



LUTHERAN WORLD SERVICE INDIA TRUST

Empowering the last, the least and the 10st

e-Newsletter

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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.

INSIDE STORIES

COVID – 19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE (SPECIAL FOCUS)

God is our
refuge & strength,
an ever-present
help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear.

-Psalm 46:1-2

For Internal Circulation Only

EDITORIAL: COVID-19 Pandemic Response 2020

The COVID-19 Pandemic has caused indispensable damage to human lives, livelihood, economy, social cohesion and threat to human existence at all levels as well as severe global socio-economic disruptions. So far, Covid-19 has affected 213 countries across the globe and millions have been affected, while hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives due to this killer disease. In India, the disease has spread to all the states and union territories (except Lakshadweep). Nevertheless, in the meantime, all necessary precautionary and preventative measures are required at every level to reduce the spread of the virus.

LWSIT's Continuous Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

During this Quarter, the Project Units of LWSIT responded well to the COVID-19 Pandemic situation by providing food materials, WASH/ Hygiene Kits, Face Masks along with awareness and training programs to the migrant workers, daily wage earners, women, children and other vulnerable people to address the needs during the pandemic situation and showed them how to take appropriate measures to reduce the risk of transmission and minimize the possibility of getting infected from the Coronavirus Disease. Project specific interventions are reflected here under in nutshell :



STEER Project Balangir Unit has provided WASH/Hygiene Kits to the families and conducted awareness and sensitization program on COVID-19 Pandemic emphasizing on to adopt precautionary and preventive measures by maintaining social distancing, using of face masks, frequent hands washing, personal hygiene, treatment of the symptoms, etc. The Unit has distributed 520 Face Masks in 12 communities during the quarter.

GEP Bhubaneswar Unit supported the deprived slum dwellers with 1,000 WASH/Hygiene Kits and 3,300 persons received masks to combat COVID-19 Pandemic received face masks. Sanitary napkins were given to the adolescent girls. With the support from DTNBWED and facilitation by the Education Officer, Ministry of Labour & Employment Govt. of India, four training programs were conducted on COVID-19 management and promoted the search for alternative livelihood opportunities.



Covid-19 Pandemic Response @Project Units



Initially the communities at STEER Project, **Bankura Unit** were mostly at risk since the migrant workers came back to their native place and faced a lot of challenges. Under such circumstances, Bankura Unit provided 235 Hygiene Kits, 450 Face Masks to the people in the communities especially to the migrant workers, physically challenged people and elderly persons who are most vulnerable. Agricultural assistance was also provided to the poor and needy families as per the decision of CBOs/SHGs so they could manage to make some profit from the agricultural field to ensure their livelihood.



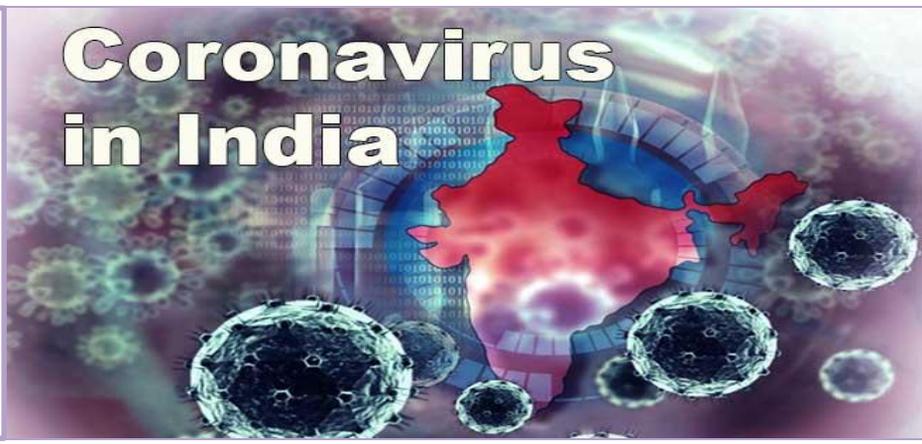
In order to enhance the knowledge to cope with COVID-19 Pandemic situation, DSSQC Project **Birbhum Unit** conducted a series of awareness programs for tribal people. People of both Birbhum district of West Bengal and Dumka district of Jharkhand have immensely benefitted as Face Masks were distributed to them.



**Covid-19
Pandemic
Response
@
Project
Units**



Coronavirus in India



During the third quarter, the project Humanitarian Assistance to COVID-19 Pandemic situation in **Assam** supported by Normisjion was continued with second and third phases of relief support to migrant workers and daily wage earner families. During this first phase of relief, support has been provided to 500 families in order to reduce their sufferings as affected by COVID-19, during second and third phase of relief support, LWSIT has assisted to 800 families and 1,100 families respectively. The relief materials includes; Food Items, WASH/Hygiene Kits and Face Masks to combat the COVID-19 transmission.

As part of the ongoing project of Empowering Tribal Youth and Communities for Change supported by ELCA, relief assistance has given by LWSIT in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic situation in Grahampur and Bongaigaon Dioceses in Assam. Food materials, Hygiene Kits and Face Masks have been distributed to 500 families covering both the Dioceses. Besides, training, awareness and sensitization programs on the prevention and protection from COVID-19 have been conducted involving tribal youth and community leaders.



