



Faith in development: Transcript

Season 3: Church and Community Transformation

Summary keywords

Church and Community Transformation, CCT, wellbeing, holistic wellbeing, mobilisation, community

Speakers

Pete Dawson, Bethany Sikes, Charlotte Flowers

Episode 1: What is Church and Community Transformation (CCT)?

Pete Dawson 00:00

Hello and welcome to season three of the Faith and Development Podcast, brought to you by Tearfund, a Christian relief and development agency working in over 50 countries around the world. This is a podcast of storytelling and conversation as we explore different areas of development through the lens of faith, drawing on the wealth of incredible people who will share their learning and experience.

Now this season we are focusing on the church and why Tearfund believes working with the church is critical for ending global poverty. My name is Pete Dawson and it's my joy to welcome you to the podcast. I have the immense privilege of being part of the Tearfund team, where I am part of what we call the Church Partnerships team, and basically I get to connect with churches across the UK to share about our incredible work happening globally, to connect people with our projects, but also to hear from churches about what God is doing in and through them here in the UK. But my background previous to Tearfund has actually been in church leadership for the past two decades – in one capacity or another I've been involved in church leadership, church planting, and one of the things I love about Tearfund is that, first and foremost, they're the primary vehicle for doing what they do is the local church.

But I am joined by the wonderful Bethany Sikes. So Bethany, would you like to introduce yourself?

Bethany Sikes 01:38

Yeah. And so excited to be with you today. So my name is Bethany, and I work with Tearfund's Impact and Effectiveness Team. So we are responsible for trying to understand and demonstrate what impact Tearfund is having through its work with the church around the world, and also to make sure that we're doing that as effectively as possible, so we support all of our country teams in the work that they're doing.

Pete Dawson 02:02

Fantastic. So for over 50 years, Tearfund has worked with local churches around the world to reduce poverty and seek transformational change for communities. So Bethany, we work with the church. But how?

Bethany Sikes 02:16

Great question. So there's lots of different ways that you can work with the church, but Tearfund has a model that we use called Church and Community Transformation. Put simply, a Church and Community Transformation model boils down to a process that is a Bible-based guided training approach that a local church can use with its community. So identify the resources they have, and then they work together to create long-lasting, whole-life transformation. As local communities work through that process, they decide what outcomes and activities work best in their situation. So that could be everything from setting up a saving group, running a training on vocational skills, or setting up their own community project. So it's going to look really different around the world. But Church and Community Transformation is the overarching name for this model of a Bible-based training approach.

Pete Dawson 03:08

Fantastic. And for short, we call that CCT, am I right?

Bethany Sikes 03:10

Yep. So you'll hear people referring to it both as Church and Community Transformation or CCT.

Pete Dawson 03:15

Great. And so Tearfund published our largest ever impact study that we call *Local Church, Lasting Transformation*. And this was to gather real, tangible, robust evidence on the effectiveness of CCT – Church and Community Transformation.

Bethany Sikes 03:30

Yeah. So in 2023, we published our largest ever independent study, *Local Church, Lasting Transformation*. We spoke to almost 8000 people in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zimbabwe all about how the church brings transformative change in their communities. And I am really excited to be sharing these amazing results with you. And over the next six episodes, we're going to be exploring that evidence, unpacking it with you, and it's all about why it's so important that we work with the church to end global poverty.

Pete Dawson 04:00

Amazing. I'm excited to unpack this. Now, before we get into the evidence in future episodes, today we're going to hear from the wonderful Charlotte Flowers. She's one of our colleagues supporting Church and Community Transformation to understand how Tearfund works with churches to reduce poverty and bring transformation to communities across the world. So, Charlotte, welcome.

Charlotte Flowers 04:29

Thank you. Thank you for inviting me to join in the conversation.

Pete Dawson 04:32

Great to have you with us. If you'd like to say a little bit about who you are, what you do, what your role is here at Tearfund.

Charlotte Flowers 04:37

So, yeah, as you said my name is Charlotte. I've been at Tearfund for the last 11 years, so quite a long time. And I've worked supporting CCT the last seven or so years. But my current role is coordinating some of our strategy. So I'm based in the UK, but supporting it kind of globally, bringing together the different regions so that we can learn from what each other are doing and, you know, improve what we're doing. Yeah. It's a brilliant privilege to be able to work on this and just hear some of the amazing things that are happening through it.

