



Eagles Relief and Development Programme

Analysing the Cost Effectiveness of Church and Community Mobilisation in Malawi



Research study, July 2019

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Cover photograph by Richard Stark

With grateful thanks to the community members and Eagles staff whose contributions made this research possible and whose hard work is captured in this report

Executive Summary

Demands for both sustainability and value for money means that traditional NGO approaches to implementing projects may no longer be appropriate. An alternative approach called Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP)¹ is gaining traction in many parts of the world. Anecdotal evidence suggests that CCMP is highly effective to see communities moving out of poverty. But there is a lack of comparative or cost-effectiveness research. This has inhibited many donors from investing in it.

This research study, conducted in Malawi with a local faith-based organisation, Eagles Relief and Development Programme (Eagles) sought to fill that gap. Eagles implements both CCMP and more traditional, participative projects. Data gathering methods used by researchers to compare the two approaches included:

1. Participatory research in eight communities
2. Semi-structured interviews with Eagles staff (leadership and staff of both CCMP and TA projects)
3. Document review, including financial analysis

CCMP: *CCMP equips local churches to work with their communities to creatively problem-solve using their own (or locally available) resources. A process of envisioning churches through Biblical reflection and engaging the community with asset-focused activities to identify and analyse opportunities and challenges leads to churches and communities taking action together. Solving their own problems breaks mindsets of dependency and brings holistic change, especially for the most vulnerable.*

TA (project using a more 'traditional approach')²: *Between 2011 and 2017 Eagles also implemented a successful programme addressing food insecurity and climate-related disasters in rural Malawi with funding from a large UK NGO and a bi-lateral donor. This project was selected as there has been prior well-funded and rigorous evaluation proving it had significant impact, thus making it a fair comparison to some of Eagles' best work in CCMP.*

The participatory research in eight communities found that under eight years after they had started:

1. **CCMP approach was 27 times more cost effective than TA.** CCMP had the same level of positive impact on community quality of life but at less than 4% of the cost;
2. **CCMP communities were almost four times more confident in solving problems for themselves in the future** (averaging 8.09 out of 10 certainty of taking action on new problems compared to 2.21), indicating much greater likelihood of sustainability
3. **CCMP communities took more deliberate and direction to care for the most vulnerable**, in line with the Sustainable Development Goal commitment to 'leave no one behind'

¹ Including variants such as Truth Centred Transformation; Umoja; Qavah; and Use Your Talents

² referred to as 'TA' throughout this report to respect the privacy of its funders

Impressions from communities and local government officials:

“In the past, we used to hope that some NGO or politician would come to help us. Now we just meet as a community, decide what we need to do, and do it.” *Community member*

“In the future, our village will be so advanced! If you depend on organisations, they come and go, but if you are self-reliant, you develop yourselves.” *Village Chief*

“We have learned to make the most of our resources. Things we used to think were useless, we now use to develop ourselves. We have learned to be self-reliant.” *Village Chief*

“This process is really helping us here and changing the mindsets of the people... we used to expect people from town to come and do things for us; now we do things for ourselves.” *Area Development Committee Chair*

TA had impressive impact in areas of direct intervention but very little or none in others. As there are no direct interventions within CCMP, all activities were chosen, resourced and implemented by the communities. Notably, significant progress was consistently seen across all areas in the CCMP communities, suggesting that it is an effective approach to achieve holistic change.

Following the change in mindset from dependency, even the poorest communities found the resources to solve many of their challenges or successfully partnered with local government. Even without taking comparative cost into account, CCMP communities achieved almost identical progress in quality of life to TA, but without any of the direct training or material inputs such as treadle pumps, livestock and drought-resistant seeds. This suggests that expectations of communities within NGOs are often prohibitively low and paternalistic, sometimes even inhibiting long-term development. In the words of Eagles’ Executive Director of 15 years Victor Mughogho, “Donating solutions can be as inhibiting to sustained change as donating objects.” The evidence suggests that, where possible, NGOs need to shift from direct interventions to facilitating problem-solving processes or to a combination in highly fragile areas. NGOs need to focus on investing in people rather than investing in things; not just training communities in more skills but challenging how people see themselves and their world.

“Donating solutions can be as inhibiting to sustained change as donating objects.”

Recommendations

1. Further research should be conducted to test the reliability of the conclusions of this report and explore the issues raised: robust research across different organisations implementing CCMP and different projects, using a larger number of communities with larger and more representative participant groups.
2. Where possible, NGOs should shift to facilitating problem-solving processes: this research demonstrates that it is often more cost effective to equip communities with the skills to mobilise their own resources to solve problems rather than directly intervening. NGOs should shift towards this way of working wherever possible, or integrate mindset change and problem

solving into other projects in more fragile contexts where some direct intervention is still necessary

3. Faith based communities are key players in sustainable community development. The church is one of the most influential and powerful institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa. They access large numbers of trusted volunteers in every community and provide networks for replication

List of abbreviations

CCMP	Church and Community Mobilisation Process
TA	Project implemented by Eagles using a ‘traditional approach’ - involving material inputs from Eagles and trainings in specific skills
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
VSL	Village Savings & Loans
Eagles	Eagles Relief and Development Programme

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1. Introduction

Background

Eagles Relief and Development Programme (Eagles) began in Malawi in 2003 in response to terrible flooding. Living Waters' Church International wanted to respond in a way that combined long-term resilience building with immediate support. They discovered the most effective way to do this was to mobilise local churches and communities to identify their own challenges and the resources they had to solve them. Their unique knowledge of their own situation enabled them to tailor activities to the exact issues they were facing and also generated greater ownership and commitment from the local community in comparison to the other organisations, leading to greater sustainability.

In collaboration with others experimenting with similar approaches, coordinated by Tearfund, they developed this into the 'Church and Community Mobilisation Process' (CCMP). Eagles have witnessed the impact of CCMP over the years, but have never made a detailed analysis of its impact and cost-effectiveness in comparison to more traditional development approaches (such as directly delivering trainings in identified areas of need in combination with material inputs, such as seeds or livestock). This report seeks to fill that gap, using a variety of methods to compare CCMP with another successful project that Eagles implemented using a traditional approach (this specific project is referred to as 'TA' throughout report to respect the privacy of its funders). TA was selected as well-funded independent evaluations had previously proved it had significant impact, making it a fair comparison to Eagles' best work in CCMP.

Aim of the research

This research aimed to compare the cost-effectiveness of CCMP with more traditional NGO-project approaches in Malawi.

Study Site

According to recent figures, Malawi is the fourth poorest country in the world (Global Finance Magazine, 2019). A small and landlocked country in south-east Africa, Malawi has a majority rural population in which more than a third of these households are entirely dependent on subsistence farming or fishing to survive (IFAD). These communities are extremely vulnerable to the increasingly unpredictable weather and more frequent disasters due to climate change. Families struggle to provide enough food for the whole year, and currently 37% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition (National Statistics Office).

Despite these worrying figures, important progress is being made, as demonstrated by both of the approaches explored in this research.

