



Making plans, looking ahead with hope

Tanzania

Report for St James Church, Tunbridge Wells, April 2020 to March 2021



People gather for one of the sessions on the Church and Community Mobilisation Process
Source: Diocese of Kondoa/Tearfund

Results

- In Tanzania, the Diocese of Kondoa is helping local churches tackle poverty. Using an approach known as the Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP), people are coming together to identify the biggest challenges people are facing, their causes and are taking action to bring lasting change. This year they have been forming self-help groups and learning about new agricultural practices.

Thank you

In the Kondoa District of Tanzania, farming is a way of life. Around 90 per cent of people are employed in small agricultural businesses. They rely on what they produce for food and as a source of income. For most households this might come in at just under a pound a day, but this helps them cover the cost of essentials - things they use every day, like soap, sugar or fuel - to pay for healthcare or their children's school fees. However, farmers like Paul are finding it increasingly difficult to grow enough.

This is in part because, in the Kondoa region, lives and livelihoods are being profoundly affected by the weather. When rainfall is too low, crops and livestock fail to thrive. Then when the rain does come to the dried land, it can flood. The losses are devastating for farmers who have invested so much time and energy on trying to make sure there is enough for their families. For many families, it will mean having to skip meals, sell assets, cut back on medical care, or stop attending school.

With your support, the Diocese of Kondoa is helping local churches and communities take action.

The introduction of the Church and Community Mobilisation Process has given people a fresh approach to these challenges. Through it, they are finding a space to explore the issues they are experiencing in greater depth. And they are discovering ways of tackling these issues by mobilising their resources in ways they perhaps haven't before.

Small 'self-help' groups are forming too, which can offer an additional means of support. As part of their regular meetings, members save money together to form a central pot of money that they can request a loan from. It is helping them cover the cost of essentials or gain a means through which they can invest in their businesses. It is something that those who don't have enough capital would have trouble doing through a bank.

The relationships formed in self-help groups are ones people often find they can turn to when times are tough. The groups in Kondoa are using their meetings as a space to learn about a range of different subjects too. Over the past year, these have included training sessions on climate-smart agricultural practices, which have been supported by the Government Agriculture Officer. Group members have learnt about planting calendars, how to space crops like maize, simsim (sesame), sunflowers and groundnuts to maximise their harvests. They've learnt about the benefits of applying manure to cover crops and fertilise the land, about seed selection, about weeding, disease and pest control. And they have learnt how to store crops and food, to make their produce last longer and go further.

Applying these practices could significantly change communities' access to food, while also reducing the impacts of drought or prolonged rainfall that is happening as a result of climate change. They are changes impacting farmers, just like Paul.

The farm Paul worked was large, but like so many other people in the area, Paul had difficulty growing enough produce. He got very few harvests.

This past year, thanks to your support, things were different.

Thanks to your support it is estimated that 1,275 people have been directly impacted by this project, while another 5,100 have benefitted indirectly. In this third year of the project:



The 15 CCMP facilitators took part in eight days training on Church and Community Description. This was organised through a collaboration between the Diocesan CCMP coordinator, Tearfund partner, the Christian Council of Tanzania and an expert from Msalato Theological College, and will help the facilitators, who guide the CCMP process in their communities to lead, support and train others.



The 15 facilitators took part in eight days training about forming and managing self-help groups. Since these sessions, 17 self-help groups have formed. They represent about 512 people. Already, they have been able to start taking loans from their shared funds, which they are using to invest in a variety of different income-generating activities. Some of them are using it to invest in their farming activities, in their rearing of livestock like poultry, or setting up kiosks so they can sell goods at local markets



42 self-help group leaders took part in training about agriculture, looking after livestock and beekeeping. On returning to their groups, they've been able to share what they've learnt with around 3,700 people. As a result, community members have been able to start applying these practices on their own land.



Monitoring and follow-up sessions were held, to help address and discuss the challenges people are facing, and offer technical support for the facilitators.

Challenges

For many, this year has also been a tough one. When the World Health Organisation declared the coronavirus a pandemic on the 11th March 2020, communities around the world took action to prevent the spread of the virus. In Tanzania, during the same month, the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed. The government closed all learning institutions, banned gatherings and introduced travel restrictions, but allowed places of worship to remain open. In June 2020 the government declared Tanzania free of COVID-19, but communities remained concerned. Illnesses such as coronavirus can put already stretched healthcare systems under strain, so prevention measures, particularly in rural areas, where health centres might only have limited medical equipment, can be vital. To prevent the spread of the virus, the Diocese has been supporting local churches with the installation of handwashing stations, while the CCMP Coordinator has been providing education on COVID-19 prevention measures with community members.

