



HEALTH & EDUCATION



HIV/AIDS

- i. 27,587 people from key affected populations were tested for HIV
- ii. 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



NUTRITION

- i. More than 95% nationwide coverage of Vitamin A for children under 5, which averts more than 15,000 child deaths every year
- ii. Increased exclusive breastfeeding of children under six months of age from 46 to 64% in 24 districts
- iii. Children receiving minimal acceptable diet increased from 23 to 54 % in food-insecure areas



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

- i. Nearly 85% of households in USAID-supported areas used an improved sanitation facility (compared to 40% national average)



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

- i. 63,727 newborns received postnatal health checks within two days of birth
- ii. 60,942 women were protected from excessive bleeding after giving birth



FAMILY PLANNING AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- i. 100% of USAID-assisted delivery sites provided family planning services
- ii. 3,912 health workers were trained in family planning and reproductive health



EDUCATION

- i. Supported Nepal's first nationally representative Early Grade Reading Assessment
- ii. Assisted the Government of Nepal to develop Nepal's National Early Grade Reading Program
- iii. Advocated with education stakeholders to increase investments in improving early grade reading outcomes



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Developed unique partnership with a hotel group to engage the private sector in safer construction and corporate earthquake preparedness

Trained 287 people as medical first responders and 274 others in collapsed structure search and rescue

Supported the completion of seismically-sound blood bank for Kathmandu Valley

In response to August 2014 flood and landslide events, provided immediate food and non-food assistance worth about \$1.6 million to flood- and landslide-affected households in Nepal.

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE



ELECTION SUPPORT

- i. Reached 1 million traditionally marginalized people through voter education and registration campaigns
- ii. Trained 3,511 election officials and 6,000 domestic election observers



CONFLICT PREVENTION & EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

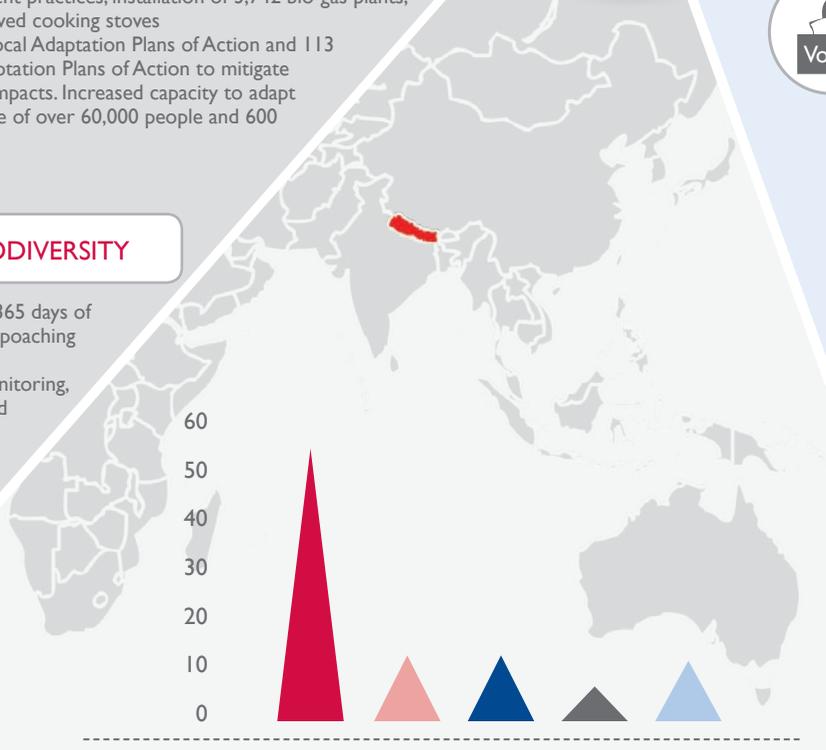
- i. Assisted 20,718 community members to build support for peace and reconciliation
- ii. Trained 1,167 national legislators and legislative staff in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, constitutional processes, and effective governance



COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

- i. Strengthened 752 justice sector officials to combat human trafficking, which led to 63 convictions and six landmark cases
- ii. Provided Trafficking in Persons services to 123 survivors of human trafficking

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2014



Legend: ■ Global Health ■ Food Security/Agriculture ■ Environment ■ Education ■ Democracy and Governance

FY 2014 BUDGET OVERVIEW: \$74.83 MILLION

AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT



FOOD SECURITY

- i. Over 137,830 USAID-supported farmers applied new technologies, sold vegetables worth nearly \$17.7 million, and produced 198,093 metric tons of rice and maize
- ii. Established a Memorandum of Understanding and contract agreements with five seed companies and additional key seed farmer cooperatives and farmers. Also, established linkages with 46 savings and credit cooperatives, 11 micro-finance institutions, and four financial institutions to further develop and strengthen sustainable food security approaches in Nepal



CLIMATE CHANGE

- i. 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
- ii. Developed 30 Local Adaptation Plans of Action and 113 Community Adaptation Plans of Action to mitigate climate change impacts. Increased capacity to adapt to climate change of over 60,000 people and 600 institutions



BIODIVERSITY

- i. Contributed to 365 days of zero rhinoceros poaching through support for ID-based monitoring, community-based anti-poaching groups, and local volunteers

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USAID RESPONDS TO FLOOD DISASTER IN NEPAL

IN August, the torrential mid-summer monsoon rains triggered massive floods and several landslides, killing an estimated 200 people and injuring 150 others, with the Red Cross estimating that approximately 150,000 people were displaced. Many displaced families lost homes and some or all of their food supplies and other household assets. Landslides and water inundation blocked roads and limited access to affected populations.



