

**Mothers’ Union Eagle process and potential research plans for the next three years**

The Eagle process envisions and equips the local church ***“to have a vision and passion for being salt and light in their community, enabling the church and community to work together to address common needs by using their own shared resources”***.

It aims to support communities in Uganda to take initiative and improve relationships (with God, each other and the environment), gender equity, livelihoods and health. Mothers’ Union Uganda is pioneering this approach so it can fulfill its mission to transform whole communities by promoting stable marriages, family life and children’s protection more effectively and sustainably.

There are three main stages to the process:

* Envisioning the church: carrying out workshops to change mindsets; setting up Eagle groups; doing Bible studies; and initiating group and household projects to test out and apply the learning.
* Envisioning the community: mapping needs as a church and community together; ‘dreaming dreams’ about the changes they want to see; and agreeing a priority to tackle.
* Taking action and working together: setting up a committee; and implementing and monitoring the work.

**Update on Eagle**

Eagle has enabled Mothers’ Union in Uganda to develop a new way of working, helping communities break free from dependency and deal with issues such as poverty using their own resources.

Lives are being transformed. One participant states:*”If we hadn’t started the Eagle process before the drought in this community we would have lost more of the vulnerable and elderly people.”*

An external evaluation has found that the programme has brought tangible and holistic change to the first four pilot areas. Eagle has so far benefited over 15,000 people, bringing positive change to relationships, livelihoods, health, sanitation and education, and enabling people to take control over their lives as follows:

***Relationships with God, others (including the vulnerable) and the environment***

* Beneficiaries have developed a more active prayer life, and spend more time reading the Bible and applying it to their lives. People spoke of having a real relationship with God for the first time.
* More families are now planning together, and groups reported improved relationships between church leaders and members, and better cooperation among themselves.
* People are caring more for vulnerable people. For example, groups in South Ankole reported an estimated 60% increase in people supporting basic needs for others. In Busoga, Eagle group members have visited the sick and helped those in need with basic items like blankets.
* Care for the environment. For example, in South Ankole Eagle groups planted 10,000 trees, in Madi West Nile, members have stopped cutting down trees and are using compost. Many groups are removing plastic bags and cleaning up their communities. Those dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods have become much more aware of the impact of climate change and the need to mitigate the obstacles that it poses. This includes diversifying crops and preparing the ground before the rains to maximise the growing season.

***Local initiative and use of resources***

* Data from South Ankole found that 65% of participants have improved the amount and quality of the food they eat across the year after diversifying their crops. They now store millet, beans, maize and cassava in granaries to last them through the lean times. Kiringa groups are managing a banana plantation and maize field and have gained better technical understanding of how to manage their gardens and share expertise instead of competing.
* Some groups have focused on income-generating businesses such as piggeries, chicken-rearing, soap production, crafts and brick-making. This new income is supporting family needs, for example, buying a bicycle and sending their children to school.

***Improved health and sanitation***

* Many groups have constructed latrines. Families have also new bathing shelters, drying racks and have cleaner, better maintained compounds.
* Some dioceses have successfully helped their communities to access health screening. In Madi West Nile, the Eagle clean-up of the community football ground and road clearing paved the way for government to immunise children.

***Improved gender relations***

* Women have more of say in decision-making, for example: families now budget together. Women are taking on more leadership roles in the church.

**How does this tie in with what else is happening within Mothers’ Union?**

1. Mothers’ Union are exploring how we can use story-based analysis (most significant change) to compare and prove the impact of our Church and Community Mobilisation (CCM) processes in communities in the UK and Uganda within a participatory ‘Theory of Change’ framework.
2. We will also shortly be initiating our global listening process across the globe - engaging with our members and their communities through locally owned listening and analysis processes and plans that build relationships (with God, each other and in the church and community) and identify priorities at community, diocese, national, regional and international levels. Some of the anticipated outcomes include:

* Mothers’ Union at all levels will be better equipped to listen to the voices of people we serve and has insights into how to work more effectively together to bring lasting and holistic change.
* A Mothers’ Union that is flexible, responsive, relational and therefore effective, listening to and driven by local experience and priorities.
* Individually and together members will be more effective in bringing change in their church and community as they are relevant and focused, engaging the right people and resources.
* We will have a group of highly skilled trained facilitators who can support other processes.
* We will have a set of regional frameworks and agreed priorities showing Mothers’ Union’s unique contribution to transforming communities that will form the basis of a global framework and set of strategic priorities for the future. Learning from locally identified priorities will help define how Mothers’ Union operate, e.g. in relationships, advocacy, finance and communications and will articulate stepping stones to achieving them.

1. We are developing a framework for using academic research to:

* Prove the impact and legitimacy of transformational processes and the Mothers’ Union.
* Creating and proving the impact of alternatives to the traditional donor-led development.
* Raise the profile of FBOs in an external environment, building credibility and trust in ourselves and other FBOs.
* We are looking to take up the challenge of proving that social change **can** be funded and produce sustainable transformational change, through carrying out four pieces of research on: story-based Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL); transformational savings and credit programmes, Mothers’ Union’s global listening process and our CCM processes.
* Learning from this research will be shared in appropriate forums and networks.

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