Over the past year Tearfund's Country Program in Tanzania was also restructured. This led to a relocation of the Tearfund country office. The combination of this, alongside the pandemic, meant some delays to the activities the communities had planned for this year. This means that although this was due to be the final year of this phase of the project, a one year-extension has been arranged, to ensure the communities are able to complete all of the activities they have planned.

Hope for the next season

Across Kondoa, people like Paul and Mrs Damirisi are continuing to establish plans for the future through projects that will bring added security for their families, turning their ideas into a reality. Communities are finding, through their self-help groups and local churches, that they have a place to turn in times of crisis. It is providing fresh hope and confidence for the next season.

Little changes, big rewards

Thanks to your support, Paul was able to attend training about a range of agricultural techniques. He began applying the new techniques on his own farm. Paul used better quality seeds to plant a quarter of an acre of maize, as he had been advised during the training sessions. Then at the end of the growing season he managed to harvest four sacks - or around 400kgs - of maize. He explains: "For the first time in my life, I have enough food to feed my family throughout the year, thanks to CCMP training".



Mrs Damarisi (pictured above at her old house) took part in the CCMP and agricultural training sessions too. It is through these sessions that she learnt about self-help groups. With an idea in mind, she took a loan from her group, to buy sesame seeds and groundnuts. After planting them, she took care to follow all the instructions given by agricultural experts. And she too brought in a great harvest. With the money she earned from selling her produce, Mrs Damaris bought some iron sheets - just what she needed to build a new house.

Changes like this are just part of what has been happening this year. The 15 facilitators, who lead the Church and Community Mobilisation Process in Kondoa, completed the second stage of their training, which focused on 'Church and Community Description'. It is a stage that encourages communities to describe their history to help them figure out whether any past events have negatively impacted their current situations. This can help them determine any changes that might help to improve their situation for the future.

Community leaders have played an important role in gathering people for different community activities, and are playing a vital role in sharing important data and information about their communities, while also supervising and following up on the different plans taking shape. As they embark on this new phase of the process, inspired by discussions about subjects like *Resource Mobilisation*, the churches are becoming catalysts for change amongst their communities. Community leaders are amazed at the churches' dedication. They are seeing the churches harness their resources - their skills, talent and time - to volunteer to do community development work: cleaning primary schools, secondary schools, clinics and health centres. The chairman at Makorongo village even decided to attend one of the church services and thank the church leadership and believers for the great job they are doing. He also wrote a letter of thanks and congratulations to the church for being a role model.

Having considered the resources they have within their churches, most of the churches' congregations have planned their own joint ventures as well. The members of Magungu Church have made 1,100 bricks, collected a truck full of sand and dug the foundations for a new church building. Chinyika Church has collected half a ton of pebbles and started making bricks to help them finish their own building. Makongoro Church has almost finished constructing their new building. While the members of Hamia Church are building a house for their pastor. And church attendance in the communities has continued to grow. Before the Church and Community Mobilisation Process began in Kondoa, Sunday church services used to have between 75 and 100 church members taking part. It is now about double that. Their offerings however, have increased exponentially. Churches are receiving about 14 times as much in donations as they used to, with an increase from 7,500 Tanzanian Shillings (between two to three pounds) to 100,000 Tanzanian Shillings (around 32 pounds).



Farmers have seen improvements in their harvests this year, having employed climate-smart agricultural techniques. Here, Mrs Damirisi stands outside the new home she was able to build as a result of the extra income she brought in. Source: Diocese of Kondoa/Tearfund



Releasing a well of living water

Tanzania

Proposal for St James Church, Tunbridge Wells, May 2021 to May 2022



Over the past year, inspired by training at his local church, and encouraged by a group he is part of, Abraham is discovering new ways of using local resources. It is transforming his life, and the lives of those around him.

