

Outreach Abroad

OPERATION AGRI'S MAGAZINE

NEPAL:

Projects which
resource vital
health care

SRI LANKA:

Generating income
from crops &
livestock



1961–2024

Supporting
rural and urban
development
projects in
Christ's name

3/4 2024



Operation
AGRI
Christian love in action

SUMMER 2024



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Operation Agri is a CIO

Operation Agri works with local Christian partners in ten countries. Operation Agri helps grow food, increase incomes, teach skills, empower women and much more.

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Welcome
from the Editor

Climate Change Challenges

Unseasonal droughts and floods along with abnormal temperatures are causing enormous difficulties for farmers across the world.

When these effects of climate change add to an already undernourished or soil eroded farm, families struggle to produce food for their table and many go to bed hungry.

Your generosity makes a difference.

You make it possible for farmers to have the right training to work with the land to produce family food and a surplus which brings finance for schooling and health care.

Thank you,
Nigel.

NigelJones@operationagri.org.uk

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COVER IMAGE: *Securing Livelihoods in Sri Lanka*: Mary has healthy goats now that she has a shelter for them



Gill Ashley Smith, Operation Agri Trustee,
brings highlights of the Annual Appeal

2024-25 Annual Appeal

This year's Video Resource Pack: *Securing Livelihoods in Sri Lanka* is available for churches, schools, or other organisations. Use it at harvest festival, midweek meeting, or another event. It invites support for Operation Agri. The video features our project in northern Sri Lanka, where many families face huge problems of climate change and economic crisis.

Order the pack online at www.operationagri.org.uk/current-appeal

or contact our administrator Jo Jackson
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Operation Agri's partner, LEADS, is working with two villages, giving special help to widows with children. Some had to go out to work, leaving children alone, which was a great concern. Women's savings groups are a vital step in bringing women together to save money, discuss local problems, and decide who most needs help. The aim is to enable women to have sustainable incomes from livestock and crops.

Help with goats and organic crops

In the video we meet Mary, a widow. LEADS provided a shelter, so her goats are protected from getting ill in drenching monsoon rains. She is really happy with her healthy goats and is rearing more to sell for a secure income.

Chandrani was one of the women that received training in organic home gardening. LEADS reports 'She is an excellent farmer, growing lots of organic

vegetables and fruit, providing healthy food. She is now training other women in organic methods, such as how to produce their own liquid fertiliser.'



Concern for children

The LEADS staff were concerned about protection of children, so they helped form a Village Child Development Committee. Members check on children missing from school, or suffering abuse, and educate parents on issues like disciplining children, early marriage, and misuse of phones! They started child clubs, involving nearly 100 teenagers. Each month, young people in the area come together to learn about their rights and responsibilities, and share concerns and hopes. This is a great opportunity to socialise, develop skills like public speaking, enjoy sports and do community work together.

LEADS now plans to help develop marketing of local produce, and ways for savings groups to invest in their locality. The aim is to empower the community – to work together; to be able to tell local authorities about their concerns; and to look out for the needs of the most vulnerable.

Gill Ashley Smith

Sunflower crop provides for many

Morice Luoga Heavenlight shows how sunflower farming has the potential to improve food security for some areas of Tanzania

Appreciation

Operation Agri's support has enabled Farming Partnership Initiatives (FPI) to train farmers in sustainable agriculture, soil and farm management, post-harvest management, livestock crop rotation and a good time to plant. We are also providing training and sunflower seeds to farmers to increase the quality of sunflower production and the sale of sunflower seeds and oil.

By God's grace, Karagwe and Kyerwa districts are blessed to have two rainy seasons, that means our farmers can plant and harvest sunflowers successfully twice a year.

Through FPI, farmers receive the training and sunflower seeds in order to grow more drought-resistant crops, to fight against the irregular rainfall. That is why we're aiming to promote sunflower farming as a drought-tolerant crop, this has great potential for improving food security and incomes.

Because of your hands, FPI has succeeded in making a change to the lives of the people we are serving to help themselves; we wouldn't be what we are without Operation Agri.

Success

This season, unusual rains have hit our farmers' farms, because of climate change. Despite uncommon rains and floods our farmers have succeeded in getting in much of the expected crop, even if it's not a hundred percent.

