2015 CALENDAR

TO FOSTER A MORE DEMOCRATIC, PROSPEROUS, AND RESILIENT NEPAL

2015

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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APRIL

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MAY

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JUNE

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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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Holidays

(A)	Jan 01	New Year's Day
(A)	Jan 19	Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.
(A)	Feb 16	President's Day
(N)	Mar 05	Holi Purnima
(N)	Apr 14	Nepali New Year
(N)	May 4	Buddha Jayanti
(A)	May 25	Memorial Day
(N)	May 29	Ganatantra Diwas
(A)	July 3	In lieu of Independence Day
(A)	Sept 7	Labor Day
(A)	Oct 12	Columbus Day
(N)	Oct 13	Ghatasthapana (Dashain)
(N)	Oct 21	Astami (Dashain)
(N)	Oct 22	Nawami (Dashain)
(N)	Oct 23	Dashami (Dashain)
(A)	Nov 11	Veterans Day
(N)	Nov 12	Gobhardan Puja (Tihar)
(N)	Nov 13	Bhai Tika (Tihar)
(A)	Nov 26	Thanksgiving Day
(A)	Dec 25	Christmas Day

(A) = American Holiday
(N) = Nepali Holiday

Cover Photo: Pallavi Dhakal, USAID Suaahara Program

MESSAGE FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

In September, I had the pleasure and honor of joining Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Madhu K. Marasini, to sign an Assistance Agreement of $402 million on behalf of our governments, launching the next phase of development cooperation between the United States and Nepal. The Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2014 – 2018, launched earlier in the year, outlines a shared vision and continued partnership of our countries to address Nepal's development needs over the next five years.

Emerging out of a ten-year civil war and now poised to draft its new constitution, Nepal has the opportunity over the next five years to re-craft the political, social, and economic institutions that can propel its development in unprecedented ways.

Nepal and its development partners must, right now, do all we can to accelerate and keep on the path towards progress. Our investments should seek to build on the efforts and successes of the past and support the Government of Nepal in creating an environment where the most vulnerable are lifting themselves out of extreme poverty and contributing to a stable, resilient, and democratic society.

We at USAID have been proud partners in Nepal's development for over 60 years. During this long history, Nepal has made important development strides and has the potential to serve as a global example for sustaining health, education, and agricultural gains. While we can take heart in the knowledge that our joint efforts have improved the lives of so many Nepalis over the years, we are also keenly aware of the challenges that remain. These challenges include reducing poverty and accelerating economic growth, improving literacy, continuing to reduce maternal and child undernutrition and mortality, and putting systems in place to minimize the damage caused by natural disasters. We also face the challenges of transitioning to a vibrant, inclusive, democratic Nepal, and of protecting the natural resource base upon which all Nepalis depend.

Over the next five years, USAID will continue to increase its focus and investments on building resilience in Nepal.

Resilience is essential if we are to win the fight against poverty, and ensure that no segments of society are left behind, but that will take creativity, innovation, and cross-sectoral partnerships. Ultimately, with this renewed focus on resilience, we seek to save and improve more lives—while reducing the need for repeated infusions of humanitarian assistance.

The Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2014 -2018 reaffirms our commitment to working with Nepal to tackle these challenges. The strategy is aligned with the Government's Three-Year Development Plan for 2013-2016. It directly supports four of the six priorities of the Government's plan and is well aligned with government priorities to increase agricultural productivity, diversification and commercialization; improve basic education and health, drinking water and sanitation; promote good governance; and promote the tourism, industry and trade sectors.

Together with the Government of Nepal, USAID remains committed to supporting Nepal's democracy and the economic growth needed to eliminate extreme poverty, build resilience, and lift the country out of its "Least Developed" status. We know that these goals are possible. Nepal was one of just eight fragile states to have successfully halved extreme poverty ahead of the 2015 target for the Millennium Development Goal. In just seven years, between 2003 and 2011, the extreme poverty rate fell from 53 percent to 24.8 percent. This is extraordinary. Nonetheless, eliminating extreme poverty and graduating from "Least Developed" status will take stronger partnership, innovation, commitment to policy reform, and a collective focus on development implementation. Indeed, it will take a new model of development.

Over the next five years, USAID will increasingly seek out and forge new and improved partnerships with an understanding that a new public-private model of development can achieve broader results than public investment alone—with a focus on mutual accountability with ourselves and all of our partners. Still more importantly, USAID will seek to work more directly with the Government of Nepal and build the needed in-house capacity to ensure long-term sustainability of development efforts. We will also strive to continue to demonstrate innovation and application of science and technology in ways that will maximize our results.

