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## *fun fact:*

Ducks have no feeling in their feet.

## *good fact:*

Ducks eat bugs, remove weeds and fertilize rice fields. They also lay eggs for their owners to eat and sell.

### **Give the gift of Rice Ducks.**

Their feet won't feel it, but the person you help certainly will.

# Lutheran World Relief **GIFTS**

*For ducks and other gift ideas*  
[lwrgifts.org](http://lwrgifts.org)



# LWRnews

OCTOBER 2010  
Vol. X.X.I

*Affirming God's love for all people, we work with Lutherans and partners around the world to end poverty, injustice and human suffering.*



# HUNGER

*Lutheran World Relief is a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), individuals and parish groups in international relief, development, advocacy and social responsibility.*

Dear Friends,

What does it mean to be hungry? Chronic hunger is hard for most of us to imagine, but it is a daily reality for more than one billion people in the world.

In Niger, half of the population currently does not have enough food. Cycles of drought and floods have devastated crops. Some areas have had no harvest at all this year, and people struggle to eat just one meal a day. Learn more about this crisis and how Lutheran World Relief is responding on the next page.

In countries where resources and money are scarce, farmers are often forced to choose between growing crops that feed their families and ones that they can sell for income. Others have to borrow money at high interest rates to plant their crops. Still others must leave their families, sometimes going to a different country, to work and earn money for survival.

None of these are good choices. That's why LWR works for sustainable, long-term solutions to hunger. Because alleviating hunger is so much more than just providing food: it requires a comprehensive approach. If farmers have enough water, tools, seeds and supplies, they can grow more crops. If those crops are high quality and well marketed, they sell for a higher price, earning farmers more income. And if farmers have more money, they can purchase additional food and can further improve their lives.

LWR is working with communities to fight hunger at the local level. And at the same time, we're part of the international discussion to address hunger from a policy level. Recently Evelyn Nassuna, LWR's Uganda Country Program Director, testified at a U.S. Congressional hearing on Feed the Future, a Presidential initiative focused on increasing food security and nutrition in developing countries. LWR's programs serve as examples to shape and implement the initiative to fight hunger in Africa and around the world.

In fact, we are so dedicated to fighting hunger that as I write this, many LWR staff are participating in a Global Hunger Challenge, trying to live on the same food budget as an average Haitian. How would you fare in such a challenge? Go to [blog.lwr.org](http://blog.lwr.org) and click on "Global Hunger Challenge 2010" to see how the LWR staff did.

Because no one should have to go hungry, we thank you for your continued support, which provides families with lasting solutions to hunger.



In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Nunes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John A. Nunes  
President and CEO



Evelyn Nassuna with Rep. Russ Carnahan of Missouri.

Now that our government is talking about global hunger, help make sure they do something about it. Join LWR in imploring Congress to help farmers help themselves at [lwr.org/foodsecurity](http://lwr.org/foodsecurity).

**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF'S VISION** Empowered by God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ, we envision a world in which each person, every community and all generations live in justice, dignity and peace.

▶ GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK: 700 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21230 USA | 800.597.5972 | [lwr@lwr.org](mailto:lwr@lwr.org)

# NIGER

## Breaking the Cycle

By Nikki Massie



The 1974 food crisis first brought Lutheran World Relief to work in Niger. Landlocked, drought-prone and desperately poor, the country has often struggled to feed its people. Since that crisis, LWR has worked in Niger, helping farmers improve growing methods and irrigation systems and grow food to eat and sell.

Unfortunately, drought and more recently, seasonal flooding, has returned, leading to a severe food shortage that is threatening up to half of Niger's population. Some of the hardest-hit areas are teetering on the brink of famine.

“This scenario is not new,” says Alissa Karg, LWR's deputy regional director for Africa. “Niger experiences cycles of drought, often leading to crop failure and food shortages. Since LWR has worked in Niger for so long, we saw that communities needed help and were able to act quickly.”

LWR responded to a similar situation in Niger in 2005, using a proven approach that addresses the root causes of hunger and creates long-term solutions. By equipping people to grow more and better crops and raise healthier livestock, LWR helps ensure that families not only have enough food to survive the crisis, they are also better prepared for whatever challenges the future may bring.

Today, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, LWR is working with Adaltchi, a union of more than 3,000 wheat growers in Tahoua, one of the most drought-affected regions of Niger, to make the best use of their limited water supply in order to grow more crops and earn more income.

Working with LWR, the union made critical improvements to their irrigation system, like reinforcing walls, planting trees and clearing

sediment from irrigation channels. LWR also helped Adaltchi acquire threshers for farmers to process their wheat for sale. Traditionally, threshing is done by hand, a long and laborious process.