Source: Katie Delo/Tearfund

The Diocese of Kondoa is committed to working with local churches to build resilient communities. With your help, by March 2022 - as part of a multi- year program of work - they hope to have supported 7,000 people like James, Abraham and Joyce. People who are rising up and releasing living water for their families and neighbours. You could be a part of this work of encouraging people to create, dream and collaborate, so they can bring about the futures they want to see, free from poverty and resilient against the shocks and stresses of life. A further 28,000 people could benefit indirectly. This year:



The 15 facilitators of the *Church and Community Mobilisation Process* will complete the final stages of their training. They will focus on *Information Gathering*, *Information Analysis* and *Decision Making*, which should provide them with ways to collect, collate and use data to help outline the things that are of highest priority to each community. The facilitators will then go on to train their local communities in the skills they have learnt and help them come to a decision about what they would like to do to bring life-giving transformation for those experiencing the effects of poverty.*



1,000 people will have the opportunity to learn about conservation agriculture, through their 20 local churches. In their sessions, those taking part will be given information and support on the methods that can be used to protect their soils and its nutrients - helping them reap good harvests long into the future, despite the drying and flooding effects of the changing climate.



A borehole will be drilled at Sanzawa, to provide easy access to clean, safe water.

Gathering at the well

The community of Sanzawa sits in a remote part of Kondoa, far from services like schools and hospitals. There is no piped water. But at the heart of the community are a group of people making changes. Like a wellspring, they are bringing life and hope.

The group, known as 'Sandawesu', were born out of a training series run by their local church. It has brought about changes perhaps none of them would have expected.

Their members decided to form Sandawesu after taking part in training about 'self-help groups' - teams of about 15-20 people who join together to save money and take action to bring about the future they want to see. Through this group, James learnt about the Church and Community Mobilisation Process; a training series people had been taking part in at the church. In the training sessions people studied the Bible together, discovering what it had to say about God's vision for the world and His mandate to the church. A vision which showed a fullness of life. The sessions were practical too, helping people unpack the different ways God uses people and their resources and the ways this might be true, even in their own lives.

James explains that in his training session: '...they were so inspired by the way even Jesus used the very little he had and was able to feed the 5,000.' It was not long before the group took action themselves. 'Before the training we felt as if we were living with our eyes closed, we couldn't see all that God had given us. Now we have seen the light!'

Pooling resources

Using their individual talents, skills and resources Sandawesu adapted what they had learnt to create greater security for their families.

The trees

James explains: 'I used to use the small amount of money I made from selling my crops to buy alcohol, then the money would be gone. Now I use the small amount I get to buy fruit trees, which is much more profitable and I can't believe the difference that small change makes to my life. The trees blossom and give fruits every year - and I am no longer a drunkard letting my money go to waste'.

The rocks

Fellow group member, Abraham, quickly saw new potential in a resource he had - some rocks - which he hadn't considered using before: 'After the training I started to smash rocks to sell to builders. I used to sleep with a heavy feeling in my chest but now I sleep in peace. I have sold enough rocks to buy a motorbike, which I rent out and have been able to build a house of my own for my family'.

The chickens

Joyce (pictured, right) shares, 'I took a loan of 100,000 Tanzanian shillings (about £35) and bought local village chickens which are raised organically and have a large profit...'

Joyce travelled to town to sell them. 'Now we know how to use what we've got.' Joyce explains: 'After selling [the] chickens, I bought some goats and reared them for sale too, with a higher profit margin than [the] chickens. I now have a number of small businesses, including growing and selling tomatoes. With the money, I have repaid my loan and now I give my children three meals a day. I no longer worry about tomorrow.'

By using their individual resources the Sandawesu self-help group have increased their opportunities, diversifying their income, so when there are shocks they have another thing to lean on.

But they have gone beyond that. For they have found power in working together. They have pooled their resources to work on joint ventures. Their collaboration has led to them starting a fish farm which is financed from their group kitty. And their local church is doing something amazing too. They used to walk past huge mounds of sandy terrain and then one day they decided to fill their buckets, make the sand into bricks and build a bigger church.

Their time together, spent in conversation, spent dreaming and spent encouraging one another is transforming lives across the community. As they face the future, their pool of resources is rising up to meet the challenges they have experienced, and building some security against those challenges yet to come.



A rush of living water

With support like yours, James, Abraham and Joyce have discovered a space where they can gather. Where they can pool resources. Where they can find encouragement. Where they can create.

With support from their local church, they are experiencing huge changes. They are nurturing transformation, which is giving them back freedom to dream and combat the things that have been holding them back. Like a well of new life, their ingenuity is rising up to transform the life and livelihoods of those around them - and helping them prepare the land for future generations.

How can you stand with the Diocese of Kondoa?

This year, your support could help James, Abraham and Joyce's self-help group complete their CCMP training, so that they have tools to tackle the different challenges they'll face, and repeat the exercise again and again.



Abraham stands beside a pile of rocks he has broken down