

How church and community transformation is achieved

*A short introduction
to the CCT theory
of change*

tearfund

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Tearfund supports churches to embrace their calling to God's holistic mission. This allows local churches around the world to explore for themselves their calling to engage with their local communities, and then to take action with or alongside those communities to see holistic change – in individuals, in churches, in communities and in nations. We call this process church and community transformation (CCT).



More specifically, we define CCT as any process or activity that embodies these six principles:

- 1** CCT is driven by a biblical theology of integral mission and dependence on God.
- 2** CCT intentionally seeks the restoration of all four broken relationships.
- 3** CCT facilitates Bible reflection to bring about changes in mindset and behaviour.
- 4** CCT mobilises the church to become an agent of holistic change in the community.
- 5** CCT relies on inclusive, participatory, contextualised processes to bring about ownership and sustainable change.
- 6** CCT celebrates and mobilises local resources, increases agency and releases community potential.

This document offers an explanation of how church and community transformation (CCT) works: our CCT theory of change. It brings together our theory of poverty and our well-established Light Wheel framework, connecting them through the various CCT processes that churches can use to bring about transformation in different contexts, effecting change at four levels: individual, church, community and national.

It was developed with contributions from a wide range of people involved in CCT across Africa, the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Middle East, with input from peer agencies. As such, this theory of change should represent how change happens in

any and all church contexts, whether urban or rural, majority or minority, persecuted or free, or within settled or transient communities.

We will first introduce each element in turn of the CCT theory of change diagram, and then use the metaphor of a journey to represent the whole process of change in CCT.

For more information about how CCT processes work and for case studies that demonstrate the change that CCT is achieving around the world, see [An introduction to church and community transformation \(CCT\)](#).

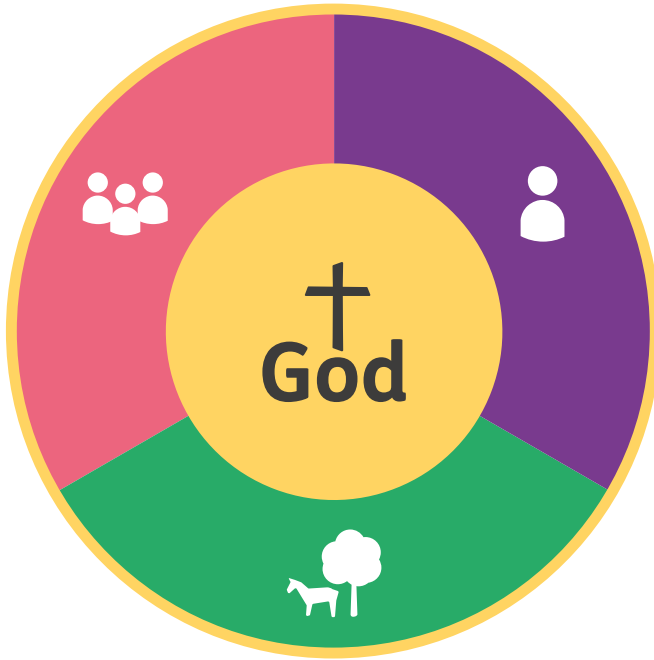
Why change is necessary

Tearfund's theory of poverty states that poverty is the result of broken relationships. The Bible describes how, at the Fall (Genesis 3), people broke their relationship with God, and this resulted in damaged and broken relationships with others, with creation and with themselves.

Because the goal of church and community transformation (CCT) is the restoration of these four relationships, they are placed at the very centre of the CCT theory of change diagram.