In response, USAID, through its Disaster Risk Reduction efforts, provided immediate food and non-food assistance worth about \$1.6 million to flood- and landslide-affected households in Nepal. USAID supports a variety of disaster risk reduction (DRR) programs to prevent or minimize the damage caused by disasters through preparedness, mitigation, and awareness efforts.

FOOD ASSISTANCE:

USAID provided food assistance through the UN World Food Program (WFP). The U.S. contribution enabled WFP to distribute locally procured



food for more than 150,000 flood-affected people in the most severely flooded districts of Bardiya, Banke, Surkhet and Dang. The contribution also supported targeted food or cash for work activities that promote early recovery in the affected areas. WFP worked under the Government of Nepal's District Disaster Response Committees and with the Nepal Red Cross Society to ensure that distributions were delivered in a timely fashion to the most needy. Earlier, in August, USAID had purchased approximately 450 metric tons of locally and regionally produced rice, legumes and other important food commodities for flood-affected people. In total, USAID provided about \$950,000 in food assistance.

NON-FOOD ASSISTANCE:

As a part of its ongoing DRR effort, USAID had pre-positioned emergency relief supplies that were immediately distributed to flood victims. These



included sets of plastic tarpaulins, blankets, clothes, and kitchen and household utensils. In recent years, the U.S. Government, through USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, has enhanced emergency preparedness and immediate response by pre-positioning non-food relief items in 12 strategic locations across the country. Overall, USAID contributed about \$540,000 in non-food assistance.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE WOMEN AND CHILDREN:

USAID contributed an additional \$190,000 to increase protection for vulnerable women

and children in three flood-affected districts of Nepal: Banke, Bardiya and Surkhet. USAID provided the funds to Save the Children in Nepal to support the psycho-social needs of vulnerable



women and children; identify, reunite or refer unaccompanied minors to appropriate services; and train health and education providers as well as communities on how to identify and respond to abuse, exploitation, gender-based violence, and psycho-social distress.

HELPING FLOOD-AFFECTED FARMERS:

The landslides and floods affected an estimated 844 hectare of crops upon which 2,929 households in the six Mid- and Far-Western districts – Banke, Bardiya, Dang, Kanchanpur, Kailali and Surkhet – depend. In response, USAID purchased 73.65 tons of wheat seed of two different varieties from two Nepal-based seed companies, and delivered this seed to 2,822 farmers. This prompt action allowed these farmers to plant



commercial wheat crops and rebuild their livelihoods so they are better prepared for the next agriculture season. In January 2015, USAID will procure and distribute an additional 419 kg of vegetable seed for approximately 2,800 growers. The total USAID support will help around 5,600 farmers.

AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM TO PROTECT COMMUNITIES FROM FLOODING:

In September, USAID announced a project titled 'Strengthening Flood Resilience in Kankai River Basin' to establish an innovative early warning system in Nepal's eastern flood-prone areas. The project will benefit more than 5,600 people in the region. In 2009 alone, more than 500 houses were submerged and over 100 hectare of paddy field and other crops were damaged due to flood in the Kankai River Basin. The lack of systematic flood forecasting system in the basin increases the risk of vulnerable communities in Jhapa and Illam districts.

To address this, the project, implemented by Practical Action, will establish a community-centered flood early warning system that integrates Flood Forecasting Guidance System

“ USAID provided immediate food and non-food assistance worth about \$1.6 million to flood- and landslide-affected households in Nepal. ”

technologies. The project will also strengthen awareness and train communities and other stakeholders to understand, monitor and prepare for effective early warning and response to floods. In addition, it will help Nepal's Department of Hydrology and Meteorology develop new flood and rainfall monitoring stations as well as upgrade the already existing stations. The project will install gauges along flood-prone rivers and share real-time data with district authorities, including District Disaster Management Committees, using SMS and email. This will help protect the lives, properties and livelihoods of the most vulnerable people. ●

USAID COMMEMORATES 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN NEPAL

USAID, in close collaboration with other sections of the U.S. Embassy, organized several outreach activities to mark the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence across Nepal. These activities included workshops, talk programs, public debates, street dramas, screening of movies and documentaries, and public service announcements, with an overall objective to raise awareness and promote dialogue on gender rights issues in Nepal. Following are some of the major USAID-led activities to commemorate the 16 Days:

27TH WORLD AIDS DAY:



(Top to bottom) Dignitaries on stage for the main event in Kathmandu; Daniel Sinclair, USAID, giving remarks to a crowd of several thousand people; Daniel in one of the stalls displaying IEC materials on HIV; and Free HIV testing and counseling services

