

ISSUE 9

Lasting Promise

M A G A Z I N E

LIVESTOCK
AS A LIFELINE

BEST LAID
PLANS

MEET YOUR
NEIGHBOR



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF



GOOD STEWARDS

We are called to be good stewards of God's graces, serving others with the gifts we have received. (1 Peter 4:10 NRSV) As stewards of *your* compassionate gifts, Lutheran World Relief is committed to ensuring your impact helps communities thrive long beyond immediate crises.

This means enabling our neighbors to boost their harvests and income while conserving resources and building resilience for the future.

HERE'S HOW:



SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES:

Diversified crops and organic practices protect land *and* livelihoods in extreme weather.



WATER EFFICIENCY:

Smart water use helps farmers thrive despite unpredictable droughts.



SOIL HEALTH:

Integrated methods that consider land, crops and livestock create fertile soil and reduce pollution.



FAIR MARKETS:

Addressing inequity and exclusivity by partnering with larger market players opens opportunities.



RESILIENCE:

Disaster plans and weather-resistant seeds safeguard farmers in uncertain times.



CAPACITY BUILDING:

Training and jobs empower farmers to build better futures for themselves and for their communities.



FOCUS ON RURAL FARMERS:

Farming is often the largest source of income **and jobs**. Supporting rural farmers is an effective way to fight poverty.

Your support taught El Salvadoran farmer Cristian Romero sustainable farming. "It's not enough to learn something," he says. "If you know how to solve a problem, you should help others do the same."

Luis Tobar for LWR

By taking this approach, together, we ensure that your lasting promise has lasting impact on our neighbors.

Thank you for making this stewardship possible!

Lasting Promise

MAGAZINE

Issue 9 (2025)

EDITOR:

Niki Clark

ON THE COVER:

Despite living in disaster-prone Nepal, Bikram BK is thriving. Livelihoods aren't simply income — they are a lifeline to a brighter future, made possible by you. Read more on page 8.



Dear **Partners in Lasting Promise**,

This edition holds a special place in my heart. Growing up in northern England, I discovered the joy poultry can bring. Forty years later, I still breed and exhibit chickens as a hobby and serve as honorary President of The Poultry Club of Great Britain. Watching chicks emerge from their shells continues to **inspire me with hope and possibility** even after all this time.

You do the same for families worldwide. Helping neighbors start or grow small businesses like poultry farming provides them with the tools to feed their families, educate their children and increase resilience to disasters.

Because of you, families can build better tomorrows. Thank you for being stewards of faith!

In Christ,

LEE GRANT

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friend,

It is with profound gratitude that I welcome you to this edition of **Lasting Promise**. You stand at the center of a compassionate legacy of Lutherans that has surrounded our neighbors in their time of need, bringing hope and reminders of God's love for decades.

Christ tells us, **"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."** (John 6:35 NRSV). He **nourishes our soul, feeding our spirit**. Your service to our neighbors, as you'll see in this issue, empowers them to **feed their physical bodies**. But you're doing more than just providing food to those who hunger. You're equipping them to feed themselves, despite the challenges ahead.

In these pages, you'll witness the remarkable transformation possible when you provide families with the tools to face their circumstances with confidence and build resilience. You make it possible for farmers on the front lines of war to nurture thriving businesses, for those in disaster-prone areas to recover quicker, for mothers fleeing violence to create nourishing sources of food and income in their new homes, for coffee farmers to provide for their families even when harvests are bad.

These aren't just livelihoods — they're lifelines. Your love creates stability and opens doors to brighter futures. A future where communities are stronger and our neighbors are more resilient to our ever-changing world.

Thank you for helping us create this future together. Thank you for sharing in this lasting promise.

In Gratitude,

**AMBASSADOR
DANIEL SPECKHARD**
President and CEO



YOUR ENDURING LOVE IN SOUTH SUDAN

OUR NEIGHBORS IN SOUTH SUDAN KNOW CRISIS.

In any given year in the country's short 15-year history, families have faced conflict and violence, droughts and flooding, displacement and hunger, many at the same time.