The four relationships



Relationship with God



Relationship with creation



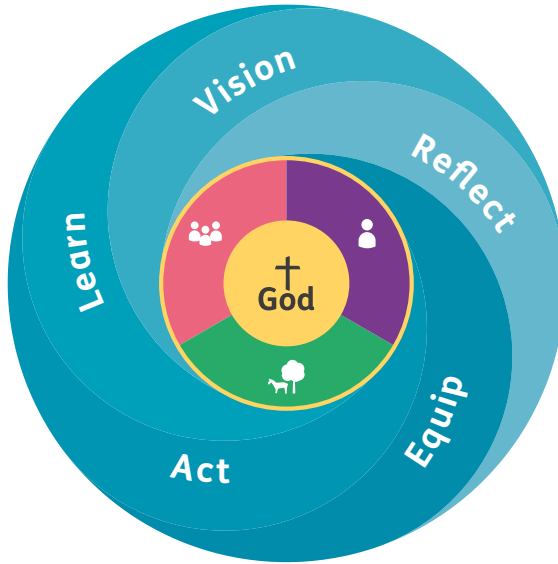
Relationship with others



Relationship with ourselves



The five phases of CCT



How change happens

The particular process that is used to achieve church and community transformation varies and is adapted to each country and church context. They need to be locally-owned to be effective: there is not a set of fixed steps that works everywhere.

However, we have found that every church working towards CCT engages in five core phases: Vision, Reflect, Equip, Act, Learn.

None of these phases has a rigid beginning, end or even duration. Depending on the local context, each phase can be short or extensive. In some places they are separate and in others they overlap or are revisited. In fact, some CCT processes may not visit all of these phases – but every church that has fully embraced and is operating with an integral mission mindset demonstrates most of them.

✓ Enable CCT

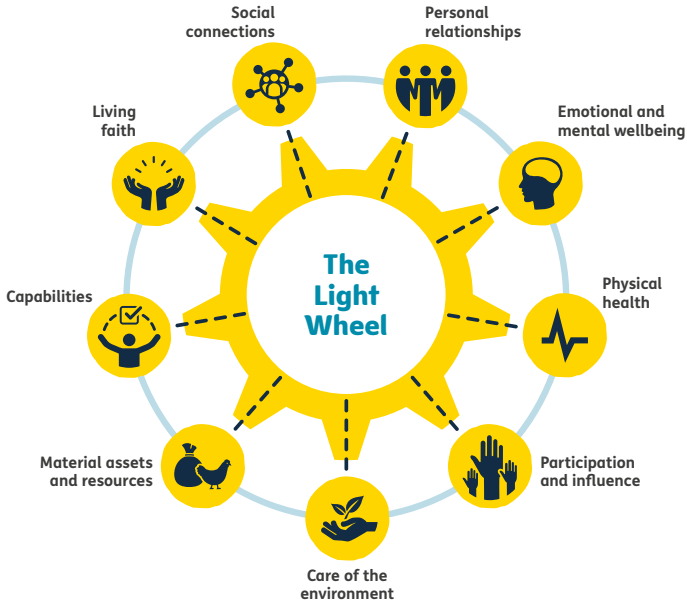
Factors that enable CCT include:

- allowing enough time for a deep process of sharing the vision of CCT, in order to break a dependency mindset and help a church to take up its mission
- identifying, engaging and supporting the right actors
- making the process as inclusive, diverse and participatory as possible
- designing CCT processes to enable churches and communities to reach maximum impact in their circle of influence
- having opportunities for learning exchange
- incorporating advocacy to ensure participants have access to rights, external resources and influence.

✗ Hinder CCT

Factors that hinder CCT include:

- the use of non-local facilitators or the over-involvement of Tearfund or partners
- the existence of conflict or competition within or between churches or communities
- the existence of power dynamics between churches and/or communities.