On December 1, Nepal commemorated the 27th World AIDS Day under the banner of “Getting to Zero: Zero new HIV Infections, Zero discrimination, Zero AIDS-related deaths” at a special event in Kathmandu’s historic Basantapur Square. Presided over by the Minister of Health and Population, Khaga Raj Adhikary, and a prominent Constituent Assembly member, Nabindra Raj Joshi, the event called attention to the importance of joining forces for a united approach to combating HIV/AIDS. USAID commemorated World AIDS Day as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. Over the past several years, USAID has played a lead role in supporting the Government of Nepal in nationwide commemoration of World AIDS Day in Nepal. USAID’s Deputy Director for Health, Daniel Sinclair, provided remarks to a crowd of several thousand people. USAID’s HIV/AIDS partner, the Saath-Saath Project, provided funding and supported publicity efforts for the event. USAID also supported free HIV testing and counseling at the event. In his remarks, Mr. Sinclair highlighted the need for quality data on the epidemic in Nepal, noting that several important prevalence studies for certain key-affected populations have not occurred. This lack of timely data on the epidemic in Nepal has reduced the effectiveness of evidence-based interventions designed to prevent new infections. ●

MASS RALLY TO MARK INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:

On December 3, USAID’s Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes project observed the 23rd International Day of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in Kathmandu in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare by organizing an “Awareness Mass Rally” with the global slogan of “Sustainable Development: The Promise of Technology.” Traditional trumpets led the procession of over 1,500 PWDs, including students with disabilities, family members, government representatives, and national and international PWD organizations; rally participants carried PWD rights messages on placards, banners, caps and badges. Subsequently, participants joined a formal inaugural session, presided by Information and Communication Minister, Minendra Rijal, who emphasized that technologies should be made accessible to improve PWDs’ lives. ●



INAUGURATION OF VICTIMS/WITNESS SPACE:

On December 5, USAID Nepal Deputy Mission Director Amy Tohill-Stull, along with Chief District Officer Kedar Neupane and The Asia Foundation (USAID’s Combating Trafficking in Person project’s implementing partner) Country Representative, Dr. George Varughese, inaugurated a victim/witness Safe Space in the Public Prosecutors’ Office in Kavre District as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. Representatives from civil society, media, district police, and the Public Prosecutor’s office were present at the event. The purpose of this USAID-supported Safe Space is to create a safe environment for survivors of trafficking and gender-based violence – free from



(Top to Bottom) USAID Deputy Mission Director Amy Tohill-Stull, along with Chief District Officer, Kavre District, and The Asia Foundation Country Representative inaugurated a victim/witness “Safe Space”, which is located inside the Public Prosecutor’s Office building.

perpetrators’ threats or others’ manipulation, and also from public scrutiny

– allowing them to deliver valid testimony. “This 16 Days campaign is not just about raising awareness on ending violence against women. It’s also about acknowledging efforts to address challenges that deprive women of basic human rights – such as access to justice. The opening of this Safe Space is one example of such efforts,” remarked Amy-Tohill-Stull at the inauguration. She also added that efforts like this help create an enabling environment for victims to confidently engage in judicial processes while reducing the instances of withdrawal or changes to testimony during the prosecution due to undue influence, fear or hostility. This enables Public Prosecutors to successfully administer justice. ●

A TALK PROGRAM ON CHAUPADI:

On December 10, USAID’s Safe Wash II project, in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section, organized a talk program on *chaupadi* at the U.S. Embassy’s American Corner in Dhangadi to mark the 16 Days, particularly International Human Rights Day. *Chaupadi* is a social malpractice that prohibits menstruating Hindu women and girls from participating in household and other activities (or in some cases from staying in the house at all), as they are considered “impure.” The talk program was organized to raise awareness about gender discrimination and gender rights, particularly to focus on *chaupadi* as a human rights issue in the Far Western region. It provided a forum for organizers and panelists to develop and share new and effective strategies to reduce/eliminate *chaupadi*. Panelists for the discussion included representatives from government agencies, the Nepal Police, the Women and Children Office, advocates, women-led NGOs, female activists and local intellectuals. A total of eight speakers were invited to participate in the discussion. The program attracted about 65 participants, including from women



activist groups, Embassy Youth Council members, media (3 regional journalists), NGO representatives, and traditional faith healers called *jhakris*. Participants stated that these harmful traditional practices against girls and women are prevalent all over Nepal and that *chaupadi* is more prevalent in the Mid- and Far-Western regions. Interestingly, the faith healers, who at the beginning of the program had vocally supported the practice, agreed towards the end that it is indeed a malpractice and promised to help raise awareness against it, which was met with a round of applause from the crowd. ●

LOCAL-LEVEL THEATER PERFORMANCES TO RAISE AWARENESS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:



USAID-supported Street Drama in action.

From December 6 – 8, USAID’s Sajhedari Bikas (Local Governance) project, in collaboration with Fatima Foundation, hosted Kachahari theater performances in six Village Development Committees of Banke district, followed by a performance and discussion attended by senior government officials and NGO representatives in Nepalgunj on December 9. The drama, which was set in the Mid-Western Terai, told the story of a young girl faced with sexual harassment in school, early marriage, domestic violence and accusations of witchcraft. The drama was performed in Tharu, Awadhi and Nepali languages utilizing an interactive forum theater model in which the actors invited the audience to participate in resolving the girl’s situation. An estimated 1,000 people attended the performances. In Nepalgunj, the Acting Chief District Officer, Regional Director of the National Human Rights Commission, and Deputy Superintendent of Police participated, along with USAID’s Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Adviser, Manju Tuladhar. Mohammadi Siddiqui, a prominent leader, said in her opening remarks, “This event marks the solidarity of the American public with the Nepali public on fighting GBV, and I applaud USAID’s initiative.”

