



An introduction to church and community transformation (CCT)

Overcoming poverty
through a whole-life
response to the gospel

tearfund

Welcome!

This resource is for anyone who wants to gain a better understanding of what church and community transformation is, and understand:

- what the Bible says about church and community transformation
- how we arrive at church and community transformation
- why we're committed to church and community transformation.

What is church and community transformation?

We believe that local churches – wherever they are in the world – begin a lifelong journey when they embrace and commit to living out a theology of what we call ‘integral mission’. This journey empowers them, changes mindsets and brings about holistic transformation in both the church and the community.

The ultimate goal of this journey is to see broken relationships restored.

‘The first thing that changes is that we remove from our minds the idea that we are condemned by God to be poor. Through study of the Bible, we finally realise that what we were thinking about ourselves is not true. At first we think we cannot do anything to change – but once we begin to think about what we can do to improve, we start to use all of the resources God has given us in our own locations to change.’

Djerabe Paul, Chad

Yao Georges, a CCMP participant, sits outside his home in Manglai Kan village, Côte d'Ivoire.
Photo: Joshua Eaves/Tearfund

‘The way I see this community in the future is a community that will keep on changing, keep on being transformed, because our community was not like this before.’

Yao Georges, Côte d'Ivoire

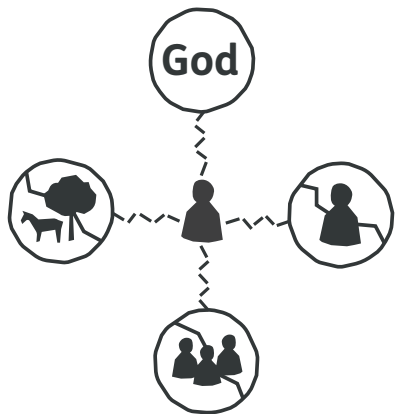


What does the Bible say about CCT?

Our theory of poverty

When God created the world, humankind experienced only perfect relationships; with God, with ourselves, with others, and with creation. The Bible frequently uses the Hebrew word 'shalom' to describe this state of wholeness, peace and connectedness.

In Genesis 3, we learn that the Fall caused these relationships to be broken: and it is this brokenness that we believe causes all poverty.



While the factors that keep people in poverty are often many and diverse, we believe at their root

is the broken bond with God, our distorted understanding of self, our unjust connection to others, and our exploitative ties to the environment.

But we also believe that broken relationships are restored by the work of Christ. He came to make all things new, breaking the hold of sin and death. He came to show us that:

1. we can have a relationship with God
2. we have dignity as people made in God's image
3. we are to love one another in a nourishing community
4. we have the privilege of stewarding God's creation.

'For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.'

Colossians 1:19-20

When Jesus returns, God will fully restore all relationships. Although the Fall has marred what God intended for us at creation, the work of Christ

offers hope that what is broken – both inside of us and around us – will be repaired. Shalom will be restored.



Creation: perfect relationships

Individuals, communities and nature live in perfect relationship with God, with each other and within themselves.



Fall: broken relationships

Humanity's sin breaks the perfect relationship between creation and God. It causes broken relationships between and within individuals, communities and nature. This leads to poverty and injustice in all their forms (including structural brokenness). God still maintains perfect relationship within the Trinity between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Redemption: restoring relationships

Through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, God is restoring his relationship with creation, and healing broken relationships between and within individuals, communities and nature. (This includes healing structural brokenness within communities.)

Integral mission

In John 10:10, Jesus says, **‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.’**

Integral mission is a holistic response to the brokenness that exists in our world. As Christians, we seek to follow Christ’s example and restore the world’s broken relationships in his name, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Integral mission is what we are each called to be and do: it means living out our faith with our whole lives – through our words, actions and character.



📍 Farmer irrigating his crops, Bolivia.
Photo: Andrew Philip/Tearfund

God started this mission of restoration and will finish it when Jesus comes again. Until then, we – all Christians who are part of the church, the body of Christ on earth – are called and commissioned to continue that mission. We are called to follow Jesus’ example and do the kinds of things he did while he was here on earth. As we do, the world sees what the kingdom of God looks like, experiences his love and understands that it is possible to enter a relationship with him.

Having life ‘to the full’ means restoring an individual’s relationship with God, creation, others and themselves – giving them a taste of God’s shalom, and the well-being, connectedness, depth of intimacy, security and fruitfulness that comes with it.

This practical outworking of integral mission, seeking to restore relationships – and by doing so, tackling poverty at its root – is what we believe will lead to church and community transformation (CCT).

The role of the church

The local church is at the centre of God’s vision for the world. The Bible tells us:

‘But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.’

1 Peter 2:9

The church is not perfect. However, it is the context in which followers of Jesus come together to learn, serve and be changed, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

The local church – as a community striving to be Christ-centred,

loving, accessible and sustainable – is best placed to provide some of the key elements required to overcome poverty.

What ‘being church’ looks like is shaped largely by the context in which the local church finds itself; that is, the community to which the church is called. The church transforms its community precisely because it is part of that community.

