



# World Neighbours Canada

[www.worldneighbours.ca](http://www.worldneighbours.ca)

Fall 2023

## STEP BEYOND GRATITUDE

This fall, World Neighbours Canada had the great pleasure to host Lydia Tapsoba from Burkina Faso. You can read about her tour of southern B.C. in the enclosed newsletter. Lydia has been abroad before, but nonetheless she was struck by the abundance of water and food—and freedom from conflict—that Canadians enjoy. Millions of people in Burkina Faso do not have access to clean water, nor do they have enough food to eat—child malnutrition is widespread. To add to their problems, the rise of terrorist activities in recent years has caused many people to flee their homes and seek shelter in towns or cities or even other countries. The reality for most Canadians is very different. We have ready access to potable water, more food than we need and a peaceful life.

With Thanksgiving recently celebrated and Christmas not far off, many of us will be feeling grateful for the safe and bountiful life that we enjoy. At World Neighbours Canada, we urge you to think about people in other countries who live in much more difficult circumstances. Canadians can make a difference. The excellent video with which Lydia Tapsoba was touring describes a small project that allowed women farmers to achieve more financial stability and improve their standing in their households, through fattening of sheep and intensive training. In Honduras, World Neighbours Canada is supporting the work of a “facilitator of citizen participation” to support and strengthen grassroots organizations such as water management boards, environmental protection groups and parents’ associations to ensure these organizations can manage their affairs competently and transparently, and also advocate for support from local government or other authorities. In Nepal, the district of Ramechhap is close to achieving the goal of having piped water available for all hill villages, thanks in part to support from World Neighbours Canada.

All of this good work has been accomplished because a few hundred Canadians like you decided that they were not only grateful for the food, water and safety they enjoy—they were also determined to do what they could to help people who are less fortunate. Thank you for your support! It has made a huge difference to the lives of thousands of people. Please continue to support World Neighbours Canada and its partner organizations to the extent you are able. I urge you to give generously to help us continue our fight against poverty and injustice. Step beyond gratitude!

Sincerely,

Bruce Petch, Executive Director (volunteer)





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Lydia Tapsoba, from Burkina Faso, visits Osoyoos Lake on her recent trip to B.C.

## A whirlwind of presentations around BC

By Judy Gray,  
World Neighbours Canada director

World Neighbours Canada was excited to host Lydia Tapsoba from Burkina Faso for a tour of southern BC. Lydia managed to fit in 23 presentations during her 14 days here and covered more than 2100 km, from Kamloops to Oliver to the Sunshine Coast and Victoria. Lydia threw a snowball as we travelled the Coquihalla Connector, held a curling rock, putted a golf ball, dipped her feet in Osoyoos Lake, held pumpkins, touched the Pacific Ocean, rode BC ferries, viewed salmon spawning in a creek and was fortunate enough to see three humpbacks spout and wave

a flipper. Lydia was amazed by the number of lakes and the dense forest in BC.

We began each gathering with the video that was recently created by APDC (our partner organization in Burkina Faso). What an inspiring video it is; and it's now available on YouTube! Lydia was able to add many pertinent details about the project that are not included in the video. Here are some of her observations:

- It is very difficult to change social norms, and yet in 15 months APDC was able to make significant progress in this domain — women who had never before participated in the purchase and/or sale of sheep at the cattle market

learned that this IS possible, and they have earned the blessing of husbands, village elders, religious leaders and community leaders to negotiate in that male-dominated venue.

- APDC is one of the only organizations in Eastern Burkina Faso continuing to carry out development work — supporting the sheep-fattening, helping with the creation of market gardens during the dry season, and working towards women's savings groups joining a credit union to improve their financial status.
- In Lydia's opinion, one of the reasons that few men and adolescent boys from the project villages have joined terrorist groups is that there are income and meaningful activity possibilities in the village, thanks to APDC's involvement.

Many thanks to the APDC team — Rebeka, Hortense, Diaboado, Noula, and Koanari — who are willing to continue visiting the project villages to support the innovators and others, despite growing issues with insecurity in the region!



