

Lifelines

For supporters of
ELCA WORLD HUNGER

ELCA World Hunger is a ministry of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to
end hunger in the United States and around
the world. www.ELCA.org/hunger

Winter 2016

We're here

Water in the midst of drought in Porterville, Calif.

The right to stay

Reclaiming land and a life in Cambodia

Beyond surviving. Flourishing.

Accessing water in any season, rainy or dry in Nicaragua

After the quake

"Building back better" in Nepal

We did it!

ELCA Malaria Campaign and Walk for Water updates



ELCA World Hunger
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



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 God's work. Our hands.

*My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,
 And my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,
 So from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?ⁱ*

Dear friend of ELCA World Hunger:

I love roller coaster rides. Most people thrill at the “big drop,” but the little kid within me emerges as we plummet toward the tight turns. Unlike the roller coaster gliding on rails designed for repetitive “safe” travel, the turns in ministry and mission can seem a bit less gleeful, a bit more treacherous and uncertain.

We turn. Turning the pages of the calendar, turning the ELCA's ministry of World Hunger through growing support, and turning around the lives of those who hunger and thirst (both for sustenance and righteousness).

We are incredibly blessed to build on over 40 years of dedication. And, the future of this work is as much in your hands as anyone. We start the year with possibilities, and they become realized only as contributions are made.

In this LifeLines, you will see some of the difference being made, here at home and abroad. Water is now available to our brothers and sisters in California and Nicaragua, where they face the daily reality of living without water. Youth and adults gathered at the ELCA Youth Gathering to “Walk for Water” and lives are turning in communities around the world. Our work also reached Cambodia where there's now a new turn for stability for the people of this country. The ELCA heard about the importance of the church in the fight against malaria and responded, turning the trajectory of whole villages for the better. And, we are turning the attention of the ELCA Malaria Campaign to the wider health-related work that ELCA World Hunger supports.

We celebrate your continued support and ask that you help us turn to growing this work through increasing support in the year ahead. The hymn at the beginning of this note continues in a later verse as follows:

*The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;
 There are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn.*

Please help us continue to grow work founded on this vision.

THE REV. DANIEL RIFT
 DIRECTOR,
 ELCA WORLD HUNGER AND DISASTER APPEAL

ⁱ “Canticle of the Turning”
Evangelical Lutheran Worship 723

The Rev. Daniel Rift

Director,
 ELCA World Hunger
 and Disaster Appeal

How to give

Online
www.ELCA.org/hunger/donate

Phone
 800-638-3522

Mail
 Make checks payable to
 “ELCA World Hunger”
 and mail to:
 ELCA
 P.O. Box 1809
 Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

Contact us

Email
hunger@elca.org

Phone
 800-638-3522, ext. 2616

View this issue online

www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources

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Table of Contents



ELCA WORLD HUNGER

WATER & SANITATION

We're here 5

AGRICULTURE

The right to stay 7

WATER

Beyond surviving. Flourishing. 9



LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Nepal: After the quake 10



CAMPAIGN UPDATES

ELCA Malaria Campaign 11

ELCA World Hunger's Walk for Water 11



Water & Sanitation



Without water there is no life, no matter where you live. ELCA World Hunger supports local partners in the United States to provide much-needed water in the midst of drought and advocates for the right to clean, safe water in forums ranging from city councils to the United Nations.



For the Garcia family, the water system from the council means more time with their children, less stress on their stretched budget, and less worry about how they will shower, flush the toilet or cook.

We're here

A year and a half ago, Tomas Garcia faced a devastating problem. The five-year drought in California had dried up the local river, and now his well, like hundreds of others in the town of East Porterville was also running dry.

For Tomas' wife, Juana, the drought was a daily reality. "I would get off work and worry about where I was going to get water that night," she says. Finding water also meant less time to spend with her daughters.

The drought affects more than cooking and cleaning. Juana is a grape worker, and she depends on a good harvest for income. "Two years ago," she recalls, "I could pack nearly 300 boxes of grapes each day. Now, there is barely enough to pack 40 boxes."

There are no city services in the unincorporated town, and it can take months to get help from the county. To help close this gap, the Porterville Area Coordinating Council, supported in part by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, has been installing its own water system for residents, many of whom are disabled, elderly or unable to apply for assistance.

Elva and Fred Beltran, their son Freddy, and several volunteers at the council spend countless hours helping neighbors, like the Garcia family, gain access to water. They have "built a rapport and trust" with the people of East Porterville, says Freddy.

"We're here, we're in the neighborhood, we speak their language," his father, Fred, echoes. Deep concern for their neighbors without water is what drives the Beltrons and other volunteers to continue in their work, even though most of their time is unpaid. According to one resident, finding help from the council has been a "miracle."