These relentless burdens have created a hunger crisis that is one of the worst in the world. Families who are forced to flee their homes arrive in displacement camps weak from hunger. Many also lack the tools and skills to start over.

Population of
11+ million
people and
about **half**
face hunger

*Each icon
represents
100,000 people.*



1.6 million children
are malnourished

1 in 3 people
are displaced



*Your support empowers neighbors
like Nyaduaw Chuol to protect their
families against hunger during
compounding crises.*



**'WHEN I WAS IN THE VILLAGE,
I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO GROW
THESE VEGETABLES. NOW
I CULTIVATE AND TEACH
OTHERS HOW TO PLANT.' -
NYADUAW CHUOL**

BUT THEY HAVE ALSO KNOWN YOUR LOVE.

Your compassion has traversed far distances, embracing the hardest-to-reach and empowering the most vulnerable to create brighter futures.

Your support has trained our neighbors in the importance of a varied and nutritious diet — and provided them with the seeds to create gardens of their own. You have equipped them to farm, fish and raise chickens — helping them not only combat their hunger but also create sustainable income and food sources for their families.

Nyaduaw Chuol had just given birth when war reached her village in South Sudan. She and her husband fled with nothing but their newborn son. After a difficult three-day walk, they arrived in the town of Ayod, baby and mother both severely malnourished.

Thankfully, your generosity reaches where few others go.

Because of you, Nyaduaw learned to grow vegetables, her son is healthy, and she now shares her knowledge with others in the community.

Nyaduaw isn't the only neighbor enjoying the fruits of your compassion. Your support enables a holistic approach that not only meets urgent needs but also builds lasting self-reliance.

You have provided the training and skills for our neighbors to feed their families with nourishing food. You have built dikes and cleared water channels so that they can better mitigate flooding risk. You have provided resources for mothers to ensure their families stay healthy.

You walk alongside our neighbors until they are strong enough to walk — and then run! — to a brighter future on their own.

THANK YOU! ○



85% of children and pregnant or nursing women are getting **enough to eat**



30% of participants have **stable incomes**



50% decrease in **food insecurity**

OPEN SESAME!

How a tiny seed grows into
big business in Burkina Faso



Dakuyo Foroza basks in his sesame fields in Burkina Faso. He is one of thousands of farmers your love has reached. (Jake Lyell for LWR)

Like countless other farmers in Burkina Faso, **Drissa Banihou** felt helpless. After years of drought, four of the 10 acres his family had farmed for decades had stopped producing crops. With a wife and two young children to support, Drissa had no idea what to do — or even where to begin.

“I am a farmer,” he says. “This is my life. I can never leave farming. There are too many lives at stake.”

But today, that same land is thriving, thanks to your compassion — and a tiny seed, the sesame.

Konate Lodi was born into a farm family. A sesame producer and father, Konate serves as the president of the farmers’ cooperative in Passakongo village. The cooperative works together, sharing resources and knowledge. After participating in training, he encouraged his fellow farmers to join in.

Drissa (right) in front of his home in Burkina Faso. (Jake Lyell for LWR)

The cooperative has benefited greatly, and the results have brought much joy to his community.

“This was very profitable for us,” Konate says. “[You] have changed our lives.”



Year after year, much like the sesame seeds themselves, this good work grew. Farmers learned more and shared their learnings, changing the lives of more than 400,000 people in Burkina Faso...with no signs of stopping. The seed you planted will continue to grow for years to come.

TOP RIGHT: Konate has led his sesame farmers’ cooperative to great success because of you. (Genaye Eshetu for LWR)

MIDDLE RIGHT: Agricultural entrepreneurs, empowered by you, gather at a sesame collection center to share ideas and strategies. (Genaye Eshetu for LWR)

BOTTOM RIGHT: A producer holds a recent sesame harvest in his hands. (Genaye Eshetu for LWR)



YOUR LASTING PROMISE CREATES LASTING IMPACT

How do you create lasting change in places like Burkina Faso, where violence, displacement and food insecurity have shaped lives for decades? You provide the tools and resources to build resilience and adaptability, empowering families to reclaim control over their lives.