It takes 90–120 days, from sowing the seeds, to harvest sunflower heads and the resultant oil.

Future

FPI dreams of establishing a smallholder farmer and micro-sunflower oil mill processor in Karagwe, with a capacity which can handle 200 bags of 70kg per day and store up to 2,000 bags of raw materials.

The main markets for sunflower oil products are nearby and the demand is larger than production. The local market is good, currently oils are retailing at an average of Tzs 5,500, (about £1.65), per litre and, because the demand is huge, Karagwe and Kyerwa import sunflower oil from Singida and Kahama regions.

The project aims to focus on market development and values chain development, to increase yields.



◀ Deus Kashushura
with sunflowers that he's
waiting to harvest

▼ Hillary Jovin and
his family

“

**We wouldn't be
what we are without
Operation Agri.**

Currently our farmers are producing sunflower oil and animal feed products locally.

Hillary Jovin, 53, father of six, is amongst the farmers who benefited from the FPI sunflowers project.

He says: '... previously our family used to buy cooking oil. But, since I joined the Farming Partnership Initiatives programme, (a part of it being a beneficiary for receiving a milk cow from FPI) I am growing sunflowers. After joining the FPI project we learned about nutrition and growing sunflowers. Now I know how to grow at certain times of the year and carefully plan my crops and now we have our own cooking oil from our field. To me this is a great change. I am using some of my income to develop my farm activities and it's my plan to expand our sunflower farming as well.'

Deus Kashushura, 59, is amongst the farmers who received sunflowers seeds and training from FPI and who is now growing sunflowers on his two-acre farm.

He says, 'I learned about the benefits of growing sunflowers from training provided by FPI. My brother and I have decided to grow more sunflowers in our fields in the next years because I am seeing that it is a good crop. Sunflowers are not difficult work. We're expecting that it will bring many benefits to our families for the years to come. I have learnt that sunflowers have many benefits, including the value of its seeds for producing oil and animal feeding, and you don't need to export as there are markets nearby. So I have expanded the field. This time it was just a trial, but I have seen there are opportunities in sunflower farming.'

Morice Luoga Heavenlight



Dancing in Dhaka

Jerry Clewett, Trustee, celebrates with the Church of Bangladesh and learns how an education programme, supported by OA, is teaching young people to aspire to be more than rickshaw pedlars

Invitation to celebrate

Everyone likes to be invited to a birthday party, so I was excited to receive an email inviting me to the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Church of Bangladesh, (COB), with whom Operation Agri (OA) partners. I later learnt that there were two celebrations – one for the COB and a second, the day after, for the 200th anniversary of St Thomas' Cathedral in Dhaka.

Dancing in the dust

The 50th Anniversary celebration took place at the Retreat and Prayer Garden in Anandapur. The proceedings were led by The Most Revd Samuel Sunil Mankhin, the Moderator and Bishop of Dhaka diocese. The chief guest was The Right Revd Anthony Poggo who is the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion. Apart from the many folk from the COB it was great to spend time with several of their 18 mission partners including those who partner the COB directly, and those who, like Operation Agri, partner with COB's Christian Ministry for Children and Youth (CMCY). The morning programme included a thanksgiving service and a variety of music and traditional dancing. The afternoon gave space to the larger COB partners to describe their partnerships and mission.

The following day we gathered again, this time at St Thomas' Cathedral where we participated in a morning service in the Cathedral with Holy Communion, and an address by The Right Revd Anthony Poggo. Like the first day the afternoon programme consisted of many speeches interwoven with cultural dances.

Meeting and greeting

As part of the celebration of the COB 50th anniversary, I was invited to bring a short greeting on behalf of Operation Agri. I was able to highlight the early work of OA in Bangladesh, (or East Pakistan as it was then known). The work started in 1961, emerging out of requests made by David Stockley, a BMS Agricultural missionary, for tools, seeds, day-old chicks, and other farming resources to support his farmer training. I was also able to bring a specific greeting from the current Chair of Trustees of Operation Agri, Nigel Jones, whose message read 'On behalf of the current and previous trustees of Operation Agri I send you our most sincere greetings on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Church of Bangladesh. It is a great delight and privilege to be able to serve you, and many of your people, in the name of Jesus through the work of CMCY. May our paths continue to fruitfully coincide as the Lord guides us forwards.'