Approaches

CCMP description

CCMP equips local churches to break mindsets of dependency and work with their community to achieve holistic change, especially for the most vulnerable. Bible studies envision them with God's heart for justice and His commands to care for people's physical and spiritual needs. Communities are equipped to identify their own problems, discover the abundance of their own resources, find solutions and act together, taking responsibility for their own development.

The stages of CCMP usually involve (although often blended together):

- Church awakening: Eagles envision pastors to understand the biblical mandate for social justice and trains them to pass it on to their churches
- Community entry: pastor and church build relationships with community leaders. The chief calls a community meeting where the church facilitates CCMP
- Attitude change within the community: church facilitators use CCMP tools to break attitudes of dependency within the community, enabling them to recognise that they have the resources they need to improve their own lives
- Community discovery: community and church identify their greatest challenges and the locally available resources
- Community analysis: community and church prioritise and analyse their challenges and create a vision for their future
- Planning for action: community and church create an action plan to address these priorities using their resources/ in partnership with the government or others
- Sharing experiences (monitoring, evaluation and learning): community and church monitor their work, learn from successes and challenges, take action in response and evaluate their impact

TA description

Beginning in 2011 and ending in 2017, it was designed to address the chronic challenge of food security and disasters that rural communities in Malawi face due to climate change. It saw significant impact through its activities at community-level, which included: post-harvest management; agroforestry; fuel-efficient stoves; seeds; village savings and loans; conservation agriculture; irrigation; livestock; training in human rights, gender justice and inclusion of stigmatised groups, such as those living with HIV.

2. Methodology

Methods

The data for this research was gathered through:

- Participative research in eight communities
- Document review of Eagles' evaluations, finances and grey literature
- Semi-structured interviews with key informants from Eagles (the Director, the CCMP coordinators and facilitators of both TA and CCMP programmes)

Sampling and selection

Eagles staff identified the three TA communities and five CCMP in the Southern and Central Region in which each approach had been very successful. To make a fair comparison we purposively focused on the best examples for both types of intervention. Attempting to match middlingly successful communities would have left more room for error and while a comparison of the least successful would have been interesting, time and budget constraints meant that it is outside the scope of this report.

'Quality of Life' Participatory Tool

We gathered qualitative data from communities about their quality of life using a participatory tool, assessing how much change they have experienced in six different areas, identified in Eagles' Theory of Change as important indicators of holistic development: food security; health; livelihoods; education; caring for the environment; and an inclusive, stigma-free society. Community evaluation experts, such as Chambers (2008), concluded that participatory methodologies often give more accurate results than household surveys and can have the positive by-product of strengthening communities, rather than just extracting information. Participatory methods respect local knowledge and situate the participants as the experts: activities enable participants to reflect and evaluate their own experiences with one another so they become the primary beneficiaries of the learning and feel less pressure to give the answers they perceive as 'desired' by the researchers. By using a tool during which communities debated the issue amongst themselves, focus groups engaged with one another instead of the researchers, increasing the likelihood of an honest, representative answer.

In line with the philosophy of treating communities as the experts, a 10 step scale for each of the areas was defined by a focus group from Bokosi, Lilongwe, in which men, women and members of various social groups were represented. They identified what would typically be seen and experienced in a village at different stages on the scale: step 1, the worst conceivable position a village could be in; step 10, where a village would realistically be in an ideal world; and step 5. Figure 1 is a table that outlines the definitions of each of these steps in each of the 6 areas. Using this pre-defined scale, focus groups in following communities discussed and identified their position before Eagles began either CCMP or TA

and their position now³. As the defined steps of the scale were consistent across all communities, the qualitative results could be reliably compared numerically once changes on the scale in each area were calculated. In addition, this method meant that any change experienced in a community was relative to its own initial position, thus accounting for the fact that communities often began in different positions on the scale.

Figure 1. A table detailing what a typical community at stages 1, 5 and 10 of the scale would look like, as defined by a community focus group in Bokosi, Central Malawi.

A 10-step scale used to determine CCMP and TA impacts in communities within each area

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Worst conceivable position a community could be in					Best realistic position a community could be in				
	What a village at each of steps 1, 5 and 10 might typically look like Defined by a community focus group in Bokosi, Central Malawi									
	Step 1			Step 5			Step 10			
Food Security	No food supply for whole year. Have to do piece work on others' farms to get food. Often go 3 days with no food			2 meals a day from May-Sep Have to do piece work for food for rest of year			3 meals a day for the whole year – porridge in the morning, nsima and relish at midday and evening			
Health	No toilets or bathrooms Village covered by shrubs - allowing mosquito to thrive Widespread sickness Cholera due to dirty water No access to nutritious food No access to clinic			Access to clean water but insufficient (eg. 1 borehole in village) Toilets and bathrooms but low quality			Good quality water to drink Sanitary toilets with slabs Knowledge to prevent disease People have good sanitary habits (eg. bathing, washing hands) Nutritious food Good quality air Close proximity to clinic			
Livelihoods	No stable income Occasional piece work for money			Money for a few months of year (2-3) Selling crops like soya/ tobacco Access to VSLA			Income all year through small-scale businesses Lots of alternative sources of income Secure bank accounts			
Education	No children attend school Parents do not care or see it as issue No one can read or write			Some people can read & write 80% of children complete primary school 30% of children complete secondary school			All children complete secondary school Parents value education and insist children attend 100% literacy			

³ Actually used position at the beginning of 2019 so that the impact of cyclone Idai would not impact results

Cared-for Environment	<p>Trees cut down constantly and not replanted</p> <p>Chief not interested in environment</p> <p>Plastic and other waste dumped anywhere</p> <p>Cooking done on open fires</p>	<p>Some trees but not good management</p> <p>Burn plastics</p> <p>Other waste thrown in hole</p> <p>Some making manure</p>	<p>Lots of trees and no trouble with firewood – trees replanted every year</p> <p>Rubbish pit for all waste</p> <p>Widespread making of manure</p> <p>Fuel efficient stoves for everyone</p>
Inclusion	<p>People living with HIV very stigmatised – unable to take part in community life, left to die - even actively targeted (eg. violence)</p> <p>Women are not valued or considered in decision-making or for positions of leadership</p> <p>Differently-abled are ignored</p>	<p>Some people from marginalised groups included in decision-making/ on committees, but many still reluctant</p> <p>Stigma still existent</p>	<p>Everyone enabled to fully participate in community life and decision-making</p> <p>No stigma</p> <p>Women treated equally to men</p> <p>Love for everyone</p> <p>All can serve on committees</p>

Assessing sustainability

Sustainability, defined here as the likelihood that the impact of any interventions will be long-lasting without continuing input from non-government organisations (NGOs) and, ideally, will replicate and grow, is difficult to quantify directly. Instead, we posed three ‘scenario’ questions to the focus groups to measure their confidence in problem-solving as a proxy-indicator. This is because new issues are guaranteed to arise in every intervention a community carries out and, if they cannot solve these issues, Eagles have found it to be one of the most common causes of interventions being stopped. They additionally provided a measure of the extent to which the community takes responsibility for their own development, something that greatly contributes to sustainability. The scenario questions asked how confident the participants were that their community would do something about a particular issue if it arose. The same concept of the 10 step ladder was used, with step 1 on the ladder being ‘certain that the community would do nothing’ and step 10 being ‘entirely confident that something would be done’. The members of the focus groups were asked to stand by the step along the ladder which best represented their confidence that the community would respond in each scenario. The scenarios were:

- If a pump breaks down, how confident are you that the community would do something to fix the problem?
- If staff from the nearest clinic stopped turning up and there was no medication available, how confident are you that the community would do something about the situation?
- If a mother brought to your attention that children with disabilities were not attending school, how confident are you that the community would do something about the situation?

