

ONE VOICE

TOGETHER IN PRAYER FOR AN **END TO POVERTY**

LEARNING TO FARM AGAIN

Victoria hums softly to herself as she carefully fills her watering can. The Malawian grandmother has a flourishing vegetable garden. And she can now plant and harvest all year round, thanks to the training she received from Tearfund's local partner.

But life hasn't always been so good for the 68-year-old. Before the training, Victoria and her husband had been using traditional farming methods, which were proving to be a challenge.

'I used to plant maize and groundnuts,' says Victoria. 'But after putting in all our energy and efforts, we would end up harvesting only five bags of groundnuts and ten bags of maize. 'Often we did not have enough to feed our family for the whole year.'

Meanwhile, Victoria's husband developed a debilitating back condition that meant he couldn't help on the farm.

Helping themselves

In 2016, Tearfund partner, Assemblies of God Care (AG Care), introduced what's known as the Church and Community Transformation (CCT) approach in Victoria's village.

As a result of CCT training, communities discover the resources and abilities they already have. In time, they find new ways to help themselves to get out of poverty.

'AG Care showed us how we can make our own low-cost fertiliser, which I can tell you has increased the yield of my farm,' says Victoria.

A good harvest

'In 2018, in the same space where [in the past] I harvested only five bags of groundnuts and ten bags of maize, I got 20 bags of maize and 25 bags of groundnuts! The harvest was so big that I was able to sell the surplus and buy iron sheets to help build a new house.

'I bought goats and chickens which I regularly sell to pay school fees for my grandchildren.' She also learnt about 'winter cropping' which gives insights into how best to plant during the off-season.

Praise God, Victoria now feels like she is set up to provide for her family – all year round and for many years to come.

PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for all those people in Malawi who are struggling in poverty, and feel stuck without hope.
- As our partner staff at AG Care continue to introduce CCT training to other villages in Malawi, pray it will be well-received and effective.

- Thank God for Victoria and her family and pray that that their success story will inspire others.

A NOTE FROM...

'Victoria's story shows us that it's always possible to try a new way of doing something. Her resilience and determination inspires me not to give up. It's also a gentle reminder that we don't need to do life alone, others can help us get to where we need to go to, if we just let down our barriers.' **Rachael Adams, Brand and Communications team**

MEET HONDURAS' YOUNG CHANGE-MAKERS

Honduras is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with two-thirds of its population living in poverty. But new opportunities are being created through youth programmes, which are equipping young leaders to use their skills to make a difference in their local community. They are helping heal this deeply divided country.

Shaping a new generation

Cynthia is 22 and lives with her family and works as a financial assistant. She was invited by her church to participate in the Transform Youth programme, led by one of Tearfund's local partners.

In taking part in the course, she began to understand the wider message of the gospel and how to help those in her community in need. Before, she wasn't sure how to apply this to her life, and helped out at home only. 'Now I'm able to see things more clearly through other people's eyes. And God has shown me that there are many people in need,' she shares.

The training led to the participants in the Transform Youth group working with their local community to see how they could best serve it. They got together with other young people and organised groups to collect rubbish, build play areas for children and help out in lessons to support children in schools.

Creating unity

'We live in a community that is deeply divided... [but] I feel happy to know that I'm not alone. There are other young people who also dream of seeing our families, churches and communities transformed by the power of God,' Cynthia shares. Transform Youth brings together young leaders from different churches and backgrounds, all who have the potential and drive to transform their communities.

Cynthia is just one of the incredible people who have graduated from the group and want to continue to serve their local community. She is now a facilitator on the programme, and is passing on what she's learned to other young leaders. She's hoping to train as a missionary in the future, to continue to help empower others to overcome poverty.

PLEASE PRAY

- Praise God for how he is continuing to use Cynthia and other young leaders to help transform local communities and bring hope to those in need.
- Pray for the work of Transform Youth; that it will continue to reveal God's heart to a whole new generation of people and help people find solutions to overcome poverty.

- Pray for the positive impact graduates of Transform Youth will have in communities across Honduras. Pray they will help heal wounds and bring peace to deeply divided communities.

WORLD IN UNION: RUGBY, TEAMWORK AND POVERTY

A reflection with comments from former Samoa rugby captain, Dan Leo.

Why is Tearfund talking about rugby? We care about serious things like poverty and global advocacy issues like climate change. What could we possibly have to take from rucks, mauls and a squashy-shaped ball?