This calendar introduces USAID's five-year strategy and its overarching goal to foster "a more democratic, prosperous, and resilient Nepal." We believe that if selected institutions become more effective at delivering services, more adept at engaging citizens – and more responsive to their needs – and if communities' economic, environmental and human capacity is strengthened, Nepal will become more democratic, prosperous, and resilient.

We look forward to this journey in order to achieve our shared vision.

I wish you a Happy New Year 2015!

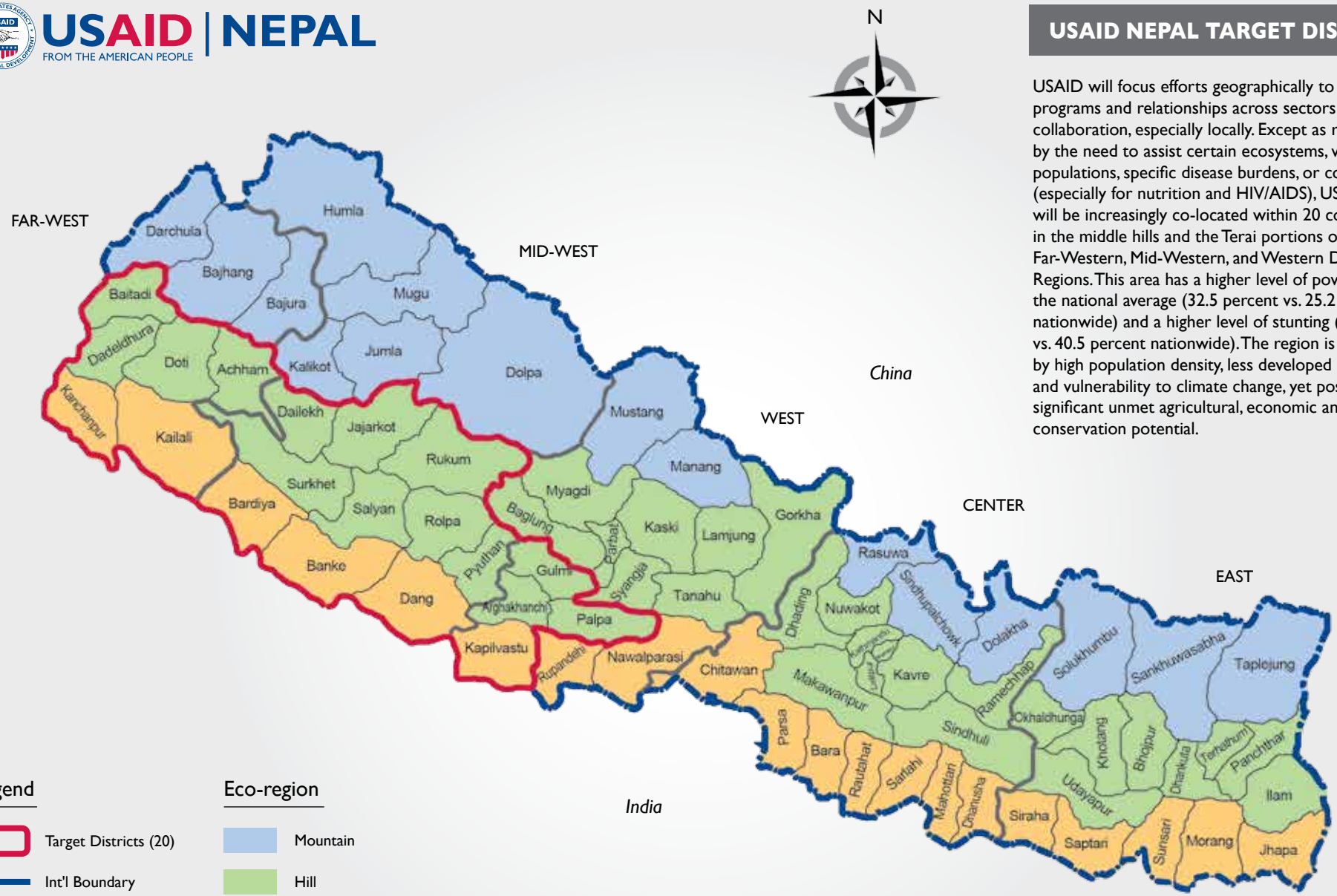
Dr. Beth Dunford
Mission Director
USAID Nepal

Top: Beth Dunford, USAID Nepal Mission Director (L) with Mr. Madhu K. Marasini, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance (R) after signing the Assistance Agreement of $402 million
Bottom: In September, Beth Dunford launched the Resilience Summit by highlighting USAID's vision and approach to building resilience in Nepal.