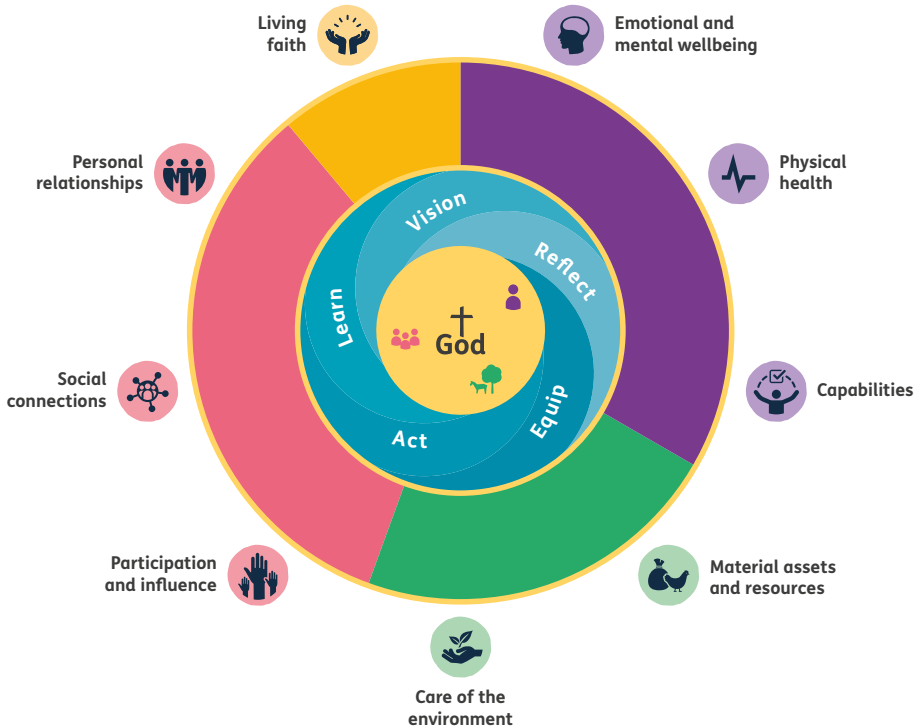


How change is measured

There are a range of ways to verify that the transformation we are anticipating is actually taking place. One of these is the Light Wheel, Tearfund’s framework that measures change across nine aspects of wellbeing that are depicted as spokes on a wheel on the diagram above. When transformation is taking place in a fully holistic way, all nine aspects of wellbeing will be positively impacted.

Each of the nine aspects of wellbeing is primarily related to the restoration of one of the four broken relationships (as depicted by the colours of the icons). If transformation is happening in one of the aspects of wellbeing, we can assume that it is contributing to the restoration of one (or more) of the relationships. For example, if we see positive change in a group’s social connections and participation and influence, we can interpret this as evidence that relationships with others are being restored.

The nine aspects of wellbeing



We believe that our relationship with God shapes and guides our experience in all aspects of our wellbeing, which is why relationship with God is at the heart of the theory of change diagram.

Transformation is only fully holistic when each of the four relationships are being restored, measured by a positive change in all nine aspects of wellbeing.

In order to achieve that transformation, churches and communities visit the five phases - catching and sharing the vision of CCT, reflecting on their current situation, being equipped to take meaningful action, acting, and then learning from their experiences.