Pete Dawson 05:09

Amazing. Well, I guess we'll start with the biggest question. Can you tell us what exactly is Church and Community Transformation?

Charlotte Flowers 05:16

Yeah. So Church and Community Transformation, it's really about really getting the church to understand its mandate that God's given it. And as – not just the church – kind of it's individuals, it's the church and then

wider community. So they can actually explore what are the issues within their situation, what vision are they getting from God to actually address some of those issues? And so it starts with some Bible studies to get people exploring things. And, you know, when people are in poverty, they have very little confidence, often. They think they can't do things for themselves, or they've been left in a situation where they have very little and it's very hard to get out of that. But what we, the Bible studies try to help them explore the fact that they're made in the image of God, that they are wonderfully made, that God has given them talents and skills, and they might not have resources, but they might have certain skills that they can use. And then also the Bible studies takes it through about what the church can do in terms of, serving the community, how they can look out to the community, how they can actually join and have unity with the community, and then also around, yeah, actually, how can they utilise those skills and resources? And so then it goes through a whole process of identifying the needs and then together deciding on what issues they're going to tackle themselves. And actually they do those those kind of development projects themselves that they decide on.

Pete Dawson 06:47

Amazing. It sounds like it's just a strategy for mission for the church about mobilising the church, isn't it.

Charlotte Flowers 06:52

Yeah.

Pete Dawson 06:54

And I think one I've heard explained one of the passages that I've often gone to is that passage in Romans 12 that talks about 'we're transformed by the renewing of our minds'. And I guess is that what you say is fundamental to seeing a shift and communities transformed and people being released from poverty.

Charlotte Flowers 07:13

Yeah, I think when you speak to people that have gone through the process, at an individual level, I think it starts with that. It's almost like people have this kind of epiphany moment where they simply say 'I used to think I had to wait for Tearfund or whoever it is to come in and help me, but now I see I can do things myself' and that develops and that snowballs. Yeah. And I think it's that, yeah, it's that passion as well that people get like that real kind of 'Actually I can do something and it's not just for myself but for others' and it really snowballs from that. Yeah.

Bethany Sikes 07:44

Would you say that it's partly around restoration as well?

Charlotte Flowers 07:51

The world is a broken world, right, so we have a broken relationship with God, but people have broken relationships with themselves that they don't believe that they're able to do things. And we see that across the world. You know, that's not just for economically poorer countries or places that, people live in poverty. But there's also broken relations with others and with creation, and I think all of this is about restoring that, and I think one of the things that you see often when we're visiting places, when we've done evaluations, it's that broken relationship with self, which often is the kind of catalyst for change. And that really drives so much, you know, so much of what happens after that.

Bethany Sikes 07:44

So CCT or Church and Community Transformation looks different everywhere, then, if it's got the same starting point. But communities can take it however they want to?

Charlotte Flowers 08:37

Exactly because they prioritise their needs. And, I mean, again, you know, we participate in development. That's often what they've pushed is that if people know their situation, they know locally what the issues are. They know, and so rather than someone from the outside coming in to say 'Right, you need a borehole, you need some water', it's they decide actually, yeah, we need water, but actually for us the health clinic is more important or whatever it is. But again with CCT or Church and Community Transformation we're saying we're bringing the church into that. So they explore much wider needs. And it's not just kind of the practical things that perhaps as a development organisation, we might come in and say, 'Oh, you need water'. There's lots more of the things that come out of that. And so you see a different relationship building initiatives in the community, you see practical things like schools and health clinics. But there's a lot of softer things as well I think, that that you tend to see as well.

Pete Dawson 09:31

I think one of the things I love about Church and Community Transformation is that so many times in the church, we can compartmentalise. You've got the preaching of the gospel because we save souls, and then you've got the people who do social action in another corner, which is not Jesus model is it? You know, there's two things coming together. I love it because it's based in the scriptures about the word of God, the truth of God. But also it's an action as well.