For the Garcia family, the water system from the council means more time with their children, less stress on their stretched budget, and less worry about how they will shower, flush the toilet or cook. Thanks to your support, in a town with many challenges, ELCA World Hunger and the council are helping neighbors meet this urgent need and will continue to accompany them as the drought in California deepens.



Photo: ACT Alliance/Paul Jeffrey

Agriculture



Climate change, conflict and crisis put many of the world's 2.5 billion smallholder farmers at risk of extreme poverty. Long-term sustainability requires innovative approaches to agriculture, disaster risk reduction and advocacy, the kind of approaches supported by ELCA World Hunger.



Through Life with Dignity, a program supported by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, the Ngets, along with more than 1,200 other families, have been offered the opportunity to reclaim land for themselves and their livelihoods.

The right to stay

It is April 17, 1975, and the capital of Cambodia is filled with hope as the people of the country celebrate the end of the five-year civil war. This hope is quickly replaced with fear as the people are evacuated and flee to the countryside to escape the threat of a bombing. The charge is led by the Khmer Rouge regime.

As the men, women and children begin to embrace the safety of the countryside they discover a much harsher reality. Under the Khmer Rouge, for the next three years, they are forced to labor in the fields tirelessly, without income or a home. In the end, close to 1.7 million Cambodians, nearly a quarter of the country's population, are killed by torture, execution, disease, starvation and overwork.

It is during this time that Vithu and SomSari Nget fled for their lives. And, since 1979, the couple has lived a transient life, unable to remain in the same place too long before being asked to move on.

Thirty-six years after the Khmer Rouge fell, the people of Cambodia are still struggling to rebuild, and Vithu and SomSari share in that struggle. But, through Life with Dignity, a program supported by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, the couple, along with more than 1,200 other families, has been offered the opportunity to reclaim land for themselves and their livelihoods.

For Vithu and SomSari, this means they have a small field and a plot where they can grow a garden and build a home of their own. Your gifts have made it possible for the couple to have a permanent home for the first time in more than 35 years. They can also grow and sell their own food, no longer laborers to landowners.

The Ngets were among the first in their village to establish a hydroponic system, a simple, yet effective, way of growing seedlings and leafy vegetables. And their garden is flourishing.

These first's for Vithu and SomSari would not have been possible without your support to ELCA World Hunger. Thank you.



Photo: ACT Alliance/Sean Hawkey

Water



Clean water and sanitation can mean the difference between life and death. Constructing wells and training local workers to maintain them, teaching farmers how to grow more crops with less water, and improving sanitation and hygiene are part of the life-changing work that ELCA World Hunger supports.



“ In this place, each day we’re learning about nature’s behavior, and we need to keep on working and teaching so we can grow our crops with the little water we have and keep home gardens with water from our wells. This way, we can provide food for the households. ”

PASTOR EMPERATRIZ VELASQUES OF IGLESIA LUTERANA DE NICARAGUA FE Y ESPERANZA

Beyond Surviving. Flourishing.

“ In this place, we’re [just] able to survive,” says Pastor Gerzan Alvarez of the Iglesia Luterana de Nicaragua Fe y Esperanza (ILFE).

Nicaragua is a country surrounded by water, with two of the largest freshwater lakes in Central America - Lake Managua and Lake

Nicaragua - on the Pacific side of the country. Yet, water that flows through the rural areas of Nicaragua is often difficult to access or has been contaminated.

In Somotillo, fresh water is available through small hand-made water systems, water that can often only be retrieved manually or with rope pumps. This region, located in one of the driest areas in Nicaragua, battles droughts that wilt crops and limit the ability of villagers to maintain healthy water levels in their wells, forcing many of the wells to run dry. In search of water, women, who are traditionally responsible for this work, will spend an hour or more each day collecting water for their families, water that may or may not be safe to drink.

In 2014, Nicaragua experienced the worst drought the country had seen in more than 40 years. Crops withered,

wells dried up, and small farmers faced huge losses, with some losing as much as 70 percent of their harvest.

The ILFE’s food security project, a program of The Lutheran World Federation supported by your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, is working with communities in Somotillo to help minimize the impact of droughts in this region. Wells are being improved, irrigation systems installed, and more than 150 families are learning how to grow crops with minimal water and recycle water for home vegetable gardens that will provide income and food.

Pastor Emperatriz Velasques of ILFE says, “In this place, each day we’re learning about nature’s behavior, and we need to keep on working and teaching so we can grow our crops with the little water we have and keep home gardens with water from our wells. This way, we can provide food for the households.”