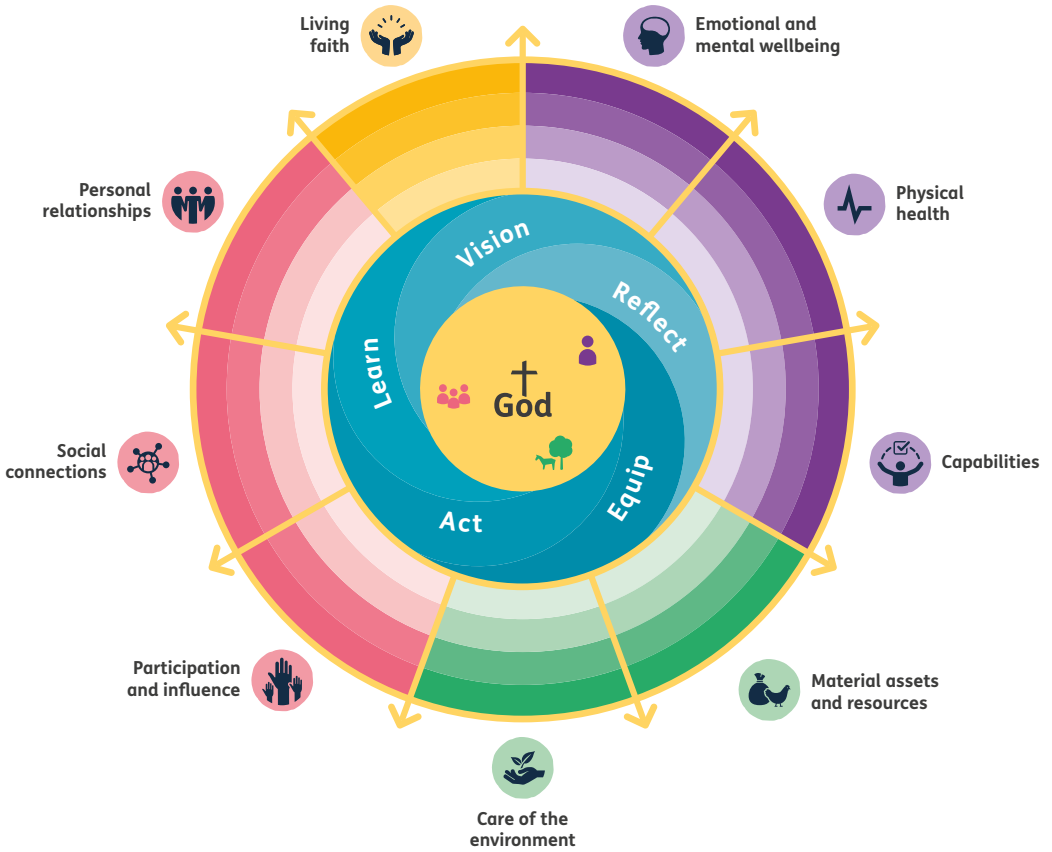
For more information about the Light Wheel, [view our Light Wheel page on Tearfund Learn](#).

How change is scaled up

The CCT theory of change looks for change in individuals, churches, communities and nations. This is depicted through the four circles of influence on the diagram. The gold or yellow between each spoke and circle represents holistic mission - the fact that God's mission and our relationship with him underpins each of these Light Wheel domains and circles of influence.



Instead of seeking change only *within* each circle of influence, the theory of change encourages people to look outwards and see the potential change beyond the circle of influence they are in. So, individuals are encouraged to support their church to change, churches are encouraged to support their communities to transform, and communities are encouraged to come together to see their nation transformed. The arrows indicate this outward-looking influence and growth.