I think the gospel is not just a message that we believe to get to heaven, but it brings the reality of heaven. It's this kingdom coming to earth. I know Tearfund sometimes uses that language about the kingdom. Yeah.

Charlotte Flowers 10:07

Yeah, exactly. I think it is. And, you know, when you talk to people, I've found, particularly when I've been places in Africa, they don't separate it like that as much as we perhaps do, and I think if you ask them about their faith, they'll talk about all of their life. They'll talk about, you know, about how they've prayed. But

then about their oranges crop or something else, that's to do everything is to do with their faith in God, and the fact that God has blessed them. They don't separate out. We learned so much from that, I think.

Bethany Sikes 10:37

Yeah, that's really exciting. So when a church starts the Church and Community Transformation process, can you give some examples of what that looks like in practice?

Charlotte Flowers 10:45

Sure, yeah. So so as I said, it starts with Bible studies that are set. So usually a facilitator's chosen from the church, and it will be someone who is already involved in the church, who's very much from that community. Sometimes it's the church pastor, the church leader, but it can be someone in the congregation as well. And then they get trained in how to facilitate these Bible studies and the Bible studies are very kind of they try to make everyone involved. It's not someone standing at the front teaching people. It's more of a kind of conversation, discussion, which often is quite different to in places where there's quite a quite hierarchical sort of culture that can be really a real big change for people to actually speak about the Bible themselves, to discover it.

Pete Dawson 11:30

It's quite liberating, isn't it?

Charlotte Flowers 11:31

Yeah, definitely. So I think that's even part of that kind of empowerment and confidence building. So the Bible studies go through, as I mentioned, this they call it foundational Bible studies. And at the end of those, even before the end of those, people start doing individual initiatives. You can't really stop. You can't set them on this linear process. You know, people get excited and they get ideas and they start doing things. So often you'll see people taking an individual initiative. So it might be if it's in a very rural place, it might be that they start growing a different crop, or they have an idea of, 'Oh, I've got this waste, you know, waste land area, I'm going to start digging that'. And I had one where they dug a hole and started having fish like a pond and all sorts of different things. But then, the actual process of CCT is that they go and then they start to identify the needs of the community. So they create a group who actually go out and survey the community, find out what the issues are. Then they have a meeting. So it's often that they do that as a church to begin with, and then they'll go out and try and engage the community and get community leaders involved, and they'll map out what are those key concerns for their community. And they then prioritise what they want to work on. You know, they can get so far. Sometimes they need to ask for more help, so they might request support from Tearfund or other NGOs or the government. But that's kind of this snowball. And the idea is that they keep doing this process, they keep identifying needs, they keep thinking about how to improve things for the future.

Pete Dawson 13:03

So when a church has a heart and passion and a vision for doing this, how easily and quickly do other people catch that vision? Obviously the church can be the driver for it, but, how quickly do the community members come on board? Because there's such great need, is it actually 'We're in this as well'? What's the catalyst?

Charlotte Flowers 13:23

I think, I've seen, in places where it's Christian majority, it can happen very quickly. I've been to Uganda quite a few times and it seems like they do a really good job of just getting the whole community involved, particularly in rural areas where everyone probably knows each other already, there's already those community structures. And you see, you might start in, say, the Anglican Church, but they quickly get the other churches involved, and get the wider community involved. So that can happen very quickly. In other places it's much more difficult. You know, in parts of West Africa where there's more Muslim majority, it can be quite difficult for Christians to, you know, the relationships can be difficult. But you see slowly, slowly those relationships building. So sometimes in those places it might be that the church does it more not on their own, but they start off doing things, and that's often when the community take notice and say, 'Oh, what the church is doing. Oh, that's quite successful. How can we get involved in that?' I think that's how it builds. I think often even individual initiatives, like the small things that people start doing, that gets other neighbours interested. And so even if they're not churchgoers or not part of the church, that's often what starts to get them involved as well. And even people of different faiths as well, I would say that's when it brings in, you know.

