UNITED MISSION TO NEPAL

The beauty of Nepal masks a struggling country, with many living in dire poverty: UMN want to change that. With your help, the church of Nepal can rise up and make a difference to thousands of lives.
WHY WE ARE WORKING THERE

Nepal has made giant strides towards eradicating poverty in the last few decades. For example, in 1990 only 64% of children were enrolled in primary schools; in 2013 that number had grown to 95.3%! But there is still a long way to go.

Nepal has been hampered by corruption, affecting every sphere of society; not just politics but also sport, education, and business. The government’s development activities are limited and the majority of the population live in miserable conditions as they lack the power and resources for a better life.

Disasters like the recent earthquake in April 2015 have hampered progress even further. As well as killing 8000 people, it also destroyed homes and livelihoods, setting back the development of individuals and the country as a whole.

Into this gap should come the church. But although the church in Nepal has grown in the past few years, UMN describes the majority as “almost unaware of and indifferent to the poverty in their surroundings”. Instead churches often focus on the soul of a person, ignoring the body it belongs to. Perhaps it is hardly surprising when many Christians themselves are also desperately poor, and unable to see how they can change their own situation, let alone that of the people around them.

THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT

For 60 years UMN have been reaching out to the poor and vulnerable in Nepal, particularly those suffering from stigmatising illnesses like HIV/AIDS. Now they are helping churches in Nepal to think differently about the society around them, and giving them the ability to reach out to those who are the most vulnerable: the young, the elderly, and the sick.

They do this through a process called Sangsangai, an adaptation of what is more commonly known as Umoja or the Church and Community Mobilisation Process. Umoja means ‘togetherness’ or ‘unity’ in Swahili, and the process has revolutionised communities in many countries where Tearfund works. Now UMN are using the approach in Nepal.
UMN are using *Sangsangai* to teach local churches and denominations in Nepal about the wholehearted message of the gospel. Often the church has been stunted, tied down to preaching only about eternal salvation, and ignoring the challenges of those living in poverty. UMN want to see the church live out Jesus’ heart for the poor by opening their eyes, hearts, and hands to the wider community.

**The first stage of the project is rooted in Bible studies**, exploring God’s message to the church about looking after the poor in our communities. They also talk about the gifts that God has given to His people, seeking to break the dependency on outside help. This approach strengthens churches, raising up new and effective leaders who are able to read and interpret the Bible and make decisions independently.

**In the second stage, the church will begin to look at the community around them with fresh eyes**, identifying the resources that they already have, and the most present needs of the people around them. The church will be supported by UMN and trained facilitators at every step of the process, as they are educated, equipped, and mobilised to make a difference.
PROJECT IMPACT

UMN have already trained 1743 churches, but they are only just beginning! They have seen such success that they are looking to make huge expansions. They want to reach out to Bible colleges and denominations, influencing the whole church in Nepal to change their approach to helping the poorest in their communities.

- This project will bring together churches and communities, creating a more unified society
- Sangsangai will strengthen the church in Nepal, equipping and raising up new, effective church leaders
- This project will reach out to Bible colleges and denominations, influencing the wider church in Nepal

WHAT WILL IT COST

- £1160 will pay for the church leaders in a district to go through the training for Sangsangai, learning how to address the needs of people living in poverty. This includes the young Christian leaders in the area, who will also receive extra training to build them for leadership roles.

- £330 will pay for a district to receive training in peace and reconciliation, helping to heal old wounds in the community. They will then build on that trust by starting Self Help Groups, saving money together so they can make changes in their lives.

- £40 will pay for the formation of a youth group, so UMN can teach young people skills for their future.

JOIN US

Around 11490 people will benefit from this project, meaning it will cost just £22 per person to transform lives through the local church in Nepal.