USAID also broadcast two Public Service Announcements in local languages through regional radio stations to raise awareness of gender-based violence. ●

LOCAL FM RADIO GIVES COMMUNITIES A VOICE

Airing health concerns via local radio programming



Nepal is a country with low literacy, where few can afford a television and electricity shortages keep the power off for much of the day. So when USAID's Health for Life (H4L) project needed an effective way to encourage productive dialogue between health care providers and the communities they serve, radio was the obvious choice. Through the Antenna Foundation, a local NGO that specializes in media advocacy and awareness-raising, H4L supports the Radio Bahas program, which holds regular, town hall-style meetings where community members meet with health officials to get answers to their questions and find solutions to their problems. In a deeply hierarchical society, this approach gives the group the courage to speak out in a manner that they might not have as individuals, letting them speak more openly, and providing knowledge critical to improving health care in the community.

Here's how it works: a team from the local radio station travels to communities in their district to conduct and record a public discussion on health issues. The conversation is moderated by someone from the radio station, but community members do the majority of the talking, all of it in the local language. Community members raise their health care concerns, local service providers respond, and together they come up with a solution. After concluding, the recording is edited and broadcast during the time-slot for Jeewan Ka Laagi Swasthya – literally, "Health

for Life" – another H4L-sponsored health information radio program. Since its start in late 2013, when 28 independent, community FM radio stations broadcast their first episodes of Radio Bahas, the monthly radio program has recorded hundreds of participants and reached tens of thousands of listeners.

Although the issues raised are often complex, the opportunity to have their voices heard and rebroadcast is empowering and gives valuable insight into what people on the ground think about the health care system and what can be done to improve services. Furthermore, listeners get the chance to hear members of their own community talking about health issues that matter to them. In the nine months the program has been running, H4L has supported local FM radio stations to conduct 180 public hearings for direct interaction with an estimated 9,000 community members and stakeholders. An informal survey revealed that many people listen to the broadcasts, and have in turn spoken with friends and family about the issues raised during the forums.

Enabling communities to identify and solve problems for themselves puts them in control of their health care. Participants and listeners alike are eager to hear their concerns taken seriously, and for these hard-to-reach communities, there is no better way to emphasize the legitimacy of their concerns than to have them proclaimed over the airwaves. ●



After Radio Bahas was conducted, we noticed health workers behaving more responsibly and gently with us and the community. Also, the outreach clinic we had asked for was built in our ward.

Pratima Bhusal, 25, Narainapur Ward 4, Banke District



(Top) Reka Budathoki, 34, speaks to a health official in Rim VDC, Salyan District during a Radio Bahas program to be broadcast on Radio Kapurkot FM.

(Bottom) Resham Upadhyay, 39, Rim VDC, Salyan District during a Radio Bahas program to be broadcast on Radio Kapurkot FM.

PHOTOS: JACOB KASELL, USAID HEALTH FOR LIFE

TRANSFORMING LIVES

When Phularam Chaudhary was in grade four, he was infected with encephalitis, leaving him with hearing and speech impairments. Coming from a deprived family in Kailali district, he studied only until the sixth grade and faced stigma and discrimination at the hands of not just his employers and community but his family as well. He was paid less than others at work, and his family thought he was a burden. He was depressed and desperate to find a purpose in his life.

His search ended when he met Jyoti Chaudhary (no relation), a Community

Disability Worker under the USAID Strengthening Rehabilitation in Districts Environs (STRIDE) project. STRIDE improves the functional independence of people living with disabilities and encourages their participation in education and employment. Jyoti regularly visited Phularam's house and provided counseling to him and his family members, eventually making everyone believe that Phularam can do something productive in his life.

Phularam, motivated by his family's changing attitude toward him and through Jyoti's support, got trained in bamboo

"EVERYONE HAS A PURPOSE IN LIFE"

crafts and products at Small Bamboo Entrepreneur Association in Malakheti. He put his heart and mind into the training and even earned NRs. 5,000 while still at the training center.

Today, he owns a small bamboo furniture production center and earns NRs. 6,000 to 7,000 per month. He has earned the respect of his family and community.

"Jyoti has been a guiding light to me. She helped me know myself and my strength. Today, I have a purpose in life," said Phularam with a wide smile. ●



(Top) Phularam in his bamboo store. (Bottom) CDW's follow-up visit with Phularam (middle) at the training center.

KALPANA'S JOURNEY

TOWARD BETTER HEALTH AND NUTRITION



Like Kalpana, many mothers in Nepal do not have access to information on the right actions to ensure proper nutrition needed to raise healthy children.



1 “I delivered my first child at home. I did not exclusively breastfeed him, as I used to think milk alone was insufficient for my baby,” said Kalpana Khadka, 22, holding her newborn second child.

Like Kalpana, many mothers in Nepal do not have access to information on the right actions to ensure proper nutrition needed to raise healthy children.