Bethany Sikes 14:38

Yeah, one of the things that I find most exciting in our *Local Church, Lasting Transformation* study is that we looked at churches at lots of different stages of the process. So we had some churches that had been doing Church and Community Transformation for less than a year, and then we had people or churches that had been doing it for five or more years. And what we, you might have thought, okay, well, the churches have been doing it for five years would have, you know, significantly greater results in the community. But actually, we found that churches that had just got started, so were in that first year, already we could see higher wellbeing, when we compared them to communities where our churches weren't doing Church and Community Transformation yet. And then we saw that that higher level of wellbeing was then sustained for many years after Tearfund's initial involvement. So this journey of transformation, you know, has a pretty quick impact. But then it doesn't just drop off, it continues to grow and sustain. So that was one of the things that I was I was really excited by about this. Is that something you've seen?

Charlotte Flowers 15:35

I think so, I think that that initial, in some of the ways that people do CCT, they talk about the 'setting fire', which sounds a bit odd, but they do a whole kind of activity with the wider community and they actually light a fire. But the idea is to say 'We have passion, we have fire for our community. We want to do something'. And I think that can happen even before they do that activity. That can happen really early. Like I was saying, with individuals and with the church, they just get it, they get excited and they start doing

things. And so in terms of us, like following what's happening, it's not in this linear process at all. It's not like, oh, they've got to this stage, this will happen. It all kind of happens. It's very kind of cyclical. And yeah.

Pete Dawson 16:17

So you've spoken about how the process happens, but practically what does CCT look like in communities? Because as you say, it's not linear, so what's the outworking of it? What does it look like for communities?

Charlotte Flowers 16:30

I think, so I was actually in Rwanda last year, so I was actually sitting with a few churches. We did an evaluation there, so I could give you an example there. So they'd only been doing CCT for maybe two years I think. Okay. But already so we, we met with the church people. They started Bible studies. That was one of the first thing that they had never done Bible studies in that way before. So that was even – they even spoke about how they'd not really read the Bible for themselves. And these are people that have been going to church a long time, but because normally they wait for their church leader to kind of read the Bible to them, to explain it to them. So that was really empowering, and they'd started to do a lot more prayer as well. So it, I think, the kind of, if we are separating out, although we shouldn't, but there's some of those kind of spiritual aspects you really see growing as well, and more people getting involved with church and coming along to church more because it's becoming – it's not just the Sunday service, right, it's everything.

Pete Dawson 17:24

Stepping into its mission that Jesus gave it.

Charlotte Flowers 17:27

Exactly, exactly. And then they talked about some of the initiatives. So they started a self-help group, which is where they save together. So each week they might give a very small amount. And they have a kind of, their own sort of bank, and they give out loans. So they'd started that off. So in Rwanda, after Covid, you couldn't open a church if you didn't have a handwashing facility, which actually meant that a lot of churches struggled to do that and closed, or stayed closed after Covid. But they'd managed to fundraise through the self-help group to put in the handwashing facility, and then they managed to put a toilet in as well, which is brilliant. So then and then they were saving to get, actually in every church I went in Rwanda, they all talked about wanting musical instruments, by which they meant like a keyboard and also a sound system they really wanted to get, so they were saving for that. And actually, I got a WhatsApp message at Christmas with a video of the church I had gone to. Yeah, they told us they got this keyboard and stuff. So they were saving for that.

But then other kind of more practical initiatives is that Rwanda's very hilly, as some might know, and so they have a problem of landslides and water running down when it rains, in rainy season. And so they'd started to plant trees and just simple initiatives to try and, yeah, to stop this. And the government had noticed that they were doing that because the government also has a campaign to try and get people to do this. So they saw that, and then they started to fund them and give some saplings and help them to do it. So it's sort of,

yeah, coordinating with that. And they said that other neighbours had noticed that they were doing this, they put various things on their roofs to collect water, to collect rainwater, things like that. And so the people started, 'Oh, what are you doing? Can I get, can I help, can I do it from my house?' And so that would actually increase the church membership as well. So it's all this kind of, this sort of rolling thing. And then lots of them have started new initiatives, so their income has gone up. So they talked about having, yeah, having more food, being able to do more as well.