Quantitative Data Comparison of Intervention Costs

To triangulate findings from the participatory tool and other sources, we used the method below to find the comparative cost of directly implementing an intervention (such as in TA) with the cost of mobilising a community to use its own resources for its own interventions. We:

1. Selected CCMP communities where similar interventions had resulted to those that were implemented through TA: forestry, livestock, conservation agriculture, Village Savings and Loans (VSL) groups etc.
2. Divided total cost of CCMP in the area by the number of communities
3. Calculated proportional cost of each intervention if it were directly implemented by an NGO. We used Eagles' TA figures where available (cost per intervention per village) and asked Eagles staff to estimate the comparative cost of other interventions that had resulted from CCMP in the same communities. 'One unit' was defined as the cost of implementing one VSL group in a community and all other interventions were estimated as some greater number of units based on a ratio of how many times more it would cost.
4. Divided the total cost in that community by the number of 'units' to calculate the cost of 'one unit'
5. Multiplied by the number of units of a specific intervention
6. Divided to work out cost per household/ per farmer (to match TA data)

Limitations

Due to using a participatory approach and constraints of time and funding, there are significant limitations and potential sources of error within the results. Discounts applied in the calculation stage minimised the impact of some; however, others require a longer study and an increased sample size.

- Low number of communities consulted: due to time constraints, we were only able to conduct participatory activities in three TA and five CCMP communities. To make the comparison as fair as possible, we asked facilitators to select communities that they considered to be their most successful examples. While, given the circumstances, this was the fairest approach, it meant that unsuccessful and moderately successful examples of CCMP and TA were left out of the analysis. In addition, we were unable to collect data indicating the proportion of communities in which CCMP and TA were highly successful.
- Differences in climate and location: all three TA communities were in Chikwawa, an area of Malawi frequently hit by disasters, as testified to by focus group participants, while the CCMP communities were in areas that have a comparatively more stable climate. This limitation was imposed by the location of Eagles' work, as there were no CCM and TA communities in the same area. Having to respond to disasters more frequently could have restrained the improvements made in TA villages. Although we asked communities to use their situation just before cyclone Idai to answer the questions, previous disasters may still have had an impact
- Unrepresentative focus groups: due to the constraints on communication, staff and community time, communities selected participants. Particularly in the TA communities, this led to focus groups dominated by community leaders and those who were responsible for the project, which could have inflated results due to bias towards their work or over-estimation of the average position of a community member as they were among the better-off and most aware of any positive change.

- One focus group per community: the limitation of one group per community meant that everyone had to do the activity together. In the initial research plan, we hoped to separate men, women, adolescents, children and members of particularly vulnerable groups to allow everyone to comfortably share their views. Nonetheless, the participatory approach gave most participants enough confidence to input and facilitators made space for the quieter to speak up.
- Different lengths of time of Eagles' involvement/ since the end of Eagles' involvement: although we tried to ensure that most communities had been doing TA or CCMP for similar lengths of time, this was not always possible. One CCMP community had only been working with Eagles for two years and another had never had any formal CCMP training, just a theology module in 'God's Heart for the Poor' that Eagles integrated into a Bible school in Blantyre. However this has been conservatively taken into account in the findings.
- Levels of awareness of challenges for the most vulnerable: in CCMP, particular emphasis is placed on understanding all the challenges faced by the community, not just the surface ones, especially the most vulnerable. This more in depth understanding of life from the perspective of the most vulnerable could have led to comparatively lower scoring
- Attributing change: in some of the TA communities, other NGOs had also been working, leading to some complications in attributing the causes of change. However, this was conservatively taken account for this in the calculations so that any positive change in the published results can reliably be assumed to be directly as a result to Eagles' involvement.
- Different starting situations: although we used the change in situation to make calculations, not the resulting situation, to account for differences before Eagles began work, there is the possibility that there is not a direct relationship between effort put in and resulting impact – perhaps a community has to work much harder to move from 1-2 on the scale than from 3-4. To learn whether this really is limitation would require much more study.

3. Findings

Overall impact, cost-effectiveness and sustainability

The Quality of Life Participatory Tool revealed that the successful TA and CCMP communities showed similar levels of average impact, an increase of between three and four, with TA higher by 0.03⁴.

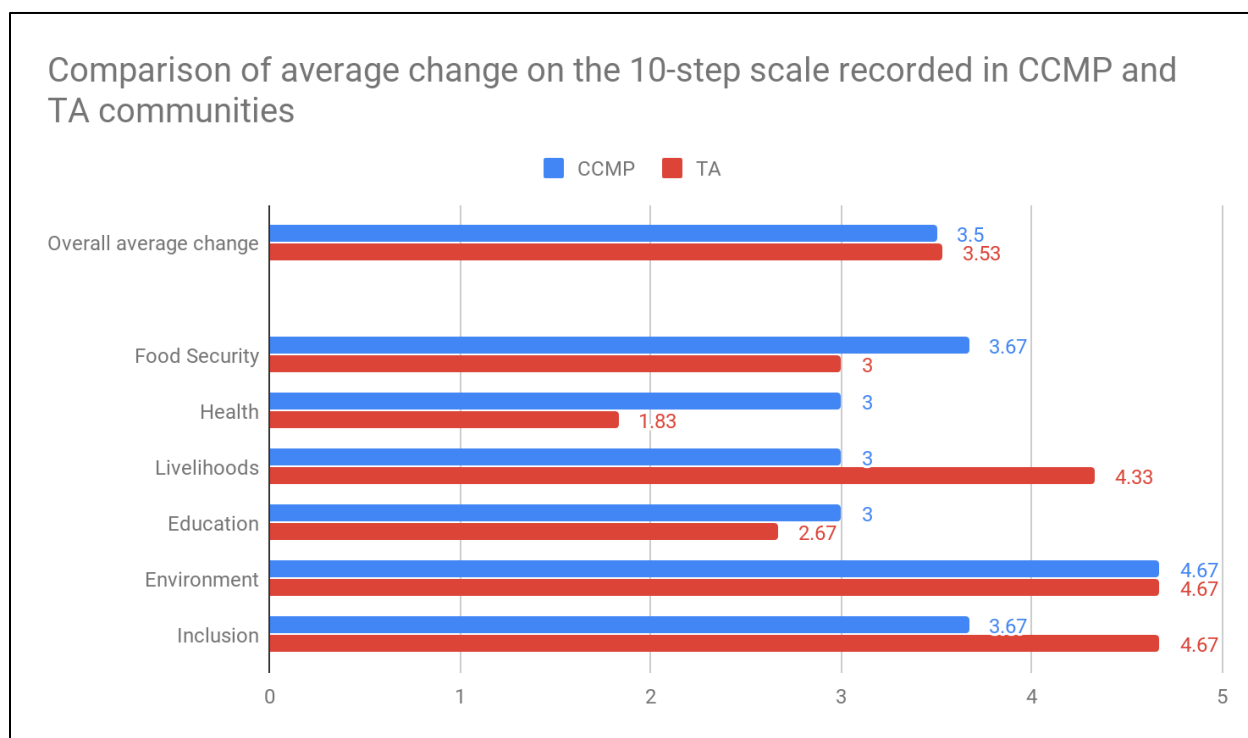


Figure 2. Chart comparing the average change on the Quality of Life scale in CCMP and TA communities in the 6 areas of change.