2 USAID-funded Suaahara is an integrated nutritional program that is reaching out to 1,000 days (period between a woman’s pregnancy and her child’s second birthday) mothers in 41 districts of Nepal through frontline workers such as Female Community Health Volunteers to promote good nutrition practices. This will lay the foundation for the child’s ability to grow, learn and emerge out of poverty – yielding dividends for a lifetime.



3 In the nutrition interaction meeting conducted in villages by Suaahara, mothers and their families learn about healthy caring and nutrition behaviors. This is where Kalpana learned about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, ante-natal checkups, hygiene and sanitation as well as complementary feeding of children, incorporating animal source foods and nutritious vegetables.

4 “Unlike my first one, I delivered my daughter in a health facility. I breastfed her exclusively for six months and then fed her nutritious homemade porridge that I had learned to make in the nutrition interaction meeting. I am also extra careful about washing my hands with soap before feeding her and we drink boiled water at home,” said Kalpana.



5 Suaahara also trained Kalpana and her family on vegetable cultivation and poultry farming, providing her with five chickens and nutritious vegetable seeds for three seasons. This is to encourage proper and correct complementary feeding practices, making sure that diverse nutritious food—rich in iron, Vitamin A and protein—can be easily produced and prepared at home.

PHOTOS:
DINESH BASNET,
RAMCHANDRA GIRI AND
PALLAVI DHAKAL,
USAID SUAAHARA PROGRAM



6 Suaahara encourages women to adopt small actions like these that will make a difference in their lives and the lives of their children. Like Kalpana, the USAID-funded Suaahara program is planning 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.



WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

(Clockwise) Durmati Gurung and her neighbor show the chamber where the overflow of water is collected to use for vegetable cultivation. | Durmati proudly shows off tomatoes grown in her field. | Local women harvest tomatoes irrigated with the help of the overflow of water. | Newly constructed tap in Huslangkot of Dharampani in Tanahun District.



PHOTOS: AKASH SHRESTHA, WWF NEPAL

By Richa Bhattarai, USAID Hariyo Ban Program

A popular Nepali proverb states: “If you are thirsty, you must go to the river. The river does not come to you.” But for the members of Siddhathani Community Forest Users Group (CFUG) in Dharampani of Tanahun District, water now flows to them. The residents of Huslangkot, who used to walk about three hours each day for a pot of water, currently have water gushing from taps right next to their houses. USAID’s Hariyo Ban program helped to make this possible by supporting an innovative approach for the local community to adapt to drought and other adverse impacts of climate change.

In a detailed vulnerability assessment conducted by Hariyo Ban, Huslangkot was identified as one of the most vulnerable regions due to its water scarcity. During the assessment, locals shared how their troubles seemed to be escalating each year – the summers were hotter, leading to water sources drying up more quickly. Their biggest problem was that women and children from about 35 households had to travel downhill to the Kotle River to fetch water each day. Seventy-year-old Durmati Gurung,

whose house is at the top of the hill, remembers how she got up at four each morning to fetch water. She said, “I’ve lived here since my marriage, and this is a lovely place except for our constant difficulties with water. All of us got up at dawn and trudged downhill and then trekked back uphill with water in our dokos (baskets). But that was barely enough for drinking.” Then her face breaks

into a smile as she points to the communal tap just beside her door. “Now I can go out and fetch water anytime I want. It is like a miracle,” she says. This transformation was brought about through the Community Adaptation Plan of Action (CAPA) prepared with USAID’s Hariyo Ban support. The CAPA identified

a drinking water system as the top priority in Huslangkot. In order to address the water deficit and enhance the community’s adaptive capacity, the Rural Energy Fund developed the Kotle Khola Rural Solar Drinking Water Project, which pumps water from the Kotle Khola stream up to the village with a solar pump. Technical and financial support was provided by the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPCC), the Rural Energy Fund, and Hariyo Ban.

In a matter of months, the solar panel, intake reservoir tank and distribution tank were constructed. Seven taps have been constructed throughout the village, and the community continues to marvel at the accessibility of drinking water. “I have a family of five, and we have enough for drinking, washing and cooking. In fact, we even have water for irrigation, and I planted tomatoes, onions, gourds and cucumbers. Who would have believed we could plant vegetables in this barren land!” says Durmati Gurung.

Ram Bahadur Thapa, chairperson of the drinking water project, says, “Our children could not go to school on time as their mothers would return late with the water and had no time to cook. But thanks to the continuous water supply, there are no such hindrances anymore. Our entire community feels blessed.”

Along with the water supply, the community took part in several other climate change adaptation activities. In fact, the Siddhathani CFUG was awarded first prize by the Western Region Forest Directorate for its outstanding contribution to conservation and the development of mountain ecosystems and local livelihoods. The award was presented during the celebration of International Mountain Day in December 2013 in Pokhara.

Huslangkot is one example of Hariyo Ban’s work to improve community access to water. Water is at the heart of every community, and increasing climate variability - along with changes in land use - are affecting water supplies in many places. In order to promote climate resilience, it is important to ensure that vulnerability to drought and disease are reduced through a clean water supply. For a community whose chief vulnerabilities were identified as water shortage and drought, Huslangkot is well on its way toward climate change adaptation. ●

PROJECT BENEFICIARY

SORSWATI PARIYAR

Sorswati Pariyar, 29, has a young son and lives with her in-laws in Lachok, Kaski District. Her husband, like thousands of other Nepali men who have left the country for better economic opportunities, works overseas. However, he has not yet been able to send money back home. Sorswati, with only a high school degree, was unable to find a job locally to support the family.

