

e-Newsletter

4th Quarter: October to December 2020, Volume XII Issue: iv

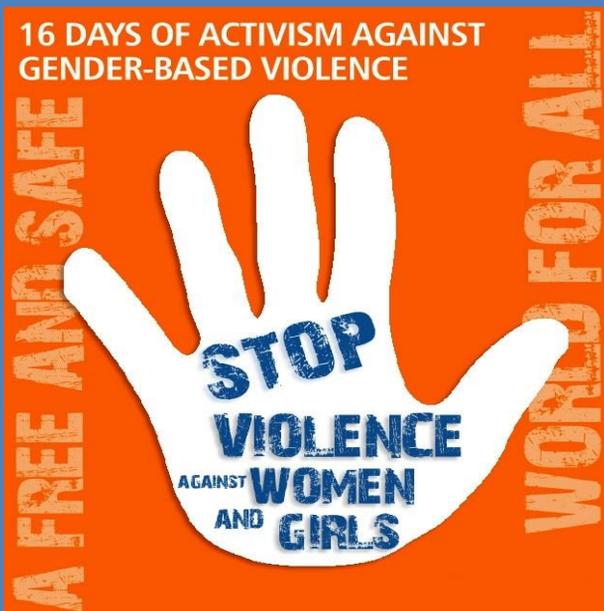
Lutheran World Service India Trust is a Christian, ecumenical organization promoted jointly by the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India and the National Council of Churches in India.

Registered formally in 2008, the organization began work as the India programme 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

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



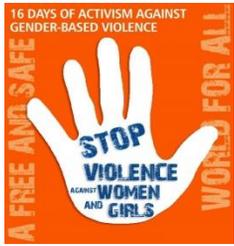
PROJECT UPDATES

Defend the weak and the fatherless;
uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.
Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

Psalm 82:3-4

16 DAYS ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

EDITORIAL:



The UN Secretary-General’s UNITE by 2030 to End Violence against Women campaign is marking the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (25 November to 10 December 2020) under the global theme, **“Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect”**.

As many countries implemented lockdown measures to stop the spread of the coronavirus, violence against women, especially domestic violence, intensified, and in some countries, calls to helplines have increased five-fold. In others situations, formal reports of domestic violence have decreased as survivors found it harder to seek help and access support through the regular channels. School closures and economic strains left women and girls poorer, out of school and out of jobs, and more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, forced marriage, and harassment.

In April 2020, as the pandemic spread across the world, the UN Secretary-General called for “peace at home”, and 146 Members States responded with their strong statement of commitment. In recent months 135 countries have strengthened actions and resources to address violence against women as part of the response to COVID-19 Pandemic. Yet, much more is needed.

In order to observe the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence, LWSIT organized several programs across its various projects as briefly mentioned here:



GENDER EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (GEP): KOLKATA UNIT



From 25th November till 10th December 2020, GEP Kolkata Unit organized several Gender Based Violence (GBV) programs on different dates to mark the occasion. These programs emphasized the prevention of GBV and raise voice s for discrimination and violence against women and girl children particularly during COVID-19 Pandemic situation and lockdown period. Specific programs held were Health check-up camp for Women, in collaboration with Family Planning Association (FPA) of India, Poster and Quiz Competitions, Awareness sessions on Violence Against women and girls involving Adolescents of both girls and boys, where topics discussed included all forms of violence faced by Girls and Boys in the society due to patriarchal system, to recognising violence from Home, School, Colleges, Workplace and in public spaces, and affirmative actions to stop violence and sharing information to save themselves. On the concluding day of the 16 Days Activism program, Human Rights Day was observed at the Kolkata Unit.

GENDER EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (GEP): BHUBANESWAR UNIT



During the period of 16 Days of Activism against GBV, GEP Bhubaneswar Unit organized various programs at six different locations covering 35 slum communities of both Bhubaneswar and Cuttack cities in Odisha.

Besides role play on GBV and women empowerment was conducted by group members, emphasis was given on raising awareness among women and men to prevent GBV, the role of women in society, their political participation and economic empowerment. Debate competitions were held on the prevention and protection of women from domestic and gender based violence was conducted during campaign program.

The dignitaries who addressed the gatherings at different places highlighted various legal provisions to protect women and how these victims can take the shelter of justice and court of law in case they face the violence at home, workplace, etc.



CAMPAIGN AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE: OTHER UNITS

MAYURBHANJ: The 16 Days of Activism against GBV was observed this year separately and also along with the 10th December Human Rights Day in different Communities. Different gatherings and rallies with CBOs, Village level Institutions and SHGs jointly took active initiative in this regard and they highlighted the discriminations against women and girls which are against Human Rights. After the rallies, the people gathered in a common platform where discussions focused on different issues relating to Human Rights and the universal declaration of Human Rights apart from the role of the People's Institutions in restoration of human rights ensuring a dignified living for the People especially the deprived section of the Community. Despite significant achievements and while illiteracy still prevails especially among women, people still remain amidst blind beliefs. The participants took a ceremonial oath to ensure the values of human rights without any discrimination towards Caste/religion, gender and financial status at the Community levels - focusing dignity of women & girls through appropriate care and concern and a common action plan was also chalked out covering the future course of action.