But that’s not all. By living out the gospel message through the power of the Holy Spirit, the church not only changes its community (context) – it is also *changed* by its community (context). Everyone is made in the image of God, and so everyone is able to contribute to the well-being of others.

‘When I was being trained in integral mission, we were asked: “if we were to do ministry as Jesus did, how would we do it?” Honestly, our pattern of ministry changed from that one question: we became participatory, using local resources that we mobilised ourselves.

‘Today, we have a health centre and a primary school. Teenage marriages and pregnancies are lower, and there are fewer divorces because relationships have improved between men and women. Many theological colleges have come to learn from us because the change is so great.’

Venerable Isaac Danung, Nigeria

The journey

How do we move towards church and community transformation?

Journeys to a distant destination usually share certain features. There is usually some inspiration or reason for making the journey in the first place, and they are more likely to succeed if the journey is well planned.



But each journey to that destination looks different. That's because there are different starting points, various options for which route should be taken, and these routes may well take different lengths of time. The decision about which route is best depends entirely on the context.

Similarly, all journeys to achieve CCT share some common features:

- They begin by recognising that poverty is complex and must be responded to in a holistic way.
- They share the same reason for the journey: a recognition that the church has a mandate to integral

mission and restore the four broken relationships.

- They share the same destination: holistic church and community transformation.
- They all need a good plan to reach the destination: shifting mindsets and inspiring action in individuals, church and communities.

However, there will be huge variety in the specific routes taken, the resources needed and the duration and difficulty of each journey, because everyone begins from a different starting point.



📍 Self-help group at AEBR church, Huye District, Southern Province, Rwanda.
Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

Principles of church and community transformation

The precise activities that make up a journey toward CCT will look different in each church and community. But any journey that is based on the following six principles should make good progress towards the destination.

1. **CCT is driven by a biblical theology of integral mission and dependence on God.**
Achieving church and community transformation begins when a church understands and commits to living out its mission in a holistic way.
2. **CCT intentionally seeks the restoration of all four broken relationships.**
Poverty is viewed in all its complexity, and any attempt to overcome it ensures that all four broken relationships are considered.
3. **CCT facilitates Bible reflection to bring about changes in mindset and behaviour.**
Participatory Bible studies set people on a journey to discover for themselves their inherent worth, dignity and potential.
4. **CCT mobilises the church to become an agent of holistic change in the community.**
We are called not to remain separate from our communities but to be a catalyst that initiates transformation in them.
5. **CCT relies on inclusive, participatory approaches to bring about ownership and sustainable change.**
When the church and community journey together, listening to and including everyone, CCT can be more fully achieved.
6. **CCT celebrates and mobilises local resources, increases agency and releases community potential.**
The church and community recognise the resources they already have and seek their own solutions to create sustainable, inclusive and resilient change.

Envisioning

Envisioning is the first part of the journey. Being ‘envisioned’ happens when individuals and local churches begin to understand the breadth and fullness of God’s mission to redeem and restore all of creation. They start to grasp CCT theology, which encompasses an understanding of poverty as broken relationships, the call to integral mission, and the role of the church to participate in God’s mission.

On this journey, people look to Jesus and how he approached mission by caring for the well-being of the whole person: for their spiritual, social, emotional and other needs. They learn to seek his kingdom in all areas of life through their actions and character, as well as through their words. It’s a journey on which they begin to imagine a better future, and they see the role of the church in bringing about this future.

Around the world, we build relationships with local churches, denominations and networks to promote understanding and commitment to CCT theology. Envisioning is done in a variety of ways, from informal conversations with friends to large organised events.

However, the most common way Tearfund works is through ‘envisioning workshops’, participatory gatherings lasting one to four days in which people grapple with all aspects of CCT theology and commit to living out integral mission themselves and inspiring their churches to do the same.

‘The Bible studies have strengthened my faith. They have helped me to know that all I have is for God and it’s through me that he wants to show his love, power, grace, peace, and mercy in this broken world.’

Bathio Diarra, Mali

Taking practical action – intentional and ongoing

When churches grab hold of the vision of CCT, a shift in mindset takes place and this leads to the desire to take action.

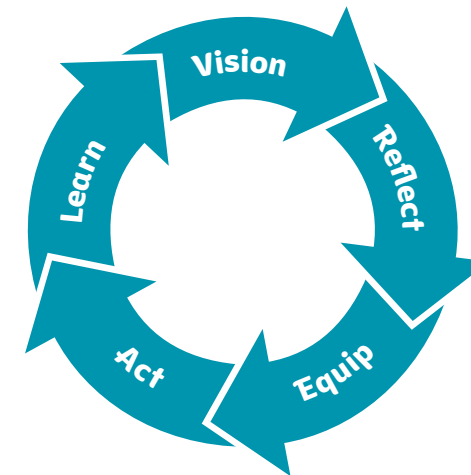
These are not just one-off efforts, but ongoing actions headed towards the destination of CCT and causing a whole change in lifestyle. The six CCT principles can

help to ensure that these actions will lead toward sustainable and holistic transformation in both the church and the community, while remaining rooted in the theology.