“Before the project, the whole family had to thresh, sift and sort wheat by hand,” says Dodo Yacouba, Adaltchi member and project participant. “The availability of threshers is a relief and saves us a lot of time.”

Because of these improvements, Adaltchi members have weathered the current crisis better than their neighbors have. When their crops began to wither, farmers used rainwater from their irrigation system to save crops. And byproducts from the mechanized threshing process can be sold as supplemental animal feed, earning extra money for the farmers and their families.

The Gates Foundation is also supporting LWR's work with Hadin Kaï, another community-based organization in the same region, to help 40,000 people cope with the emergency. Using a “cash-for-work” approach, community members are rehabilitating water systems, protecting the watershed and restoring farmland, all while earning money to buy food and support their families.

With the new growing season now underway, both partners need help supporting their members through the difficult time until the harvest. “The members of Adaltchi and Hadin Kaï still face many pressing challenges,” notes Karg. “But with these programs, at least they will be better equipped to feed their families while doing so, both today and well into the future.”

*Nikki Massie is LWR's Staff Writer.*

# DEVOTIONAL

A CHRISTIAN DEVOTION FROM LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

By the Rev. Rick Nelson

## Do You Believe in the Harvest?

*“May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.” —Psalm 126:5*

For many years, I was perplexed by this passage — this scriptural promise about “sowing in tears.” I didn’t get it. I wrote it off as poetry. Until I read the diary of a missionary who served in West Africa.

He wrote of growing up in the Midwest, surrounded by farmers, of riding tractors and learning to plant and cultivate crops. There was nothing to weep about at sowing time! He never understood Psalm 126, he said, until he served as a missionary in the Sahel.

The missionary describes the harsh climate in vivid detail, explaining that people here must grow all their food for the year during the four-month rainy season. In October and November, the harvest reaped and the granaries full, the people feast and celebrate, and sing songs of joy.

But as the year progresses and the stocks recede, they begin to cut back: from two meals a day to just one, and finally, by April, many families survive on just a bit of thin gruel.

Then, he writes, it happens. A child comes to his father with an exciting discovery: grain! He has found a bag in the hut, next to the goats, full of grain. He begs his father to give it to his mother to cook.

Tearfully, the father explains why he can’t feed this precious grain to his hungry family. It is next year’s seed grain, and he must save it for planting or the family will have nothing for the future.

When May finally brings the rains, the boy watches his father take the sack from the wall, and, with tears streaming down his face, sow the seed grain in the ground. An unreasonable act, to be sure, and the ultimate act of faith in the promise of the harvest.

Scripture begs the question: How much would it cost us to sow in tears? How much trust and faith do we really have in the promises of God? How far are we willing to go in responding to the ridiculous generosity of Christ?

### DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE HARVEST?

How much would it cost for us to find a way to say: “I believe in the harvest, and therefore I will give that which makes no sense. The world would call me unreasonable to do this. But in my life with God, I am called to sow regardless — even, sometimes, in tears. Because I want to experience the joy, the richness of God coming alive in my life!”

**I BELIEVE IN GOD’S HARVEST!** And in order for that harvest to abound, I will give sacrificially so that Lutherans can do the ministries that God has imagined for us!

For the promise is this: “Those who sow in tears will reap with shouts of joy...”

### DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE HARVEST?

*The Rev. Rick Nelson is senior pastor of Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis and the chair of LWR’s board of directors.*



# DRINK COFFEE, WIN PRIZES

WIN UP TO \$500 FOR YOUR CONGREGATION!

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Order your tasting kit today.

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774.776.7340



The LWR Coffee Project is a partnership between Lutheran World Relief and Equal Exchange



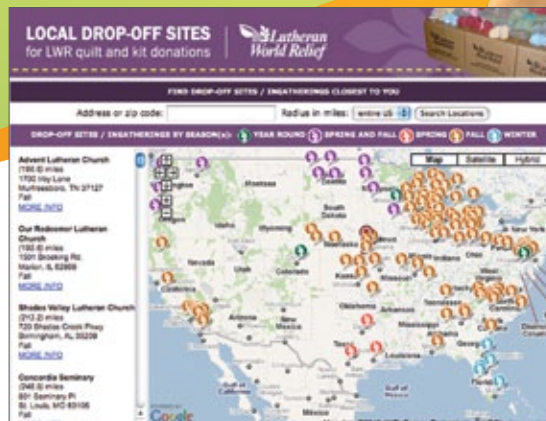
# Needed School Kits and Quilts!