BANKURA: The 16 Days of Activism against GBV was organized by Bankura Unit in 3 places (Lakhnakata, Beltikuri and Dhadanga). Women SHGs of 15 Groups participated in the programs covering a total of 112 persons. The Women Development Officer (WDO), said that, after formation of SHG, the importance of women have been increased and consequently the incidence of domestic violence has decreased to some extent. The dignity and respect of women have enhanced as well to some extent. The Panchayat Development Officer (PDO) spoke about the value of women in our society and how they need positive motivation towards their empowerment.

BALANGIR: Various programs were organized on gender justice and equality in order to bring women to the forefront of development. There is a need to stop violation against women and protect their rights. Training programs on increasing and strengthening leadership qualities of women were conducted.



KENDRAPARA: 16 Days of Activism against GBV was organized by Kendrapada Unit at six different places within the operational areas. The Elimination of Violence against Women was observed on 25th November and Human Rights Day on 10th December. In order to see an inclusive society, it is important to involve women in mainstream development. Without participation and involvement of women, the society is incomplete. Emphasis was made to change the male dominated society in all spheres of life. Gender stereo-type role need to be changed, so that, women can come forward and involve in development process.



KALAHANDI: International day for the Elimination of violence against women and 16 Days Activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV) was observed on 25th November 2020. They expressed courage and determination to eliminate the violence against women and raise voice for women rights. The members took oaths to ensure the girl child education and justice to the women during the COVID -19 pandemic situation apart from prevention of violence and harassment against women. Legal aspects to protect the women and various programs meant for women empowerment were also highlighted.



LWSIT's Continuous Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic

During the Quarter, the Project Units of LWSIT responded well to the COVID-19 Pandemic situation by providing food materials, WASH/ Hygiene Kits, face masks, livelihood security support to migrant workers, poultry rearing support to women migrant workers, vocational/ skill development training to migrant workers, daily wage earners and other vulnerable people to address the needs during the pandemic situation. Besides this, capacity building programs were organized for youth and women, raising awareness for community people, teachers, school children, local-self government representatives, CBO & SHG leaders as well as members, by which they have taken appropriate measures to reduce the risk of transmission, minimize the possibility of infection from coronavirus disease, etc. Some of the highlighted activities implemented during the 4th Qtr. 2020 are reflected here:



The **CAP-R** (Community Action for Peace and Reconciliation) Project of Humanitarian Assistance to COVID-19 Pandemic situation in **Assam** supported by Normisjion continued with IV and V phases of relief assistance to migrant workers, daily wage earners and other vulnerable sections of families to reduce the sufferings they have undergone during COVID-19 Pandemic situation. 400 families were covered during IV phase, 600 families have been assisted with relief materials in V phase of humanitarian assistance. As a special program support, LWSIT provided relief materials through “COVID-19 Initiatives” supported by Normisjion and 2,150 families received relief materials through this special assistance.

The **DSSQC** Project in **Birbhum** provided various relief materials under the “COVID-19 Initiatives” supported by Normisjion. There were 1,450 families who benefitted through this special support. The Project Unit also organized 15 awareness camps and 3 training programs on COVID-19 Pandemic to enhance the knowledge and to adopt Do’s and Don’ts in order to cope with the Covid situation. During this period Project Unit also organized 3 refresher training programs to enhance the knowledge and skill on using different digital apps through their cell phones for getting different types of information regarding govt. facilities, new schemes and entitlements



The project units responded well considering the needs of the partner communities and COVID-19 pandemic situation. During the quarter, with financial support from ELCA, the project title ‘Humanitarian Assistance to Migrant Workers affected by COVID-19 in **Balangir** and **Kalahandi** districts of Odisha’ was implemented and completed by 31st December 2020. Program activities such as; Food-For-Works (FFW), Livelihood Security, Poultry rearing support and Vocational/ Skill Development Trainings were implemented in both the districts for migrant workers and 2,410 people benefitted.



Various Programs @Project Units



Various Programs @Project Units



**Meetings/ Workshops/ Webinars attended by AED and other Staff:
(October-December 2020)**

- ❖ ACT Alliance global members attended an online meeting on 1st October regarding the ACT Alliance governance matters
- ❖ Gender Sensitization workshop held on 3rd October, which was attended by Board Members, AED, all Project Coordinators and National Office staff
- ❖ Webinar on changes in FCRA new rules organized by NCCI along with FMSF on 9th October and 30th October, attended by AED, Senior Staff of National Office and Project Coordinators
- ❖ AED, Acting President and Executive Secretary, UELCI attended the Partners meeting with Normisjon, Church of Sweden, ELCA on 7th October, 9th November and 14th December respectively
- ❖ Webinar on Gender Based Violence organized by ACT Alliance on 3rd November, attended by AED
- ❖ Digni Global Partners meeting 9th - 11th November, attended by AED
- ❖ CHS Alliance Partners meeting on 9th November, attended by AED
- ❖ Webinar on Gender Based Violence organized by ACT Church of Sweden on 17th November, attended by AED and Program Coordinator & Project Coordinator of GEP Unit, Kolkata
- ❖ Webinar on FCRA changes organized by FMSF on 27th November, attended by AED and Senior Staff at National Office
- ❖ COVID-19 discussion paper: Implications on ACT Strategies organized by ACT Alliance led by General Secretary of ACT Alliance, held on 26th November and the program attended by AED and Emergency Manager
- ❖ Board meetings conducted on 21st October and 10th December, attended by AED
- ❖ Workshop on POSH held on 2nd December, attended by AED, Board Members, National Office staff and Project Coordinators
- ❖ Advisory Committee meeting held on 17th December, attended by AED
- ❖ UELCI Annual General Body Meeting held on 21st December, attended by AED