USAID | NEPAL
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

USAID NEPAL TARGET DISTRICTS

USAID will focus efforts geographically to leverage its programs and relationships across sectors for better collaboration, especially locally. Except as required by the need to assist certain ecosystems, vulnerable populations, specific disease burdens, or coverage needs (especially for nutrition and HIV/AIDS), USAID activities will be increasingly co-located within 20 core districts in the middle hills and the Terai portions of Nepal's Far-Western, Mid-Western, and Western Development Regions. This area has a higher level of poverty than the national average (32.5 percent vs. 25.2 percent nationwide) and a higher level of stunting (45.2 percent vs. 40.5 percent nationwide). The region is also typified by high population density, less developed infrastructure, and vulnerability to climate change, yet possesses significant unmet agricultural, economic and nature conservation potential.



Map: USAID Nepal GIS Unit

USAID seeks to Foster a more DEMOCRATIC, PROSPEROUS, and RESILIENT Nepal.

Under its new five-year (2014 to 2018) strategy, USAID programs in Nepal seek to reinforce recent gains in peace and security, stabilize democratic processes and practices, strengthen the delivery of essential social services, expand proven health interventions, and address the global challenges of food insecurity and climate change.

To address these issues, USAID partners with Nepal on the U.S. Government's three major development initiatives – Feed the Future (addressing global food insecurity), Global Climate Change and the Global Health Initiative – as well as on education and democracy and governance. Across all sectors, USAID focuses on key cross-cutting issues, such as gender and disaster risk reduction, as well as on improving the Government of Nepal's capacity, accountability and ability to deliver services to traditionally marginalized groups.

For the next five years, USAID will focus on three development objectives to support more sustainable development efforts and maximize the long-term value of U.S. Government investments in Nepal.

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

1 MORE INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

USAID seeks to achieve more effective governance and increased political inclusion by investing in the country's peace process, accountable democratic institutions, civic participation, and governance capacity.

2 INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH TO REDUCE EXTREME POVERTY

USAID seeks to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth by increasing competitiveness of agriculture and enterprise through increased productivity, financial and market access, sound natural resource management, and improved policy and performance.

3 INCREASED HUMAN CAPITAL

USAID seeks to improve the health, skills and literacy of Nepali people, which will strengthen the human capital necessary to fully participate in a more democratic and prosperous Nepal.

Photo: Hariyo Ban Program, WWF Nepal

The November 2013 Constituent Assembly election – which USAID was proud to support – was declared credible and inclusive, with nearly 80 percent voter participation. The election represented a major milestone for the peace process and the promulgation of a new constitution in Nepal.

USAID's existing activities to strengthen Nepal's electoral processes – a fundamental aspect of political accountability – will continue as Nepal's democracy evolves. In the coming years, USAID seeks to promote a more stable and peaceful democracy by supporting political parties, electoral institutions, legislative processes, and civil society organizations in Nepal. USAID seeks to strengthen public confidence in democratic processes and promote good governance by helping these key institutions become more democratic, effective and inclusive of all citizens.

JANUARY 2015

पुस / माघ

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 १७ New Year's Day	2 १८	3 १९
4 २०	5 २१	6 २२	7 २३	8 २४	9 २५	10 २६
11 २७	12 २८	13 २९	14 ३०	15 १ Maghe Sangkranti	16 २	17 ३
18 ४	19 ५ Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday	20 ६	21 ७ Sonam Lhosar	22 ८	23 ९	24 १०
25 ११	26 १२	27 १३	28 १४	29 १५	30 १६ Sahid Diwas	31 १७

MORE INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Photo: International Foundation for Electoral Systems

USAID played an integral role in the successful turnout of the November 2013 Constituent Assembly election, which helped ensure the country's political stability.

Since Nepal began registering new voters under its 2010 biometric registration process, USAID-funded programming reached 3.7 million traditionally marginalized people, including women, people with disabilities, free-bonded laborers, and youth, through voter education and registration campaigns. As a result, 2.6 million of them registered to vote.

DECEMBER 2014

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FEBRUARY 2015

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Since the conflict, Nepal's transition to democracy has at times progressed slowly and unevenly, hampered by the absence of elected local government. Nepal's local bodies – District and Village Development Committees as well as Municipalities – are the main contact between most Nepalis and their government. Despite the lack of local elections, these bodies remain functional and continue to be responsible for providing basic government services. As the Government of Nepal moves toward state restructuring, and continues to decentralize critical government functions to sub-national units, USAID supports Nepal in achieving a peaceful transition by strengthening the relationship between Nepalis and their officials, and improving transparency, accountability, and responsiveness at the local level.