Last year, USAID’s Initiative for Climate Change Adaptation (ICCA) project trained Sorswati to grow off-season tomatoes using a high tunnel drip irrigation system. She also used safe integrated pest management (IPM) that was developed in Nepal through USAID’s IPM Innovation Lab project with the National Research System.

Sorswati earned \$400 last year and has added an extra tunnel this year to increase her income. The high tunnel system allows farmers to start growing crops before the monsoon, provides protection during the monsoon, and allows them to harvest from the end of the monsoon through the winter months, when farmers are able to get higher prices for off-season vegetables. Sorswati sells her produce locally through a collection center formed by the ICCA project. The center also provides her with information for using the right inputs and growing the most profitable crops.



Sorswati uses this income for her son’s education. She wants her son to have a higher education so that he can have better opportunities in life than she has had.

USAID’s ICCA project works in eight districts to increase the incomes of 20,000 smallholder households through climate resilient agriculture. It also facilitates development of Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) covering over 100,000 smallholder households. LAPAs are investment plans to guide local government and development programs for climate change adaptation. ICCA works to integrate climate change adaptive technologies and approaches into the LAPA process, including micro-irrigation and multiple use water systems for efficient use of scarce water resources; safe bio products for plant protection; high tunnels to enable off-season production; resilient essential oil crops; and coffee growing on steeply-sloped marginal lands. ●

“ In order to promote climate resilience, it is important to ensure that vulnerability to drought and disease are reduced through a clean water supply. ”

USAID ADMINISTRATOR RAJIV SHAH VISITS NEPAL



PHOTO: SURAJ RATNA SHAKYA/USAID

At the Buddha Secondary School in Lele Village, Dr Rajiv Shah observed the tablets that are used for assessment to evaluate the students' ability to recognize letters and sounds, identify words and demonstrate comprehension in timed trials.

USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah visited Nepal February 25-26. His trip highlighted the post-election period as a "new day for Nepal," in which the new government has an opportunity to build upon the political stability resulting from the November 19, 2013 elections to promote economic growth by harnessing innovation and private sector investment. The Administrator emphasized key reforms needed to signal to the private sector that "Nepal is open for business"—particularly in the agriculture and energy sectors, which have significant potential to drive economic growth and reduce extreme poverty in Nepal. While multiple GON leaders expressed their desire to focus their first year in office on drafting and passing a constitution after which they would focus on promoting economic growth, Administrator Shah strongly advocated for doing both simultaneously. He noted Nepal's weak per-capita economic growth rate of 3.6 percent from 2008 to 2012 and described the new government's first 100 days as a time to start needed reforms that would encourage investment.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND USAID SIGN ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT FOR \$402 MILLION OVER FIVE YEARS



On September 23, in a brief ceremony at the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Madhu K. Marasini, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, and Dr. Beth Dunford, Mission Director of USAID/Nepal, signed an assistance agreement of \$402 million over the next five years. The funds will be used to reinforce recent gains in democratic processes (such as elections), improve governance, expand proven

GLIMPSES OF 2014

TWO WILDLIFE SPECIES NEW TO NEPAL DISCOVERED WITH SUPPORT FROM USAID

USAID announced two new additions to Nepal's exceptionally varied diversity of flora and fauna: Tibetan Wolf and Steppe Polecat. These wildlife species new to Nepal were discovered in the Trans-Himalaya Upper Mustang region of the Annapurna Conservation Area by USAID's partner, the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC). The two species were discovered as part of NTNC's long-term ecological research in the region to study the status of snow leopards and wolves through methods such as camera trapping and genomic studies. The total number of recorded mammal species in Nepal now stands at 211. The study was initiated with support from the USAID-funded Hariyo Ban Program, with further support from Panthera-Kaplan Graduate Awards and Hedmark University College, Norway. Working with partners like WWF/Nepal and NTNC, USAID works to reduce threats to Nepal's great natural diversity in critical bio-diverse areas and to help the poorest and most vulnerable people build the resilience they need to thrive in the face of a changing climate.

health interventions in maternal and child health, improve literacy, increase economic growth, and address the challenges of food insecurity and climate change. "On behalf of the Government of Nepal, I would like to express my appreciation to the people and the Government of the United States of America for this assistance and also for their continued interest and support in the socio-economic development of Nepal," said Mr. Marasini. Across all sectors, USAID focuses on key cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality and empowerment and disaster risk reduction, as well as on supporting the Government of Nepal's leadership on increasing accountability and ability to deliver services to traditionally marginalized groups.

USAID SUPPORTS NEPAL'S FIRST-EVER NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX (LGBTI) RIGHTS

On April 22-23, USAID, in partnership with UNDP and UNICEF, hosted Nepal's first-ever national dialogue on legal and social challenges facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people in order to support policy dialogue and community mobilization. This unique dialogue brought together activists, civil society organizations, government officials, and other development partners. Ambassador Bodde, Nepal's Minister of Health, and UNICEF Country Representative spoke of the importance of human rights and inclusion of marginalized groups. Nepal has made significant progress with respect to LGBTI rights such as allowing adults to live together, requiring a third gender distinction for identity cards, and the establishment of a parliamentary committee to study same-sex marriage. However, subtle and explicit discriminatory attitudes and behaviors toward gender and sexual minorities persist. The event served as a knowledge baseline of the legal, political, social, economic, and institutional environments in which LGBTI advocates and organizations operate.

