



# World Neighbours Canada

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

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## STRIVING FOR SELF-RELIANCE AMIDST UNCERTAINTY

One of the pitfalls of helping people in need is the risk of creating dependence on external support. Further, the uncertainty of politics and economics in developing countries makes it unwise for rural families to rely on government or on single sources of income. At World Neighbours Canada, we strive to increase self-reliance so that people can sustain livelihood improvements after a program ends.

This year we are approaching significant milestones in self-reliance in Honduras and Nepal. World Neighbours Canada has supported our local partner organization, Vecinos Honduras, in the Azabache area of south-central Honduras for 12 years. It is called the Michael Newman Program, in honour of a late World Neighbours Canada director who was deeply committed to alleviating poverty in the area. People have learned to grow better coffee, raise healthier children and operate their own community organizations. Now Vecinos Honduras has phased out its direct support in Azabache and is focussing on other parts of the country, especially the dry southern corridor.

In Nepal, World Neighbours Canada has, since 1989, supported the local organization Tamakoshi Sewa Samiti (TSS) in building water systems in Ramechhap district. These robust systems collect water from springs and convey it to villages in buried PVC pipes. Women and children, the traditional carriers of water, save hours of time hauling water from faraway sources. TSS ensures that each community takes responsibility for its water system – first providing labour and local materials for construction, and then taking on operation and maintenance. Now most communities in the district have functioning water systems and achieving the goal of easily accessible water for everyone is within reach.

In Burkina Faso we are making solid progress. Financial support and training for family-based sheep-fattening enterprises has provided the basis for women farmers to achieve better income and food security, despite the terrorist violence that has affected most of the country. The many challenges facing people in eastern Burkina Faso necessitate a self-reliance strategy with multiple elements. Besides livestock, World Neighbours Canada local partner APDC is working with farmers to increase water infiltration in fields and produce vegetables for market, among other programs.

In the difficult landscapes in which we operate, self-reliance cannot be achieved without support. We rely on thoughtful and concerned Canadians to recognize that respectful assistance aims to give people the knowledge and the means to overcome the obstacles they face, not to make them dependent on outsiders. I urge you to continue to support World Neighbours Canada and our overseas partners in the struggle for self-reliance. Please give generously – while we are making measurable progress, the need is great. It is simply not fair that so many families – our global neighbours - live in poverty and can barely feed their children.

Sincerely,

Bruce Petch, Executive Director (volunteer)