FEBRUARY 2015

माघ/फागुन

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 १८	2 १९	3 २०	4 २१	5 २२	6 २३	7 २४
8 २५	9 २६	10 २७	11 २८	12 २९	13 १	14 २
15 ३	16 ४ President's Day	17 ५ Mahashivaratri	18 ६	19 ७ Democracy Day Gyalbo Lhosar	20 ८	21 ९
22 १०	23 ११	24 १२	25 १३	26 १४	27 १५	28 १६

MORE INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Photos: Giri Raj Adhikari, Youth Initiative

USAID engages youth to help facilitate the development of inclusive local development plans that meet the demands of the broader community and to create and support youth economic empowerment groups. USAID is working to build a stronger relationship between government, citizens and civil society by strengthening the local development planning process and improving local government officials' ability to respond to community demands. In the picture, a local youth group in Surkhet District discusses local development concerns in a regular monthly meeting.

In 2014, USAID reached all 58 Village Development Committees and six District Development Committees to prepare revenue generation plans and make inclusive Village Development Plans.

JANUARY 2015

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MARCH 2015

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The most essential factor in achieving a democratic, prosperous, and resilient Nepal is completion of Nepal's peace process. While peace is ultimately a product of the government's ability to address grievances and bring marginalized populations into civic, economic and political life, USAID will complement the government's efforts to support the peace process by mitigating local communal conflicts and increasing equitable and inclusive civic participation and activities.

USAID seeks to decrease local-level conflicts that stem from issues of inclusion and access by increasing mutual understanding among the conflicting groups and improving relationships between marginalized groups and their local governments. USAID programming will emphasize formal and informal mechanisms for dispute resolution and build trust among Nepal's varied caste, ethnic and linguistic communities.

MARCH 2015

फागुन / चैत

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 १७	2 १८	3 १९	4 २०	5 २१ Fagu Purnima ○	6 २२	7 २३
8 २४ Women's Day	9 २५	10 २६	11 २७	12 २८	13 २९ ◑	14 ३०
15 १	16 २	17 ३	18 ४	19 ५	20 ६ Ghode Jatra ●	21 ७
22 ८	23 ९	24 १०	25 ११	26 १२	27 १३ ◐	28 १४ Ram Nawami
29 १५	30 १६	31 १७				

MORE INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Photo: Bimala Puri, USAID SAMBAD (Dialogue for Peace) program

Lok Maya Mahato (L) and Bel Saru (R), from Nawalparasi district, both lost their family members during Nepal's armed conflict. Lok Maya's brother, a police official, was killed by the Maoists and Bel's sister, a Maoist cadre member, was killed by the State Security Force. In the picture, the two family members carrying different political ideologies came together for the first time to plant a tree sapling in the name of their deceased siblings. At the suggestion of local communities, USAID organized a tree-planting program to promote social harmony and reconciliation among conflict victims from that area. The planting included Village Local Peace Community members, conflict-affected people, and other community decision makers. Nawalparasi is home to people from both sides of the Maoist-State armed conflict.

Over the past year, a total of 20,718 people (including 13,894 women) participated in USAID-supported trainings and activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation.

FEBRUARY 2015

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APRIL 2015

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Trafficking in persons is a serious problem in Nepal, characterized by cross-border, international and internal trafficking of women, men, and children. Non-governmental organizations in Nepal estimate that as many as 15,000 Nepali women and girls are trafficked annually to India, while 7,500 are trafficked domestically for commercial sexual exploitation. Furthermore, Nepal's economic challenges continue to drive vulnerable populations in search of labor that often results in human trafficking.

USAID works with governmental and non-governmental organizations to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute traffickers, as well as to ensure effective implementation of the Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act. USAID works in six trafficking-prone districts identified by the government as source, transit and exit districts. With USAID support, Nepal's government and civil society have made significant gains, including an anti-trafficking national action plan, the establishment of minimum standards for trafficking victim care, stricter monitoring of labor-recruitment agencies, and notable convictions for trafficking cases.

APRIL 2015

चैत / वैशाख

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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5 २२	6 २३	7 २४	8 २५	9 २६	10 २७	11 २८
12 २९	13 ३०	14 १ Nepali New Year 2072	15 २	16 ३	17 ४	18 ५
19 ६	20 ७	21 ८	22 ९	23 १०	24 ११ Loktantra Diwas	25 १२
26 १३	27 १४	28 १५	29 १६	30 १७		

MORE INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Photo : Fungma Fudong, USAID Nepal

Sita (name changed) went to Malaysia dreaming of a job in either a hotel or a school. But as soon as she landed at the airport, she learned that she had been deceived by the recruitment agent and was forced to work as a maid in a private house, where she was subjected to physical and mental abuse. Today, she is back home with her children in Nepal, where she received support and legal assistance from Paurakhi, one of USAID's anti-trafficking program partners in Nepal.