Burkina Faso had already seen a surge in sesame production — a resilient, high-value cash crop that thrives where others fail. **Yet, small-scale farmers were not reaping the rewards.**

That's where your love stepped in. Here's how you've supported farmers in Burkina Faso:

- Expert hands-on training
- High-quality seeds
- Improved equipment
- Capacity building for cooperatives
- Access to financing
- Advantageous connections with buyers and government officials
- Smartphone technology offering real-time guidance

THE IMPACT? Farmers produce higher yields, generate more income and connect with lucrative markets in a way that wasn't possible before. And the impact has extended to communities across Burkina Faso. With other farmers experiencing similar success, more children are attending school, more supplies are being purchased and the local economy in these areas is stronger.

Because of you, **farmers in Burkina Faso are optimistic about their future.**

A future they are fully ready and confident to realize themselves — thanks to Partners in Lasting Promise like you! ○



Watch more about how your compassion is improving the lives of thousands of smallholder sesame farmers.

LIVESTOCK AS A LIFELINE IN DISASTER

Chickens helped Bikram BK turn his family's life around after the pandemic.

When disaster strikes, families often face overwhelming uncertainty. Questions such as “What’s next?” can often come quickly to those surrounded by devastation. The future feels uncertain, and stability seems out of reach.

Thankfully, your lifeline goes beyond urgent needs, helping those suffering to rebuild and be more prepared going forward.

Did you know that livestock is one of the most powerful tools in building resilience?

For years, Bikram BK and his family struggled to find stability in Kanchanpur, Nepal. Despite his education, his teaching income couldn’t support his wife, Puspa, and their daughter, Shrisha. Financial struggles forced Bikram to move to India for work, visiting home just twice a year, while Puspa raised their daughter and managed their household alone.

When he lost his job during the pandemic, Bikram returned home after nearly six years away. While this change brought uncertainty, it also became a turning point.

Through the support of compassionate donors, he received 125 chicks, farming supplies, and training to become a poultry farmer. This modest beginning grew into a successful business with 800 chickens. With his new income, he purchased additional livestock, including goats, a pig and a buffalo.

Bikram’s farm not only provides for his family today; it also allows them to prepare for a better tomorrow. He shares his story with others in his community, so they, too, can become more resilient in times of change.

“We are much happier,” Puspa says of their lives now. “The family is together.”

Livestock is so much more than an income — it’s a lifeline, and you make it possible. ○

Puspa with her daughter Shrisha at their home.

PUTTING THEIR EGGS IN MANY BASKETS



Wandukwa Micheal inspects his bee hives as part of a farm diversification program in Uganda. (Jjumba Martin for LWR)

AS ANY SAVVY FINANCIAL PLANNER

would say, the key to weathering the ups and downs of an unpredictable world can be found in one key strategy: DIVERSIFICATION. In other words, “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.”

When it comes to our neighbors around the world facing the uncertainties of floods, droughts and disasters, the same strategy holds true — and your support makes it possible.

Your generosity is helping small shareholder farmers learn to turn single sources of income into multiple streams — and reducing their vulnerability to risks. It’s more than just good financial advice; it’s creating new possibilities for the future.

And those possibilities come in creative and impactful ways. Your love is equipping coffee farmers in

Uganda to funnel extra coffee income into raising rabbits and bees. The result is more food for their family and more funds to invest back in their farms.

Meanwhile, agricultural families in disaster-prone countries are raising chickens and goats, providing stability no matter the season. For those in high flood risk areas, fish farming enables a sense of stability.

These new ventures don’t just help families feed their children today — they are creating a brighter tomorrow. A future where children are educated, farmers are better prepared for disaster, and families are facing the future with confidence.

Together, we are rewriting stories of uncertainty into ones of resilience and triumph. **THANK YOU!** ○



Ugandan farmer Grace Wambewo grows onions to supplement her income. (Jjumba Martin for LWR)



Peruvian farmer Eusebia Canales raises cubs (guinea pigs) to diversify her income and her family’s meals.