A follow-up to this, on November 24, USAID, UNDP, and UNICEF jointly launched the "Being LGBT in Asia: Nepal Country Report." This report, part of the broader regional "Being LGBT in Asia" initiative, aims to provide an overview of



the legal and social environment for LGBT people and organizations in Nepal.

NEPALI JUDGE HONORED BY SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY AS ANTI-TRAFFICKING HERO

Lalitpur District Court Judge Tek Narayan Kunwar was declared as Nepal's Anti-Trafficking Hero and honored by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry (pic). Judge Kunwar was among the 10 people from around the world recognized for their efforts in combating trafficking in persons. The honor was bestowed during the unveiling of the 2014 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report at a ceremony in the U.S. Department of State headquarters. Since 2010, USAID, through the Combatting Trafficking in Persons program, has worked with the Justice sector, including Judge Kunwar, on improving the justice sector's application of rights-based and victim-centered jurisprudence through trainings. Since 2011, USAID trainings have directly contributed to 48 convictions—and 3 landmark cases. In 2012, when Judge Kunwar convicted three human traffickers—sentencing them to 20 years in prison and a fine of 200,000 Nepali rupees each (\$2,256)—it created a nationwide stir and garnered wide media coverage. The successful conviction was a groundbreaking and unprecedented step in Nepal's judicial and anti-human trafficking history, and provided a much needed ray of hope in the ongoing struggle to achieve justice for trafficking victims.



PHOTO: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

USAID JOINS HANDS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL TO COMMEMORATE NATION'S FIRST FAMILY PLANNING DAY



On September 18, USAID and other development partners led by the Family Health Division of the Ministry of Health and Population organized Family Planning Day for the first time in Nepal. This day marked the first of an annual nationwide campaign with a vision of reinvigorating and expanding the current family planning program and ultimately increasing the use of family planning in the country. Nepal has achieved remarkable progress in the overall status of maternal health, much of that due to the strong national family planning program. According to the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2011, there was a marked increase in the use of modern contraceptives between 1996 and 2006. However, family planning use has remained essentially the same since 2006.

Representatives from the government, donors, civil society, media, health workers, volunteers and students participated in a rally to promote informed decision-making on sexual and reproductive health. Family Planning Day 2014 ended with a formal event in which special recognition and appreciation awards were given to organizations, including USAID, for their significant contribution in starting and promoting family planning in Nepal. The event also launched a groundbreaking mHealth initiative – the first in Nepal – which will push sexual and reproductive health messages to youth to help improve their knowledge and behaviors. Initially, 300,000 young people received weekly test messages on sexual and reproductive health.

INVESTING IN BUSINESS LITERACY TO EMPOWER VULNERABLE NEPALIS AND HELP END EXTREME POVERTY



USAID will build the skills of 48,000 Nepalis in the west, mid-west and far-west regions in literacy, numeracy, entrepreneurship, financial management, and life skills as part of a new, three-year, \$4 million Business Literacy project. The project, launched on July 18, is part of the U.S. Government's five-year, \$66 million Feed the Future Initiative in Nepal that aims to raise incomes and improve livelihoods for vulnerable households. In addition to building literacy skills, the project will enable access to income

generation opportunities in agriculture and support small-scale enterprises.

The Business Literacy project builds upon previous USAID efforts and expands on trainings that empower women, youth and marginalized communities. The Business Literacy project is being implemented by Nepali NGOs DEPROSC-Nepal and Samjhauta Nepal in close collaboration with the Government of Nepal.

RESILIENCE SUMMIT IGNITES GREATER INTEREST AND WELL-INFORMED DIALOGUE

On September 3, on the heels of unprecedented flooding across Nepal, USAID organized a special Resilience Summit in Kathmandu to discuss and look for new models to solve complex and interrelated challenges such as extreme poverty, food security, and climate-induced shocks. The Summit provided a timely platform for well-informed dialogue with key stakeholders from the broad development community – with more than 160 participants from government, donors, INGOs/NGOs, private sector, and media – on the topic of resilience in Nepal. Mission Director Beth Dunford launched the Summit by highlighting USAID’s vision and approach to building resilience. The Panel Discussion on ‘Making Smarter Investments to Build a Resilient Nepal’ was especially stimulating and important. Topics covered broad-ranging perspectives on resilience, calling for greater attention and resources for preparedness than for response; stronger coordination between the various government ministries; improved government accountability for disaster mitigation and preparedness; investment in nutrition; and a national authority for disaster preparedness and management to coordinate disaster preparedness and response.

At the event, USAID also announced three new initiatives valued at up to \$70 million in funds that will help communities more quickly recover from natural disasters and other stressors. Given the increasing and irrefutable link between resilience and ending extreme poverty, USAID will continue to encourage smarter decisions and approaches to



(Top) Dr. Beth Dunford highlights USAID’s vision and approach to building resilience in Nepal. (Bottom) Chief Guest Dr. Pokhrel and U.S. Ambassador Bodde launch the three new initiatives.