The people of Somotillo will continue to depend largely on rain to survive, but thanks to your support of ELCA World Hunger, they will have access to water in any season, rainy or dry.



Photo: ACT Alliance/DCA/Shikhar

Nepal: After the Quake

As a church, we have walked with the people of Nepal for more than 40 years. Our long-standing relationships provide a strong foundation to respond holistically to the needs of those who were affected by the Nepal earthquakes in 2015.

People living in poverty are most affected by disasters. Lutheran Disaster Response and ELCA World Hunger provide a distinctive and effective approach to help those most vulnerable. Through relationships and commitment to serve, support extends before, during and after a disaster strikes.

When the first earthquake hit Nepal, Lutheran Disaster Response provided relief within days. Working with our trusted partners, we provided temporary shelter, ready-to-eat food, blankets, hygiene kits, quilts, water filtration units and psychosocial support. Now, Lutheran Disaster Response is transitioning from emergency relief to intermediate recovery. This will include rebuilding damaged homes, water systems and sanitation structures, while also empowering communities and meeting critical livelihood needs.

Many farmers lost everything in the earthquake – their crop, tools, livestock and seeds for the next planting season. Prem Raj Shrestha is one of those farmers.

“The earthquake has rendered many cracks in my land. I am not quite sure if the investment in agriculture this year will generate much,” he says. His home was also destroyed during the earthquake, and he says he will have a difficult time feeding his family. “Grains stored are now covered by rubble. The local grinding mill is shut down and we can’t even buy [seed] from nearby,” he said.

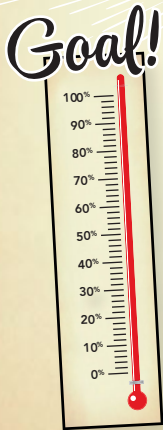
Lutheran Disaster Response is committed to helping people like Prem “build back better.” We will continue to walk with the people of Nepal for years to come. While disaster relief continues, ELCA World Hunger is also working hand-in-hand, meeting the needs of communities by improving livelihoods through better nutrition, access to income, job opportunities and living conditions.



ELCA Malaria Campaign
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.



\$15 MILLION
 FUNDRAISING GOAL ACHIEVED!



Thank you for the many ways you have contributed to the success of this campaign. You have helped protect countless lives from malaria.

What's next?

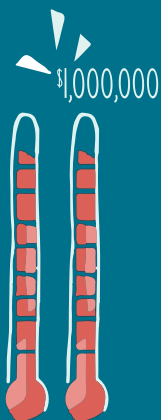
While the ELCA Malaria Campaign will officially come to an end on Jan. 31, 2016, our commitment to ending deaths from this disease will not. In the coming years, support to our companions and partners to address malaria will come through gifts to ELCA World Hunger, which has a long history of supporting health-related work.

This has been made possible through the shared generosity of thousands of congregations and individuals. Thank you for your prayers, your partnership and your generosity. Find resources to help you celebrate at www.ELCA.org/malaria/resources.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER'S
WALK-FOR-WATER



Thanks to the enthusiasm of our youth and the generous support of many, ELCA World Hunger's Walk for Water fundraising challenge of \$500,000 was met - and now it will be doubled!



More than \$500,000 has been received and thanks to a generous family, \$500,000 will be matched - **totaling more than \$1 million in gifts for ELCA World Hunger-supported water projects.**

Your support is helping to create healthier families and stronger economies through projects that provide clean drinking water through spring boxes and boreholes, support for irrigation systems, education about sanitation in rural villages, and so much more.

While we celebrate meeting our goal, our work is far from over. Continue the momentum of the Walk for Water challenge with special resources, educational opportunities and fundraising events that will help our friends around the world break the cycle of hunger and poverty. Learn more at www.ELCA.org/Walk4Water.

We DID IT!
\$1 MILLION
 to SUPPORT
 ELCA WORLD HUNGER
 Water-Related
 Projects

We CELEBRATE
 knowing the journey
 to end hunger
 continues.
JOIN US.

LifeLines

For supporters of ELCA World Hunger Winter 2016

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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Chicago, Illinois 60631
www.ELCA.org/hunger

ELCA World Hunger's **40 DAYS**

of Giving

Join us this Lent

ELCA World Hunger invites **you** to join us for a special Lenten journey in support of our work throughout the world.

Participating congregations will receive exclusive access to ELCA World Hunger's **40-day Lenten devotional** and accompanying six-week **study guide** suitable for Wednesday or Sunday Lenten worship or study, the opportunity to sign up for a **devotion-of-the-day** e-newsletter and more.

Register today!

The journey begins on Sunday, February 7.

www.ELCA.org/40days

Always
being made
New.
THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE ELCA