID-19 affected people supported by ELCA:**

There are total 100 households from 4 communities have received Unconditional Cash Transfer @Rs.3000/- per family. The selection of the Rights Holders was done by giving priorities to those are affected by COVID-19 second wave infection, lost their livelihood and women headed families. Through this program, a total of 445 Rights Holders received the cash grant and benefited during the crisis period of COVID-19 Pandemic. A total of 50 households received WASH/Hygiene Kits from 3 communities of GEP Kolkata Unit. Through this program, total 221 Adolescent/ youth members have benefited during the crisis period. To access knowledge and promote COVID -19 appropriate behaviour, total 2 Trainings were organised for the youth group of 8 communities and 5 Awareness programs for the participants of 6 communities. Through this awareness program, they learnt about causes, prevention and protection on COVID-19 management.

### **ACT Alliance (IND-211) supported Humanitarian Assistance Program:**

300 families received WASH/ Hygiene Kit Materials and Face Masks; 150 families received Unconditional Cash Transfer; Formation, Strengthening and Training to Youth COVID-19 Task Force Members covering 46 participants; Gender Sensitisation Awareness program to reduce GBV and Domestic Violence (DV) covering 119 participants (women 106, Men 13); Training to 51 persons of CBO/Women SHGs/ Volunteer on Gender and reduction of GBV, etc.



## **STEER Project, Balangir Unit:**

Within the regular program of STEER Project, there were several programs implemented during 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr. of 2021. These included; Community awareness programs on WASH conducted in 6 communities involving 158 participants, 6 Awareness programs on WASH conducted for school children involving 363 children from 21 communities which was facilitated by Anganwadi Worker, ASHA Worker and Project Staff. Besides, support of WASH/ Hygiene Kits and Face Masks provided to 376 families in 42 communities covering 725 people.

## **Response to COVID-19 Pandemic second wave situation supported by ELCA:**

Livelihood security was provided through Unconditional Cash Transfer to 100 families in 26 communities from among the migrant workers, daily wage earners, other poor and vulnerable families infected/affected by COVID-19 pandemic. Formation, Strengthening and 2 Training programs were conducted for Youth COVID-19 Task Force Members involving 38 members from 16 communities. 5 Awareness and sensitization programs conducted for 160 people by giving emphasis on prevention, preparedness and COVID appropriate behavior. Besides, 50 WASH/Hygiene Kits assisted to 14 COVID-19 affected communities through which 249 persons benefitted. Face Masks were given to 82 COVID affected families in 18 communities covering 409 people.

## **Humanitarian Assistance to poor and vulnerable people affected by COVID-19 pandemic second wave (ACT Alliance Appeal-IND211)**

With the financial support received through ACT Alliance mechanism (ACT Appeal-IND211), there were several programs implemented by Balangir Unit. These included; Formation, Strengthening and Training to Youth Task Force Members (COVID- Bahini), by which 2 training programs were conducted in partner communities where 73 participants from 15 communities received training and enhanced their knowledge; awareness and sensitization programs on prevention, preparedness and COVID appropriate behavior were organized involving 136 people from 13 communities which was facilitated by both health workers and project staff; Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) to the migrant workers, daily wage earners, other poor and vulnerable families infected/affected by COVID-19 in the form of Livelihood Security was supported to 150 COVID affected House Holds in 34 communities, immensely benefitted all the members of these families. With the help of UCT, the assisted families were able to buy food rations, medicines, vegetables and other household daily needs. Besides, there were 4 gender sensitization/ awareness programs for prevention and reduction of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Domestic Violence (DV) also organized: in which 148 people from 13 communities attended the program and learned the ways and means to deal with difficult and challenging situation. 2 training programs for CBOs/Women Self Help Group/Volunteers on gender and reduction of Gender Based Violence (GBV) were organized in partner communities involving 69 participants from 13 communities. 316 Hygiene Kits assisted to same number of families in 27 communities covering total 1,664 members. Also, Face Masks were given to 450 COVID affected families in 44 communities covering 2,250 individuals. All these supports were like blessings for the poor and vulnerable families those directly or indirectly affected/ infected by COVID-19.

## STEER Project, Kalahandi Unit:

Keeping in mind the hygienic condition and adaptation of the COVID appropriate behavior especially during it's peak, it was most important to maintain sanitation of each and every household of the community. The hygiene kits with face masks were provided to 370 deprived and poor families in the most vulnerable and underprivileged communities where most of the families depend on for daily wage laborers and migrant workers, working in local areas. Some of the families live in very miserable and unhygienic conditions. Some homes have adolescent girls without any proper sanitation facilities. The task force training was shared with the community youth members (both male & female) about the COVID-19 prevention, preparedness, mitigation and COVID appropriate behavioral practices by the community. The Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) has been transferred to the poor and needy families in the communities who were affected by the COVID-19 second wave particularly the returnee migrant workers and daily wage as they have no any alternative livelihood to earn anything and are currently jobless due to the closedown of industry which created lack of work opportunity for the skilled and non –skilled daily wage workers.



