

Report of the LWF National Committee in India

The LWF National Committee of India circulates the announcement of LWF vacancy to member churches requesting the Heads of Churches to choose eligible candidates and recommend to LWF National Committee – India. The applications received from the member churches are scrutinized and recommend the suitable candidates for the LWF positions.

UELCI MINISTRIES

Human Resource Development

The LWF scholarship application forms are forwarded to churches. This year the Human Resource Development Committee of UELCI, screened and recommended 66 individual scholarship applications and five group scholarship applications of the member churches to be forwarded to HRD/LWF for approval. After thorough scrutiny by the LWF Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) Desk 14 individual and 3 group scholarships were approved.

Capacity building program for staff was conducted. The capacity building programs “pays enormous dividends, It triggers positive growth that produced better-trained staff, skilled and better performing initiatives and more creative methodologies.” The UELCI staff capacity building workshops assist the staff working in the secretariat and the varied project field coordinators to improve their management and leadership skills, develop prompt and right strategic planning. The training brought improvement in the levels of service and governance of the program among staff members and also enabled the management to identify individual strength and weakness which help to evaluate and plan for additional staff training and support needs.

The regular staff meeting facilitates the staff to know their job description and also helps them to understand the purpose and relevancy of the various programs. In addition the monthly staff meetings promote the various departments to team up to plan their programs for the month.

Sponsorship to CMC Ludhiana

The department also sponsors candidates to CMC Ludhiana for MBBS and P.G. courses. The applications received will be scrutinized and the candidates are called for written test and interview. Then the eligible candidates are sponsored by UELCI to CMC Ludhiana for MBBS and P.G. courses. The following candidates were sponsored to CMC Ludhiana for MBBS Course for the year 2014

1. Mr. Akash Thangaraj
2. Ms. Teli Anne Satwika
3. Mr. Naveen Sandy Roberts
4. Mr. Dadala John Ratan Luther
5. Ms. Kattupalli Rithika Ahana
6. Mr. Yellamati Lawrence Abraham
7. Mr. Anston Christo Paul
8. Ms. Nadar Rajila Rajamani

9. Ms. C. Jessl'
- i0. Mr. Eddie Lucas S.
11. Mr. Godwin Dany
- i2. Ms. Namitha Noel Christiart
13. Ms. Nishitha Kar.ya Rajakumar
14. Ms. Reneeth Gabriella R.
15. Mr. C. Ricky Solomon Ratna.gar

The candidates have to produce bond to work with UELCI and its member churches after completion of their course.

Recommendation to LWF for the vacant post

The UELCI on receipt of the announcement for the vacant post in various departments in LWF and circulates them to the member churches.

- Director for the DMD/LWF
- Web Journalist in the Office for Communication, Dept. for Planning and Operations, LWF
- Representative of the LWF/DWS Country Program in Ethiopia
- Program Officer for Latin America, the Caribbean, Angola and Mozambique in the Dept. of World Service
- Journalist for Member Church, International and Ecumenical Relations in the Office for Communications, Dept. for Planning and Operations, LWF
- Advocacy Officer, Dept. of Theology and Public Witness/International Affairs and Human Rights, LWF
- Regional Representative of the LWF/DWS Regional Program in Central America
- Representative of the LWF/DWS Country Program in Mozambique
- LWF Regional Officer for the Expression of Communion in Asia
- Program Officer for East and Horn of Africa and Climate Change
- Program Officer for Middle East and North Africa in the Dept. for World Service, LWF
- Assembly Coordinator in the Dept. for Planning and Operations
- Representative of the LWF/DWS Country Program in Jordan

The Heads of the churches send suitable applications forms to UELCI with their recommendations. The LWF National Committee of India forwarded the following applications to LWF with the recommendation of the Executive Secretary, National Committee of India.

- UELCI recommended the application of Rev. Raj Bharath Patta from Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church for the post of Advocacy Officer, Dept. of Theology and Public Witness/International Affairs and Human Rights, LWF. He was not selected by LWF
- UELCI recommended the application of Rev. Mrs. Joy Devakani from Arcot Lutheran Church for the LWF Regional Officer for the Expression of Communion in Asia.