The TA averages include all three communities: Patawo, Nyamphota and Supuni. In order to give a fair comparison, most of the CCMP averages exclude Mwima as they had not had any formal CCMP training. The pastor mobilised his church and community after completing the 'God's heart for the poor' module that Eagles has integrated into Living Waters Bible School, which explains the theology behind CCMP: that God gives everyone resources and mandates the church to care for the most vulnerable. As the module focused mainly on factors that would contribute towards the inclusion area of change, caring for the most vulnerable and enabling them to play a role in community life, they were included in this average. A conservative discount rate was applied to 'health' and 'inclusion' in some TA communities to account for the work of other NGOs.

⁴ using TA adjusted figures to take external circumstances into account and discounting Mwima and Chifuwa as neither had completed CCMP yet

Analysis of impact

TA communities showed impressive changes in the areas directly impacted by the project or another NGO: food security; livelihoods; environment; and inclusion. In the two communities where another NGO had done health work, there was also significant change; however, in the TA community without that external intervention (Patalawo), there was no change, suggesting the improvement in the others was not due to Eagles. When asked to describe the reasons for the changes across areas, everything mentioned in TA communities was an activity initiated by Eagles or another NGO. This includes (indirectly) the improvement in education which the communities linked to their increased income from improved livelihoods.

On the other hand, CCMP communities attributed their changes to interventions initiated and carried out without external support or through the mindset change brought by CCMP tools and bible studies.

Cost-effectiveness

Taking the average costs into account (excluding Mwima whose cost to Eagles was nothing):

- TA had an average impact of +3.53 across all the areas of change at a cost of £24⁵ per person
- CCMP had an average impact of +3.5 across all the areas of change at a rough cost of 89p⁶ per person

In other words, an increase of '1' on the Quality of Life scale costs £6.80 through TA, whereas it costs 25p through CCMP – meaning it costs 27 times more to get the same impact through TA than CCMP.

Sustainability/ problem solving

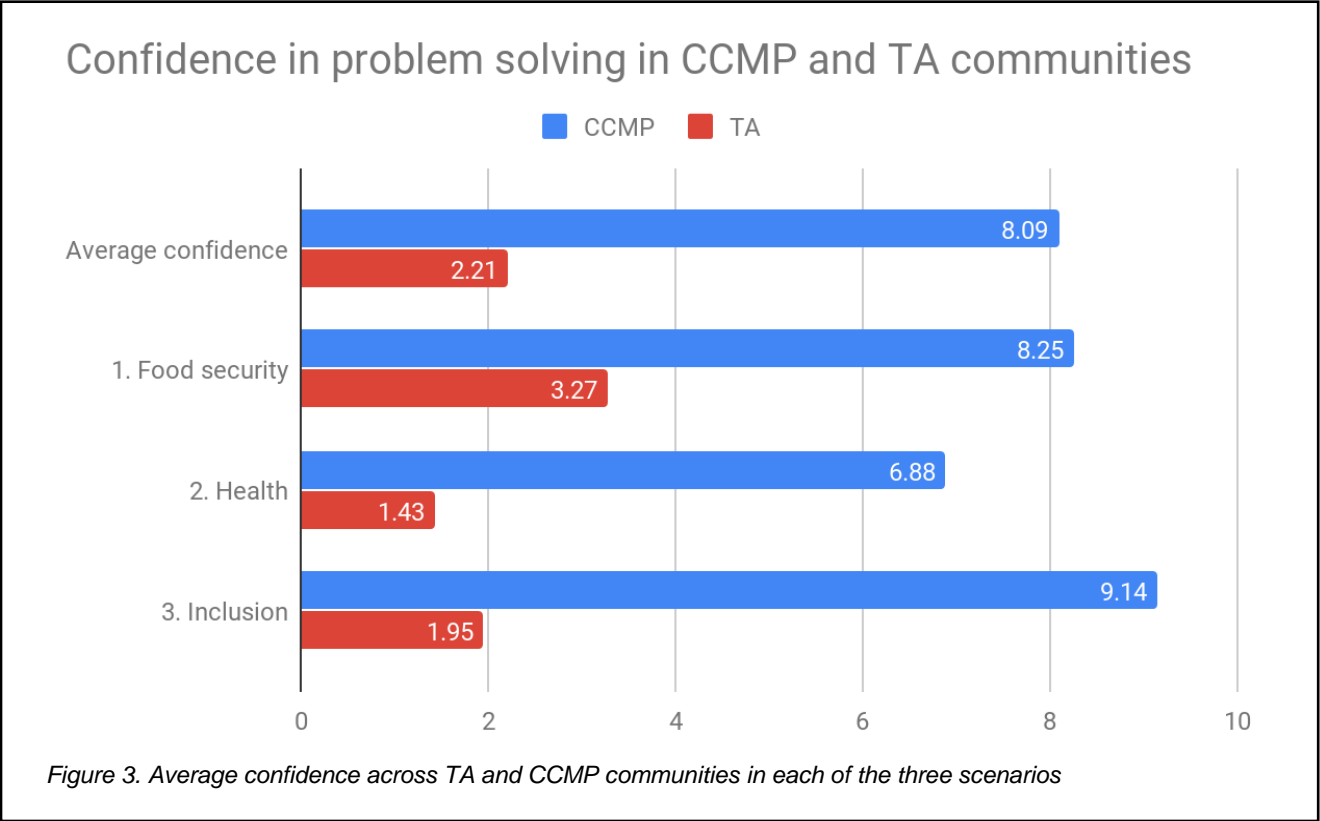
Question	Average Confidence in Community	
	CCMP	TA
1, Food Security: If the pump breaks down, how confident are you that the community would do something to fix the problem?	8.25	3.27
2. Health: If staff from the nearest clinic stopped turning up and there was no medication available, how confident are you that the community would do something about the situation?	6.88	1.43
3. Inclusion: If a mother brought to your attention that children with disabilities were not attending school, how confident are you that the community would do something about the situation?	9.14	1.95
Av. total confidence	8.09	2.21

⁵ cost for TA came from external evaluation

⁶ cost for CCMP was averaged across several projects as costs vary depending how quickly facilitators, churches and communities grasp the ideas

The second half of the participatory tool measured the confidence of individuals that their community would take action to solve a particular problem. High scores suggest some combination (in varying proportions) of: a belief that they are able to solve the problem; seeing the problem as their responsibility; and having ideas of actions to take. It serves as a proxy-indicator for sustainability as Eagles' wider learning shows that the above factors are key to communities continuing to work after a project's end, sustaining impact and beginning new interventions.