Simple things can mean the difference between despair and recovery for children and families in the aftermath of a crisis. You can help! Assemble kits, sew quilts and share these gifts of Christ's love.

[lwr.org/beinvolved](http://lwr.org/beinvolved)  
800.597.5972

Fall ingatherings are fast approaching. Check out our new interactive map to find the drop-off site closest to you!

[lwr.org/ingatherings](http://lwr.org/ingatherings)



*Bahamuni with three of her children. She can now afford to send all four of her children to school.*

# INDIA

## Women's Groups Fight Hunger

*By Astri Sorenson*

Like many tribal families in India, Dilim Murmu and Bahamuni Hansda own very small pieces of land, on which they must grow food for their families to eat and sell for income. In the past, these women did not know how to use the land effectively to produce enough food and income to support their families. Dilim didn't make enough money from her crops to send her five children to school, and Bahamuni lost two children to diarrhea because she couldn't afford the medical treatments for their recovery.

Both women live in Bihar, India, a region of devastating poverty and hunger. The lack of irrigation to grow crops, limited access to health care and education, erratic rainfall and lack of economic opportunity leave many people, including Dilim and Bahamuni, feeling helpless.

But through a Lutheran World Relief program, hundreds of women have found strength, and security, in numbers. In 82 villages, 2199 women, including Dilim and Bahamuni, have become members of 135 women's groups. Participating in these women's groups has enabled thousands of women to realize their collective potential to improve agriculture and fight poverty.

Working with local partner organization Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN), LWR has helped these women's groups build the resources they need to feed and protect their families. The program conducted workshops for hundreds of women farmers to practice seed selection, learn about natural fertilizers like cow dung and algae, and develop plans for collective involvement in agriculture. It has also developed livestock programs for 182 other women who do not have enough land to grow crops. Livestock such as pigs

don't require much land, so families with only small yards can build a clean and sturdy pig pen to raise and sell pigs.

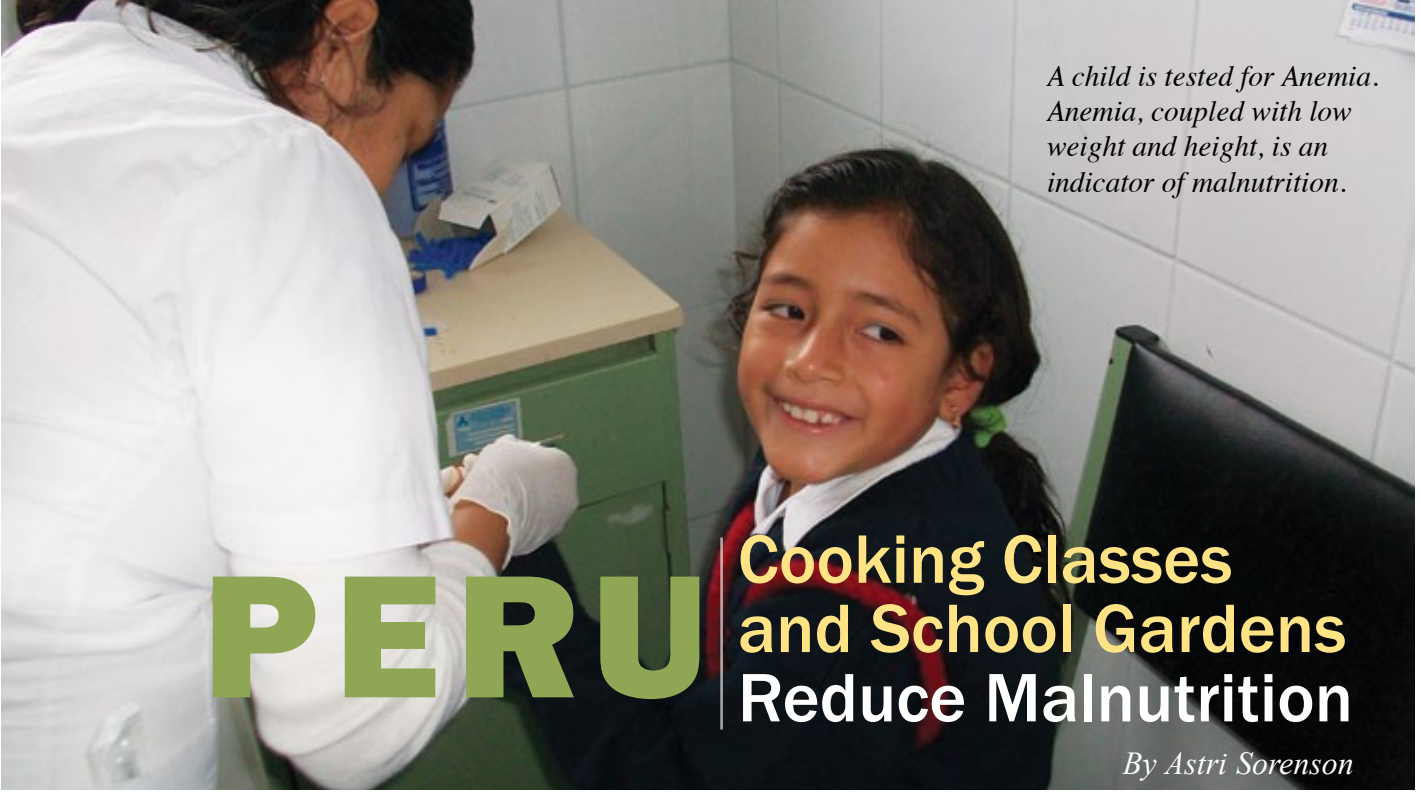
As the result of their willingness to take risks to grow new crops, learn new skills and work together, women like Dilim and Bahamuni are now growing a variety of nutritious foods. Many of the women are growing crops like okra, eggplant, wheat, potatoes and tomatoes. The women have also received 250 goats that provide additional income from their milk. And when the goats have babies, the kid is passed on to benefit another woman. It's the gift that keeps on giving.