## STEER Project, Kendrapada Unit:

This Unit Organised 4 training programs related to the COVID-19 pandemic and gender based violence as well as they organised 2 trainings on formation and strengthening and training to youth COVID-19 task force members: Programs were held so that the Community people can be aware of the COVID 19 impact. The project organised two Training programs for CBOs/Women SHG vulnerable on gender prevention and reduction of Gender Based Violence in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

During this reporting period those family are directly or indirectly infected or affected by the COVID-19 situation and the poorest of the poor and vulnerable that families are getting UCT support. Total 250 families benefited under UCT by the Act Alliance both Kendrapada and Jajpur districts, 100 families benefited by the support of ELCA, 300 families benefited under Act Alliance, 50 families benefited under ELCA and 370 families benefited under STEER programs and received Hygiene kits and face masks.

## STEER Project, Mayurbhanj Unit:

The COVID-19 had brought enormous difficulties for one and all especially for them who depend on daily wages/earning. The previous lockdown imposed by the Government had dismantled the normal life situations in the Community. While the Migrant Workers returned back from their respective places of work and turned unemployed, people had to lose the daily wage earning opportunities. People were having the COVID like symptoms but not coming forward to undergo COVID testing due to the stigma. They were of the impression that if they were found to be COVID positive, they will be referred to the COVID Hospitals, from where nobody returns home. The members got the opportunity for the renewal of know-how through training, awareness & sensitization Programs. They also played the active role in making people aware of the deadly virus. LWSIT supported the deserving families with Unconditional Cash Transfer, Hygiene Kits & Masks this year with the help of ELCA, ACT Alliance and other regular programs. Financial support was like God's grace to those wage dependent families, who had lost the opportunity to earn due to the Pandemic situation. Hygiene Kits and Face masks allowed no scope to Individuals to avoid the COVID appropriate behavior.



## CAP-R Project, Assam Unit:

The Project organized the International Day of Peace on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to spread the message of Peace. Four programs were organized at the zonal levels and participated by 426 people from 12 partner communities. As part of the program, peace rally was held with the participants carrying the banners. The participants also carried placards and vocalized slogans on peace. The theme **“Recovering better for equitable and sustainable World”** was highlighted in the course of the program. The community people have been cooperating with LWSIT ever since it started to work in this region. LWSIT will always strive to work for peace building in the region bringing together different ethnic and religious groups on a common platform.



## MEETINGS & PROGRAMS ATTENDED BY AED & STAFF FROM JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2021

- 6th July: AED and Emergency Manager attended the meeting with ELCA on TFR Project in Assam
- 8th and 9th July: Review meeting conducted online with all the Project Coordinators, in which AED and other Senior Colleagues of National Office attended the review meeting
- 12th July: AED, Emergency Manager, Deputy Finance Manager, all Program Coordinators attended the meeting with all the Project Units for COVID-19 Response program supported by ACT Alliance and ELCA
- 20th July: AED attended the meeting with OD consultant and Board members
- 10th August: AED and Emergency Manager attended meeting with LWF Nepal and RDRS Bangladesh colleagues on TFR Project
- 21st August: AED attended OD Meeting with Board Members
- 23rd August: AED attended the Capacity Building workshop for Board members
- 26th August: AED and Emergency Manager attended the meeting with ELCA on TFR Project in Assam
- 2nd – 4th Sep: Capacity Building workshop on Monitoring & Evaluation held at National Office, in which Project Coordinators and a second line staff from all the Projects, AED and National Office staff attended the Workshop
- 14th Sep: Orientation meeting held on Reporting Templates conducted by ACT Alliance staff for ACT India Forum members, in which AED and Emergency Manager attended the meeting
- 17th Sep: AED attended Board Meeting of LWSIT
- 21st Sep: AED along with Manager – Emergency & Program Development as well Program Coordinator of GEP attended the meeting on staff capacity building project proposal with Act CoS
- 22nd Sep: AED attended NCCI General Assembly meeting
- 23rd Sep: AED attended the meeting with ACT CoS on UN Side event Program on Patriarchy /Gender in COVID situation
- 28th Sep: Safeguarding Workshop organized by ACT India Forum, in which AED and Emergency Manager attended the program
- AED, Manager – Emergency & Program Development as well as Program Coordinator of GEP visited Bhubaneswar Unit on 8th and 9th Sep' 2021 for program monitoring visit, review the program implementation status and conducted staff meeting



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