The journey toward CCT is often cyclical:

- grabbing the vision
- reflecting on what this means for you individually, as a church and as a community
- becoming equipped to take action
- actually taking action
- learning from what you did.

Sometimes, though, the journey is overwhelming, and so Tearfund supports churches to start taking practical action in a structured way. These guided approaches are what we call ‘CCT processes’.



‘We were focused so much on winning people in Christ, we never thought about the community where we live. We were not bothered by the dirt and pollution we saw every day.

‘But when we started learning about holistic mission, we wondered, “if only our village could look cleaner, our people would be healthier.” Now, after the completion of the campaign, there is a sense of achievement within us that we were able to do something for our community. We will continue to serve our people in whichever way we can.’

Pastor, rural western Nepal

Developing CCT processes

Over the last 30 years, Tearfund has helped to develop processes that take local churches on a journey to achieve CCT. These processes require a facilitator to take the church and community through a collection of specific activities designed to envision people in integral mission and then take action to put these learnings into practice.

‘The church realised they had been asleep. The CCMP training motivated people and has caused revival in the church. People now understand their own value and also value what they have.’

Naba Lamoussa, Burkina Faso

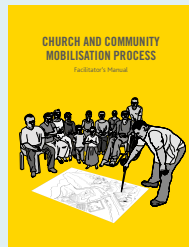


CCT processes in Tearfund

The two most commonly used CCT processes in Tearfund are:

- the **church and community mobilisation process (CCMP)**, developed in the late 1990s. This process is the more in-depth of the two, and as a result requires more training before it can be used effectively.
- **Umoja**, meaning ‘togetherness’ in Swahili, which was developed in 2008. This process was designed as an off-the-shelf resource, requiring less facilitator training so that it could spread more quickly.

Although some of the specific activities used in these two CCT processes differ, they follow similar journeys through the six CCT principles.



CCT processes give space to reflect on the four broken relationships and CCT theology. They facilitate relationship building between the church and the community, they seek to empower people to realise their God-given potential and recognise their locally available resources. They strive to see the church and community working together to transform and overcome poverty holistically and sustainably.

Tearfund supports these CCT processes by training and investing in church facilitators, who are members – or, in many cases, the leader – of the local church that has been envisioned. We equip these facilitators with the knowledge of the process and skills to adapt the process to their own context, and they commit to implementing it in their local church and community.

CCT processes begin with Bible studies that are facilitated, not taught. This enables those who are on the journey to read the Bible in a new way. They discover that God has put resources all around them, even if they haven’t recognised them before. They discover their potential, the gifts and skills God has given them and the mandate of the church to continue God’s mission.

Bible studies always end with a call to action. These actions often start small – for example, committing to a change in perspective or initiating a small project – but can quickly grow in scale. Whole churches and communities can find themselves working together to initiate change, and the impacts of these actions can continue far beyond the end of a formalised CCT process. The changes are sustainable because they are initiated, owned and driven by the church and community members themselves.

‘Getting someone to change their viewpoint is difficult, but if they study with others and together make a discovery, it is a much more profound change. I’ve read the Bible for a long time but have never seen it like this before.’

Emmanuel Kimen, Liberia

After the initial Bible studies, the CCT processes empower the church members to reach out to their communities and invite them to work together to mobilise, and then use, local resources to overcome the issues in their communities. The processes are full of participatory tools and activities that help people to better understand their communities and their potential to transform them.

“In the Bible study, “Elisha, the widow and her oil”, we learned from the life of the widow that she was alone and was going through difficult times, but she still had resources. This is what inspired us. This is how we have started looking for the resources that we have and it led us to set up our association and today things are better.’

Koffi Kan Afely, Côte d’Ivoire



After taking part in CCT training at Chirambi CCAP Church, Hamitoni Banda became a farmer and small business owner. He now shares his skills with the community and employs local people, like these women, to harvest groundnuts (peanuts). Salima, central Malawi. Partner is AG Care. Photo: Marcus Perkins/Tearfund

“I lost my father and my mother, so I used to have the mindset that “I am poor and don’t have anything.” But when we started the Bible study called “God’s vision for his people”, I knew that I could also make it. This is why I started raising poultry. And with the money I made from selling those chickens, I bought the land and have started the building that you see.’

Kouakou Jean-Luc, Côte d’Ivoire



Kouakou Jean-Luc, church member, Kokumbo, Côte d’Ivoire. Photo: Joshua Eaves/Tearfund

‘We started to believe that we could become salt and light.’

Pastor, Nepal



📌 Inspired by Sangsangai, this pastor in Nepal began to develop and expand his beekeeping business to benefit his whole community.
Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

Local contextualisation

As local communities take ownership of a particular CCT process, they will adapt and often rename it to serve their local context. One of the most contextualised CCT processes is ‘Sangsangai’. Sangsangai is an adaptation of Umoja for use in Nepal. Here, the church is small and marginalised, and so Sangsangai starts with the family.

