

NEIGHBORS

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Dear Neighbor:

As this issue of *Neighbors* goes to print, we are still struggling with the global pandemic, and the tragic war in Ukraine has not abated. While each day we are faced with heartbreaking news, we also see stories of bravery and compassion. We have decided to focus this issue on the women we work with around the world. These women—mothers, sisters, wives, aunts and grandmothers—have all faced adversity. Their stories are each a testament to the power of the human spirit to overcome terrible challenges. As Dr. John Peters, our founder, wrote in his book, *Cry Dignity*, in 1976,

"The task is far from accomplished. To stop is to be overwhelmed. But breaches have been made and beachheads have been established. In hundreds of villages in Africa, Asia and Latin America there are those who have found in our association a bond of unity and a door of hope."

This bond of unity and hope could not be accomplished without the generosity of donors like yourselves. We are deeply grateful and hope you will continue to support this essential work and change that is happening all over the world. Wishing everyone a healthy spring filled with new growth and possibilities!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kate Schecter".

Kate Schecter, Ph.D.
President and CEO
The May Ayers Milburn Chair

P.S. World Neighbors once again has the highest ratings for most sound fiscal policies and transparency with Charity Navigator, GuideStar and Charity Watch! Please know that your contribution will always be used with great care and deep appreciation.



A savings and credit group in Nepal with Kate and Srijana Karki, World Neighbors' Regional Director, South Asia

This issue of *Neighbors* is dedicated to all the women we work with around the world. We wanted to take the opportunity, on the heels of Women's History Month and International Women's Day, to celebrate the achievements of these women in creating lasting change for their communities.



Paulina (middle) provides training to women to knit fabric to make bags

PAULINA RAMIREZ GUZMÁN

Guatemala

"To those who doubt, I tell them to visit us, to come see our organization and what we do in it. I tell women that it is never too late to continue learning, they can even learn to weave and make handmade bags or any other crafts that they would like to learn to generate income. I also tell them that through the AMO [Association of Olopenses Women], women can be better organized to achieve our goals and prepare projects that benefit our communities. There are many ventures that women have in mind and it is easier to make them a reality when we have the support of our own community organization that will always be close by, that speaks our language, knows our customs and that believes and bets on us."

LILA SHRESTHA

Nepal

"I always had difficulty in managing extra expenses for health care, education, festivals and other expenses for my children, as my husband was the only earning member of the family. Now my worries are over as our household income has increased. My husband's and my income have allowed us to lease land and expand vegetable farming. I could not believe it happened within a year. I need to learn more. I also want to teach other small farmers who lack technical knowledge. I want to see other women become small farmers just like me. In one year, my life changed with vegetable farming. It gave me my name, fame and income."

"I am very happy with this opportunity and I would like to thank World Neighbors for coming to our village."



Lila tending to her tomato plants

YVONNE BOLIMERE

Haiti

Yvonne Bolimere, a mother of four, struggled to bring water to her home. In the past, as part of her household job, Yvonne encountered many difficulties in finding water for her family. She lives in Vyekay, a community located in the municipality of Hennerly, in the Artibonite department. The community has no piped water so Yvonne used to walk almost two hours to find a water spring to bring water home. Yvonne would leave early in the morning, before daylight, to avoid the crowds of women who were also coming to get water. The water spring does not have the capacity to fulfill the needs of the whole community and the water spring's access road is in poor condition. Therefore, it was not easy for anyone living in Vyekay to get water at home.

World Neighbors works with a community partner, Organization des Paysans de Chemin (OPC), in rainwater management to help families use rainwater for consumption and agriculture. With the help of World Neighbors and OPC, Yvonne built a concrete rainwater tank, which collects water from the roof of her home. The tank is used not only for her family but is also shared with three other neighbors' families.

"This tank has been very useful to us, we collect water every rainfall and the family has enough water to use. I can say it has solved the water supply problem for my family. It has relieved me from fetching water from far



This water tank provides enough water not only for Yvonne's family, but for an additional three neighboring families in Vyekay.

away. Now I have more time for myself. Even if it does not rain for a long time, I can collect enough water," said Yvonne.

"We try not to waste this water because it costs a lot of time and energy for women in Vyekay to fetch water. In order to keep the water clean for weeks, I add chlorine. We also use the bio-sand water filter to get safe water to drink. The rainwater tank [also] provides enough water for the goats and pigs I raise on my farm," said Yvonne, who is leading the World Neighbors program and the OPC organization in her community.



Yvonne building her rainwater-harvesting tank



MASTAN MAÏGA & ALIMA COULIBALY

Mali

Mastan Maïga (left) and Alima Coulibaly (right) are members of a savings and credit group in the village of Diaratou in the Sourountouna region of Mali. Alima said that through training, she became aware of the importance of properly conducting income-generating activities. In this picture, Mastan, a group leader, is teaching Alima about microenterprise creation and management.