CCT is any process or activity that embodies the six CCT principles

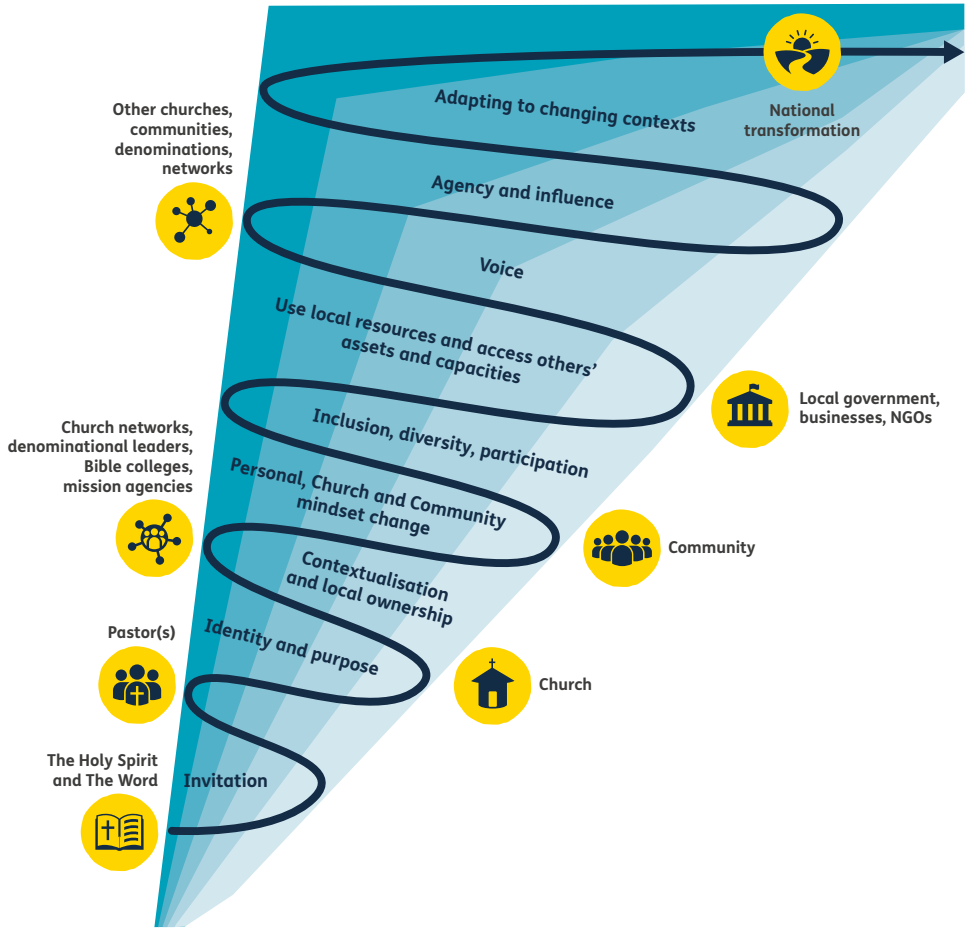
-  Relationship with God
-  Relationship with creation
-  Relationship with others

-  Relationship with ourselves
-  Phases of CCT

Circles of influence

-  Individual
-  Church
-  Community
-  Nation

Journeying with CCT



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1 Integral mission theology and dependence on God</p> <p>4 Mobilises the church to become an agent of holistic change in the community</p> | <p>2 Restoration of all four broken relationships</p> <p>5 Inclusive, participatory approaches</p> | <p>3 Facilitates Bible reflection to bring about changes in mindset and behaviour</p> <p>6 Mobilises local resources, increases agency and releases community potential</p> |
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Founded on the CCT principles