Working with CMCY

I was keen to spend some days working with the staff of the project we support, the Duaripara Family Development Project, (DFDP), and the staff of CMCY. Operation Agri had already agreed to fund a new three-year phase of the project beginning in January 2024, so this was a good opportunity to sit with the staff of the project and CMCY to see how monitoring tools for the project could be improved.

Meet the students

DFDP had moved into a new building since my last visit in 2021. We were able to meet the girls who attend the centre and enjoy some poetry and dance they had prepared. I then met four girls Sumi, Sampa, Bilthi and Mita who had attended the DFDP education centre for eight years, (reaching

- ◀ Dance performance at DFDP
- ▲ Celebrating the 200th anniversary of St Thomas' Cathedral

grade 5). They said how much they appreciated the environment of education, love, learning and awareness. Their parents work as, respectively, an electrician, carpenter, rickshaw pedlar and barber and their aspirations are to be a doctor or pilot. When I asked how their neighbourhood could be improved, they said they wanted a safer environment, no dust, and more food for those who are hungry (many lack food due to low income).

My short time in Dhaka ended with a walk around Duaripara, proudly guided by the project girls for whom it is their home. I was delighted to meet Hasina who is now a psychology student and a teacher in a high school, having previously been a student for many years with DFDP.

Compost training in ru

Lawson Limao explains the importance of educating farmers in different types of fertiliser

Crisis

Today, Zambia is in real crisis. The soaring cost-of-living is affecting so many people and dragging the majority down. Perhaps its biggest impact is on our diets. Low salaries and insecure incomes mean most just eat what they can, regardless of whether the food is good, healthy, and wholesome.

Commercial farms run by big businesses try and keep the markets supplied, but their use of commercial, genetically modified, and infertile seed varieties, relies on huge amounts of chemical fertiliser. These crops might be fast growing but large-scale industrial farming is leading to deforestation, soil erosion, and land and water pollution. It is pushing small-scale farmers off their land. It is also expensive. To maintain yields, more and more chemical fertiliser is needed, but the cost of fertiliser is going up all the time.

Smallholders

High food prices are not good news for small-holder farmers. Poor farmers sell most of their crops at harvest when prices are lower, to pay back debts built up from buying farm inputs like fertiliser and seed, or to pay their children's school fees. While they sell their crops at harvest when the price is lower, they buy food to feed their families throughout the year, even when the price is high.



While large commercial farms can access government support to buy chemical fertiliser at subsidised prices, most farmers live on small family farms of just a few hectares, (1 hectare is nearly 2.5 acres), and simply cannot access the schemes. The majority of these farmers are women, and they are hugely disadvantaged. It is a big political issue.

Organic fertiliser

This is why the project we have been running, with support from Operation Agri, is so important. We are running the project in Petauke District, in the area overseen by the Nyampende Chief. This is in Zambia's Eastern Province, not far from the Mozambique border, and it is an area heavily dependent on agriculture. Like much of Zambia, maize is the main crop here.

ral Zambia



▲ Training session on making liquid manure

◀ Lawson (front right) checking crops grown by project participants

takes a number of months before it is ready and replaces the chemical fertiliser normally used at planting. To make liquid feeds we demonstrated how to mix cow, chicken, pig or goat manure in an old sack and suspend it like a teabag in a drum of water. The organic infusion is so rich it can be diluted and used to feed the crops as they grow.

The project has been a great success and there have been requests to extend the training to other areas in Petauke District. They told us, 'Uyu utumiki upitilize!' meaning, 'Let this work continue!'

Drought

Southern Africa would normally expect rain in December through to February or March, however, this year many farmers are still waiting, (as of March/April). The drought is partly due to the ongoing El Niño climate cycle, which has changed rainfall patterns during our growing season, but localised deforestation has made this situation worse. As part of the training, we shared how trees can support soil structure, fix nitrogen, and even cool the land which encourages clouds and rain. Please pray for the farmers in the organic fertiliser training project and others across Zambia as they struggle through the current drought.