KAMALA KUMAR

Nepal

Kamala (right), a member of a savings and credit group in Nepal, said, "I took a loan of 20,000 rupees (\$164) from the group and used my savings to open up a small shop and eatery. I used to earn 3,000 to 4,000 rupees per day during pre-pandemic days. Now business has slowed down but still I am earning 1,000 to 1,500 rupees every day."



RAMATOU KONÉ

Mali

Ramatou Koné (right) is 33 years old, married and lives in the village of Socourani-sonina in the commune of Téné in Mali. Ramatou's daughter was born with a low birth weight and the health workers told her to breastfeed exclusively until her daughter was six months old. After this period, the child was still malnourished. The community health volunteer advised her to give the child enriched porridge. Because of the training she received, the child recovered and is doing wonderfully, to this day.

TIKA MAGAR

Nepal

"My name is Tika Magar. I am 35 years old. I live in Triyuga Municipality in Udaypur, Nepal. I am the daughter of a farmer. I got married in a nearby community. I have a husband and two children aged 11 (boy) and eight (girl). My husband was out of the country for a long time. Our main income used to be from crops that were barely enough for 3 – 4 months – this was the situation three years ago before I became associated with the World Neighbors program. Now for the last three years, I am a group member of a savings and credit group which has brought a huge change in my life. Mostly income-generation activities brought changes I always hoped for our family. I can cover household expenses with the income I earn. I participated in lead farmer training supported by World Neighbors.

I have a kitchen garden as well as commercial farming, from which I earn 5,000 – 10,000 rupees (\$41-\$82). The organic farming training that I received from World Neighbors has helped me to improve cultivation of the regular crops like maize. With enhanced knowledge about farming I am getting good returns on our traditional crops as production has increased. I am known for my organic vegetables in my group and community. I feel so happy about it. Since I was trained in commercial vegetable farming, I teach my group members. We are getting good income from seasonal and off-season vegetables.

"World Neighbors made us believe that if we make ourselves capable – we can change our lives."



Tika Magar and child in front of her commercial scale vegetable garden

As our income has increased from multiple sources, my husband is back from foreign employment. Seeing my work, he decided not to return to the Gulf country where he was working. Instead, he has joined me. I have taught him lots of things that I learned as a lead farmer. My children go to school. Income that I am generating has helped us to pay tuition fees and household expenses. I am happy that my husband is not going back. It has been one and a half years that we work together in the fields.



Tika Magar in her kitchen garden



Poultry farmers in Burkina Faso

COMBARI NAFI & THIOMBIANO MADÉLEINE

Burkina Faso

Combari Nafi (left) and Thiombiano Madéleine (right) are members of the Fada program and the savings and credit group in the village of Bgersaga in Burkina Faso. These women started poultry farming thanks to the activities of the savings and credit group.

Combari and Thiombiano said that thanks to the income from poultry farming, they are now able to contribute financially to address household issues like health care, schooling and the nutritional status of their children.

GUNMAYA MOKTAN

Nepal

"I joined the savings and credit group the organization helped form and started saving 100 rupees each month. I attended kitchen garden training first and then became eligible for commercial-scale training. The advanced level training taught me how to grow varieties of vegetables year-round using the plastic tunnel technology. I planted six varieties, which were ready to be sold in three and half months. For the first time I earned 17,010 rupees (\$140). I not only learned skills and knowledge in what I wanted to do, but earned respect from my community as now many women want to follow my work."

"When I heard about the program, I felt like a dream was coming true."