In 2014, USAID trained 752 justice sector officials on combating human trafficking, which led to 63 convictions and six landmark cases. USAID also provided various services, including legal and psychosocial counseling, to 123 trafficking survivors.

MARCH 2015

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MAY 2015

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Two out of three Nepalis suffer from food insecurity each year. Due to extremely low levels of income and agricultural production, the poorest households must allocate almost three-quarters of their income to food. Nepali farmers also lack access to markets where they can sell their farm products at optimal prices. Despite these difficulties, there are many opportunities to substantially improve Nepal's food security.

Nepal is one of 19 focus countries under Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's initiative to establish a foundation for lasting progress against food insecurity and global hunger. Through this initiative, USAID seeks to reduce poverty and hunger in 20 core districts of the West, Mid-West, and Far-West regions in Nepal. These regions rank lower than the rest of the country in terms of both income and human development, including a high percentage of historically marginalized populations and women who are left to manage land and agricultural production alone due to men migrating out of the country for work. USAID seeks to achieve inclusive growth in the agriculture sector, increase farm families' incomes, and improve the nutritional status of 160,000 rural households. More specifically, USAID is helping to boost the farm productivity of women and other vulnerable groups by introducing high-value crops and yield-boosting technologies; building the capacity of agriculture extension workers and local service providers; connecting farmers to inputs and markets; and expanding small-scale irrigation.

MAY 2015

वैशाख/जेठ

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 १७					1 १८ May Day	2 १९
3 २०	4 २१ Buddha Jayanti	5 २२	6 २३	7 २४	8 २५	9 २६
10 २७	11 २८	12 २९	13 ३०	14 ३१	15 १	16 २
17 ३	18 ४	19 ५	20 ६	21 ७	22 ८	23 ९
24 १०	25 ११ Memorial Day	26 १२	27 १३	28 १४	29 १५ Ganatantra Diwas	30 १६

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH TO REDUCE EXTREME POVERTY

Photo: USAID Hill Maize Research Project

Women farmers in Jajarkot District stand in front of their maize harvest. USAID enhances maize productivity and seed quality to improve household food security. This year, over 35,000 new farmers used improved open-pollinated maize varieties and new technologies promoted by the Hill Maize Research Project. The new maize varieties show tolerance to drought and disease and have resulted in higher, more stable yields, thereby improving incomes and enhancing food security for targeted beneficiaries.

Between October 2013 and September 2014, over 137,830 USAID-supported farmers applied new technologies, sold vegetables worth nearly $17.7 million, and produced 198,093 metrics tons of rice and maize.

APRIL 2015

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JUNE 2015

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Long recognized by the U. S. Government as a priority country for biodiversity conservation, Nepal is also a focus country for the U.S. Global Climate Change Initiative. Nepal's nature and beauty are important to conserve because of the environmental services it provides as well as the tourism it attracts, which contributes about nine percent to GDP. Climate change can be thought of as a risk multiplier that will put greater pressure on biodiversity conservation, land use planning, forest health and quality, water resources, and increase associated disasters such as fires, droughts, and floods.

USAID works to reduce threats to Nepal's great natural diversity in critical biodiverse areas and to help the poorest and most vulnerable people build the resilience they need to thrive in the face of a changing climate. USAID also helps local governments develop climate change adaptation plans and has enabled over 400,000 people to better manage their environment by conserving biodiversity, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to a changing environment and sustainably managing their natural resources.

JUNE 2015

जेठ/असार

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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7 २४	8 २५	9 २६ ◑	10 २७	11 २८	12 २९	13 ३०
14 ३१	15 ३२	16 १ ●	17 २	18 ३	19 ४	20 ५
21 ६	22 ७	23 ८	24 ९ ◐	25 १०	26 ११	27 १२
28 १३	29 १४	30 १५				

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH TO REDUCE EXTREME POVERTY

Photo: Kashish Das Shrestha for USAID Nepal

Even though conservation efforts have helped Nepal's blackbuck population (*Antilope cervicarpa*), also locally known as *Krishnasar,* to increase from 9 to 293, this only surviving blackbuck population is at great risk due to habitat fragmentation; disease from livestock, as their habitat area is interspersed with human settlements and farmland; and inbreeding. USAID supported the translocation of blackbuck to Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, where there is a better habitat for the species. They are now in a predator-proof fenced area of 7.5 hectares in Hirapur Phanta to ensure their survival before adapting to the wild habitat.

In 2014, USAID contributed to 365 days of zero rhinoceros poaching through support for ID-based monitoring, community-based anti-poaching groups, and local volunteers. Complementing the conservation work, USAID also contributed to sequestration of 1,570,000 metric tons of CO2 – equivalent greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable forest management practices, installation of 3,742 bio-gas plants, and 3,877 improved cooking stoves.