## By the numbers: Presentation venues and participation

261

Elementary & high school students & teachers in Kamloops & Oliver

113

Students & instructors at Thompson Rivers Univ., Univ. of the Fraser Valley, Univ. of Victoria

200

Community members in Kamloops, Gibsons, Oliver, Vancouver, Aldergrove Rotary Club

30

Directors, donors, supporters & friends in Kamloops, Victoria, Vancouver, Roberts Creek



# Majority of households in district now have access to water

By Gordon Carnes, Nepal Coordinator, World Neighbours Canada

After completing three more drinking water systems in Nepal earlier this year, our partner organization Tamakoshi Sewa Samiti (TSS) informed us that the majority of households in the district of Ramechhap now have access to water. Citing a Nepal Central Bureau of Statistics survey, 91% of 46,466 households in the district of Ramechhap have either tapped water within the premises or access to tapped water outside the premises. The remainder get water from traditional sources such as wells or springs and rivers. In fact, TSS indicated that it is now difficult to find communities that still need drinking water systems.

World Neighbours Canada and TSS have been active for three decades building gravity-fed water systems to improve family health and reduce women's workload of fetching water from traditional water sources which

were far from their homes. The public tap model that we have implemented has been a cost-effective approach. Along with other organizations and the Nepal government we should be celebrating our success! The government has now formulated a policy to provide "one house one tap" for the future.

The social, health and economic benefits to the communities that have received assistance to build drinking water systems has been immeasurable, but now we have reached a turning point. World Neighbours Canada is communicating with TSS to identify the priorities of rural communities for future sustainable development, alleviation of poverty and improved health. We are proceeding carefully to ensure that work we support will benefit poor and vulnerable people and reduce gender inequality.



Nearly everyone in Ramechhap District now has piped water nearby

## Seeds of life: Keeping resources local to protect crops from drought

By Gabriel Newman, World Neighbours Canada director

In February of this year, when World Neighbours Canada representatives were in Honduras meeting with community groups, we heard how farmers were concerned about the effect El Niño would have on their crops and their lives. These community members did not have cell phones and were isolated from most news sources, but they knew about the weather. Most of them experienced the severe droughts of 2015-2016 and remember missing an entire season of crops. The conversations about the impact of El Niño were not yet taking place in Canada, yet in Honduras farmers were preparing.

According to ACAPS (an organization that monitors crises for humanitarian organizations), Honduras is considered one of the countries most at risk from the effects of El

Niño. In July of this year, the Honduras Red Cross activated its Early Action Protocol for Drought.

Farmers are eager to work together to provide mutual protection from the changing climate. One approach that is gaining popularity is saving local seeds on a larger scale than just individual farms.

Many communities have their own varieties of corn and beans which have been used for decades. They are used because they grow well in the local climate and soils. Local farmer's collectives are pooling their resources and their seeds to not only sell them when the price is better, but to protect themselves when crop production is poor. Furthermore, saving local seeds ensures that the genetic resources stay in the communities they are best adapted for.

Vecinos Honduras (World Neighbours Canada's partner organization) is working with these farmers to teach agricultural methods that work better in drought conditions. With farmer's collectives they are helping them organize to save their precious seeds. With young entrepreneurs they are providing opportunities for training to help them create businesses that can supply silos for grain storage. Finally, on a larger scale they are working with these collectives and communities to petition local municipalities to copy-right local seeds so they can't be trademarked by large corporate interests and that their control over these local seed banks is maintained for future generations.

There are no simple solutions to the growing climate disaster that Honduras faces. Vecinos Honduras approaches the needs of the farmers from many angles, individually, collectively, municipally, and federally.



A prize-winning variety of red bean seeds at a local fair.

### Honduras – Crises Analysis

*Since 2013, widespread insecurity, poverty, and high levels of violence have displaced many people within and beyond Honduras' borders, with people displacing mainly to or through Mexico. Generalised violence, the expansion of drug-trafficking groups, extortion, and threats have resulted in a high number of internally displaced people (IDP) in the country.*

*Honduras is part of the Central American Dry Corridor and experiences erratic rainfall and prolonged periods of drought, resulting in heavy crop losses. The socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 restrictions and weather emergencies have increased food prices, affecting food access and availability. As of February 2023, over 2.6 million people were facing Crisis or Emergency food insecurity (excerpt from ACAPS country analysis, September 2023).*