Gunmaya tending tomatoes grown under a plastic tunnel

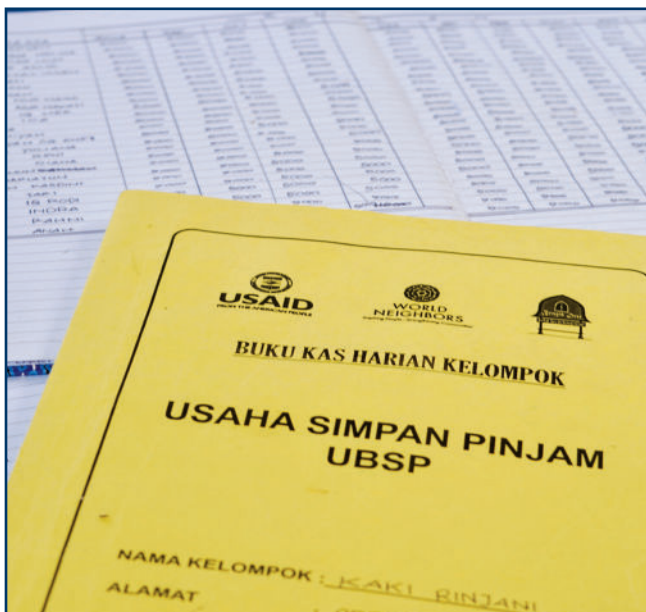
MRS. MASNAH

Indonesia

Mrs. Masnah lives in Dara Kunci village on the island of Lombok in Indonesia. She has four children. Masnah was inspired by a training session on the manufacturing of wheat crackers, facilitated by LPSDM, a World Neighbors local partner. She wanted to start a small cracker business but had no money for the initial capital. A typical loan was not an option as the interest would be exorbitant (20%) and the repayment period would be only three months.

Mrs. Masnah communicated this concern to the trainer and found out that many other participants had experienced the same issue. The group agreed to form a savings and credit (S&C) group named Tunas Harapan (Sprouts of Hope). The group included 17 members, one man and 16 women. The members saved an initial IDR 100,000 (roughly \$10) and then were required to save an additional \$.75 each month. Over the next six months, the group collected approximately \$334 in capital.

The S&C group also provided knowledge and guidance on the development of productive enterprises. Mrs. Masnah borrowed \$38 from the group for the initial capital for her business. She was then able to purchase the raw materials, oil, spices and plastic wrapping for her crackers, which she now sells for about four cents per package.



A group ledger for a savings and credit group in Indonesia



Mrs. Masnah's daughter takes cracker orders to nearby shops

Masnah has established a distribution network and sells her products to food stalls around her area every two days. With this system, she is able to earn a monthly income of roughly \$75. This helps substantially with the cost of her children's schooling.

Masnah and her family are proud of her cracker manufacturing business and grateful for the security the additional revenue brings. She plans to expand her business using other raw materials from her farm.



Savings and Credit Group in India



Savings and Credit Group in Mali

Around the world, savings and credit groups are helping women to lift themselves out of poverty. These groups support women to start their own businesses and to pay for education, healthcare and improvements to their homes.



Savings and Credit Group in Bolivia



Savings and Credit Group in Nepal



Antonia Velasquez, on the left (wearing a black blouse), teaches another woman about planting mango trees on her coffee plantation in La Cruz

ANTONIA VELASQUEZ

Guatemala

When the World Neighbors program, funded by The Starbucks Foundation, started in La Libertad, Huehuetenango, Guatemala, Antonia Velasquez had to walk two miles to attend the workshops. La Cruz, the community where she resides, does not have public transportation, nor did it have a Farmer Field School (FFS). A FFS provides a place where farmers can come to exchange ideas and find out about new techniques in sustainable agriculture.

Being a self-motivated participant and an eager learner, Antonia began sharing all she learned with her community. With her leadership, a FFS was established in her community. She was able to encourage many community members to engage and put into practice all they learned.

Through trainings at the FFS in La Cruz, people began to diversify their crops, start vegetable gardens and plant shade trees on their coffee plantations.

“On the coffee plantations, farmers planted trees (fruit and hardwood) to provide shade to the coffee so

that the fruit ripens better and improves the coffee’s quality,” explains Antonia who has now become a trainer in her community. “Without the tree nursery in La Cruz, we did not have access to trees, now we are self-sufficient and produce 2,000 seedlings that are ready to be planted every month.”

The trees create a biodiverse agroforestry system that retains rainwater, protects the habitat for local animals and biologically protects the coffee crops from rust, a disease that can harm the coffee.

In addition to crop diversification and shade trees, the FFS has taught community members about water filtration and grey water separation. “I never thought we would learn how to separate soap, detergent and grease from the water used in our homes. I always believed these processes were very complicated and only available for people that live in big cities. This is now possible in La Cruz, despite not having a sewage system, so we have solved the problem of bad smells from dirty water with the grey water system.”

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August 3, 2021 — March 23, 2022

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Anniversary**
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Mark & Linda Worley
James Worley

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Sustainability is a cornerstone of World Neighbors' programs. We focus on long-term improvement in all our communities around the world. We want to ensure that the life-changing skills we teach can continue for future generations. However, sustainability is not something we can achieve without our loyal and caring supporters.

By making a planned legacy gift with World Neighbors as a beneficiary, you will help us inspire people and strengthen communities by giving them a sustainable future. There are many planned giving methods, and gifts can be made in the name of loved ones. Types of planned gifts include investment funds, retirement accounts, property and many more.

To learn more about the many ways to make a legacy or planned gift, please contact Robert Lachance at 405-286-0805 or rlachance@wn.org.



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OUR MISSION

World Neighbors inspires people and strengthens communities to find lasting solutions to hunger, poverty and disease, and to promote a healthy environment.

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