The average confidence for TA communities was 2.21 in comparison to 8.09 for CCMP communities, strongly suggesting that CCMP leads to a mindset change away from dependency towards independent problem solving. One CCMP community even discussed what they would do in each case, showing that they not only believed they could solve new problems but could very quickly come up with strategies to do it: everyone contribute money to fix the borehole; go and speak to local government about the clinic; and 'act immediately' so that the children living with disabilities are enabled to go to school.



While the CCMP communities were eager to show off their achievements, all three TA communities asked for Eagles to come back and work with them more so that they could solve other problems. This indicates a dependency on Eagles and lack of belief that they can bring change on their own. There was also no evidence of any activities outside the direct interventions of TA. While most of the impact of TA was still sustained (two years' after its end), the evidence suggested that the current impact is likely to

be the limit – the communities are unlikely to take the initiative to do more. Moreover, when a new problem arises, such as the rains becoming too unpredictable for conservation agriculture to produce enough food, their lack of confidence to solve problems suggests that the intervention will end.

The lowest confidence for both TA and CCMP communities was the question about the clinic. As this one is most likely to need government advocacy, this suggests reluctance to engage with local government or lack of understanding of how to do it, a potential gap in both CCMP and TA. Although still lowest of the three, the confidence of CCMP communities averaged 6.88 as opposed to 0.36, perhaps suggesting greater understanding of other stakeholders or perhaps just greater belief in their collective ability.

Quantitative Comparison of Intervention Costs

Figure 4. Table showing the comparative costs of various interventions if achieved through TA or CCMP

	CCMP	TA	Ratio
Agroforestry / forestry	£0.38 per farmer	£9 per farmer	1:24
Fuel Efficient Stoves	£0.76 per household	£17 per household	1:22
Village Savings and Loans	£3.70 per VSL member	£17 per VSL member	1:5
Conservation Agriculture	£0.64 per farmer	£14 per farmer	1:22
Livestock	£6.05 per beneficiary	£40 per beneficiary	1:7

These results should be taken as indicative rather than absolute. We had a low amount of data available due to the kind of figures needed not being part of Eagles usual monitoring practices – except when part of a specifically funded project, CCMP trainings and monitoring occurred at various points across many years with no record of the total amount spent per community or the numbers of beneficiaries for different interventions. We were forced to use assumptions such as that everyone in the community benefited from interventions such as bridges and roads, and that an ‘intervention’ looked similar across different communities - that it had similar results (such as the same type of bridge), a similar amount of resources went into them and they were similarly sustained.

In TA communities, the figures come from the external evaluation. In CCMP, the costs are not directly related to interventions as the costs in CCMP are training and mobilising facilitators. However, in order to be able to compare the results with TA, we divided the overall cost of implementing CCMP in a community between the different interventions that resulted (based on a cost ratio developed from TA figures and staff experience).

Analysis of impact

Despite these limitations and the lack of data as to the comparative impact of an intervention in different communities, which would be needed for a full analysis, the consistency with which interventions are many times less expensive through CCMP strongly implies that it is more cost effective to equip communities with the skills to mobilise their own resources than to intervene directly. In addition, these quantitative results closely mirror that of the qualitative participatory tool (which

suggested equal impact on community quality of life at just 4% of the cost), thus making both results more credible.

As CCMP targets and engages whole communities, the interventions which benefit most households came out as 22-24 times cheaper through CCMP. Interventions which target smaller numbers of individuals, such as VSL groups or livestock, are 5-7 times cheaper through CCMP. However, all the figures used for CCMP were extremely conservative, meaning it is likely to be many times more cost-effective than the results show. For example:

- if the community said ‘everyone used a fuel-efficient stove’ or ‘all farmers are doing conservation agriculture’ but was unable to give exact figures, we estimated it at 50%
- we used only initial beneficiary households for livestock pass-on even though it is planned to benefit every household

Moreover, the figures for TA do not take into account any indirect costs, such as staff salaries, office rental, transport etc, while the figures for CCMP included everything.

Food Security

Food security is a great concern for communities in Malawi where many households struggle to find enough food to last between harvests and 37% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition (National Statistics Office). In the ‘Quality of Life’ tool, community members defined the worst position a village could be in as having no food supply for the whole year, being wholly reliant on ‘piece work’ (daily labour for little pay) to buy food to survive and often going three days without a meal. In an ‘ideal village’, everyone would have three meals a day for the whole year.

Most of the communities that participated marked their initial position as very low on the scale. They attributed this to a great extent to the challenge of relying on rain-fed agriculture in an ever more unpredictable climate without the knowledge of how to farm effectively or adapt to the new conditions. Most struggled to find enough food for most of the year.

Despite this challenging context, both TA and CCMP had a significant impact on the food security of all the participating communities, with a roughly equal improvement of +3 on the 10-step scale as a result of Eagles’ projects. TA communities recorded improvements of between +2 and +4, while the impact of CCMP was between +2 and +7. This is particularly impressive for CCMP, given that food security was a core element of TA: communities mobilised through local churches used their own resources to bring comparable progress in food security as TA communities given drought-resistant seeds and treadle pumps (for irrigation), and directly trained in conservation agriculture and post-harvest management.

	Average initial position on 10-step scale	Average final position on 10-step scale	Average change
CCMP	2.5	5.75	+3.25
TA	1.67	4.67	+3

Figure 5. Table showing the average change in food security in TA and CCMP communities

Increased food security had a positive effect on other areas, such as increased harvests giving surplus food to sell, boosting income and enabling families to pay for school fees (Livelihoods and Education).

CCMP communities attributed these changes to being mobilised to work together and their new confidence to envision the future. They said instead of wasting time on unproductive activities, they made plans, prioritised, and invested time where it would be most rewarding. Many began using their available resources to make fertiliser to increase their harvests. In TA communities, they attributed the changes to the direct interventions of TA described above.