USAID SUPPORT LEADS TO LANDMARK JUDGMENT ON ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Kathmandu District Court passed a landmark judgment on organ trafficking under the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2007. The District Court convicted two perpetrators with ten years of imprisonment and a fine of Nepali Rupees 200,000 each (about US\$2,100). The court further decided to compensate the survivor with Nepali Rupees 200,000. With support from the USAID-funded Combating Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) project, local NGO Forum for Protection of People’s Rights Nepal provided legal counseling, legal aid, and court representation to the survivor since the case started in May 2013 when the project assisted the survivor to file a first information report. The judgment is a judicial milestone, using the existing anti-trafficking legal provisions and an expanded framework to establish a link between exploitation, deception, and human trafficking in acts to extract human organs. One of the perpetrators was also charged for a second kidney trafficking case in Kavre District Court filed in 2012. In a country where justice still eludes victims of sexual trafficking, this is an important conviction for a form of human trafficking that is still evolving and new to Nepal. The CTIP project, since 2010, has worked to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute human traffickers in six of Nepal’s most trafficking-prone districts.

doing development and partner with the government and the private sector to better manage risks.

U.S. GOVERNMENT AND SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND LAUNCH “GAUN GAUN MA SINGHA DURBAR”



U.S. Ambassador Bodde giving remarks during the launch event of ‘Gaugun Ma Singha Durbar’

On September 19, the U.S. Mission in Nepal, through USAID, launched a new, 52-episode radio drama series called “Gaugun Ma Singha Durbar.” The series, which will be produced by Search for Common Ground and broadcast across all 75 districts using local FM stations, aims to increase public awareness of how government works at local and national levels. Producers hope the series will foster constructive interaction between citizens and government. The radio drama will later be followed by a TV series. Speaking at the launch, U.S. Ambassador Peter Bodde stated: “Gaugun Ma Singha Durbar is a way to foster more civic engagement and government accountability. This series is also an opportunity for the voices of the many minority and traditionally marginalized groups in Nepal to speak, and to be heard. A better understanding of the government can build trust between citizens and government and build a stronger democracy in Nepal.”

NEPAL INTRODUCES INACTIVATED POLIO VACCINE AHEAD OF OTHER SOUTH ASIAN NATIONS

On September 18, Nepal became the first South Asian nation to introduce the inactivated polio vaccine. This is a

critical step in the global Polio Endgame Strategy, which aims to shift developing nations away from use of activated vaccine once the percentage of the population vaccinated has reached a certain level. Nepal now uses the activated vaccine in oral drops, but the inactivated vaccine—which can only be used once a critical mass of the population is vaccinated—is safer because it doesn’t carry the risk of spreading the polio virus by vaccine-derived means. The inactivated vaccine requires training and strong monitoring and thus is more challenging than giving drops. Injection of inactivated vaccine is routine in the U.S. and other developed nations.

The U.S. Government is the largest government donor for polio eradication and has contributed more than \$2.3 billion globally since the mid-1980s. It has contributed more than \$10 million, through the World Health Organization, to Nepal’s successful polio eradication efforts since 1996. USAID support encompasses the full range of polio eradication activities, from vaccination campaigns to surveillance of possible new cases.

FIRST SEISMICALLY SAFE BLOOD BANK INAUGURATED AND HANDED OVER TO NEPAL



U.S. Ambassador Bodde inaugurating the blood bank

U.S. Ambassador Peter W. Bodde and Minister for Health and Population Khaga Raj Adhikari jointly inaugurated a new, seismically safe Blood Bank at the Tribhuvan

University Teaching Hospital, the country’s largest public hospital. The facility is expected to supply blood transfusion services to 75 percent of the medical facilities and hospitals in Kathmandu Valley. Kathmandu, Nepal’s capital city, faces a high risk of a catastrophic earthquake, presenting potential challenges in all development sectors, with ripple effects across the country. With disaster risk reduction efforts such as the blood bank construction, the U.S. Government seeks to build Nepal’s capacity to prepare for and respond to natural disasters and to mitigate the impact of a major natural catastrophe and shorten the recovery time. The U.S. Government provided \$980,000 to construct the seismically engineered facility in partnership with the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital. USAID supported the completion of the Blood Bank by providing technical assistance.

NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN OF VITAMIN A SUPPLEMENTATION AND DE-WORMING



On October 19 and 20, the bi-annual vitamin A supplementation campaign took place nationwide targeting children 6-60 months of age. The National Vitamin A Program is based on research in Nepal funded by USAID in the 1990s, which demonstrated significant mortality reductions in children under five with twice yearly vitamin A supplementation. Thanks to this research, national vitamin A programs have been scaled up in many developing countries and are saving the lives of thousands of children around the world. At just 2 cents per capsule, vitamin A supplementation is one of the most cost-effective, life-saving child health interventions. Nepal’s Female Community Health Volunteers identify eligible children, provide them with vitamin A and deworming tablets, and also give nutrition education encouraging the consumption of vitamin A-rich foods. According to the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (2011), vitamin A supplementation is considered a major factor contributing to Nepal’s remarkable 54 percent decline in under-five mortality over the past 15 years. USAID estimates that approximately 15,000 child deaths are now being averted annually in Nepal because of this biannual supplementation.