Lawson Limao, Project Coordinator, The Word of God Ministries Church, Zambia



We started by working with local leaders and together we identified 400 farmers to be part of the project. Village headmen and headwomen, the local churches and agronomists were all consulted.

We began by talking about the needs of the soil and the crops. We shared stories, and people were all in agreement about how worried they were about the future. How could they continue when the cost of inputs was making their lives so hard? How could they afford school fees, animals, or food? Many were cutting down trees and selling charcoal so they could afford to buy chemical fertiliser.

We then taught about how to make different types of organic fertilisers such as thermal compost and organic liquid feeds. Thermal compost, (decomposing organic material at an elevated temperature), only

Children's

Page

By Janet –
a good friend of OA

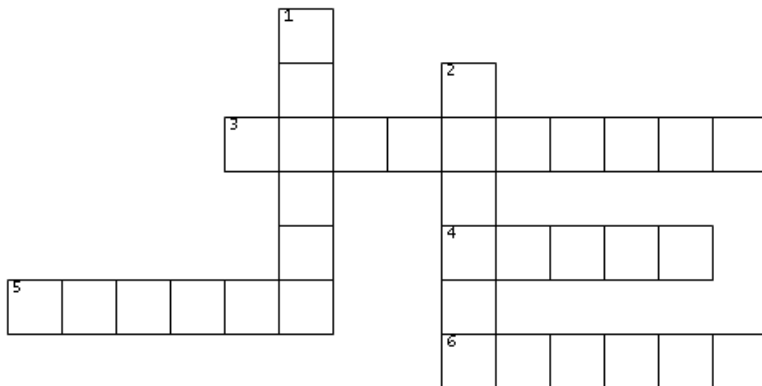
Operation Agri enables SDKF to run six-month training courses in Uganda.

Can you rearrange these letters to find out what one course is teaching people to repair?

CCLTRMOOESY

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Now complete the crossword below which is connected to this training. *The picture should help.*



Across

3. The rider holds onto these
4. On the wheel and made of rubber
5. These help in the dark
6. On the rider's head

Down

1. These are needed when stopping
2. Used when changing gear

YOUTH PAGE

Lydia Caldera on the challenges of tackling health emergencies in rural villages

In Nicaragua, the poorest Spanish-speaking country in the world, children still die from preventable or treatable diseases such as diarrhoea and pneumonia. It is worse in rural and remote areas where there is no doctor, no hospital, no pharmacy, and the closest health unit might be hours away.

Women face many challenges in accessing health care – a particular worry during pregnancy, when giving birth, and watching their children grow up.

That is why AMOS Health and Hope partners with Operation Agri to serve 23 vulnerable rural communities. We train local leaders and facilitate community empowerment.

We do this so community leaders can prevent and treat illnesses, know what to do in an emergency, and help to save lives.

Lydia Caldera is the Development and Communications Manager with our partner



AMOS Health and Hope, in Nicaragua.

Two words from the prophet Amos:
Amos 5:14 – **Seek good**

This is exactly what Operation Agri is doing – and achieving – in conjunction with partners such as AMOS Health and Hope.

Go to the link below and



Seek good

Thank you.

<https://operationagri.org.uk/product-category/presents-with-a-purpose/country/nicaragua/>

Birthing centres and other vital services still needed in Nepal

Jhaggu Prasad Gahatraj shows how much MCDS is valued and trusted by local people

MCDS project location at Mahatgaun Rukum East

Challenges for the CHEP Project

The mountainous district of Rukum East is one of the least developed of Nepal's districts with a Human Development Index, (HDI), of 0.431. Most developed countries have an HDI score of 0.8 or above.

The communities are underprivileged and deprived of basic facilities. The geographical structure, unproductive land, poor health and hygiene, declining education quality, deforestation, caste discrimination, poor living standards and lack of female empowerment are burning issues.

The Community Health and Education Project, (CHEP) – part of the work of Multi-Purpose Community Development Service (MCDS) – is based in Bhume Rural Municipality-6 Mahatgaun, Rukum (East) of Lumbini Province of Nepal. It is a three-year project and will phase out by 17 July 2026.

The project focuses on improving the living standards of the poor, and sustainably uplifting socially oppressed people and addressing school, health, Disaster Risk Reduction, (DRR), and complex issues. Fundamentally it's about raising people's standard of living.