MAY 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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JULY 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Nepal faces multiple natural hazards, including annual floods, landslides, drought, and fires – chronic stressors that affect vulnerable populations the most. The Kathmandu Valley faces a high risk of a catastrophic earthquake, presenting potential challenges in all development sectors, with ripple effects across the country. The U.S. Government considers disaster risk reduction a top priority in Nepal and one that supports its broader foreign policy objective of advancing Nepal as a more stable, resilient, and prosperous country.

Currently, most of USAID's disaster risk reduction efforts in Nepal focus on mitigating the impact of a large-scale, seismic event in the Kathmandu Valley and other urban areas of Nepal by increasing earthquake awareness and preparedness. Overall, the U.S. Government supports Nepal's capacity to prepare for and respond to natural disasters; integrate and mainstream disaster risk reduction in programs targeting civil society, local and national government, and political parties; and mitigate the potential effects of a major event or recurring threat.

JULY 2015

असार/साउन

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 १६	2 १७	3 १८ In lieu of Independence Day	4 १९
5 २०	6 २१	7 २२	8 २३ ◑	9 २४	10 २५	11 २६
12 २७	13 २८	14 २९	15 ३० ●	16 ३१	17 १	18 २
19 ३	20 ४	21 ५	22 ६	23 ७	24 ८ ◐	25 ९
26 १०	27 ११	28 १२	29 १३	30 १४	31 १५ Guru Purnima ○	

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH TO REDUCE EXTREME POVERTY

PHOTO: USAID DRR PROGRAM

Through the Building Code Implementation Program, USAID and its partners conduct a series of trainings on seismically safer construction for technical personnel, including building contractors and masons.

In response to August 2014 flood and landslide events, USAID provided immediate food and non-food assistance worth about $1.6 million to flood- and landslide-affected households in Nepal. USAID is also funding an innovative early warning system to help protect communities in the Eastern region from flooding. The project will install gauges along flood-prone rivers and share real-time data with district authorities using SMS and email. This will help save lives in the event of a flood.

JUNE 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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AUGUST 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Under the leadership of the Government of Nepal, USAID is building resilience across all sectors – from agriculture and economic growth, to health and education, to democracy and governance, to natural resource management – with an emphasis on cross-cutting priorities, such as gender equality and social inclusion. Building resilience – including more inclusive, accountable governance and diversified livelihoods – is vital to helping Nepalis cope with the next shock (such as a natural disaster), break out of chronic poverty, and achieve inclusive economic growth.

USAID's new Community Resilience Program will take a multifaceted approach to resilience by integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into USAID's nutrition and food security efforts in Nepal. This innovative program will strengthen livelihoods, improve nutritional status and increase the capacity of vulnerable households to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in communities with extreme poverty and high rates of malnutrition.

AUGUST 2015

साउन/भदौ

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30 १३ Gai Jatra	31 १४					1 १६
2 १७	3 १८	4 १९	5 २०	6 २१ ◑	7 २२	8 २३
9 २४	10 २५	11 २६	12 २७	13 २८	14 २९ ●	15 ३०
16 ३१	17 ३२	18 १	19 २	20 ३	21 ४	22 ५ ◐
23 ६	24 ७	25 ८	26 ९	27 १०	28 ११	29 १२ Janai Purnima ○

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH TO REDUCE EXTREME POVERTY

PHOTO: PALLAVI DHAKAL, USAID SUAAHARA PROGRAM

USAID-supported farmer Kanchi Tamang with her husband, working in their vegetable garden. A quarter of Nepal's population lives below the international poverty line of $1.25 per day. USAID's new Community Resilience Program will benefit an estimated two million of the most vulnerable in Nepal's hill regions.

In the recent past, USAID's Education for Income Generation project worked with 54,000 farmers—82 percent of them women—in all 15 districts of Nepal's Midwest region, more than doubling their incomes on average. The project provided education, training and employment to historically marginalized and disadvantaged individuals, especially youth and women, and created a more productive workforce.

JULY 2015

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SEPTEMBER 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Nepal's high rates of chronic and acute malnutrition among children are of significant concern, with 41 percent of children stunted, 11 percent wasted, and 29 percent underweight. Among women of reproductive age, nutrition is also poor, with 18 percent being thin or undernourished – with significantly worse nutritional status among women in the Terai region versus the hills.

USAID is working in 41 districts to encourage simple, vital behavior changes in terms of health, hygiene, and nutrition to promote a lifetime of good health for communities, families, mothers, and their children – helping produce a healthier generation that reaches its full potential.