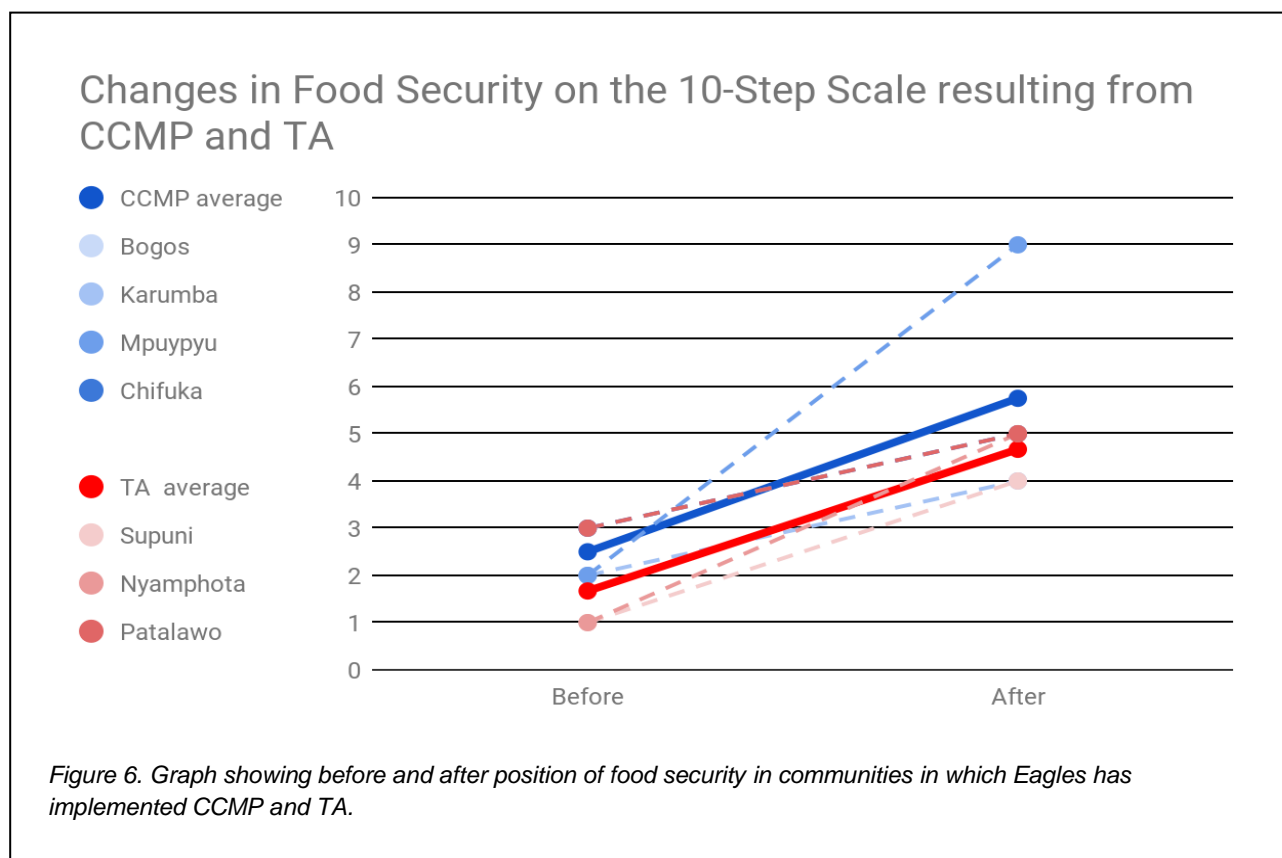


Figure 6. Graph showing before and after position of food security in communities in which Eagles has implemented CCMP and TA.

Changes in Food Security on the 10-Step Scale resulting from CCMP and TA

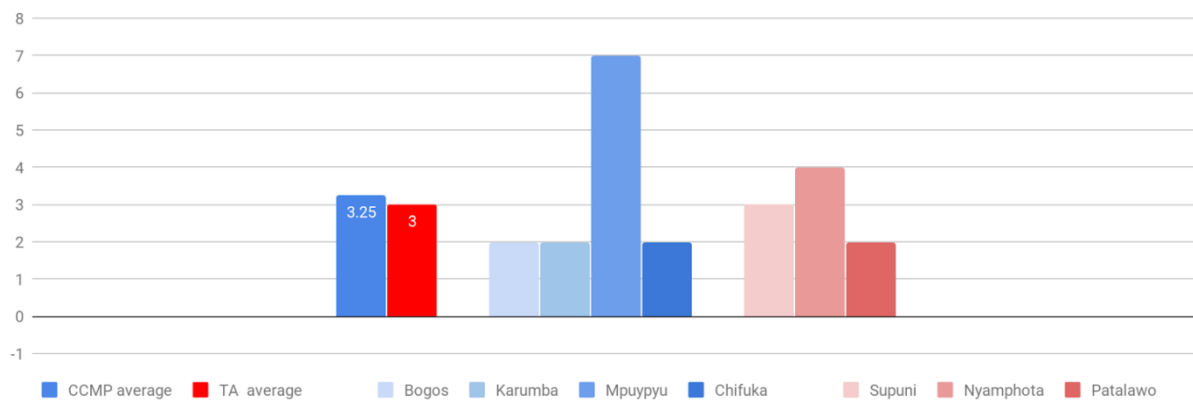


Figure 7. Graph showing change in food security on the 10-step scale in each community, as well as the averages for the CCMP and TA communities. The blue communities are those which had received CCMP, and the red communities were those that had received TA through Eagles.

The quantitative comparison of the cost of farmers doing conservation agriculture through CCMP and TA showed a ratio of 1:22 (£0.64 per farmer through CCMP and £14 through TA)

CCMP in Action

Over three years after Eagles' last visit with no subsequent contact, Kamkwere village noticed and took action on a new problem: increasingly unpredictable rains, The solution was entirely designed and resourced by themselves, without any external support at all. By the time of Eagles' visit a year after, crops and animals were thriving around an earth tank that they had built, enabling them to irrigate at all times of year.

"We saw that rainfall was now unpredictable and that was affected the food availability in our village. So the community met together to discuss ideas. We decided to dig something to catch rainwater. So now even if the rains fail, we can still water our crops and get a harvest. We are now planning to expand it and bring in fish to provide added income." Raphael (CCMP facilitator)

Health

According to the focus group that made the Quality of Life tool, a village at step 1 would have very low sanitation levels (no toilets or bathrooms); dirty water leading to widespread cholera; an environment in which mosquitos thrive; no access to nutritious food; and difficulty accessing a clinic. An ideal village would have good quality drinking water; sanitary drop-toilets; good hygiene habits; nutritious food; good quality of air; and close proximity to a functioning clinic. Their concerns are reflected in national statistics. Malawi has an estimated 0.12 healthcare workers for every 1,000 people (totalling doctors, clinical officers and medical assistants) - Kenya has about 10 times as many skilled professionals (Greenberg). In rural areas, clinics can often be dangerously far away, many people have no means of

transport, and most clinics are short on medical supplies. Two particularly prevalent diseases are malaria and HIV - more than one million Malawi children are orphaned due to HIV/AIDS (USAID).

All communities placed their initial position as very low on the scale. Most had: no toilets, or very few, and mainly used bushes; no bathrooms so they had to wash in the same bushes, often at night to avoid embarrassment; few boreholes; no easy access to health care; and high levels of disease from unclean water, lack of nutritious food and inhaling smoke from open fires.

The average improvement in health was +2.75 in CCMP communities and +1.83 in TA, once adjusted to account for external factors. In two of the TA communities, Supuni and Nyamphota, other NGOs had been working on health: Catholic Relief worked on hygiene habits and gave supplementary food to young children and lactating mothers in both; United Concern built a slab-toilet for every household, bathrooms and two more boreholes in Nyamphota. Notably the one TA community (Patalawo) that had not received additional support in the area of health recorded no change, whereas Supuni and Nyamphota expressed large positive changes of +7 and +4 respectively - suggesting that most of the change was due to the activities of the other NGOs. However, Supuni also mentioned that using fuel-efficient stoves - a TA intervention - had reduced respiratory diseases, presumably provoked by the smoke from open fires, so we applied a very conservative discount rate of 50% on the positive change in health in Supuni and Nyamphota.