Effective healthcare

Dhan Bahadur Adhikari is the health Worker of Mahatgaun Health Post. He has been working as a Community Medical Assistant for three years. He is originally from Rukum West district. He stays in a rented room. There is only one Health Post in this ward.

In this Health Post, every day 20 people come to the health facility. In a year 15 pregnant women take delivery service from the birthing centre. Most of the injured farmers, workers, and the sick, who have communicable diseases, come for treatment. It is waiting for support from local government and other organisations.

Mr Dhan Bahadur Adhikari says, 'I feel the work of MCDS is effective. MCDS has supported with health equipment, medicines, and furniture and Out Patient Department beds. It is not a big project, but it is working closely with the Health Post. MCDS provided training to all health workers. The MCDS staff are friendly and cooperative. This Health Post has no ambulance service, patients have no money for transportation for further treatment in bigger hospitals. In the case of critical delivery situations, pregnant women are facing difficulties. In the near future MCDS



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It has no birthing centre, and only one health worker and one Female Community Health Volunteer Worker.



need to conduct a dental medical camp and an eye check-up medical camp.'

Women's Group enables building of Health Unit

Ms Anupa BK is the Auxiliary Nurse Midwife of the Health Unit which serves the remote settlement of Khamde village.



There is no electricity or road access, it takes more than an hour to reach the Khamdai Health Unit. This Health Unit's house and land belongs to a Women's Group called Melmilap Group of MCDS.

Ms Anupa BK says, 'MCDS has distributed a stretcher, table, rack, first-aid box and a Blood Pressure Set. In this Unit an average of 90 people come for treatment. It takes more than three hours to reach a nearby Health Post. MCDS is a blessing for this community. The women's group, run by MCDS, has supported this health unit. It has no birthing centre, and only one health worker and one Female Community Health Volunteer Worker. The free medicine distributed to health units is not enough. MCDS needs to facilitate a birthing centre. There is still a lack of medicine, solar panels, health workers, and equipment for a birthing centre.'

Early childhood development

Ms Menuka Gautam is the head teacher of Shree Janchetana Primary School in Khamdai village. She says, 'MCDS provides joy to the Early Childhood Development, (ECD), children. The organisation provided ECD materials, a cupboard, tables, and a swing. She recalls that before this children rarely attended full-time, now 21 ECD children are enjoying the opportunity to learn. MCDS has also formed a Child Club which is working to create social awareness among families and community people.'



Trusted provider

Mr Bikram Pun Magar is Ward Chairperson of Mahatgaun of Bhume Rural Municipality. He trusts MCDS and says, 'I have provided three years project approval. I am also planning to put the CHEP budget forward for Annual Budget of a Rural Municipality. CHEP is working among education, health, livelihood, cross-cutting issues and DRR. I hope MCDS will also work after three years in new areas of Bhume.'



*Jhaggu Prasa Gahatraj,
Executive of MCDS Nepal*



Lalitpur *revisited*

Jerry Clewett makes an emotional return trip to Lalitpur, in Nepal, and discovers advances in infrastructure and health care and some inspiring stories

Excited to be back

I have travelled to Nepal often over the years but I always have mixed feelings when my plane approaches the Kathmandu Valley. In part this is due to thinking of the 1992 plane crashes where friends lost their lives; and partly it is looking down at the district of Lalitpur and the tiny dots of village houses where so much development work has been done over the years, including my own small contribution as a project manager 30 years ago; and partly it is the anticipation of meeting friends, both old and new.

This time Operation Agri had given me the opportunity to visit our local partner Multipurpose Community Development Service, (MCDS), which is the relief and development arm of the Nepal Baptist Church Council. Operation Agri supports the work of MCDS jointly with BMS World Mission and this was an opportunity to better understand their current work and future plans by meeting the key MCDS staff as well as some of the project participants in the villages.

Visit to Ghusel

I am indebted to the MCDS Executive Director, Jhaggu Prasad Gahatraj, who created space for me to have a day in Ghusel, in the Lalitpur district, and where MCDS have established one of the community focused projects.