Bethany Sikes 19:27

So that's about, you know, the impact on the individual, but also the impacts on the church itself and then the impact in, in the community. Yeah, I love that we're seeing all of those levels. There's changes happening. We saw in our study that three quarters of churches that engage in Church and Community Transformation reported an increase in church attendance and giving to the church like a really tangible, reinvestment or reinvigoration of congregations. And then that spills out into the community as well.

Pete Dawson 19:57

I actually had the privilege of going to Rwanda a couple of years ago, and I think it was one of the communities where it's prone to landslides. And what you were saying about it affecting the whole community. There was a woman who, she didn't know Jesus. But people had started to start the replanting of trees. They'd started trying to rebuild people's homes that have been devastated. I just remember really clearly this lady, she was called Clemence, and she said, when the church community came and they said they came and visited me and they helped rebuild my home. And she said these words, and this is from the mouth of someone who didn't yet know Jesus. She said it was like Jesus was visiting me. Like, this is so good. Practical stuff. That was just the spiritual transformation that was happening in the community as well.

Charlotte Flowers 20:41

Yeah. So a lot of our CCT work is across Africa, but then, you, in parts of Asia, where we work and sometimes we can't talk about specifically where we work because there's some restrictions. But we've heard stories of this because initially they might not work with the whole community because of the tensions between maybe Christians and Muslims or Christians and Hindus. But we've done we did evaluations where we ask people of other faiths what they think of the church, what has happened, and those people saying the church is the biggest, the biggest actor in our community in terms of helping. And that was, you know, during Covid, giving out food, like simple things, but also like rebuilding people's houses, like after the earthquake, things like that, that it changes the relationship because before that they thought the Christians were these kind of weirdos in the corner who do their own thing, they won't come and like share in our community festivals or whatever else is coming. But then they start to see them as friends or people that are supporting and they yeah, it just completely changes the dynamic. And so hopefully in the future they can start to do more of these bigger projects with the wider community.

Bethany Sikes 21:49

So I think it makes a big difference when you know that someone cares about you as a whole person so that you're interested in, you know, your food, your house, how you feel, not just, you know, I want you.

Pete Dawson 22:01

You're not just a project.

Bethany Sikes 22:02

Yeah. You know. Exactly, exactly. I don't just want to get you to come to church, like, it's looking at that whole person.

Charlotte Flowers 22:07

Yeah.

Bethany Sikes 22:08

And it's great to see and hear, you know, witness of that, people seeing a, you know, a demonstration of really of what the gospel is.

Charlotte Flowers 22:18

Yeah. I think, because, Bethany, you said about the churches, the tithing and churches getting more money coming in. And I think once this church starts doing like living out that, the mission and what the mission God's given them, people want to give money to that. Whereas if you're just asked as like, oh, you should tithe 10 per cent or whatever it is, you know, people aren't, you know, people are in poverty and they're struggling, but when they see that that's going to something really tangible and that's part of this wider community, then that that makes more sense to give to it. And then I think then churches have more money and they're able to do more. And then that is so it's this lovely, kind of, that's how it expands and grows as well.

Pete Dawson 23:00

And I guess, over time, does it become self-sustaining?

Charlotte Flowers 23:03

Yeah, yeah. I mean, I think there's a big problem in cultures where there's that dependency on 'I've got to wait for someone else to come in'. And then, you know, 'I don't have an education. I don't have anything. I can't do it myself'. And we even have that in this country in some aspects. But I think when you, once people start to see success, that breeds confidence, breeds that kind of empowerment, and that just snowballs again, it's that kind of...

Pete Dawson 23:30

Yeah. So earlier on we were talking about impact on people's wellbeing and Bethany, it's probably best directed to you. But when you talk about wellbeing, what do you mean by that?

Bethany Sikes 22:08

Yeah, that's a great question. That's definitely one of those terms that can mean lots of things to different people. And we're going to explore this a little bit more in the next episode. But Tearfund has a very clear idea of what we mean by holistic wellbeing, or another way of thinking about it would be whole-life transformation. So we look at the whole person, so their emotional wellbeing, their personal relationships, their connections in the community as well as their material assets and, you know, the sort of tangible things that they have. And, we talk about CCT having an impact on every aspect of people's life. And actually for us to say that it's having an impact, we want to see transformation in the whole person.