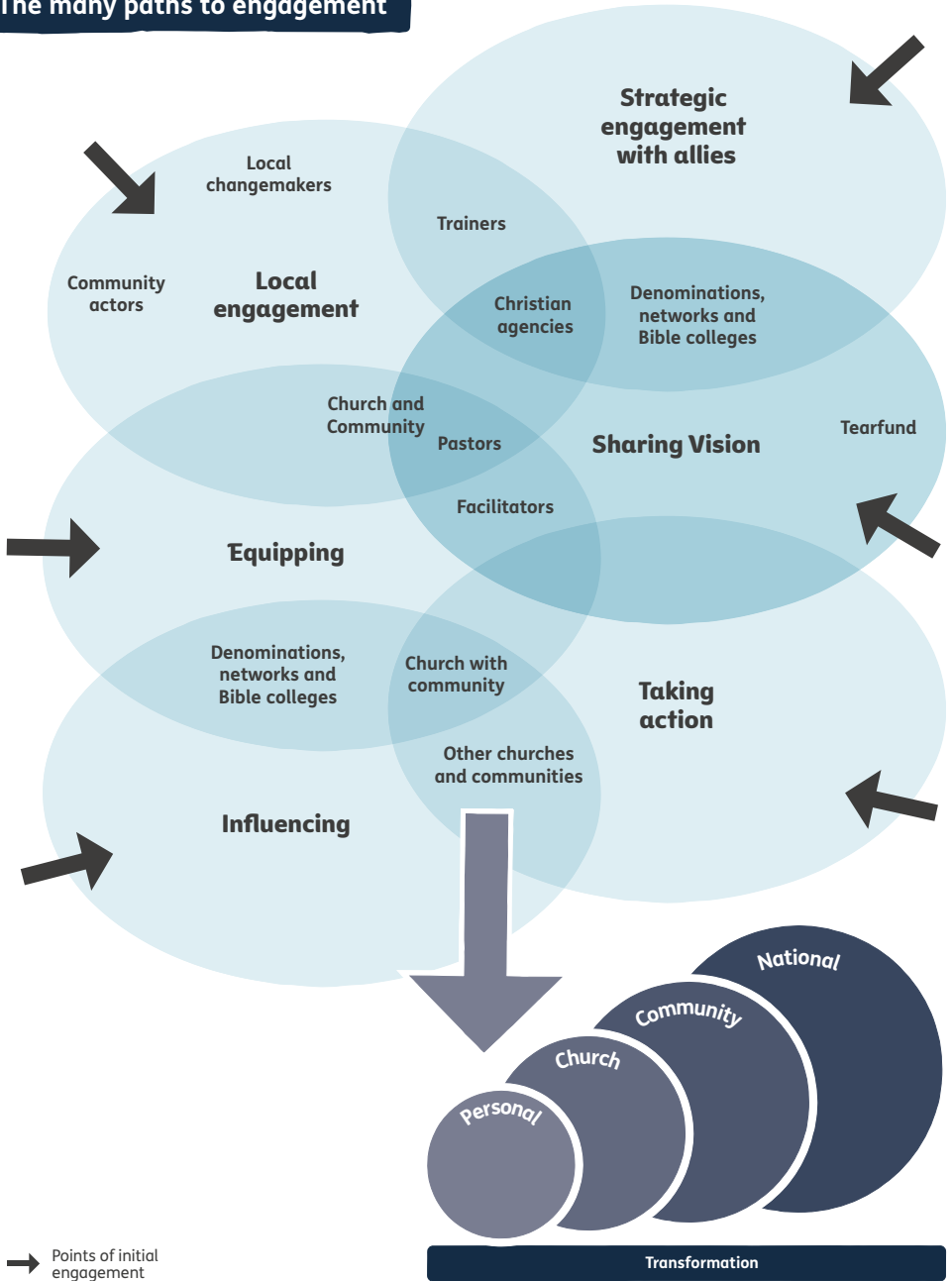
How change differs

Church and community transformation can be understood as a journey in which individuals, churches, communities, theological institutions and faith-based organisations together expand their vision, reflect, are equipped, take action and learn. Individuals and churches are invited on this journey, learning from one another and guided by the Holy Spirit and biblical revelation.

This diagram shows what one of these potential journeys might look like. Over time, a church's vision grows and its people recognise the importance of cooperating more closely with others. As transformation moves through the circles of influence, the impact of CCT is scaled up from change in individuals all the way to national change.



The many paths to engagement



→ Points of initial engagement

Transformation

In addition to each church's route being different on its journey to church and community transformation, there are many different starting points, as shown in the diagram by arrows.

Instead of viewing CCT as a rigid process that must be followed word for word, a church might reflect on what they are currently doing well and consider how they might seek to make that ministry more holistic and therefore how they might invite greater transformation into what they are already doing.



'Look! I am creating new heavens and a new earth,
and no one will even think about the old ones anymore...
No longer will babies die when only a few days old.
No longer will adults die before they have lived a full life...
In those days people will live in the houses they build
and eat the fruit of their own vineyards.
Unlike the past, invaders will not take their houses
and confiscate their vineyards...
For my people will live as long as trees,
and my chosen ones will have time to enjoy their hard-won gains.
They will not work in vain,
and their children will not be doomed to misfortune.
For they are people blessed by the Lord,
and their children, too, will be blessed.
I will answer them before they even call to me.
While they are still talking about their needs,
I will go ahead and answer their prayers!'

**Isaiah 65:17-25 (selected verses)
(New Living Translation)**

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