International Relationship

Church of Sweden has approved a project for UELCI namely “UELCI/WICAS Gender Justice and Equality”. Mr Anders Salomsson from Church of Sweden visited UELCI during March and had a meeting and discussed about the project. As per the work plan the Gender Justice and equality project programs was supposed to be started from February 2014 but due to developing of new formats and agreement the process was delayed. A Baseline Questionnaire for the program “Gender Justice and Equality” was prepared and circulated to Heads of Churches for their suggestions which could be more helpful to strengthen the data collection and meaningful to relate our programme. The first programme of this project - Capacity building program for Women’s Secretaries and staff was conducted from 6th to 9th May 2014. On the last day the participants were taken to Yelagiri hills for field exposure.

Normisjon is supporting UELCI for the Purpose Driven Church Programme. UELCI is planning to convene OASE-UELCI South India Lutheran Churches Revival Convention during October 2014. For this planning meeting was held during April 22-23, 2014 at Chennai. All the Heads of Churches, Bishop N. Borgoary, Rev. Eivind Bjornar Hetlevik, Church of Norway, Rev. Trond Loberg, Oasis, Norway, Dr. Asbjorn Simonnes, Oasis, Norway, Rev. Erik Johansson, Swedish Evangelical Mission participated and visited the venue of the proposed Revival Convention.

Division of Social Action

Emergency Response

Uttarakhand disaster through cloud burst:

Since June 16th, 2013 the cloud burst brought heavy to very heavy rain falls caused flash flood, landslides and devastated 2000 deaths, more than 6000 people were missing, roads were totally destroyed and cut off from the main communication and transportation, more houses, properties and livelihood were totally damaged. People were suffering without food, transport, communication and struggling to save their lives. The military and national disaster management team initially came forward and rescued the affected people and distributed foods by dropping through helicopters. The ACT India Forum members were in coordination i.e., UELCI, LWSIT and CASA to respond to this disaster situation through ACT Alliance and save the lives of the most vulnerable people through relief and rehabilitation programs. The UELCI has extended its moral support to LWSIT to respond to this situation along with CASA. Some resources has raised through ACT Alliance and responded by LWSIT and CASA. UELCI also requested the Heads of the member churches to pray for these disaster victims and if possible to extend support. UELCI trusts the member churches had prayer for these victims but did not receive any communication for support.

Andhra Flood July 2013:

Incessant rain falls caused in many part of Andhra Pradesh floods and rivers over flowed inundated low lying areas. 21 people lost their lives; more than 100,000 people were affected from 882 villages and lost their agriculture, houses, livelihood and properties. The government came forward and rescued about 20,000 people and

supported by providing foods and keeping them in the relief camps. After having discussion with ACT India Forum members UELCI and CASA supported the flood victims in most affected Khammam, East and West Godavari districts through ACT Alliance support. ELCA also supported UELCI to respond to the flood affected victims.

The project committee of DSA/UELCI has scrutinized the member churches project proposals and only the good project proposals are forwarded to DMD/LWF for consideration.

DSA/UELCI should sign a tripartite MOU among DMD/LWF and member churches to avoid any negative impact on the projects during implementation due to church politics and leadership changes.

In 2012 total 15 projects proposal are sent to DMD/LWF only four projects are approved by the subcommittee for Mission and Development/LWF in May 2013 meeting

- 1) PMIN065c- CA-UELCI- Dalit Awareness and Liberation Program phase III
- 2) PMIN093b- TL-UELCI- Empowering Youth through action oriented training for the development of church and society Phase II
- 3) PMIN078b-CD- GELC-Adivasi Community Development, Phase II
- 4) PMIN087b-CA - IELC- Community Education and pollution and social action - Phase II

WOMEN IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY (WICAS)

