



PARTNERSHIP INDIA-NEPAL

BRAINSTORM All you know about India and Nepal

Create a list of what you know about the countries India and Nepal.

LEARN About your neighbors living along the Gandak River basin

The Gandak River separates the neighboring countries India and Nepal. Families living along the border rely on the basin's rich, fertile soil to grow their crops and support their livelihoods. But as the river gives, it also takes away. When the Gandak overflows its banks during the annual flood season, homes, crops and livelihoods in its path are destroyed — affecting thousands of people already living in poverty.

Families living in these communities cannot move. They are considered outcasts in a strict system that keeps them hidden in the margins, living where danger lurks. Dangers like floods and chronic poverty.

Lutheran World Relief has been at work in these vulnerable communities, putting your love – God's love – in action. New and innovative flood-resistant farming techniques have been taught. Life-saving tools to warn and protect families from the devastating floodwaters have been put in place.



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

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WATCH Early warning saves Rajendra's community



DISCUSS

1. What is one thing that you noticed as you watched the video?
2. What kind of weather warning systems do you have in place in your community? How do these systems bring you comfort?
3. Before Lutheran World Relief, Rajendra's community received no warning when the floodwaters were coming. In what ways can you imagine an early warning system has changed lives?
4. What are some of the innovative farming techniques you witnessed in Rajendra's community?
5. If you and/or your family lost everything in a flood, where would you turn for comfort and support?

BIBLE STUDY Read Isaiah 40:1-11

- 1 Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
- 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the
LORD's hand double for all her sins.
- 3 A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- 4 Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
- 5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- 6 A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
- 7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
- 8 The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

- 9 Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
- 10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
- 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

1. This passage from Isaiah is bookended with words that offer a vision of a caring and compassionate God. Verse 11 describes four ways that God comforts God's people. Identify each of the four ways. Which image of God brings you the most comfort. Why?
2. Theologian Walter Brueggemann describes God's comfort not simply as an offer of solace, but as a "powerful intervention that creates new possibilities." Does this description of God's comfort resonate with you? Why or why not? If possible, use examples from life when God's comfort has created new possibilities for you.
3. Do you think Rajendra and his family experienced God's comfort?

LEARN About the impact coronavirus has on top of generational poverty

India wrestles with one of the world's most rapid and significant infection rates. The novel coronavirus spreads here because poor communities like Rajendra's are forced to live in cramped conditions with little access to what will keep them safe: clean, running water. Sanitation supplies. Masks.

Coronavirus is an added layer of danger in communities that already face significant risk to drowning or other disease. Lockdowns have shuttered farms and markets, meaning lost work and income. Yet poverty might be the deadliest killer ... and the most cruel. It sits silently amidst the ramshackle houses on the floodplain, waiting for crops to be claimed by floods. For cholera to beleaguer a toddler's life until chronic diarrhea and dehydration force a miserable end. For the stress of trying to provide for a family when no one will hire you because of your caste. Longing for comfort, our neighbors turn to God in prayer.



WATCH Save lives before the next flood season in India and Nepal



DISCUSS

1. What is one thing that you noticed as you watched the video?
2. Lives around the world have been affected by COVID-19. What similarities did you notice between the impact of the virus on your community and the impact on our neighbors along the Gandak River basin? Differences?
3. Anisha Devi and her family are being sustained by just the bread she is able to make each day. Have you ever had to eat the same thing every day? If you're willing to share, what was that like? Or can you imagine what it might be like?
4. Vijay Singh prays that his family will be able to make ends meet, and that another massive flood doesn't devastate his community again. In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, what have been some of your prayers?

PRAY For our neighbors along the border of India and Nepal

Will you commit to praying for our neighbors Rajendra Kushwaha, Anisha Devi, Vijay Singh and all in their communities? As a group, create a list of prayer concerns you will lift to God this week. Place the list somewhere you will see it each day. After you create your prayer list, pray together:

God of all creation, you draw near to us like that of a shepherd feeding his flock. Gather all people into your arms, especially our neighbors at risk along the border of India and Nepal. Create new possibilities that promise a hope-filled future. Provide safety through early warning systems, feed the hungry with bountiful harvests and comfort all who fear natural disasters in our world. Protect our neighbors from coronavirus infection and bring an end to this worldwide pandemic. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, the One who promises to comfort and keep us. AMEN.

SHARE YOUR LOVE With our neighbors

Your congregation is invited to be a part of Partnership India-Nepal, the lifesaving partnership that is changing lives along the Gandak River basin. The love of congregations like yours made the first steps possible. We've been able to reach the most flood-prone communities like Rajendra's to ensure that life-saving tools are in place for the next flood. Now, we need to ensure floods that will begin around June 1 won't steal away the small gardens and shops that promote livelihoods. And we must ensure COVID-19 won't become the next pressing danger. Your urgent support will save crops, homes, livelihoods and lives.

To make an online gift, visit
lwr.org/partnership-india-nepal.

To mail a gift, please mark **"Partnership India-Nepal"**
in the memo and mail to:
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