Despite recent declines in poverty, Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world with high incidents of natural disasters, such as floods and earthquakes. Lutheran World Relief has been working in Nepal since 2009, reaching indigenous, Dalit¹ and marginalized communities with programs in agriculture and food security, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and emergency response. Our holistic approach — which includes gender equity and opportunities for youth — helps communities to build the resilience they need to thrive.

Lutheran World Relief has previously worked in Kailali, Jhapa and Bhaktpur districts and currently has projects in Tanahu, Bardiya, Siraha, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Udayapur, Saptari, Nawalparasai, Lamjung, and Gorkha districts.

AGRICULTURE & FOOD SECURITY

Lutheran World Relief is an internationally-recognized leader in transforming poor rural economies. In Nepal, our experienced staff and partners develop and implement programs that create linkages along value chains that benefit smallholder farming families. For example, citrus farmers in Nawalparasai district have more than tripled their income — from 20 ($0.20) rupees per kilo to 70 ($0.73) — after learning how to improve the quality of crops and quantity of yields, reduce post-harvest losses, and better negotiate bulk sales and market the produce. We additionally have applied this methodology to help farmers commercialize their vegetable production in Nawalparasai and Lamjung. We also apply our expertise in the coffee supply chains to the Nepalese coffee sector, creating opportunities for small-scale producers, national stakeholders, and global exporters and buyers to connect and form productive, mutually beneficial relationships.

We work alongside communities to help farmers replace decades-old farming methods with climate-smart sustainable solutions so they can grow high-value crops, such as cardamom and coffee, and improve yields and quality to ultimately generate higher income. We show farming families how to diversify the crops they grow and consume, and how to protect the land from environmental degradation.

¹ Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchable. Dalits are a mixed population, consisting of numerous castes from all over South Asia, who speak a variety of languages and practice a multitude of religions.

Since 1945, Lutheran World Relief has been successfully tackling poverty in some of the world’s hardest-to-reach places. We provide relief in emergencies and help families restore their lives. We partner with communities to build and grow rural economies that are beneficial to the poorest farmer. By investing in people, their skills, and strengthening their ability to adapt, we help them build the resilience they need to thrive.
In Nepal, where women are especially vulnerable to poverty, Lutheran World Relief develops programs to empower and enable women to support themselves financially. For example, we help women form cooperatives and groups so they are better able to access financial, technical and entrepreneurial support for agro-based enterprises.

**CLIMATE CHANGE & DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

Nepal is highly prone to both natural and human-made disasters due to increasing global temperatures, geographic location and lack of enforced oversight on environmentally destructive socioeconomic practices, such as deforestation and poor construction of roads and dams. Situated at the junction of the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates, earthquakes, landslides and avalanches are common and often severe. Flooding, fire and drought are seasonal occurrences, which are increasing in frequency and severity as a result of climate change. Despite these constant threats, awareness about disaster risk reduction (DRR) and preparedness remains low, especially among marginalized populations, women and children.

In response, Lutheran World Relief partners with communities in Nepal to increase preparedness and improve resources available for disaster recovery. For example, we support flood-prone communities in the Narayani/Gandak and Kamala River basins, on both sides of the India-Nepal border, so they can better protect themselves from future floods. We help the communities establish Early Warning Systems for flash floods and form Disaster Risk Management Committees that develop evacuation plans and are trained on first aid and other critical emergency skills.

We also work in the rapidly growing urban areas of Kathmandu and Lalitpur to improve the capacities of local disaster management committees and communities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. We have developed a toolkit for urban planning in collaboration with the Nepal Government Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, which incorporates context-appropriate disaster risk reduction plans and building practices. And in response to the 2015 earthquakes, we trained masons, including women, to construct stronger structures that will be able to better withstand an earthquake.

Lutheran World Relief also raises community awareness about the potential effects of changing climates and provides the skills and technology — such as improved cook stoves, micro-hydro electric generators, bio-gas infrastructure, and solar panels — to adapt to these changes.

**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS**

Lutheran World Relief’s presence in Nepal allows us to immediately respond to emergencies and provide essential food, shelter materials, personal and household items, and cash to disaster-affected communities. In 2014 and 2017, we responded to communities affected by the severe flooding in Bardiya and Nawalparasi districts. And after the devastating earthquakes in 2015, we reached families with immediate aid and long-term recovery support. As part of our immediate relief response, we provided shelter rehabilitation, cash-for-work activities, food packs, LWR Quilts and hygiene kits. Our long-term recovery programming included Quality & Accountability and DRR trainings as well as early recovery, water and sanitation activities, and livelihood rehabilitation programming.

Lutheran World Relief is committed to international standards of quality and accountability in emergency operations and believes strongly that those affected by disasters have a right to life with dignity, the right to receive humanitarian assistance, and the right to protection and security, in line with the Humanitarian Charter. Therefore, Lutheran World Relief, in line with the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability, provides appropriate and effective services to the communities we serve and is accountable to these populations, as well as donors funding our work.