



ASHI'S STORY



Ashi with members of her farmers' group © Marie Renaux/LWF

In the rural town of Logone Birni, Cameroon, Ashi is both a farmer and a leader. As president of her agricultural group and a member of the local Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA), she's helping her community grow—not just crops, but opportunity.

Ashi's farming group—made up mostly of women, along with a few men—is like an extended family to her. “They are like my sisters and brothers,” she says.

Together, they cultivate tomatoes and vegetables using compost and organic pesticide—simple, natural methods that improve crop health and protect the land. They also grow rice and other staple crops, and raise small livestock, blending traditional knowledge with techniques introduced through CLWR's Nature Based Solutions project, implemented with Lutheran World Federation.

Their vegetables, especially the tomatoes Ashi sells in the market in Kousseri, are prized for their freshness and flavour. The group sells their produce collectively and shares the profits, ensuring every family has something to take home.

For Ashi, this work is deeply personal. Her husband, formerly a teacher, had to retire early due to illness, leaving her as the primary breadwinner for their family of five children. Her income from farming now supports their education and meets their daily needs. The VSLA allows her to save, access small loans, and build a more stable future.

But Ashi's motivation goes beyond her own household. Leading her group, helping others educate their children, and setting an example for the next generation—this is what drives her.

“When I see the other women in my group sending their children to school too, I feel proud,” she says. “We are lifting each other up. That is the harvest I care most about.”

Ashi's story is a powerful reminder that growing food can also grow hope—when it's rooted in shared purpose, community leadership, and care for the earth.