



- USAID is improving agricultural productivity and incomes for over 100,000 rural households in Nepal's poorest, most disadvantaged areas.
- USAID trained over 90 percent of Nepal's preschool teachers to improve early childhood education.
- Since 2010, USAID-supported civic education activities aimed at increasing women's participation reached women in over a third of Nepal's 75 districts.
- In part due to USAID, Nepal has cut its infant, under-5 and maternal mortality rates roughly in half since 1996.

Photo credit: Kashish Das Shrestha, USAID

## Country Profile

Landlocked between India and China, two rapidly changing countries, Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world and continues to cope with the effects of a decade-long insurgency that ended in 2006. Located in the Himalaya mountain range, the country is greatly impacted by global climate change and struggles with both water scarcity in some areas and increased flooding in others. Supporting progress toward a democratic, resilient and prosperous Nepal is a priority for U.S. development efforts.

USAID programs in Nepal seek to reinforce recent gains in peace and security, stabilize the transitional government, strengthen the delivery of essential social services, expand proven health interventions, and address the global challenges of food insecurity and climate change.

## OUR WORK

Nepal has achieved remarkable social, economic and democratic progress during its more than 60 years of bilateral partnership with the United States. School enrollment has increased significantly, and the maternal mortality rate has declined drastically. Yet significant challenges remain and threaten this young, fragile democracy's stability, including stagnant economic growth, high malnutrition among children, acute food shortages, high vulnerability to natural disasters and natural resource degradation made worse by climate change. The caste system and historically regressive gender norms have contributed to poor development outcomes for women and marginalized groups. Linked to all these challenges — and particularly critical as Nepal continues its democratic transition after a 10-year conflict — is the issue of governance, which USAID considers Nepal's most pressing challenge.

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

## AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

More than 75 percent of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods, but low productivity and limited market access negatively impact economic growth, fueling the outmigration of young men. Targeting 1 million vulnerable Nepalis, USAID works through the Feed the Future initiative to sustainably improve their agricultural productivity and nutrition. We improve access to and availability of quality seeds, credit and other inputs; increase incomes; enhance market linkages; and improve nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, especially among women and children under 5. Other efforts address agriculture policy reform and the trade and investment climate to improve Nepal's business enabling environment.

## HEALTH, FAMILY PLANNING AND EDUCATION

USAID supports Nepal's efforts to provide quality basic health services to its citizens, particularly the estimated 25 percent who live in poverty. Our assistance takes interventions proven to reduce deaths of mothers, infants and children and expands these practices to all 75 districts in the country, with a focus on the most remote areas. Other USAID programs reach an estimated 7.1 million people with direct services, such as nutrition; family planning and reproductive health; maternal, neonatal and child health; water and sanitation; HIV/AIDS; support for disabled people; and disaster preparedness. USAID increases consumer awareness and demand for quality health products and supports Nepalese businesses that seek to manufacture and sell these products. Following a history of achievement in preschool education, USAID is placing new emphasis on improving primary grade reading as the foundation for future learning. Working together with the Ministry of Education, USAID's new education project will help young children acquire strong reading skills in grades one to three.

## BIODIVERSITY AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

USAID works through the Global Climate Change initiative to reduce threats to Nepal's vast physical and biological diversity through interventions in critical bio-diverse areas covering over one third of the country. USAID has enabled 163,000 of the poorest and most vulnerable people to build the resiliency they need to thrive, including preserving biodiversity, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to a changing environment and sustainably managing their natural resources.

## DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE

USAID promotes good governance by helping key institutions, such as the Election Commission and political parties, become more democratic, effective and inclusive of all citizens. USAID's new local governance project is working to build a stronger relationship between government, citizens and civil society by strengthening the local development planning process and improving local government officials' ability to respond to community demands. USAID programs focus on gender and social inclusion, strengthening services for human trafficking survivors and those at high risk for trafficking.

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USAID's efforts continue to increase food productivity and incomes for farmers across the country. Photo credit: Kashish Das Shrestha/USAID



Each year, the USAID-supported National Vitamin A Supplementation campaign reaches 3.6 million children ages 6 months to 5 years, averting roughly 15,000 deaths. Photo credit: Cliff Lubitz/USAID