SEPTEMBER 2015

भदौ/असोज

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 १५	2 १६	3 १७	4 १८	5 १९ ◑
6 २०	7 २१ Labor Day	8 २२	9 २३	10 २४	11 २५	12 २६
13 २७ ●	14 २८	15 २९	16 ३० Teej	17 ३१	18 १ Rishipanchami	19 २
20 ३	21 ४ ◐	22 ५	23 ६	24 ७	25 ८	26 ९
27 १० Indra Jatra ○	28 ११	29 १२	30 १३			

INCREASED HUMAN CAPITAL

PHOTO: PALLAVI DHAKAL, USAID SUAAHARA PROGRAM

Through the USAID-funded Suaahara (nutrition) Program, Kalpana Khadka, 22, learned about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, ante-natal checkups, hygiene and sanitation, and the need to incorporate animal source foods and nutritious vegetables into her child's diet. USAID plans to reach more than 620,000 Nepali mothers and household decision makers, equipping them with knowledge to ensure the healthiest possible start in life for the next generation of Nepal.

In the past year, USAID increased exclusive breastfeeding of children under six months of age from 46 to 64 percent and children receiving a minimal acceptable diet from 23 to 54 percent in food-insecure areas.

AUGUST 2015

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OCTOBER 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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With the highest HIV prevalence among adults age 15 - 49 in South Asia (0.30 percent in 2011), Nepal has a concentrated epidemic among injecting drug users, labor migrants, men who have sex with men, and sex workers, who collectively account for 58 percent of all infections.

USAID has partnered with the Government of Nepal for more than 20 years to support the National HIV/AIDS response. USAID works with government, civil society and donor partners to implement evidence-based interventions in 33 of Nepal's 75 districts. These interventions include preventing sexually transmitted infections by raising awareness; promoting safer sexual practices and addressing HIV-related stigma and discrimination; promoting HIV testing and counseling and strengthening linkages to appropriate follow-up services that reduce HIV risk; and, integrating family planning into HIV services.

OCTOBER 2015

असोज / कात्तिक

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 १४	2 १५	3 १६
4 १७ ◑	5 १८	6 १९	7 २०	8 २१	9 २२	10 २३
11 २४	12 २५ Columbus Day ●	13 २६ Ghatasthapana	14 २७	15 २८	16 २९	17 ३०
18 १	19 २	20 ३ ◐	21 ४ Maha-Astami	22 ५ Maha-Nawami	23 ६ Bijaya Dashami	24 ७
25 ८	26 ९	27 १० Kojagrat Purnima ○	28 ११	29 १२	30 १३	31 १४

INCREASED HUMAN CAPITAL

PHOTO: NEELIMA SHRESTHA, USAID SAATH-SAATH PROGRAM

A health worker collects a blood sample from an HIV-exposed child for Early Infant Diagnosis in a USAID-supported clinic. Approximately 50 percent of untreated HIV-positive babies die before the age of two years. Early Infant Diagnosis is used to identify HIV in children between six and 18 months of age born to HIV-positive mothers. According to UNICEF, infant deaths due to AIDS can be reduced by 75 percent by early testing and treatment. USAID initiated Early Infant Diagnosis services in 2009 and is currently supporting the Government of Nepal to scale it up nationwide.

In the past year, as a result of USAID assistance, 27, 587 people from key affected populations were tested for HIV, and nearly 4,000 people living with HIV/AIDS received evidence-based prevention interventions that encourage them to adopt behaviors to reduce the risk of spreading HIV infection.

SEPTEMBER 2015

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NOVEMBER 2015

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Evidence from the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey and substantial qualitative data collected over many years shows that poor health outcomes in Nepal, such as chronic and acute malnutrition among children, are a result of low utilization of services, poor quality of services offered in facilities, and low uptake of health-seeking and nutrition-related behaviors, particularly among marginalized groups.

USAID seeks to strengthen the Government of Nepal's capacity to plan, manage and deliver high-quality and equitable family planning, maternal, newborn, and child health services. To do this, USAID builds on past health sector accomplishments, with a greater focus on health systems strengthening and measuring sustainable changes in areas such as local health governance and use of information systems.