The first cycle, at the household level, helps individual families to think through the concept of integral mission and helps them to build confidence as they initiate small projects and changes in their own lives. The second cycle, undertaken in the church, empowers these families to work together and initiate increasingly larger actions, before moving out into the community for the third cycle, only when the church feels empowered and equipped to do so.

Sangsangai includes a much greater level of integral mission content than what was originally in Umoja in order to help encourage a deeper mindset shift in the participants at the beginning of the process.

A village in rural Nepal used to have a problem with its water source.

Animals and flood water could enter it, and the drinking of the contaminated water caused illnesses such as diarrhoea and fever, which affected the children’s school attendance. But because of their poverty, the community felt unable to do anything to protect the water source.

‘As a result of participating in the Sangsangai process, we began to understand the deeper-level issues of the Bible,’ says the village pastor. ‘We started to believe that we could become salt and light, and began to identify problems and opportunities in our community and mobilise the available resources God had placed around us.’

When the Bible study group learned of the problem with the water source, they held meetings in the community to discuss how to protect it. Finally, everyone joined hands to take action.

‘The church has been successful in completing this work in collaboration with the community,’ says the pastor. ‘Now everyone in the village is drinking clean water. The children are attending school regularly. By working together, we are moving forward.’

CCT in restricted contexts

Although church and community transformation is always the aim, in some contexts the journey towards CCT is particularly challenging – even when the local church embraces integral mission and commits to living this out. In particular, these restricted contexts can exist where the church is marginalised, persecuted or in a numerical minority. Here, joint decision-making between the church and the leadership of the community may not be appropriate and is often impossible.

But Christians in these contexts have found that as they identify and respond to needs in their

communities, barriers may be broken down. Christians who have sought the common good in areas such as the environment, health and education have been able to build bridges where there has been division. And they have been able to do so while still living out their Christian values.

Integral mission theology can also help Christians to discern the sensitive or hidden issues in a community that have kept relationships in their broken state. So, while a church may have limited opportunities to speak out publicly, its practical concern for the community's well-being can be a prophetic act that leads to transformation.



☛ Pastor Sounkimsin with his family (mother, wife, children) outside the church that he and his community built through the Umoja process. Photo: Karen Shaw/Tearfund

Case study Pakistan

One church in Sagian, who had been trained in using Umoja, responded to the call to 'work towards togetherness with the community'. They identified several key needs of the community where they could help.

The first was to make their church building available to the community for sewing classes and other skill learning.

The second was to start up a blood bank database. Around 50 young people joined this community

group, identifying and recording volunteers' blood groups and providing contact details. They have since contacted several medical organisations to provide back-up, getting blood to them as needed.

Now whenever there is an accident or emergency in the community, everyone knows who to contact and the youth group arranges blood donations for the person in need. The team shared how it gives them great pleasure to share the blessing of God with their community, and when people ask them why they do this, they further share the love of God.

Case study Niger

One pastor working with a small church in a predominantly Muslim community didn't even attend a full CCMP training but simply read a few pages of the manual shared by a friend.

What he read motivated his small congregation to practise loving their neighbour and caring for God's world.

They decided to plant trees in their very dry, Sahel context:

firstly around the church building and then – at the request of the local Imam – around the local mosque. Church members watered and protected the trees, and also volunteered to clean up the streets, collecting discarded plastic bottles and bags and using the waste plastic to make paving blocks.

As the community witnessed the Christians' attitudes and actions for their good, mutual trust and relationships were built and new doors were opened for other areas of transformation.

Facilitators

Facilitators play a critical role in any CCT process: they are the people responsible for leading the church and the community throughout the journey towards church and community transformation. So two key success factors in any process are the quality of their training and the quality of their subsequent facilitation in the church and the community.

Facilitation is the best way to help communities to discover for themselves the potential they have to bring about positive changes, and involves:

- encouraging everyone in a group to share their ideas and experiences in a way that is comfortable for them
- helping a group to come to a common understanding, or to embrace an idea they support
- accepting all – regardless of race, age, gender, culture, profession, education, disability, or health or economic status

‘The process is sustainable because we train facilitators who go back and train other co-facilitators who also start working in the church and community. Other development approaches cause people to become dependent on outside aid and on foreign aid, but CCMP focuses on empowering people.’

Kouassi Konan, Côte d’Ivoire

- leading by example, through actions and attitudes.

Facilitators are usually trained in denominational or geographical cohorts, and in stages over several months (rather than covering the whole CCT process at once), allowing them to apply their learning in their local church between training sessions.

It is important that facilitators ‘walk’ with their churches and communities. CCT is a process – a journey – not a project. It is important to move at the pace of those involved to ensure people are empowered and the change experienced is sustainable.



Scaling up

Once a church facilitator has taken their own church and community through a CCT process, they may choose to become CCT trainers, who train new facilitators to start CCT in other churches.

At this point Tearfund’s role often shifts to supporting the further training of these CCT trainers, rather than continuing to train the new facilitators directly. Denominations will often fund CCT trainers to develop teams of facilitators who can

roll out CCT through a region. CCT trainers may also travel to new areas or countries to envision churches and continue the spread of CCT.