Covid-19 Pandemic Response @Project Units



During the quarter, GEP **Kolkata Unit** provided individual support to 3 Women Right holders for businesses whose family livelihoods were severely affected due to the lockdown because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The women members were encouraged to take independent business ventures, thus challenging traditional gender roles in society. LWSIT Kolkata unit created posters on COVID-19 and organised awareness on the road by displaying the posters in public places and within the community surrounding areas. The women and CBO members took positive responsibility to display the posters with hard-hitting slogans on it, highlighting the importance of safety measures in curbing the spread of COVID-19. Through this program, the total coverage was 29 SHGs and 6 CBOs in 15 communities and 8018 families were reached through this campaign. There were two Networking and linkage programs organised at Ultadanga Campus along with 42 women from 8 communities in collaboration with the Health Department. Emphasis was given on prevention and precaution of COVID-19 Pandemic, so that the spread of disease can be contained.



The COVID-19 Pandemic response program has been carried out in STEER Project **Kalahandi Unit** ever since the outbreak of this killer disease. During the initial days, the number of COVID-19 affected people were less, but as time went on, the number of Positive cases increased because of the return of the Migrant Workers from other states. In order to curb the disease, this Project distributed 600 WASH/Hygiene Kit materials such as; antiseptic liquids, bathing soaps and hand sanitizers, also Face Masks to all the family members and sanitary napkins to the adolescent girls. Most of the rights holders are Tribals and Adivasis in the Kalahandi district are unaware about the COVID-19 Pandemic because of their ignorance and lack of awareness on the issue, so several awareness programs were conducted for community members, CBO & SHG leaders and series of training programs on prevention, protection and coping with the Coronavirus Disease.



STEER Project **Kendrapada Unit** organised a number of programs as COVID-19 Pandemic response in order to minimize the risk and vulnerabilities of infection of Coronavirus Disease from one person to another in the operational communities. The project has distributed 238 of WASH/Hygiene Kits, 1,130 Face Masks have been distributed to 730 female and 400 males with the project operational communities. The project has also taken steps to encourage the Corona Virus Warriors by providing them with WASH/Hygiene Kits in the project areas while they fight against COVID-19 Pandemic in order to recover from the killer disease.

People in the weekly markets/hats in the **Mayurbhanj Project** area do not follow the COVID-19 norms appropriately. In addition, during consumption of local alcoholic drinks (Handia), they tend to forget to abide by the norms.

One such case story: Sabitri Murmu, 21, a tribal lady of Gopalpur Community under Bhuasuni Gram Panchayat of Bangriposi Block. Sabitri belongs to a Marginal Farmer's family and also remains engaged in daily wage earning and MFP collection. Sabitri also supports the Accredited Social Health Activist-ASHA during door to door visits to have health appraisals. While she looks after her child and family on one hand, she concentrates on the functioning of the CBO on the other. Her responsibilities have also increased a few fold now with the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The CBO members have nominated her as a member of the COVID-19 task force. She has undergone training in the meantime to strengthen her knowledge & skills to disseminate the vital message of awareness. Apart from engagement in daily wage earnings, she also collects the available minor forest produce.





08th September, **International Literacy Day (ILD)** was observed by STEER Mayurbhanj Unit in 04 (four) prescheduled venues following the COVID-19 guidelines with utmost care and concern. People from different Communities actively participated in the program. LWSIT Representatives made a presentation on the significance of the day, the history of the ILD and the present scenario in the context of the ratio between literates and illiterates especially among women. The dignitaries those attended the program focused their commitment and laid emphasis on the education of Children without any gender discrimination, since Education is one of the thematic focus areas of LWSIT. They appreciated the efforts made by people and their commitment to the cause. Altogether 78 men, 101 women and 81 Children from six Communities of Mayurbhanj Unit participated.



Lutheran World Service India Trust

84 Dr. Suresh Sarkar Road,
Kolkata 700 014, West Bengal,
India

Phone: +91 33 2284 9200
+91 33 2284 9730
+91 33 2284 9731

Email: aedkishore@lwsit.org

Website: www.lwsit.org

Online Workshops/ Meetings/ Webinars, etc. attended by AED and other Staff:

- AED attended the meeting with OD Consultant and Acting President on 7th & 9th July 2020.
- AED and Manager - Emergency & Program Development attended the Meeting with NCCI/ACT India Forum on 8th July and 21st August.
- AED and Manager - Emergency & Program Development attended the meeting with Partners of ELCA viz. LWF Nepal & RDRS Bangladesh on Transboundary Flood Resilience Project in South Asia on 20th July 2020.
- AED and Manager - Emergency & Program Development attended Webinar organized by ELCA on 3rd Sep 2020 on Migration and Trafficking.
- AED attended a meeting with LWSIT Resource Partners such as Normisjion, Act CoS and ELCA on 7th Sep 2020.
- AED, National Office staff and all Project Coordinators attended the program Review Meeting on 24th Sep 2020.
- AED, Senior Staff of National Office and Project Coordinators attended the Webinars organized by NCCI & FMSF & VANI on FCR (Amendment) Act 2020 on different dates
- Project Coordinators attended several meetings/ workshops at their respective project levels organized by Govt./ NGOs on different dates