NOVEMBER 2015

कात्तिक/मंसिर

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 १५	2 १६	3 १७	4 १८	5 १९	6 २०	7 २१
8 २२	9 २३	10 २४	11 २५ Veterans Day Laxmi Puja	12 २६ Gobardhan Puja	13 २७ Bhaitika	14 २८
15 २९	16 ३०	17 १ Chhat Parwa	18 २	19 ३	20 ४	21 ५
22 ६	23 ७	24 ८	25 ९	26 १० Thanksgiving Day	27 ११	28 १२
29 १३	30 १४					

INCREASED HUMAN CAPITAL

PHOTO: JACOB KASELL, USAID HEALTH FOR LIFE PROGRAM

Rekha Budathoki, 34, speaks to a health official in Rim Village Development Committee, Salyan District during a USAID-supported "Radio Bahas" program. This program holds regular, town hall-style meetings where community members meet with health officials to get answers to their health-related questions and find solutions to their problems. In the nine months the program has been running, USAID has supported local FM radio stations to conduct 180 public hearings for direct interaction with an estimated 9,000 community members and stakeholders.

In 2014, USAID assisted in developing the nation's first Collborative Framework for local health governance that will establish and strengthen responsive and accountable health systems at the local level. The Framework is endorsed by the Ministry of Health and Population and the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development.

OCTOBER 2015

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DECEMBER 2015

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USAID's education efforts focus on improving early grade reading as the foundation for future educational attainment, after the government and donor-led School Sector Reform Program assessments found abysmal reading scores despite high primary school enrollment rates. A nationally representative Early Grade Reading Assessment found that 34 percent of second graders and 19 percent of third graders could not read a single word of Nepali. At the same time, there are millions of Nepali adults, particularly women and traditionally marginalized groups, who have never attended school and are illiterate. Investments in early grade reading and adult literacy can be mutually reinforcing and support economic growth, improved health, and participation in democratic governance.

Working together with the Ministry of Education, USAID's new education project will help launch the Government of Nepal's National Early Grade Reading Program by supporting one million children in grades one to three to acquire strong reading skills. Ultimately, the Ministry of Education's national program will reach an additional four million children in over 30,000 schools. Also, USAID will build literacy, numeracy, entrepreneurship, and financial management skills of 48,000 Nepali adults in the West, Mid-West and Far-West regions in order to raise incomes and improve livelihoods for vulnerable households.

DECEMBER 2015

मंसिर/पुस

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 १५	2 १६	3 १७ ◑	4 १८	5 १९
6 २०	7 २१	8 २२	9 २३	10 २४	11 २५ ●	12 २६
13 २७	14 २८	15 २९	16 १	17 २	18 ३ ◐	19 ४
20 ५	21 ६	22 ७	23 ८	24 ९	25 १० Christmas Day ○	26 ११
27 १२	28 १३	29 १४	30 १५ Tamu Lhosar	31 १६		

INCREASED HUMAN CAPITAL

PHOTO: SURAJ SHAKYA, USAID NEPAL

In 2014, USAID supported Nepal's first nationally representative Early Grade Reading Assessment using Android-based tablets (shown in picture) for quicker, cheaper, and more reliable assessment results. The assessment evaluates students' ability to recognize letters and sounds, identify words and demonstrate comprehension in timed trials. USAID also assisted the Government of Nepal to develop Nepal's new National Early Grade Reading Program.

NOVEMBER 2015						
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JANUARY 2016						
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A DAY

IN THE LIFE OF A FEMALE COMMUNITY HEALTH VOLUNTEER

2016

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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APRIL

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MAY

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JUNE

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JULY

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AUGUST

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SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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A Day in the Life of a Female Community Health Volunteer

Jharana Kumari Tharu is a 23-year-old Female Community Health Volunteer in Binauna village, Banke district. She is among a cadre of about 52,000 women who are constantly helping to strengthen the country's health system from a grassroots level. The Government of Nepal started the program in 1988 with support from USAID, UNICEF, UNFPA and local non-governmental organizations. What began as a community-based project is now the pride of the public health sector.

FCHVs like Jharana are a large reason for Nepal being one of the few countries "on track" to meet the Millennium Development Goals of reducing maternal and child mortality, as per the MDG Progress Report 2013. Dressed in her blue sari patterned with concentric circles, a striking uniform that is recognizable to every Nepali, Jharana performs an array of health services (as seen in pictures). She and her fellow FCHVs promote safe motherhood and institutional deliveries, educate families about contraceptive methods, and serve as the focal points for government-led health campaigns addressing the primary killers of mothers and children throughout Nepal. The community-based health interventions the FCHVs implement, such as the distribution of oral rehydration salts for diarrhoea, Vitamin A and pneumonia treatment, have helped to reduce under-five mortality by more than 50 percent in the last 15 years.

Over the years, FCHVs have played an integral role in scaling up innovations that have put Nepal in the global spotlight. They remain at the forefront of efforts promoting the use of chlorhexidine to prevent umbilical cord infection in newborns, one of the major causes of neonatal deaths in Nepal.

USAID salutes women like Jharana who work tirelessly to improve the nation's health and wellbeing.

Photos: Thomas Cristofoletti for USAID