This way of working means that CCT can keep scaling up without Tearfund’s ongoing support. Tearfund’s role becomes more about convening and connecting people around the world, sharing learning and continually improving practice.

Case study Zambia

Six years after CCMP was introduced in Zambia, Tearfund began to explore how to work with denominations to scale up the use of CCMP.

Through an initial joint funding initiative, Tearfund trained 16 facilitators within the Christian Community Church denomination, who then committed their own resources to train a further 82 facilitators. In this way, a new type of ‘catalytic’ partnership was developed: Tearfund empowering and equipping a denomination,

after which a denomination would resource its own local activities and increase its number of facilitators.

Facilitators have also used the CCMP skills and tools to help start community development activities in organisations like Living Waters International, Development Aid from People to People and government ministries.

From 2012 to date, over 5000 church leaders have been envisioned and six denominations look forward to scaling up their capacity to achieve church and community transformation across Zambia.

Encouraging learning communities

As CCT scales up around the world, Tearfund has started working more catalytically. Using local and global networks to share learning is key as we help to connect CCT trainers, facilitators and integral mission practitioners around the world.

At country level, we set up and support forums in which facilitators of a particular CCT process can connect with, inspire and reassure one another. These are places to share challenges and successes, adaptations and new activities. Practitioners in these forums understand the contexts in which they're working and can support one another.

Where several locally-adapted CCT processes are being implemented in the same country, facilitators of those different processes also connect to share their learning. Learning communities are also helpful in contexts where there isn't a specific CCT process being used, but the intentional actions that are being taken are a response to that context.

At a regional and global level, we connect denominations, Christian organisations and theological institutions to inspire, encourage and learn from one another.

The 'Friends of Umoja' network is one example. It connects Christian organisations and practitioners from all around the world to share learning from a shared commitment to CCT and their many different journeys to achieve it (not just Umoja!).

'The Conversation' is an interactive global conversation facilitated by Tearfund to bring restoration to those living in poverty in the UK and other high-income countries. Tearfund leaders from Asia, Africa and Latin America meet electronically with denominational and church leaders who are interested in learning from Tearfund's experience in low- and middle-income countries of bringing restoration to those living in poverty in their communities. The denominational leaders then develop their own approaches or use existing processes to journey towards church and community transformation in their own contexts.



The friendship model

When CCT began in South-East Asia, the 'friendship model' developed as facilitators recognised that traditional partnership models of 'donors and recipients' were not necessary or appropriate for CCT, and that when churches grasped the vision, CCT scaled up by itself.

The friendship model is informal, based on trusting relationships,

and has a focus on journeying together as committed individuals, encouraging and learning from one another along the way. Sometimes this involves a facilitator taking a church through an established process, but other times the process has been replaced by other, less-structured practical actions as the movement has catalysed.

Church networks

Church networks have been a successful way of bringing churches together and mobilising them around specific issues such as theology, economic empowerment, youth or the environment. When churches have embraced integral mission, but would like to live this out through a more strategic and focused lens, this has been particularly effective.

This way of working is particularly common in Latin America. Here, large independent churches and those from different denominations come together. Working together enables the churches to become catalysts of change to create movements that bring about transformation.



Working with theological institutions

‘Winning souls does not liberate the whole person. More is needed to free the person from all factors that dehumanise them spiritually, physically, socially, mentally and economically. This is what the CCMP course does.’

Rev Mwihambi, Msalato Theological College, Tanzania.

Theological institutions are central to the growth and spiritual maturity of many churches, as they are the places where future church leaders are trained and theological perspectives are formed. Tearfund therefore works with theological colleges to integrate integral mission into their curricula, and provides training in CCT processes as a tool to equip pastors and church leaders in transforming their churches and communities.



☐ Pastor Dapsia Ndoussa Raymond at FATEK theological seminary in Kelo, Chad.
Photo: Joshua Eaves/Tearfund

‘Our friends from the global church counselled us to start with some central questions – What are we here for? What’s our purpose? What does it mean for us to be bearers of God’s image whose worship enables us to be agents and partners in God’s kingdom, working alongside others who bear God’s image too?’

‘It didn’t take us long to realise that these aren’t questions we explicitly talk about much in the UK – either as leaders or within our congregations. Yet our colleagues from Africa and India suggested that if we want to transform our churches and communities, then thinking deeply about why we’re really here *has* to be our first step.’

Bishop Michael Beasley, UK

☐ Aiah Mark Gborie, CCMP trainer and Baptist Pastor, Sierra Leone.
Photo: Joshua Eaves/Tearfund



‘I persuaded the board of the seminary to incorporate CCMP into their training so we could pass it on to the next generation of pastors.’

Rev Aiah Mark Gborie, Sierra Leone

Innovating to maximise holistic impact

Whatever the CCT process and whatever the context, Tearfund is committed to maximising holistic transformation. We do this by being innovative: learning from our facilitators and teams around the world, piloting new methodologies and finding creative ways to overcome challenges. As a result, we often embed additional elements into CCT processes or help to build the capacity of facilitators through additional training.