And we have a tool called the Light Wheel, where we have nine different aspects of wellbeing that we'll be exploring in the next episode in more detail. Charlotte, I'm sure you have loads of stories of people that people have shared with you, talking about the fact that they've experienced change in multiple areas of their lives.

Charlotte Flowers 24:42

Yeah. I mean, there's so many. One particularly sticks in my head because it was, it was just incredible to meet this lady called Margaret, in Uganda. We interviewed her as part of an evaluation, but then I got to meet her afterwards and chat more with her. And, as you said, there's nine aspects of wellbeing that we talk about within Tearfund. And she literally spoke about every one in some way and related it to the fact of what CCT had done in her life. So she and her family had a very very small farm, they were in a rural part of Uganda. And she'd been struggling. It had been quite stressful. She hadn't been able to send her children to school regularly because of lack of income. So then she got involved with CCT at the church. She was a churchgoer to begin with, but she said that it encouraged her to go along more, to do the Bible studies herself, to pray more. And then she learned more about using your own resources and the land she was using, you know, the crops. And I think it was potatoes initially or cassava that she was making, but it wasn't really getting much income. And alongside that, there was an initiative from the government. So she got a free orange sapling, like, citrus sapling. And so she started growing oranges, actually, while I was there, she kept giving me more and more oranges to eat, and it was like a lot of oranges. But yeah, that had just grown and income had grown, so her kids were going to school. And she also talked about her physical health, like, she'd had a lot of problems with stomach ulcers. And she said, I think that was to do with stress, of everything that was going on. Yeah. And it had gone. So she said, you know, God had healed her. But she said, you know, I don't stress any more so that, you know, it was all part of this whole thing and the last thing she said, and it always stays with me. She said she was now leading the women's group at the church,

and they'd even gone to government to ask for certain things. And she said, you know, 'What am I? I'm a woman. Before I could do nothing. Now, I do, you know, I do everything. And I'm a pillar of the community'. And it's just that, kind of, the confidence that she had and the pride that she had in all that she was doing. It was just amazing.

Bethany Sikes 26:55

Yeah, that's such a good example of that whole-life transformation.

Charlotte Flowers 26:58

It's all connected. Yeah.

Pete Dawson 27:01

So like from a church point of view, my background was in church leadership, in church planting, things like that. And we have measures like we measure the amount of people who make commitments and who get saved. We measure finance, giving, we measure bums on seats, those kind of things. But if you're talking about wellbeing, how do you measure that in a tangible way, so you know you're actually making a difference?

Bethany Sikes 27:25

Yeah. It's not easy, that's for sure. So we knew from our previous research studies and evaluations, like Charlotte mentioned, that, you know, those stories that people tell us, like they're talking about their wellbeing, even if they don't use those words necessarily. So we knew that the Church and Community Transformation was making a powerful difference. But we wanted to try and measure that impact in a very quantified way, and try and put a value on that, on that transformation. So that's the sort of real goal and why we commissioned the *Local Church, Lasting Transformation* study. Like I said, it's our largest independent research study that we've ever done. And we worked with some specialists called State of Life who hopefully will be joining us on a later episode. And they specialise in measuring wellbeing and also social value. And we also worked with the UK Government Economic Service to peer review our findings. And so we're unpacking them throughout the series, but just at a very top level. We asked people about 23 different questions covering their economic and their income, that side of things, covering their social lives, their personal lives and their spiritual lives. And then we were able to compare the results from people who live in a community where a church is doing Church and Community Transformation, and we also talked to people in communities where that hadn't started yet. So there's no church in their community doing Church and Community Transformation. And we were able to compare the difference across those 23 questions. And we found that every single one of those was higher for people living in communities where CCT is happening, you can prove that there's higher wellbeing and that holistic wellbeing, that whole-life transformation, because we didn't just ask one question, we didn't ask people, did you, you know, do you have higher wellbeing? We didn't ask people that. We asked people questions like, you know, 'Do you have someone you can ask help from in a time of need?' Like it's those kind of questions and then we were able, with some fun statistics to figure out where the, you know, whether they were in a community where a

church was doing Church and Community Transformation or not, and look at the difference in those results. And so, yeah, excited to unpack those more in other episodes.