One positive development, since I last visited rural Lalitpur (located in the south central part of the Katmandu Valley) in 1994, is that roads have been constructed. Not always good quality roads, but at least it is now possible to reach project locations quicker, (about 1.5 hours), than it was 30 years ago. More importantly, these roads have opened up bigger markets for farmers and have enabled pregnant women to reach the better-resourced urban facilities for giving birth.

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More importantly, these roads have opened up bigger markets for farmers and have enabled pregnant women to reach the better-resourced urban facilities for giving birth.



Child Club members

Although the Shree Ghusel Secondary School was closed, due to the Buddhist Losar festival, I was grateful that seven students came to meet me and share their experiences of the Child Club which is supported by MCDS. The Child Club is an effective vehicle for students to develop their self-confidence, social awareness, and public speaking skills. I learnt that there are 25 members, (8 boys and 17 girls), and that every Friday they run activities to raise awareness on social issues such as child marriage, the environment, domestic violence, superstition, and alcohol and drug abuse. I asked them what their job aspirations are and, in an era when so many young Nepali people aspire to just 'work abroad', it was somewhat reassuring to hear that among this group one wanted to be a local mushroom farmer, one a nurse, and one a scientist.

Female Community Health Volunteer

Nepal's health systems face many challenges in the hilly terrain, but the cadre of Female Community Health Volunteers, (FCHV), covering the whole country, has been widely praised. I met Ms Sarita Gautam, who has worked as a FCHV for ten years and who has received extensive first aid training and equipment from MCDS, for which she expressed gratitude. The Government gives her a nominal allowance of 1,000 rupees, (about £6), per month for her FCHV work which needs daily commitment. Sarita explained that many years ago she had been nominated for the role by a women's group and that she enjoys the role as 'it gives me the chance to serve the people'. Apart from being available in the village for first aid, she also conducts health awareness events for the villagers, and ensures that each pregnant woman receives four ante-natal visits, and signposting to others if there are complications. Sarita's work contributes to a dramatic reduction in maternal and infant mortality nationally – she told me with pride that the last infant death in her area was over three years ago.

It is encouraging to hear stories of success and I am grateful to MCDS for facilitating my visit and enabling me to be encouraged!

*Jerry Clewett,
Operation Agri Trustee*

▲ This family is a member of the Saurahatole Self-Help Group who collectively own this MCDS supported goat

► Members of the Saurahatole Self Help Group with MCDS staff



PRAYER we invite you to pray

I will give Thee thanks in the great congregation; I will praise Thee among many people.

PSALM 35:18 21ST CENTURY KING JAMES VERSION

Bangladesh

Project name: Duaripara Family Development Project

Partner: Christian Ministry to Children and Youth

Empowering girls through education

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for the project staff as they settle into their new building where the education centre is situated. May they create a safe and creative learning environment for the 100 girls who attend.

India

Project name: Community Empowerment Project, Kalwa East, Mumbai

Partner: Oasis India

Empowering the urban poor

PRAYER REQUEST:

The new phase of the project started on 1 April this year. Pray that appropriate staff can be recruited and retained so that positive relationships with the community may be developed and sustained for the three years of this phase.

Nepal

Project name: Duaripara Family Development Project

Partner: CHEST Ghusel

Handing over for sustainability

PRAYER REQUEST:

As the work of MCDS in Ghusel comes to an end this summer, please pray that discussions about future options, including a transition stage, will be constructive and a good witness for the team.

Nepal

Project name: CHEP Mahatgaun Development Project

Partner: Multipurpose Community Development Service

Health and education in a remote village

PRAYER REQUEST:

It will be monsoon soon. Farming families will need to focus on the land and travel will become disrupted by floods and landslides caused by the rain. Pray for a 'good' monsoon, successful planting of the rice and safe travel for the MCDS team and others.



Mathatgaun Health Post

Pakistan

Project name: Women's Literacy Centres

Partner: Light for the Nations

Literacy and Skills Training

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for the many groups which are meeting and continuing to learn. Give thanks for Nargus and her team of facilitators and teachers. Give them the words and actions they need and the group members the time and focus they'll need. Help everyone to not just learn but be empowered to use the learning.

