



# GUATEMALA

With the sixth highest level of chronic malnutrition in the world, and the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean, food security is an urgent issue in Guatemala. 47 percent of all children under five years are stunted, with indigenous and rural populations disproportionately affected. Guatemala is also one of 10 countries most vulnerable to natural disasters as the effects of climate change continue to severely impact nutritional outcomes and rural livelihoods. Longer dry seasons have devastated the agricultural sector, depriving smallholder farmers of income and pushing families into acute food insecurity. This exacerbates high levels of inequality and poverty, further escalating out-migration. Lutheran World Relief is committed to building hope for the next generation and supporting Guatemalans to achieve a stable and dignified life within their own country.

Lutheran World Relief began its work in Guatemala in the 1990s, with a constant presence since 2017. Promoting environmentally sustainable practices, we support farming families to improve health and nutrition, increase crop quality and yield, access sources of credit and sell produce in larger and more profitable markets. By championing co-creation with local partners to strengthen market-based agricultural development, Lutheran World Relief is addressing the root causes of migration, poverty and malnutrition through a holistic approach that advances community resilience and long-term food security.



**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF**

In concert with Corus International

LWR.ORG

## OUR GLOBAL APPROACHES

### Rural Economies and Agricultural Livelihoods

Lutheran World Relief works with smallholder farmers to increase their food security and their participation in and income from agriculture value chains, like cocoa and coffee. 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 seedling 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 resource, 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

### Improving Health and Nutrition in the Western Highlands

In collaboration with our local partner FundaSistemas, Lutheran World Relief works to improve nutritional outcomes and strengthen agricultural development in the department of San Marcos. Applying innovative behavior change methodologies, the project utilizes home visits, technical assistance and an arts-based community development (ABCD) curriculum to promote healthy food consumption, agricultural diversification, maternal and child health and WASH best practices. Through local partnerships, the project strives to reduce stunting among children while increasing the income, yield and availability of safe, nutritious food for rural communities.

### Cacao Value Chain Strengthening in Alta Verapaz

Lutheran World Relief worked with local partner FundaSistemas to improve the quality of life for smallholder farming families in the Alta Verapaz department by supporting the cacao value chain and improving the competitiveness of cacao producer organizations. Cooperatives strengthened their production and business capacities with specialized technical assistance in crop management, implementation of demonstration plots and clonal gardens, improved market linkages and training in business development and marketing. Farmers also utilized our Mobile Cocoa (Cacao Móvil) digital application that gives cocoa farmers the technical expertise they need and links them to best practices and improved agricultural research.

### Maximizing Opportunities in Cacao and Coffee in the Americas (MOCCA)

MOCCA is a multi-country initiative led by Technoserve and funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that helps Latin American farmers overcome the barriers to effectively rehabilitate and renovate their coffee and cocoa plants – increasing their productivity while improving their marketing capacity, incomes and livelihoods. Guatemala is one of six countries that is part of the 5-year, \$10.5 million project. Lutheran World Relief leads MOCCA's cacao programming, helping farmers sell more at better prices, improving farmer productivity and enhancing sector coordination to drive competitiveness and growth. MOCCA programming in the Alta Verapaz region is continuing to support several of the cooperatives who participated in our Cacao Value Chain Strengthening project.

### Uncommon Cacao

Through its impact investment fund, Ground Up Investing, Lutheran World Relief has made strategic investments in several companies in the cocoa and chocolate industry including women-owned Uncommon Cacao. Uncommon Cacao's business model is built around the idea that de-commoditizing cacao and introducing radical transparency to the supply chain will drive change in the industry and improve farmer livelihoods. Uncommon Cacao operates two production subsidiaries, Maya Mountain Cacao in Belize and Cacao Verapaz in Guatemala.

### 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 group 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.