- Tamil Regional Workshop was held from 13th to 15th of March 2013 at Cuddalore. As a follow up
- The International Women's Day was organized on the theme "A Promise is a promise: time for action to end violence against women" on 8th March at Chennai
- Telugu Regional workshop was organized on "Women emancipation against atrocities" from May 8th to 10th 2013 at Tirupati and from Sept.2-3, 2013 at Chennai
- The Hindi regional workshop was organised
 - (I) on women emancipation against atrocities was held from 16th to 18th May 2013 at Evangelical Lutheran Church of ELCMP, Nagpur
 - (II) for North East region from 12th to 14th June 2013 at Assam
 - (I) & (II) for JELC, ELCMP, NELC, GELC and ELCITHS at Kolkatta from 28th to 30th August
- National Workshop was organized from July 18-20, 2013 at Chennai on "Women emancipation against atrocities"
- National Workshop on "Socio Economic Empowerment of women and fight against poverty" was organized from August 20-22, 2013 at Chennai
- The Hindi regional workshop on "IGP Skill Training" was organized on Feb.11, 2014 at Chhindwara.
- Workshop on Women Emancipation against atrocities at Chhindwara from Feb.12-14, 2014
- Workshop on "Socio Economic Empowerment of women and fight against poverty" was organized on 24th Feb.2014 and Workshop on Women

Emancipation against atrocities was organized from Feb.25-27, 2014 at Cuddalore

Youth Desk

The following programmes were conducted during 2013-2014

- **Tamil Regional leadership Program** was conducted during March 14-16, 2013 in Cuddalore, Tamilnadu. The theme was “Empowering Youth to Translate Vision into Reality” The program helped the youth to acquire leadership skills and trained them with strategies that could help them to translate their vision to mission
- **Telugu Regional Leadership Development Program** was held during March 21-23, 2013 in Rajahmundry, A.P, on the theme “Nurturing Young Minds with Great Thoughts”. Youth were trained with leadership skills so that they can participate skillfully and productively in the leadership and decision making roles in their churches.
- **Hindi Regional Youth Leadership Training and Awareness Programme** took place in Seva Kendra Training Centre, Tangra, Kolkata from 15-17 July 2013 on the theme “Constructive Engagement of Youth towards Greener Future.” This programme helped the young people to identify their present position in their churches and their aspirations regarding the leadership and decision-making roles of the church. The programme also addressed the need to sustain awareness and education on the ecological concerns among the churches through the youth.
- **Tamil Regional Leadership and Awareness programme** was organized during August 26-27, 2013 in Chennai. The theme was “Youth Leadership: A Response to Climate Change”. This program instilled them to respond to growing climate changes and the effects we are facing out of it.
- **Telugu Regional Leadership and Awareness Program** which was conducted during December 5-7,2013 at Bhimavaram, A.P. trained youth on ecological conservation and the need to spread awareness to the congregation members to preserve our earth. The theme was “Greening the Church: A Paradigm Shift in Youth Spirituality”. The program helped the participants to look at the process of preserving the planet as part of our role and responsibility given by God.
- **World Water Day 2014 – Pilgrimage towards Water Justice:** A special worship service was conducted on 22nd March 2014 by the Youth Desk of UELCI along with the Environmental Committee of the Gurukul. It re-instigated the students to understand the importance of water, the present situation of pollution, privatization and wastage of water. It awakened them to strive for water justice.

Dalit and Adivasi Concerns Desk

The main goal of this desk is to conscientize the Church Leadership (Clergy, Lay, Women, Youth) to take up the accountability of empowering the Dalit and Adivasi Communities in terms of Social, political, religious oppressions and making them to march towards Dalit/ Adivasi Liberation through awareness, subsequently the Following areas were emphasized during this reporting year

- Understanding the Theological discourses from the margins (Dalit / Adivasi) and making it praxis oriented.
- Equipping to focus on Advocacy, legal actions and on Mass Media
- Networking with national, regional Dalit networks and people movements.
- Participating in the rallies and Struggles to eradicate all forms of oppression and demanding the basic human rights.