DREAMS TO REALITY:

HOW YOUR COMPASSION
HELPS UKRAINIAN FARMERS

EARLY IN THE MORNING ON

FEBRUARY 24, 2022, Alina

Katlyarova woke to the sound of explosions. By that afternoon, Russian forces had reached her village. Terrified, Alina and her family took shelter in their basement, fearing for their lives.

For generations, Alina's family had run a dairy farm in Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine, producing artisanal cheeses by hand — a labor-intensive process rooted in tradition. But during the seven months of occupation, their milk production plummeted.

With no electricity, gasoline or diesel fuel, they were forced to sell cattle to survive. The remaining animals became their means of survival. She often biked to the farm at night, risking her safety to feed and milk them.

Because of your support, Ukrainian dairy farmer Alina is growing her artisanal cheese business, despite the conflict. ►





Top: Alina demonstrates the time-consuming way of making cheese, before your support.

Above: Alina and her family are now optimistic about their future now that their business is thriving.

Although they have managed to get by on the reduced production, it has been hard making ends meet. While the occupation ended, fighting continues. Alina gave birth to her daughter, Malania, under harsh shelling while Malania's father was away on the front lines.

But her story didn't end there. Because of your generosity, farmers like Alina are rebuilding their lives, even in the midst of conflict.

With your support, **some 7,000 families in Kharkiv** are receiving tools and resources to help them move forward, including:



ESSENTIAL FARMING SUPPLIES, including seeds, fertilizers, gardening tools, and chicken coops to help families get back on their feet.



TRAINING to help farmers grow and protect their crops in challenging circumstances and tough winters.



SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS give families the chance to start their own business, earn money, and create a stable future.

Because of you, Alina was able to purchase new machinery that automated production and helped triple her output. **What once took hours of manual labor now yields 33 pounds of cheese in a fraction of the time.**

Now that Alina and her family are equipped to scale up their business, she hopes her family's cheese will someday be on shelves across Ukraine.

"We hope that the war will end as soon as possible, that there will be peace, and we will live in harmony, love and happiness," Alina says. "Hopefully, our cheese dairy and cheese-making will go up, and we will grow and expand our capabilities. And make more cheese."

With the support of donors like you behind her, **Alina's dreams are sure to become reality.**

THANK YOU. ○

UKRAINIAN BORSCHT



Ukrainian farmer Valentina Starikova

SINCE RETIRING, Valentina and Alexander Starikova have farmed their land for food and income. But when Russian troops attacked in February 2022, their village was among the first to be invaded. By the time the troops retreated several months later, the Starikovas' farm was badly damaged.

Your kindness provided agriculture support to 5,500 families in 2024, including the Starikovas. Farmers learned new production techniques and received grants to restore operations. You also provided seeds to grow ingredients for borscht, a nutritious Ukrainian comfort meal. Try making your own with this 3-liter pot recipe, provided by our friends at Namelaka, a popular café in Kyiv.

"It is hard work," Valentina says, "but working on the land is not only about obtaining food to eat, but it is also for the soul."

"It is hard work, but working on the land is not only about obtaining food to eat, but it is also for the soul."





This recipe for a 3-liter pot is provided by our friends at Namelaka, a popular café in Kyiv.

INGREDIENTS FOR THE BROTH:

- > 1 lb. **ham**
- > 3 liters **water**
- > 1 **carrot**
- > 1 **onion**
- > 2 teaspoon **salt**
- > ½ teaspoon **peppercorns**
- > 2 **bay leaves**

The first step in making borscht is the broth. It can be cooked in advance, as this process takes several hours. We cook the broth with pork, but you can choose the meat to your taste. Rinse the pork. Peel the vegetables, cut them in half, and heat them in a dry pan until dark. Add water and cook for about 2-3 hours, skimming off the foam that forms on the surface. The heat should be low, and the broth should not boil to remain clear and transparent.