Rugby: A basic summary

Fifteen players per team on the pitch at one time. Each wears a different number marking out a very particular set of skills.

Some examples... Number one. Prop. Usually giant. Solid for the scrum. Number four. Lock. Tall. Kingpin in the lineout. Number nine. Scrumhalf. Quick and mobile. Everywhere, all the time. Ten. Fly-half. The ability to maintain calm and kick with pinpoint accuracy. Fifteen. Wing. Lightning fast with a nimble sidestep.

A body of members, all looking and acting differently, working together to achieve a common goal in a way that would be impossible if they were all the same. (Wait. Doesn't that sound a little familiar?)

Rugby is a beautiful picture of how diversity shapes – and is crucial to – teamwork.

Part of the team – our Integral Alliance

Recognising the value of diversity on a team is why Tearfund deliberately works alongside local churches and partners in the communities we serve. By empowering people to use their unique skills, they can become valuable members of the team playing for their own restoration and transformation – making our game plan more relevant and sustainable.

In the same way, Tearfund is also an active player on wider teams in the global fight against poverty, such as the Integral Alliance and the Swift Consortium. These partnerships with organisations from different countries, bring together our diverse skill sets, capabilities and supporter bases with one goal – to serve Jesus where the need is greatest.

Like a rugby team, we are stronger and our reach is greater if we concentrate on our strengths and use each other's skills. Together, we can be more effective and even overcome opposition that may not have seemed possible. (Just ask Japan's current Rugby World Cup team.)

Dan Leo – a light on the world stage

We chatted about this briefly with former Samoa rugby captain, Dan Leo. Two World Cups, 39 international caps and an impressive club heritage in Australia, the UK and France, have given him a world stage view of rugby. A passion for justice and a heart of compassion have made him a light on that stage.

Dan spoke about how the sport's innate emphasis on putting community above self reflects the core church values he was raised with. More than that, he spoke of his deeply held faith and the realisation that, although he had a role in the rugby team (usually at lock or flank), he has a unique position in the body of Christ.

'I always believed God gave me the skills and talents I have for a bigger purpose than my bank balance or self-glorification,' he says. 'It's about relationships. Bringing light. Finding a way to

handle the pressure. Knowing that when things aren't going your way, God has a purpose even in those moments.'

A place on the team

Each player – on the pitch or on the bench – has a unique and vital role. There can be no heroes without the shared try-line vision of the whole team.

Each of us – as individuals or as part of the church – has a unique and vital role too. An important gift to bring to the team with a shared, life-bringing vision.

And we have a firm foundation. An undefeated captain to follow. As Dan says, 'Faith in God is that rock to fall back on. The consistency through the ups and downs. It's knowing that we're not in the race alone.'

Dan's mission field may look much more like... well... like a field than yours might, but your position is crucial. If we believe that we were created with a plan and a purpose (Jer 29:11) then, no matter what that looks like – whether we feel like the head or the fingernail in the body of Christ, our place counts.

After all, when it comes to the try line, a fingernail breadth can win or lose a World Cup.

PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for good and productive relationships between us and our partners. That we will be effective and able to reach even more people with the love of Jesus, by being ready to respond in the most practical ways.
- Lift up Dan and other Christians who are involved in all aspects of rugby – especially during the World Cup. Pray that they will be blessed and encouraged and bring light and hope where they are positioned.
- Reflect on the different talents and roles God has given us. Pray that we will be team players and do our bit as part of the body of Christ – whatever and wherever that may be.

You can find more information and some encouraging statistics at www.integralalliance.org about how teamwork is bringing hope and relief in situations like the aftermath of Cyclone Idai.

PRAYER POINTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

- ✓ After US-led peace talks with the Taliban stalled a month ago, last week's Afghanistan presidential election voting day was marred by widespread attacks. This resulted in a very low turnout. The official result is not due for a few weeks; please pray that the outcome will be accepted, and for stability and peace across Afghanistan.
- ✓ An amazing 30,000 people have signed our petition calling on large companies to reduce their use of plastic packaging, which is harming people living in poverty and damaging creation. Praise God for this and pray it will lead to real change.
- ✓ Today (Friday 11 October) is International Day of the Girl Child. Please pray for girls around the world, especially those growing up in poverty. Pray they will be given the space and opportunity to flourish and fulfil their God-given potential.