Nicaragua

Project name: Community Based Primary Healthcare

Partner: AMOS (A Ministry Of Sharing)

Mums and their sick babies

PRAYER REQUEST:

Training our health promoters in water, sanitation, and hygiene measures (WASH) is ongoing. May God open the hearts and minds of community volunteers as we collaborate to meet basic needs including access to healthcare and clean water.

Sri Lanka

Project name: Enhancing the Economies of Vulnerable Communities and protection of children

Partner: Lanka Evangelical Alliance Development Service (LEADS)

Vulnerable people – more marginalised

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for the family economics in Aaladi and Alaghapuri where the project is being implemented. Lack of employment, especially for the men who rely on daily wage jobs, has become a challenge and the women become more involved in the crop work to fill the financial gap. The wages do not meet the needs of the families and this increases the incidences of domestic violence.

Tanzania

Project name: Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

Partner: Farming Partnership Initiative (FPI)

Unity, training and rain

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for the health of the project director, Pastor Heavenlight Luoga. He is recovering from a serious bout of malaria. Pray for a full recovery as he returns to work and protection from further bouts. Pray that the farmers who have been trained will faithfully apply what they have been taught.



Heavenlight Luoga visiting a sunflower farm

ANSWER to crossword on page 10

Across 3. Handlebars
 4. Tyres
 5. Lights
 6. Helmet

Down 1. Brakes
 2. Clutch

Added value

Shadrach Manoj shares how OA is helping organic farmers make the most of good crop yields in Sri Lanka

Agriculture challenges

Sri Lanka had to face many struggles following the pandemic. It went through an economic crisis from which it is still struggling to recover. The former president, in an attempt to improve local organic agriculture, banned the importation of pesticides and fertilisers. As the farmers were not prepared for this sudden change, they struggled, leading Sri Lanka into a food crisis. Additionally, climate change is playing a major role in creating instability.

LEADS and Operation Agri

Thanks to the collaboration between LEADS and Operation Agri, organic farming has been successfully introduced in the Kilinochchi district, in the north of Sri Lanka. We've provided people with essential technical knowledge and livelihood support for organic farming. Promotion of resilient home gardening practices has been one of the most accepted and effective interventions. These farmers are given training on starting a business on a small scale, developing it and then how to add value to the product. Additionally, we've organised child protection awareness programmes, established Youth Clubs and Savings Clubs, conducted nutrition awareness sessions, and held workshops on family wellbeing.

Niro's story

Niro is one of our local farmers who received training on organic agriculture under the OA project. She was trained in starting a small business and maintaining relevant books. There was a great demand within the community for Niro's fresh organic vegetables, which encouraged her to construct a 'tube well' to supply a continuous water supply for her crops, even throughout the drought season. LEADS supported her with a spraying machine. When Niro had an increase in the yield of her chillies she set about adding value to them. Having been trained about value adding to her products, Niro used the



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Having been trained about value adding to her products Niro used the excess chillies to produce curd chillies, (sun dried).



- ◀ Niro's curd chillies packed and ready for market
- ▲ Training on preparing pesticides
- ▶ Niro with her spraying machine supplied as part of the OA project

excess chillies to produce curd chillies, (sun dried). She packed them and marketed them along with the local groceries. She was able to obtain a business registration and relevant certifications from the local Public Health Inspector. Through the sale of the chillies, and other fresh produce, Niro makes nearly Rs. 25,000.00, (about £239), per month.



*Shadrach Manoj,
Resource Mobilisation
Coordinator, LEADS Sri Lanka*





Marathon Runners 2025

If you are a marathon runner and are looking to support a charity in 2025, please email our Administrator on:

admin@operationagri.org.uk

We may have a place for you, or you may want to support Operation Agri as an independent runner.

London Victoria Station

Monday 22 April was Earth Day and also Operation Agri Day, so we had a presence on the Concourse from 7am through to 7pm. Please pray that the materials handed out and the



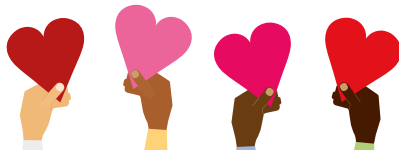
conversations held will be fruitful in the days to come.

Shows

Operation Agri had a stall at the Lambeth Country Show, (Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 June). We're looking forward to being at the Edenbridge and Oxted Agricultural Show, (Sunday 25 and Monday 26 August). If you visit this show do join us on the stall we'd love to see you.