The Light Wheel

As stated previously, the goal of integral mission is for individuals and communities to have life 'to the full', which means restoring an individual's relationship with God, creation, others and themselves.

The Light Wheel gives us a framework to help us think in a more practical way about the areas of everyday life we must consider if we want to see relationships restored and lives fully transformed. It is made up of nine aspects of well-being that are depicted as spokes on a wheel to demonstrate their interconnectedness.

The Light Wheel also helps churches to measure their contribution towards that restorative change by

reflecting on their journey towards CCT, identifying where change is happening and deciding how they might adapt a CCT process to improve its effectiveness and impact for their particular community. Churches and facilitators can use the Light Wheel's set of data collection tools to measure the change that is happening in each of the nine aspects of well-being.

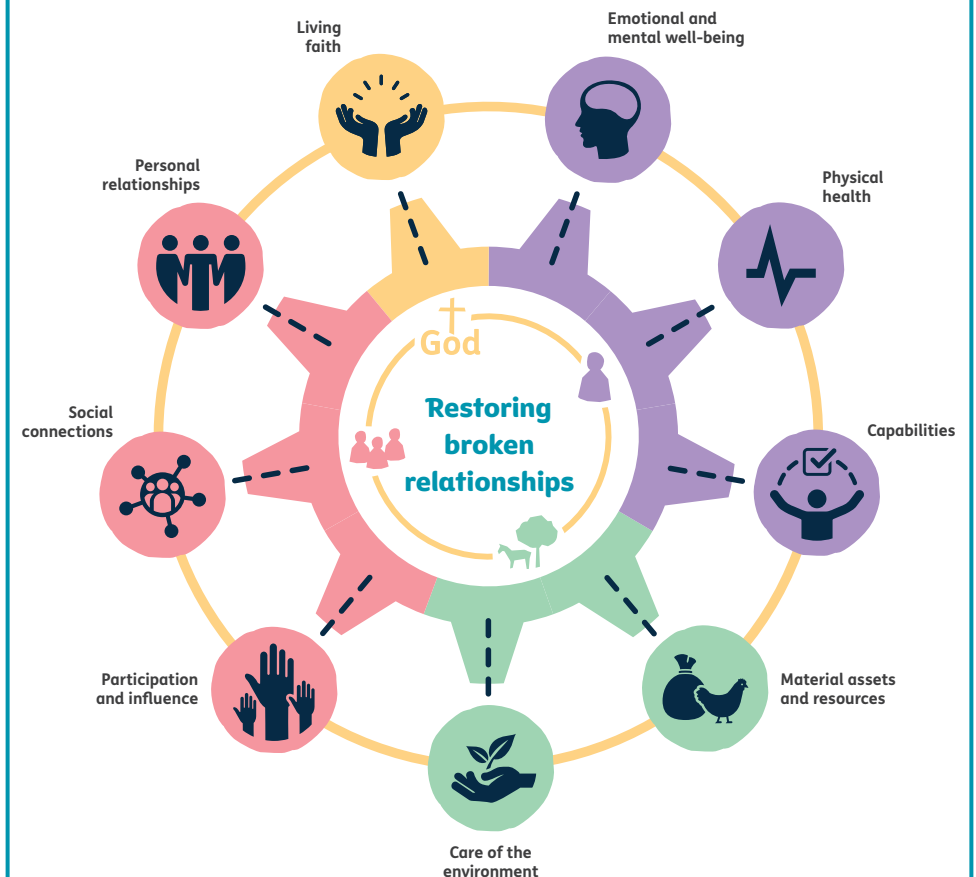
It is common for many additional elements – such as advocacy, inclusion, self-help groups, gender protection and disaster preparedness – to be integrated into a CCT process to overcome specific challenges and ensure that holistic transformation is being achieved.

The adapted version of the Light Wheel on the opposite page shows the relationship between the nine aspects of well-being of the Light Wheel and the restoration of the four broken relationships (as introduced on page 4). A community journeying towards CCT will choose activities that help grow the aspects of well-being needing most attention if the community is to flourish. These activities often improve multiple aspects.

Light Wheel example

For example, a community might decide that **livelihoods training** would be a good programme to run, to help their most vulnerable people to generate an income by starting a business.

As well as improved **Material assets and resources**, it is also likely that participants' **Capabilities** and **Emotional and mental well-being** will improve and that they will develop **Social connections** in their community.



This is an adapted version of the Light Wheel (visit learn.tearfund.org/lwdiagram for the original)

Self-help groups

In many countries, self-help groups (SHGs) and other savings approaches have been integrated into CCT processes. As people embark on a CCT process they start to recognise resources, grow in ideas and confidence for what they can achieve, and the SHGs can help make this a reality.

Not only do SHGs help to increase people's material assets, they act as an excellent gateway to help the church engage the community and build deep trusting relationships between people.

‘I have been an SHG member for three years. Thanks to it, my economic activity has been spared from bankruptcy which would have been detrimental to the survival of my children. The loans allowed me to constantly relaunch my business activities.’