The following programmes were conducted:

- **Peer Education Training Program** was conducted in the Tamil region during Feb.22-23, 2014 at Chennai. In Telugu region during March 15-16, 2014 and in Hindi region during September 21-22, 2014 for the church leaders. The participants were trained in the area of methodology and made to be trainers/resource persons and motivated to use them effectively for their own congregation.
- **The Dalit/Adivasi Training Program** was organized in each member churches for two days and the participants were Pastors, lay leaders (men and women), youth and Heads of the institution. The activists were motivated to function not only as liaison within the member churches and UELCI but also with the villagers and other organizations.
- **Community based Organisation Training Program** is designed for those who are in grass root level. Active men, women, youth and those who are in the government services from one particular village were trained in their villages to function as a community based organizers. The programs were conducted in the UELCI member churches.
- **Health Care and Medical Camps** were conducted for the Dalit/Adivasi villages in TELC, IELC and AELC area.
- **Human Rights Workshop in Educational Institutions:** Seminars on Dalit rights, right to education, child rights and other legal provisions and aids were explained to the children, youth.
- **National Seminar and Workshop to strengthen the Lutheran Churches** was conducted during Dec,13-15, 2013. The important outcome of this National Workshop and Seminar was they have committed to have a Forum with the help of the New Media, participation in Dalit rallies ad struggles.
- **Research and Documentation** The Desk published the annual E-newsletter 'Dalit Eye' in the month of January 2014

- **Vocational and Skill Training program** helped the youth to know about fast growing technologies and science which make them competent enough for employment through which they can earn.
- **Staff Training on Capacity Building program** was conducted for staff to understand the shifts and changes in the context where there is need to equip oneself in the fast changing context. This training is to sharpen the theological understanding and to make it more praxis oriented.

Information & Communication Desk

The Communication desk besides its vocation in reaching the masses through the website, the desk ventures in releasing UELCI's projects, programs, ministries, etc in its E-Newsletter, *The Indian Lutheran E-News (TILN)*. The articles in TILN are published in the LWI and ALN newsletters regularly. The desk's coordinator is one of the accredited journalists of the LWF and also the news liaison for the LWF Asia region.

The desk's main goal **Building a Communicating Communion** is to make the member churches be active members of communication in the local and global Lutheran communion. The program enhances the capacity of the churches' communication personnel through gaining training in creative/feature/report writing, photography, and editing. As a part of this program the desk plans to design and develop websites for the member churches who do not have a website.

It was decided in the 2013 Round Table Meeting with the mission partners, through the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Sanansaattajat (Messengers in English and Sansa in short), Finland, and the UELCI, that the UELCI will expand its communication ambit through radio broadcasting. The Communication desk of the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India (UELCI) is set to enter into a new project – **Communicating the Gospel via Radio Waves**. A strategy/methodology planning meeting with the signing partners – UELCI and Sansa, Trans World Radio India (TWRI), representatives of the member churches, Gurukul Lutheran Theological College & Research Institute and ecumenical organizations was organized to discuss the prospects of implementation, challenge and sustenance.

Conflict Transformation and Peace Building Programme (CTPB)

A resource center named "Shalom" was started in the UELCI secretariat, various church conflicts are documented in this center through the help of the COPs (Companion of Peace) – student volunteers from the Gurukul Theological College are involved in this program that motivates to become partners in peace making. A manual entitled "Blessed are the Peacemakers" is published by along with the National Council of Churches in India. This manual will be helpful for the participants of the various training programs which will be used by them in training the other members of the church.

The impact of this project is expected to enhance the capacity of the UELCI member churches to sustain the process of conflict transformation and peace building at

various levels. It is a challenge to us, as we partake in the Holy Communion and remains “in Christ” and Christ in us as prince of peace, it becomes mandatory for us to engage ourselves in witnessing Christ in peace building in the church and society at large.