	Average initial position on 10-step scale	Average final position on 10-step scale	Average change
CCMP	3.25	6.00	+2.75
TA	1.33	3.17	+1.83

Figure 8. Table showing the average change in health in TA and CCMP communities

In CCMP communities, improvements in health were attributed to activities they had done themselves, such as mobilising everyone in the community to build their own toilet (and building them for those physically unable to do so); raising awareness about hygiene; improving access to hospitals by constructing a bridge; building wells; and using chlorine to ensure clean drinking water.

CCMP in Action

For years Chifuka village desperately needed a bridge to reach their nearest hospital—but no action took place. Without the bridge, people were almost cut off from the hospital, having to struggle across a river—which was life-threatening when seriously ill or pregnant.

They waited for years for the government or some charity to fix this for them. Less than a year after Eagles began CCMP, they built one using only their own resources.

The Area Development Committee Chair said: *“This process is really helping us here and changing the mindsets of the people... We used to expect people from town to come and do things for us; now we do things for ourselves.”*

Changes in Health on the 10-Step Scale resulting from CCMP and TA

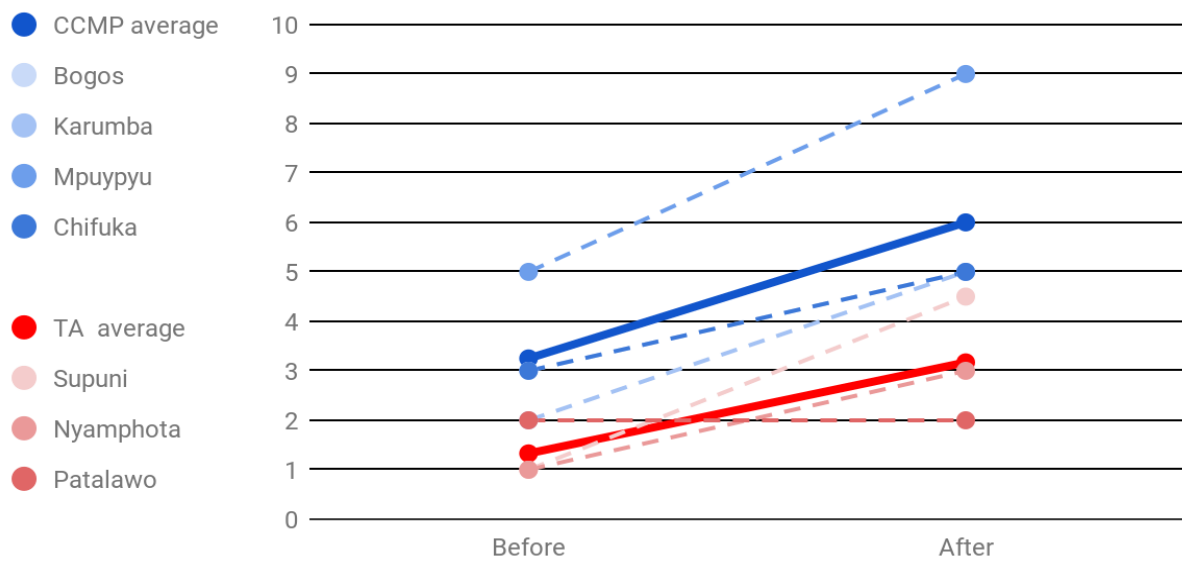


Figure 9. Graph showing before and after position of health in communities in which Eagles has implemented CCMP and TA.

Changes in Health on the 10-Step Scale resulting from CCMP and TA

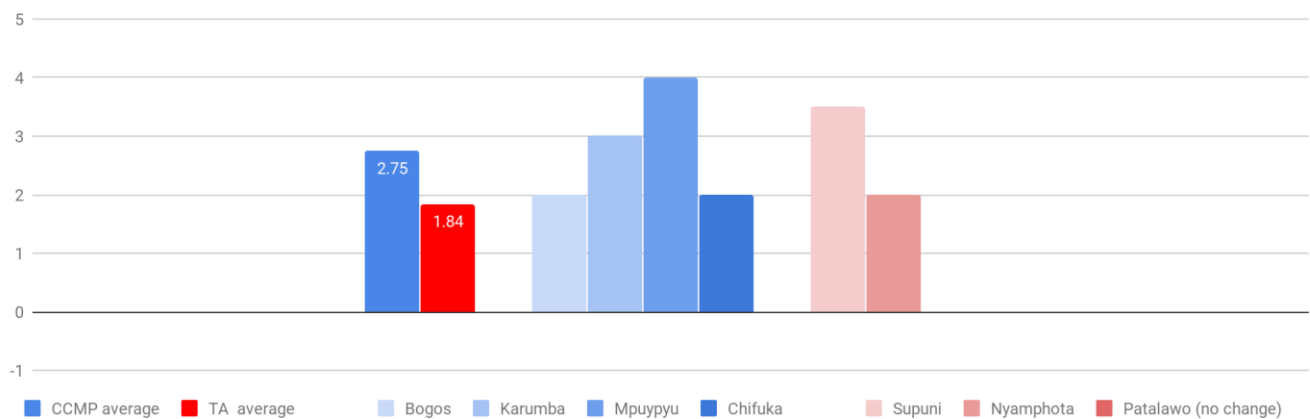


Figure 10. Graph showing change in health on the 10-step scale in each community, as well as the averages for the CCMP and TA communities. The blue communities are those which had received CCMP, and the red communities were those that had received TA through Eagles.

This was the area of lowest change through CCMP, indicative perhaps of the key role of local government in this area. The reluctance of communities to engage with government was demonstrated in the sustainability scenario that asked about whether action would be taken if health staff stopped turning up at a clinic, the solution to which one community identified would involve government advocacy. Of all the scenarios, this was the one about which CCMP and TA communities had the least certainty that they would take action (an average of 0.43 and 6.88 for TA and CCMP respectively, compared to their average of 2.21 and 8.09).

Livelihoods

People living in a village at step 1 were described as having no stable income and no businesses. Around step 5, they said people might have money for a few months of the year following the harvest, if they had extra food to sell. At step 10, everyone would have an income for the whole year through small-scale businesses and accessing loans through village banking. Many people in Malawi are still dependent on subsistence agriculture - more than a third of rural households earn their livelihood only from farming or fishing (IFAD). This was the initial situation in most of the villages that we visited, where everyone relied on farming with no alternative sources of income. In one, they did not have enough money to buy soap; in another they had to grind maize into flour by hand as they could not afford even the very low fees at the mill. Many could not afford school fees - although primary school in Malawi is 'free', children must have a uniform, books, stationary and pay the 'school fund'.

	Average initial position on 10-step scale	Average final position on 10-step scale	Average change
CCMP	2.75	5.75	+3
TA	1.67	6	+4.33

Figure 11. Table showing the average change in livelihoods in TA and CCMP communities

Both CCMP and TA brought significant improvements in this area, with TA an average of over +4 on the ladder. A main cause of this was cited in all three TA villages as the livestock programme, in which a relatively large amount of capital (in the form of goats) was directly injected into the communities, and the setting up and training of VSL groups.