Claudette Jules Nocilus, Haiti



Members of the Urukundo tailoring group. Urukundo means 'love' in Kinyarwanda. Kagarama, Kayonza district, Eastern province, Rwanda. Photo: Tom Price/Tearfund

Case study Ethiopia

Birkinesh lives in a rural village in Ethiopia. Recalling hard times her family experienced several years ago, she says: 'If we were lucky, we would eat one meal per day. When we were hungry, I would hide from my children and cry. We then would sleep on the floor on some dry grasses.'

But life has changed for her.

A Tearfund partner trained different community members in 'Saving and income-generating activities'. Birkinesh and 20 of her friends started a self-help group, and she was nominated its secretary.

After saving for six months, Birkinesh took a loan to buy bananas, which she sold at her local market for profit. She then started asking people which other items they needed, and would wake up at 5am to source them, take them to the market and make a good profit. Then God gave her a new business idea:

'That was the turning point for me. I was inspired to open a small shop at my house and sell the items that people would travel to the market to get. I sell things that any household will need, like matches, soaps, oil, salt, pens, pencils and hair oil.'

Over the years, her business has grown, and her family's life has improved:

'Now we sleep on beds and mattresses and enough blankets. I have six cows. I built a big house that I rent out. My children have all their basic needs fulfilled.'

‘I built a big house that I rent out. My children have all their basic needs fulfilled.’

'My eldest son is in his second year of Engineering at university. I send him an allowance every month and have bought him a smartphone that lets him reach us easily.'

'My husband went back to school and earned a degree in human resources and is today working in a government school.'

'Every day is a new day for us, we are happy and grateful to God. My children praise God before each of their meals. Even our neighbourhood praises God for the changes that happened in our life.'

Advocacy

Advocacy has become an increasingly important tool for achieving church and community transformation. Although CCT processes help people to become aware of and start to use the resources they have locally, as this awareness grows so does the recognition that the government has a vital role to play in the development of their community, too.

Tearfund has been supporting churches and communities to embed advocacy intentionally within their CCT processes, so that they can broaden the scale and impact of CCT. This helps local

churches and denominations equip their communities to influence the decisions, policies and practices of powerful local decision-makers. The aim of this process, known as CCT advocacy, is to bring about good governance and the use of social accountability tools.

CCT advocacy can be particularly useful for local communities who have identified issues that can only be resolved with the intervention of local government or other development actors. It also provides an opportunity for communities to amplify their voices at national level.

📷 **Woman collecting clean water from a tap, Bolivia.** Photo: Andrew Philip/Tearfund



Case study Uganda

‘Five years ago, we were in absolute poverty,’ says Margaret, a married mother of six. ‘Then, I lived thinking: “I am a woman. What can I do as a woman? Nothing!”’

But the 59-year-old, who lives in Uganda, participated in CCMP and decided to join a women’s self-help group (SHG) where she learned the importance of saving. After pooling a small amount of money each month with other women from her village, she took out a loan to build a permanent brick house for her family.



📷 **CCMP participant Margaret and her husband stand outside their home in Uganda.** Photo: Charlotte Flowers/Tearfund

📌 **‘Now I know I can do anything because of the training I got.’**

She also received livelihoods training and used her new skills to increase her crop yields and start a small shop, which gave her excess cash to invest in her children’s education. And because all of her children are now able to attend school, Margaret’s physical and mental health has improved because she worries less about money: ‘My hope is now higher than five years back. Now I know I can do anything because of the training I got.’

In addition, Margaret has become more involved in community life by becoming the chair-person for women in her community. ‘Freedom of expression has improved,’ she says. ‘When you go to a meeting and put up your hand, you are given a chance. Five years back, women were less likely to be invited to meetings or talk in them.’

She has also seen improved relationships within her household and increased community cohesion, particularly between different church denominations: ‘We share problems and we visit each other. In the past this was not the case.’

‘Now we are much better in all respects.’

Case study Don Asabe Community, Nigeria

Many communities who use a CCT process find that their addressing of one specific issue often leads to transformation in many other areas.

Don Asabe is a predominantly Christian community in Nigeria surrounded by Muslim-majority communities. It has been using CCMP since 2012 to achieve church and community transformation and recognises the impact it has made in unifying these communities.

Members of the church and community identified the need for

better access to water, and built three boreholes. But instead of keeping the boreholes under lock and key, the church realised its calling to be salt and light, and decided to open them up to neighbouring communities to use freely.

This sparked many conversations with members of the neighbouring communities, who became intrigued about the impact of CCMP. The outcomes that followed spanned across all spokes of the Light Wheel.



📍 The primary school built by the Don Asabe community as a result of CCMP.

Photo: Esther Lindop/Tearfund



Personal relationships:

The Bible studies continued to change perspectives about how people should treat others. The community now invests more in relationships, and feels that their community is a more safe and trusting environment. CCMP has also impacted gender equality and strengthened marriages.



Living faith:

Faith has become more personal and is held with greater conviction, with women especially commenting their faith has significantly deepened. Church and community members have become more confident and intentional about sharing the gospel, making significant changes in their lives.



