NEPAL

Despite recent declines in poverty, Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Food insecurity, strained water resources and reductions in agricultural production are only a few of the devastating impacts of climate change that place millions at risk. Although women account for over half of Nepal’s agriculture workforce, significant gender barriers remain when it comes to healthcare, nutrition, education and decision-making. To support sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and to foster inclusive growth in Nepal, long-term investment in rural livelihoods and disaster risk reduction is required.

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) has been working in Nepal since 2009, reaching indigenous, Dalit and marginalized communities with programs in agriculture and food security, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian assistance. Our holistic approach prioritizes women and youth and helps communities to build the resilience they need to thrive. By partnering with local non-governmental organizations, farmers’ organizations, and private sector actors, LWR continues to strengthen agricultural enterprises while enhancing sustainable water management and climate adaptive systems.

OUR GLOBAL APPROACHES

Agriculture
Lutheran World Relief supports rural communities develop productive, resilient and stable economies through a market systems enterprise development approach that engages the private sector at multiple levels, creating profitable partnerships that benefit families and promote rural livelihoods and agriculture value chains. We train farmers in climate smart agricultural practices, post-harvest processing and storage as well as in other value-adding skills. We strengthen the capacity of cooperatives and unions that serve these farmers through training in governance and financial management, facilitating joint negotiation of credit and other services, and boosting collective marketing and sales.

Climate Resilience
Lutheran World Relief works with rural communities to adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate on their agriculture-based livelihoods. We emphasize environmental rehabilitation through the implementation of soil and water conservation works and watershed management on community land, as well as tree seeding production for community-led reforestation.

Humanitarian Assistance
Lutheran World Relief meets the immediate needs of households, IDPs, and refugees affected by conflict, natural disasters, and food and water crises through food, material resources, and cash assistance as well as shelter and WASH support. As immediate needs are met, we seamlessly transition to providing the knowledge and resources they need to start, diversify, and strengthen livelihoods and reduce their vulnerabilities in the future.
**Project Highlights**

**Strengthening Local Governance for Disaster Resilient Communities**

LWR implements the USAID BHA-funded Strengthening Local Governance for Disaster Resilient Communities (SAKSHAM) project to strengthen community resilience through an integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) and local capacity strengthening. While advancing climate-smart agriculture practices, SAKSHAM impacts nearly 300,000 community members who live in flood-prone districts near the Koshi and Kamala rivers. By supporting livelihoods and financial resilience through cooperatives, community disaster risk management committees (CDMCs), microfinance institutions and insurance programs, LWR is strengthening community capacity and advancing the inclusion of women and marginalized groups in DRRM planning. Government capacity is enhanced through localization of emergency operation centers and uptake of the Building Information Platform Against Disaster (BIPAD) portal.

**Transboundary Flood Resilience**

Through the Transboundary Flood Resilience (TBR) project, LWR and our local partners are assisting communities located along the India-Nepal border to strengthen their resilience to the devastating effects of annual flooding. Launched in 2013, TBR organizes community members into community disaster risk management committees (CDMCs) as well as into transboundary citizen forums to prepare for and adapt to recurrent flooding by enhancing community capacities on early warning, first aid, search and rescue and rehabilitation services. We also advance community adaptation through climate-smart agriculture practices and livelihood diversification, including riverbed farming, portable vegetable nurseries, raised nurseries, and hanging vegetable farming. LWR implements the project through a market systems approach that engages private sector actors, such as insurance companies, agrovet and seed companies, as well as local cooperatives and savings and loan associations to support rural livelihoods and ensure more robust linkages to local and national government institutions.

**Citrus Market Development**

Working in close partnership with cooperatives, LWR has improved the lives of thousands of rural farm families in Nepal by increasing profitability in agricultural value chains and diversifying livelihoods. LWR’s Citrus Market Development project works in nine rural municipalities in the Gorkha, Nawalparasi and Tanahun districts to support farmers’ citrus cultivation and market access while promoting market growth. The project works with smallholder farmers and six cooperatives to provide training to improve crop quality, fruit grading, orchard management, collective marketing, product pricing, safe product storage, market linkages and post-harvest handling.

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**Yuwa Udhami: Youth Entrepreneurship**

LWR partners with the private sector to improve inclusive outcomes for marginalized communities through our Yuwa Udhami (“youth entrepreneurship”) project. The project enables youth from marginalized communities in Nepal’s Bardiya district to develop entrepreneurial skills and capacity in agriculture-based small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The project targets ethnic minorities and women as it trains youth on the production of high-value crops, provides coaching for business plan development, and creates linkages to financial institutions, cooperatives and markets. Promotion of climate-smart farming practices through youth-led agricultural enterprises enhances ecosystem functioning and is leading to the adoption of profitable enterprises.

**Mahila Udhami: Women’s Entrepreneurship**

LWR and local partner SAHAMATI partnered on the Mahila Udhami (“women’s entrepreneurship”) project to empower women in eight rural municipalities in Gorkha, Tanahun and Nawalparasi districts to become successful entrepreneurs. The project improved women's access to markets and government resources, strengthened fundamental business management and planning skills, improved women's access to credit, and assisted women to formalize and register their enterprises.

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**The Corus Effect**

Lutheran World Relief is part of Corus International, an ensemble of global leaders in international development and humanitarian assistance. In addition to Lutheran World Relief, the Corus family of organizations includes global public health agency IMA World Health, U.K.-based technology for development company CGA Technologies, impact investing fund Ground Up Investing, and direct trade company Farmers Market Brands.

We operate as permanent partners, integrating expertise, disciplines, approaches and resources to overcome global health challenges, develop productive and stable economies, improve resilience in the face of climate change, and respond to natural disasters and humanitarian crises.

With the support of our family's diverse set of partners and funding – from multi- and bilateral institutions and foundations to the private sector and individuals – we invest in solutions that are innovative, scalable, holistic and move the needle towards transformational change.