- Workshop for Hindi Region II was conducted from June 19-21, 2013 at Assam.
- Workshop for Hindi Region I was organized from Nov.11-13, 2013 at Kolkatta
- Worship for Tamil Region was organized from Dec.10-12, 2013.
- One motivational meeting was conducted for the COPs on 21st June 2013 at UELCI Secretariat. The students from Gurukul were motivated in the meeting to conduct surveys in their respective churches for documentation.
- On 16th December 2013 Dr. Yugal Rajalu provided special training to the COPs
- National Workshop on Pace building was organized in Nagpur from Sept.19-21, 2013

Indian Lutheran Health Ministry (ILHM)

ILHM focused its energy in establishing the office, formalizing its terms of references (TOR), and started to network with our member churches and their healthcare organizations. In this year, ILHM was successful in streamlining the sponsorship process for CMC Ludhiana, screening health related scholarship applications and project proposals. The officers of ILHM are participating and strengthening the governance process of number of Lutheran mission hospitals.

ILHM facilitated Padhar hospital to receive a loan towards purchase of an advanced laparoscopic instrument. ILHM negotiated with CMCL and arranged to send our sponsored candidates to work in needy areas. Though the need for medical persons is huge, we are happy that we could atleast support some institutions during their crisis stage.

The AELC has requested ILHM to prepare a proposal for the revival of AELC hospital at Bhimmavaram, for which we have forwarded a proposal to ELCA. Similarly, GELC has requested ILHM to study the feasibility of strengthening and supporting Sister Ilse Martin Hopsital, Amgaon, Orissa. Officers of ILHM have made a visit during 14th - 17th of July 2013, and forwarded the feasibility report to the Gossner Mission.

ILHM is also monitoring the HIV/AIDS project of the UELCI through which a number of screening camps are being organised at our Lutheran mission hospitals.

We hope in the future, ILHM will further evolve into a body that plays a vital role in the development of our Lutheran mission hospitals and health programs.

ILHM also plays a vital role in sponsoring candidates for CMC Ludhiana for MBBS and P.G. Courses.

HIV and AIDS Desk for UELCI member churches

UELCI Member Churches are mostly involved in the ministry among the villages and the rural community. Among whom, 90% of the population are ignorant and unaware of the health hazards particularly HIV & AIDS. The culture and tradition of the different communities prevent them to know more about this pandemic. There are so many reasons for which the community is having stigma and discrimination towards HIV & AIDS. This necessitated UELCI to enable its member Churches effectively to approach HIV & AIDS prevention and care. By the support of the ELCA and LWF UELCI executes the HIV and AIDS program to the member churches.

Basic scientific knowledge about prevention, care, and support to PLWHA are key components of the programs which are deliberated to pastors, women, youth and lay leaders and among school students. Capacity Building programs, Training Programs Motivational programs, awareness programs, video shows, puppet shows and street theater helps to create awareness to respond effectively to the epidemic; the participants propagate the knowledge to reach vulnerable and marginal populations in their ministerial area.

Voluntary testing and Counseling is an essential component providing a link between prevention and care. We have launched four counseling centers in four operational areas in the member churches. Through the counseling center we organize medical camps voluntary blood testing. We create awareness among the women and youth. Also we sensitize the wider community by conducting mass rallies and human chains. We are supporting the AIDS orphans of the member churches, this helps them to sustain with their minimum livelihood.

This desk has conducted 3 medical and voluntary blood testing camps, 4 motivational meetings and 4 training programs during April 2013 to Sept.2013.