Today, Dilim and Bahamuni plant two to three crops per year, and they are able to feed their families throughout the year and send their children to school. Bahamuni says, "I thank LWR and the PRADAN project for giving me these new skills. I never dreamed I could produce such different types of food, and I no longer worry about feeding my family."

*Astri Sorenson served as LWR's 2010 Research and Special Projects Summer Intern.*

Pigs and goats have helped improve the health of families in India. Through **LWR Gifts**, you can improve the health of even more families throughout the world. Check out the LWR Gifts newest addition, piglets. A piglet quickly grows into a big pig and can be sold at market in only eight months, providing families with a steady source of income. **Give the gift of a piglet or goat today at [lwrgifts.org](http://lwrgifts.org) or by calling 800.597.5972.**





*A child is tested for Anemia. Anemia, coupled with low weight and height, is an indicator of malnutrition.*

# PERU

## Cooking Classes and School Gardens Reduce Malnutrition

*By Astri Sorenson*

Emerita Cieza Hoyos' son Carlos "didn't want to eat and didn't want to study." He was too tired to attend school, too weak to play outside with his friends, and too sick to get the nutrients he needed to grow.

When Emerita attended a meeting at her son's school about malnutrition, she learned that Carlos was underweight and malnourished. Emerita was surprised: "We never knew that our children were malnourished...I was shocked and worried." She took her son to a health clinic, where doctors found he had parasites that were taking away his appetite and robbing him of the nutrients he needed.

People in Peru's rural communities have limited access to adequate and nutritious foods, making hunger and child malnutrition common for people like Emerita and her son.

Lutheran World Relief and its local partner, the Agricultural Development Team of Cajamarca (EDAC), have joined together to decrease malnutrition in 300 families in the districts of Paccha and Chadín, Peru. With the support of Foods Resource Bank (FRB), an organization that engages American farmers to help fight hunger around the world, LWR and EDAC have helped ensure access to nutritious foods for 612 girls and boys in Paccha and Chadín.

LWR and EDAC have organized workshops for mothers like Emerita, where a cooking instructor teaches them how to prepare nutritious meals with local foods. School

children have learned about the importance of balanced diets as well. As an innovative school project, the children are growing a garden and learning about the importance of eating vegetables.

Today, Carlos is healthy and eating well, and hunger and malnutrition in Paccha and Chadín have decreased rapidly — from 52 percent of school children tested suffering from malnourishment to 19 percent in less than one year. Children have energy to go to school, adults are healthy enough to work, and everyone is happier.

"... Now he is better. Now my son is eating, thank you," says Emerita.

Michael Watt, LWR's regional director for Latin America programs, says, "This project is a great example of how, by working with a strong local partner and dedicated community members, LWR's and FRB's investment can have a measurable impact on improving access to food and reducing child malnutrition."

Your support helps kids like Carlos and helps nourish a happy and healthy future for the lives of farmers and children around the world.

► To learn more about **Foods Resource Bank**, go to [foodsresourcebank.org](http://foodsresourcebank.org).

*Astri Sorenson served as LWR's 2010 Research and Special Projects Summer Intern.*