

LOOKING AHEAD



CONCLUSIONS FROM OUR INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORS

Inspiring change demonstrates the value Tearfund places on learning, reflecting on our contribution to change, our desire to use evidence for improvement, and being open and honest about where we seek to improve. We are committed to ensuring that our future programming and activities are informed by the evidence, lessons and insights presented here. As Tearfund's international directors, we outline some of the most important elements of the findings and discuss how these will shape Tearfund's future focus.

This report demonstrates the centrality and relevance of our core approaches of church and community mobilisation (CCM) and advocacy to bring about change via our development programmes. The case study, **Local-level partner advocacy** on page 14, about a community in Uganda who saw tangible improvements to their lives as a result of their advocacy efforts exemplifies this point; if we ensure the CCM process is done effectively, or if we are committed to training individuals in how to do advocacy well, then we will see lasting and sustainable change. If we do not do these things well, we may see some immediate benefits, but the change will not be long term. Similarly, we must take the long view in our disaster response work to ensure greater resilience beyond the immediate recovery stages. We will therefore

continue to resource all of these approaches and processes as core aspects of our work.

A focused approach

The projects and programmes we support cover a range of interconnected issues, all of which relate to poverty. In 2014 we went through a process of choosing five thematic focus areas which we have expertise in and are committed to continually strengthening. These are food security, livelihoods, WASH, resilience and sexual violence. Conflict resolution and peacebuilding is an emerging theme that we will start to explore over the coming year.

We have chosen these issues because we know that, if we want to see significant positive and sustainable change, we must focus, work comprehensively and be selective. Going forward, our programming will continue to be predominantly shaped around these thematic areas.

Although we have narrowed our focus to be more concentrated, we understand that poverty is complex and multifaceted; issues relating to poverty are interrelated and are not mutually exclusive. In light of this, the integration of each of our thematic areas with each other, with our Quality Standards

Photo: Richard Hanson/Tearfund (Brazil)

and with our core approaches is essential in order to see holistic change. This report demonstrates the interconnectedness of the different aspects of Tearfund's work; for example, WASH interventions can have a direct impact on the safety of women and girls, and advocacy initiatives can directly change WASH and livelihoods outcomes. This calls for a joined-up, integrated and flexible approach which acknowledges that one size does not fit all.

Looking ahead

A major priority for Tearfund going forward will be building our evidence base in all of our areas of work to test the assumptions driving our activities, and to gather and implement learning. We will wrestle



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with the best methodologies to identify evidence of change, with a particular focus on digital data collection and new technologies. Some areas of work are easier to measure, for example in WASH: if a partner has installed a new water pump in a community and there is now clean water available to all, this is a tangible and relatively easy-to-measure change. Others areas are harder to attribute: for example, in our advocacy work, the benefits gained by a mobilised community are more difficult to calculate and attribute to one particular intervention. It is often the most transformational things that are hardest to measure, but in our pursuit of positive and sustainable change towards flourishing individuals and communities, we are committed to grappling with our approaches to ensure sustainability.

We know that the incremental effects of climate change will continue to have greatest impact on those living in the communities where we work. We also know that our lifestyle choices – how we live, how we shop, and how we structure our economy – have an impact on these changes. In response, we are excited to launch *Ordinary Heroes*, a campaign which seeks to inspire individuals in the UK and beyond to make sustainable lifestyle choices. By bringing together development and environmental discourses and encouraging a movement-based approach, we believe we will see a significant shift in the negative patterns which have prevailed.

Finally, the evidence and learning in this report, combined with our ongoing organisational discussions, encourage us to reflect on Tearfund's contribution to change within a dynamic and ever-changing world. We are thinking about the



Photo: Chris Boyd/Tearfund (Malawi)

implications of the question raised by ODI and others on 'doing development differently'. At Tearfund our partnership model, our collective actions with local faith communities, operational programmes and global networks all contribute to this new dialogue and we will continue to assess the impact of our work in the coming year.

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