- The HIV and AIDS Desk conducted medical camp, Training Program and Video Show in Tamil region at Danish Mission Hospital, Sandapet. on 21st January 2014, 22nd January 2014 respectively and the competition on 23rd for the Danish mission higher secondary school.
- The HIV and AIDS Desk organized a medical camp on 28th January 2014, Training Program for volunteers and Video Show to the villagers on 29th January 2014 and the competition for the school children on 30th January 2014 at Rajahmundry.
- The HIV and AIDS Desk conducted medical camp on 26th Feb. 2014, Competition, Training Program for local congregation and competition for the school students on 27th of February 2014, capacity, Building Program and Motivational Program on 28th of February 2014 in JELC at Odissa.
- The Tamil region counseling center at Ambur conducted a medical camp at Kambikollai and K.M Swamy nagar on 20st March 2014, Training Program for the nursing students on 21st March 2014 at Bethesda hospital, Capacity Building Program to the Women on 22nd March 2014 and Awareness program and competition for the Concordia school student on 22nd March 2014.
- The Desk has conducted a medical camp on 29st April 2014, Training Program for the paramedical staff and Motivational Meeting for village people on 30th April 2014 and Capacity Building Program on 1st May 2014 in IELC at Mallapuram, Kerala.

Christian Education Desk

The evangelistic vision to communicate the gospel with a purpose and with a method that the present generation could receive originated as the UELCI's purpose-driven journey. The activities of the Christian Education desk give emphasis on church growth, evangelism and authentic leadership. The desk ensures the task of promoting and implementing the **Purpose-Driven Church (PDC)** concept to the pastors and church leaders of the member churches. The desk has been equipping and training pastors to be Teacher Trainers (TTs). The evaluation of the first phase was carried out during 2-15 August 2013 in four churches – GELC, AELC, NELC and JELC. The evaluation report was well received by the donor mission partner, Normisjon. They have agreed to extend their support for the second phase. The desk is networking with other mission partners for additional support and partnership.

The highlight of the Christian Education desk's work is the well recognition and appreciation of the UELCI PDC ministry by the overseas churches. It is heartening that the UELCI PDC ministry is shared with churches in Bangladesh. The desk is networking with the Lanka Lutheran Church, Sri Lanka.

Slum Women's Advancement Programme

The Slum Women's Advancement Programme (SWAP) is a unit of UELCI working as a voluntary organisation since 1984 to serve among the marginalized communities in the city of Chennai and six slums in Thirvallur District, Tamil Nadu. SWAP is organizing programmes for

- social economic assistance to poor house hold
- Community organization
- Community development like community health and child development
- Adolescent life skill education programme
- Climate change education programme
- Sanitation programme and also awareness about green village.

Missionary Training

Ms Esther John Chidambaram, member of TELC is sent to Mission Training to The Outreach Centre, Norway for four months. She hails from gypsy community. She has attended various meetings and seminars and worked as evangelist. She has worked with much zeal to emancipate her own community people from the various problems. On successful completion of the missionary training her services will be used in the church.

Visitors

The following representatives visited UELCI:

1. Rev. Christian Samraj, LMW & Group of 15 pastors
2. Rev. Christian Pohl, ELC in Bavaria
3. Dr. William Ogara – LWF HIV & AIDS Campaign Assessment
4. Mr. Daniel Kiwitt, Germany
5. Rev. John Lunn, ELCA
6. Ms Sarah Buender from ELC in Northern Germany

7. Dr. Franklin & Ms Rebecca Duerst
8. Ms Dana Dutcher, ELCA
9. Mr. Anders Salomonsson, CoS
10. Visit of Amy L. Hartman
11. Visit of Ms Mary Marete, ELCA
12. Rev. Eivind Bjornar Hetlevik, Church of Norway
13. Rev. Trond Loberg, Oasis, Norway
14. Dr. Asbjorn Simonnes, Oasis, Norway
15. Rev. Erik Johansson, Swedish Evangelical Mission

Conclusion

The LWF National Committee in India extends its services to the member churches and serves as a forum of Lutheran World Federation, Geneva and UELCI. This is one of the greater advantages that few important tasks of LWF has been entrusted to UELCI/LWF National Committee to observe to study or to promote on behalf of LWF. Therefore being a local organization the LWF National Committee of India extends its fullest cooperation and services to LWF which is a great privilege for local National body. Above all to glorify God UELCI and LWF National Committee cater the needs of the church and society.

Rev. Dr. A.G. Augustine Jeyakumar
Executive Secretary, LWF National Committee (I) &
Executive Secretary, UELCI