Mental and emotional well-being:

One man said, 'We gained the knowledge that assets are within us – people now have hope because they understand their potential.'



Material assets and resources:

The community has learnt to better manage assets, understanding the importance of money management and the impact of saving. One co-facilitator now rears cattle, and through buying and selling was able to buy a car. Almost all the buildings in the community have been improved with zinc roofs.



Care of the environment:

A community farming cooperative was established, which tripled the community's crop yields and taught them how to work well together while taking care of God's creation.



Physical health:

The community increased efforts to use doctors and hospitals rather than going to traditional healers, and UNICEF were invited in to train some community members as health workers.



Capabilities:

The community pooled their resources and built a primary school. There has been a big shift from a dependency mentality. One man said, 'people now want to do things by themselves. People are getting jobs and starting businesses.'



Social connections / Participation and influence:

The unlocked boreholes, school and increased harvest yields have caused Don Asabe to become hugely influential to their neighbouring communities, who have asked them how they might see the same changes in their own lives. Muslims have enquired about Christianity, friendships have been established, and 36 boreholes now exist within a few miles.

Conclusion

Why we believe in church and community transformation

Over the last 30 years, churches around the world have been embracing a whole-life response to the gospel and have started a journey towards church and community transformation. As they have committed to the restoration of relationships where they are, they have started to see poverty being overcome.

This is happening because:

- **CCT is biblical:** It is based on biblical theology that calls the church to integral mission
- **CCT uses a localised approach:** Local churches, communities of believers within local contexts, are at the heart of all CCT processes
- **CCT is flexible:** CCT processes have been adapted for multiple different contexts
- **CCT empowers:** Individuals, churches and communities are transformed as relationships are restored and people get a new vision of the possibility to meet their own needs with their

own resources to reach their full potential

- **CCT works:** Using the Light Wheel, we can demonstrate the tangible changes that CCT is making to bring restoration to those living in poverty and help people grow in their faith
- **CCT multiplies:** As church and community transformation happens, it envisions others in integral mission and repeats the process in other communities.

The ultimate proof of CCT is in the many thousands of people around the world who have experienced the transformation described in this resource. But the journey is ongoing. The commitment to integral mission is lifelong and the challenges to overcome are many.

So we invite you all, wherever you are in the world, to join us on a journey to achieve church and community transformation and, in so doing, experience the 'life in all its fullness' that Jesus promised.

What next?

- Be further inspired by reading stories about CCT successes, or access specific CCT resources and toolkits, at learn.tearfund.org
- See how CCT fits into Tearfund's wider work by visiting tearfund.org

'CCMP transformed my life and also transformed the life of the Makeuré community. And in regard of its achievement, I believe that Makeuré's future will be better than what it is now. I believe it.'

Izadene Debora, Chad

📍 Izadene Debora, CCMP church member, Makeuré village, Chad.
Photo: Joshua Eaves/
Tearfund



Glossary

Term	Description
CCT	Church and community transformation.
CCMP	Church and community mobilisation process, a formal process for achieving CCT developed in the late 1990s.
Four broken relationships	A theological concept introduced by Bryant L. Myers in <i>Walking with the poor</i> (1999) that sees the root cause of poverty as the brokenness in four relationships – with God, self, others and the environment – as a result of the Fall.
Integral mission	Refers to Christians living out their faith in a holistic way, through their words, actions and character.
Light Wheel	A tool for understanding and reflecting on holistic change, made up of nine ‘spokes’ or aspects of well-being that together address the four broken relationships .
Umoja	A formal process achieving CCT , designed to be simpler and more catalytic than CCMP , developed by Tearfund in 2008.

An introduction to church and community transformation (CCT) Overcoming poverty through a whole-life response to the gospel

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Thanks to Lahai Amara, Marc Romyr Antoine, Barnabé Anzuruni, Pranaya Chhetri, Romnal Colas, Sas Conradie, Isaac Danung, Paul Djerabe, Dani El Tayar, Stephen German, Jonathan Johnson, Dieudonné Kaboré, Konan Kouassi, Paul Mershak, Anne Mumbi, Paul Ojuman, Sarah Onduko, Levourne Passiri, Lydia Powell, Gaston Slanwa, Dino Touthang, Ephraim Tsegay, Martin Uswege, Daouda Yalcouye and Richard Yao for their contributions to the book.

Cover image: **Women from the N’zuékro community in Issia, Côte d’Ivoire, which started using the church and community mobilisation process (CCMP) in 2017.**
Alex Baker/Tearfund

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Registered Charity No 265464 (England and Wales)
Registered Charity No SC037624 (Scotland)

Tearfund is a Christian charity determined to see an end to extreme poverty and injustice. We mobilise communities and churches worldwide to help ensure that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their God-given potential.

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‘People are the best experts of their situation. They know how best they can solve their problem. It’s just that they have not been given the opportunity to look hard at what they have and what they can do. Therefore we begin by creating that opportunity – and it is empowering.’

Francis Njoroge, CCMP Trainer, Kenya

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