Pete Dawson 29:42

So that's pretty robust information. Findings that we can take.

Bethany Sikes 29:45

Yeah. Statistically rigorous approach.

Pete Dawson 29:48

So good. So good.

Charlotte Flowers 29:50

So can you just give us a sense of the scale? Like how many churches are doing this around the world?

Bethany Sikes 29:55

Yeah. So at the moment, so we started counting about five years ago, and we've got to over 27,000 churches.

Pete Dawson 30:05

Is that churches currently active?

Bethany Sikes 30:06

Yeah, that is actively taking part in CCT and being mobilised to do CCT. We have a vision as Tearfund to reach 250,000, so ten times that. So we have lots of work to do. But yeah that's where we're at at the moment, which is really exciting.

Charlotte Flowers 30:24

And that's in pretty much most of the countries that Tearfund is present in?

Bethany Sikes 30:26

Yes, across 50 countries we work in which is, yeah, amazing.

Pete Dawson 30:31

What does it look like for Tearfund moving forward?

Charlotte Flowers 30:33

So yeah, we have this big vision, this big aspiration to reach 250,000 churches by 2030. So it is very ambitious. I mean, the way that looks is us engaging more and more with big denominations around the world and different countries, with theological colleges who teach church leaders, and other organisations as well. So peer organisations who're interested. So we have lots of interest in CCT, but it's us having the resources and ability to kind of influence and equip those people that are interested to do it. But, you know, the more people that see it are convinced that it works, and particularly with, with the study that's been done as well. So we're really excited that we have enough interest to kind of build, but there's a lot of work to do.

Pete Dawson 31:20

Well Charlotte, thanks so much for joining us.

Charlotte Flowers 31:22

Thank you for having me. It's been really fun to chat.

Pete Dawson 31:39

That was so good.

Bethany Sikes 31:41

So good. Really enjoyed that conversation.

Pete Dawson 31:43

So out of what we shared, and there's a lot to take in, I'm feeling inspired, and I'm feeling challenged in many ways. But are there any particular takeaways for you?

Bethany Sikes 31:52

I think it's just really exciting to hear from someone like Charlotte, who's got that big picture vision of what the church is doing. And it really, you know, inspires you as to why we work with the church. But I love that we're also understanding a bit better how we work with the church and what that actually looks like in practice. And being able to hear Margaret's story was such a privilege about how, you know, the Church and Community Transformation model has really brought change, you know, life, life-changing change, into every aspect of her life. And to be able to visualise that that could be happening for people around the world, especially with our really exciting vision of 250,000 churches doing this work. So yeah, I'm feeling quite inspired as we finish this episode.

Pete Dawson 32:37

So good. So over the next five episodes, can you just give us a little sneak peek of what we're going to be focusing on?

Bethany Sikes 32:43

Yeah, I can give you a wee sneak peek. So we're going to be talking to some Tearfund colleagues around the world and some just fantastic practitioners who are hands-on doing this work in several countries that we work in. And we're going to be exploring a couple of different topics. We're going to be looking at unpacking that idea of holistic wellbeing, that whole-life transformation that we've already touched on today, what it looks like when the church is reaching out and working in its community.

Advocacy – what happens when the church is standing up and speaking out? And also, what it looks like and what it means to put a social value on the impact of the work that we're doing. So, yeah, lots of exciting things ahead.

Pete Dawson 33:25

That sounds great. Well, guys, thank you so much for tuning in. I do hope you've been inspired. I do hope you feel encouraged, and we would love for you to join us next episode, where we're going to be looking at how the church can bring whole-life transformation. But in the meantime, if you want to find out a little bit more about Tearfund who we are, what it is we do, and more specifically, Bethany, about the report and the findings and where can we go?

Bethany Sikes 33:51

Yes, if you want to find out more, you can read our research summary or there's a video capturing the main findings as well. And you can find all of that on Tearfund Learn. And you can also find out more about Church and Community Transformation there as well. So to do that it's at learn.tearfund.org. And if you want to go straight to the pages all about the *Local Church, Lasting Transformation* study, just pop a forward slash on there and CCT-impact.