INGREDIENTS FOR THE BORSCHT:

- > ½ cup diced **onion** (peeled)
- > 2-3 medium sized **carrots** (peeled)
- > 3 Tbsp **sunflower oil**
- > 2-3 medium sized **red beets** (peeled)
- > 2 Tbsp **apple cider vinegar**
- > 1¼ cup **tomato sauce** or **ketchup**
- > 2 medium sized **potatoes** (peeled)
- > 1-1½ cup shredded **white cabbage**
- > 2 tsp **sugar**
- > Ground **black pepper** (to taste)
- > 1 clove of **garlic**

WHILE THE BROTH IS COOKING, PREPARE THE VEGETABLES:

1. Dice onions. Cut carrots into strips. Heat a pan with 1½ Tbsp of sunflower oil, add onions and fry until golden. Add carrots and fry on low heat for 10 minutes. Drain the excess fat using a sieve.
2. Cut the beet into strips. Heat a pan with 1½ Tbsp of sunflower oil and fry on low heat for 5 minutes. Add apple cider vinegar (to preserve the beets' color) and fry for another 5 minutes. Add the ketchup (or your preferred

tomato paste). Simmer on low heat until half-cooked (al dente).

3. Strain the ready broth through a sieve. Cut the meat into pieces. Add diced potatoes and cook until half done. Add the fried onion and carrot to the pot.
4. Add shredded cabbage and cook for another 10 minutes.
5. Add the prepared beet, bring to a boil and simmer on low heat for 5 minutes.
6. Add salt, sugar and ground black pepper to taste.
7. Turn off the borscht. Grate the garlic on a fine grater, mix it in and let it infuse for 1 hour.

Notes: Optionally, you can add beans that have been soaked and cooked in advance; or greens (dill) just before the borscht is ready and removed from the heat to maintain their color. If the white cabbage is young, add it after the beets, as it cooks faster. ○

//MEETYOURNEIGHBOR

Meet your neighbor **ZOUNGRANA**.

A mother of three from Soundodo village in Burkina Faso, Zoungrana struggled as a farmer to provide for her family. Despite her tireless work, hunger and uncertainty were daily burdens.

That all changed because of you — and a few hens.

Your compassion provided training and resources to begin **poultry farming**, which offered Zoungrana vital extra income and a means to feed her family.

Starting with just five hens and a rooster, her business now houses up to 120 chickens.

“Our life was hard when we did agriculture,” Zoungrana says. “But with poultry farming, we are able to pay for our children’s school fees and their health care.”

Zoungrana now has the tools and resources she needs to succeed, including skills and a small chicken shelter. With the money she saved, she built a bigger shelter as the business grew. Her husband, inspired by her success, joined her efforts.

“We are now able to solve our problems, our children’s problems,” she says. **“I can take care of my family, my children and improve our conditions.”**

Because of you, neighbors like Zoungrana are better equipped to shape a future of opportunity, security and hope.

THANK YOU!

FRESH EGGS, ENDURING HOPE

My wife and I love fresh eggs. Who doesn't? You crack one open, you see the big golden yolk, and you know it is simply richer, smoother and creamier than any store-bought egg. They are so good.

Now, we don't have chickens, but we have friends who have chickens, which is even better. (It follows my opinions of boats: you don't want to own one, but it sure is nice to have a friend who does.)

About every other week, our friends stop by and bring a dozen or two eggs of various sizes and colors. Being fresh, we can leave them out on the countertop until we come to a family decision on how to use our precious commodity. We know that whatever it is, it will be better with their inclusion.

After one such visit, our friends stayed to talk. My wife thanked them, saying how much we enjoyed the eggs. I then asked why they have chickens and give so many eggs away. "We love fresh eggs, and the chickens lay way more than we can ever eat

ourselves," our friend began. "To be honest, I love seeing people's faces when we drop them off. It's why I try and do it in person as opposed to just dropping them off on the porch. It brings people such happiness, and I love being part of that."

Her remarks made me instantly think of you, our **Partners in Lasting Promise**. You have chosen to share what you have with others, and your gifts create such a testimony to God's love and joy in the world. It's something our neighbors feel, something I've heard time and time again from those you've touched. **"You brought us happiness. You brought us hope."**

Lutheran World Relief is people. Lutheran World Relief is you. Through your giving, you bring happiness to people around the world, our neighbors who need it the very most, and for that I am thankful. — *Rev. Tim Krick* ○



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