

Research summary

How active churches help communities overcome poverty

Church and Community Transformation in action: evidence of its impact from four research studies

We carried out research studies in Uganda, Sierra Leone, Bolivia and Nepal to find out how Church and Community Transformation (CCT) processes bring improvements in people's lives.

The evidence tells us that when the church works with the community, it's an effective and sustainable solution to overcoming poverty. Seventy per cent of interviewees said that CCT processes and the local church brought positive change in their lives. The people who took part in the research experienced significant external shocks and crises during the CCT training and practice, including drought, economic crashes, and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Out of this research, we present evidence of four areas of transformation: the church reaching out, hope restored, improved relationships and resilient livelihoods. The full report is available [here](#).

‘I see the church is involved in many more activities. There is more preaching of the word of God and people are getting saved. The church is also giving people the knowledge they need to improve their wellbeing with the resources they have. Everyone in the community is invited.’

Community member, Uganda

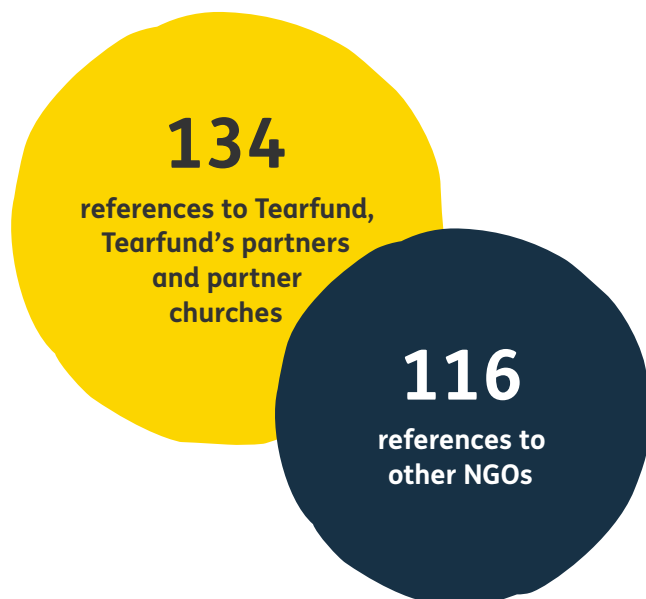
70%

of interviewees said that CCT processes and the local church brought positive change in their lives.

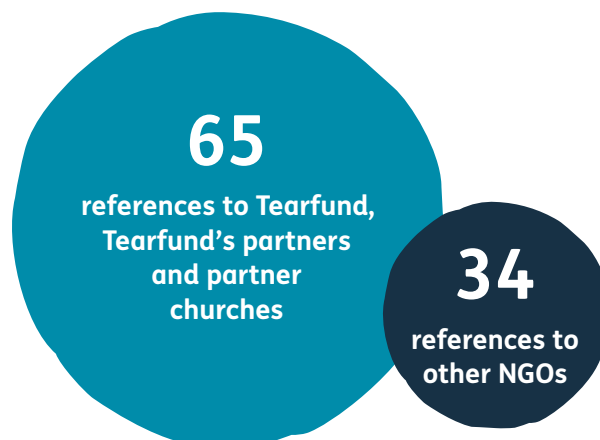
📷 After taking part in the CCT processes, Alina started running her own shop, which makes enough money to pay for her children's education and support her family while her husband works abroad.

Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

Who contributed to positive change in your community?



Who made the biggest contribution to positive change in your community?



When churches reach out to their communities, people's relationships with God are restored and they meet the needs of communities:

- More than any other factor mentioned by those interviewed, CCT and faith influenced positive change.
- Tearfund's partners and churches contributed to improvements in people's lives more often than all other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) combined, and were ranked as the biggest contributor – almost twice as often as other NGOs. These were all unprompted references.

CCT restores hope and builds emotional resilience, which gives people greater confidence, self-esteem and belief in their own abilities, as well as improving their overall sense of wellbeing:

- Hope for the future increased for 85 per cent of people interviewed.
- 83 per cent of people said that their confidence and self-esteem improved, and their ability to achieve increased. The top four causes of these improvements were all linked to CCT and their Christian faith.
- Restored hope and increased confidence have a positive effect on people's sense of self-worth: 74 per cent of people interviewed reported that their wellbeing had improved.

People's relationships at home and in the community improved and they became more resilient, which led to further improvements in their lives:

- More than half of people interviewed reported that relationships at home and in the community improved during the implementation of CCT.
- CCT plays an important peacebuilding role, with a third of people interviewed saying there was an improvement in interfaith collaboration and better relationships across communities as a whole.

‘My wellbeing is better. I now relate with people well. My family is happy, and we're learning new skills. I have a better chance than before, as my ability is now better. All of this has happened because of Christianity and my church.’

Community member, Sierra Leone

CCT helps to address economic poverty by developing livelihoods that are resilient – able to withstand external shocks as participants better understand the resources they have and invest them in their families and communities:

- 40 per cent of people interviewed explicitly said that their livelihoods became more resilient as a result of taking part in CCT processes. Even more people said they had started activities that helped them to be more resilient. The top three factors leading to livelihood resilience are all areas that people taking part in CCT are encouraged to reflect on and learn about.
- 40 per cent of people interviewed said that their income and purchasing power had increased during the CCT implementation.
- A quarter of people interviewed reported that their cash income and purchasing power had stayed the same. This is still significant progress because of the external challenges of drought and unpredictable weather patterns, economic crises and the Covid-19 pandemic.

This research presents evidence of the powerful impact of CCT in four very different parts of the world; each with their own contexts, cultures and churches. This evidence of the positive effect of CCT in such different places strongly suggests that the process works around the world, changing people's lives for the better and reducing economic poverty.

We'd love to tell you more, over the phone, or over a coffee. Please get in touch! You can contact us by phone **020 3906 3500** or email **partnerships@tearfund.org**

Poverty is not God's plan. You are.

Thousands of people needlessly suffer and die every day because of poverty. But that's not God's plan for the world. We believe that we can all play a part in ending extreme poverty and injustice by reaching out to people in need.

We invite you to join Tearfund in partnering with local churches and organisations around the world, equipping people to lift themselves out of poverty and fulfil their God-given potential.

learn.tearfund.org

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📷 Working to tackle the water shortage problem alongside Tearfund's partner church has brought the Tipa Tipa community closer together and they work in unity.

Photo: Andrew Philip/Tearfund

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