Volunteering?

Do you have a couple of hours free once a week or once a month and want to put them to good use? Contact our Administrator Jo to offer your time and talents admin@operationagri.org.uk



How does *Operation Agri* work?

In the January issue of *Outreach Abroad* the focus was on the work of a Trustee within Operation Agri. This time the focus is on the excellent assistance we get from our part time paid Administrator, Jo Jackson.

One very busy time is the period from September to Christmas. Administering the income from harvest offerings and responding to

Presents with a Purpose requests keeps Jo very busy indeed. To keep our overhead

costs as low as possible Jo works from home and we rent a small lock-up locally for the materials she needs to store.

We also receive voluntary help with other aspects of the work of Operation Agri including proof-reading, social media platforms and, more recently, a volunteer has skills and experiences that allow us to move into areas of promotion that we had not previously considered.

We thank the Lord for everyone who contributes to the vitality of Operation Agri.



I'd like to make a regular gift

to support the work of Operation Agri
by standing order

Niro picking
vegetables on her
organic garden farm
in North Sri Lanka



Standing Order

Please complete the details below, in BLOCK CAPITALS

Name and full postal address of your Bank

To the Manager:

Bank name

Bank address

Postcode

Sort Code - -

Account No

Account name

Please pay to Operation Agri at: Bank of Scotland PLC, Edinburgh, PO Box 1000, BX2 1LB

Sort Code: 80-22-60 Account No: 20935768

The sum of £

Starting date

and every Month / Quarter / Year until further notice from me in writing (Please delete those not applicable)

This order is in addition to / replaces my previous instructions to the charity

(Please cross out words that do not apply)

Signature

Date

Please detach this Standing Order and Response Form from the magazine and send to:

The Administrator, (within the UK use) Freepost, OPERATION AGRI

A photocopy of this form is acceptable. Scanned copies or other images may be emailed to:

admin@operationagri.org.uk

● Please fill in your name, address and email overleaf, and whether you would like our magazine.

● Please tick below as appropriate:

☐ I have left a gift to Operation Agri in my Will

☐ I am considering leaving a gift to Operation Agri in my Will

☐ I would like guidance on setting this up

Other ways to give

Gifts to Operation Agri may be made online:

www.operationagri.org.uk/product/make-a-donation



Legacies

Please remember Operation Agri in your Will. Many projects have been funded from legacies.

For guidance please ask the Administrator.

GDPR We have procedures to keep your personal information secure. We comply with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. We never sell your data and we will never share it with another company or charity for marketing purposes. We only share data where we are required to do so by law.

Operation Agri is registered in England and Wales as a charity, No. 1189098

operationagri.org.uk

Yes, I want to support the work of Operation Agri

- ☐ I enclose a personal gift towards the work of Operation Agri £
- ☐ I enclose a cheque / postal order / CAF charity voucher to the value above made payable to Operation Agri (**Please cross out words that do not apply**)
- ☐ I enclose a gift from our church / organisation towards the work of Operation Agri £
- ☐ I enclose a cheque / postal order / CAF charity voucher to the value above made payable to Operation Agri (**Please cross out words that do not apply**)
- ☐ **Please send me the free *Outreach Abroad* magazine by post every 3 months**
- ☐ **Please send me the Operation Agri email newsletter**

Please complete the details below, in BLOCK CAPITALS

Full Name: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Rev / Dr

Church or Organisation and Position (If applicable)

Address

Town/City

County

Post Code

Email address

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate to Operation Agri.

Gift Aid can be reclaimed by Operation Agri from the tax you pay for the current tax year.

Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

giftaid it

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must complete the information below:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £ _____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to:

Name of Charity: **Operation Agri**

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Title First name or initial(s) Surname

Full Home address:

Postcode

Signature:

Date

Please notify Operation Agri if you:

- ☐ want to cancel this declaration,
- ☐ change your name or home address,
- ☐ no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Please detach this Response Form from the magazine and send to:

The Administrator, (*within the UK use*) **Freepost, OPERATION AGRI**

A photocopy of this form is acceptable. Scanned copies or other images may be emailed to:

admin@operationagri.org.uk