Changes in Livelihoods on the 10-Step Scale resulting from CCMP and TA

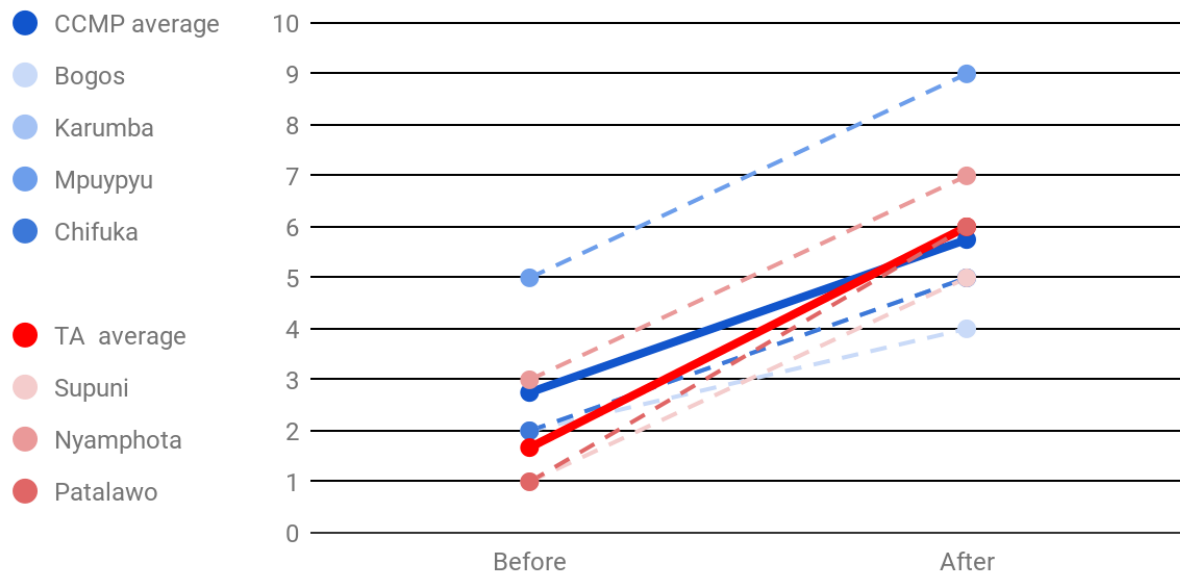


Figure 12. Graph showing before and after position of livelihoods in communities in which Eagles has implemented CCMP and TA.

Community members who had been through CCMP attributed the improvements to the greater social cohesion as people worked together to improve their lives. Many communities set up VSL groups, enabling people to access loans and begin a small scale business; in others, increased harvests from conservation agriculture gave them extra to sell. Both sets of communities said that the impact of VSL groups was limited however as, following the yearly share-out, the money had to be immediately spent on school fees or medical bills, rather than used to expand their business. Even the livestock was often sold to make an emergency payment.

CCMP in Action

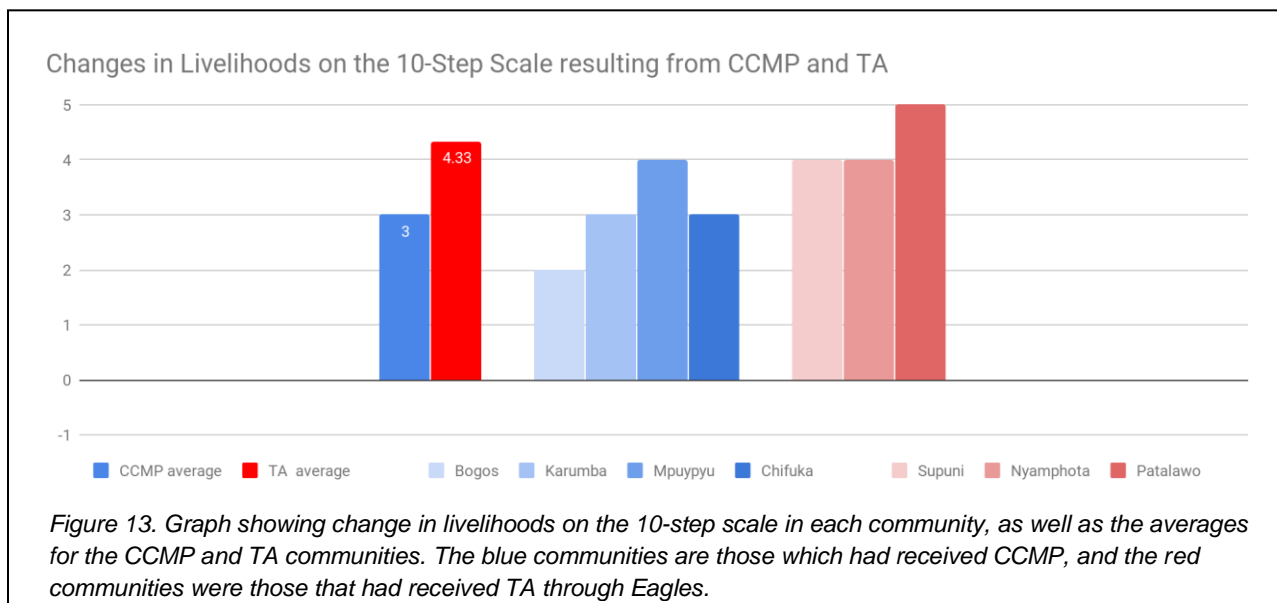
Inspired by Eagles, the pastor of Nanjiri determined to fight poverty within his community in a way which brought about self-reliance rather than creating dependency. He trained those interested from his congregation in budgeting and business management. This group started a business together to earn enough capital to each set up on their own. The group learned to bake from a man in a neighbouring village and make and sell them twice a week, saving all the money. In a couple of months, they will have enough for every member of the group to take a loan to begin their own business.

Each week, the business group give money to support the poorest in the church: the elderly, widows and orphans who cannot care for themselves. Once each member has their own business, they will still continue baking, purely to provide for these vulnerable groups. Grateful for the way that the business has transformed their lives, the group is eager to serve the community in whatever way they can.

These improvements in livelihoods had significant knock-on effects in other areas: in education, as money was used to pay school fees; in food security, as savings through VSL allowed people to buy food to last until the next harvest and to buy fertilizer to increase harvests; and in health as people could buy soap.

Interventions in this area were closer in cost between CCMP and TA. VSL groups cost only five times more through TA, perhaps due to its relatively low cost either way and a livestock intervention costs seven times more through TA, though with two qualifications: firstly, TA livestock was a mixture of goats, pigs and chickens while the CCMP data used was for just chickens; on the other hand, the CCMP community had only just begun and so the figures were for the initial beneficiaries although they planned to reach the whole village, whereas the TA communities had already reached the third stage of the pass-on programme.

CCMP communities, with no direct inputs, were able to initiate similar interventions to those done by Eagles in TA. They came up with the same idea of livestock pass-on but brought all the animals themselves. They also set up their own VSL groups, either without training or finding someone to do the training themselves - one village took the initiative to ask Eagles to come to provide the training, not only without expecting any allowances for attending (which many communities have been led to expect by other NGOs), but promising to provide the venue and food themselves, and even offering to cover Eagles' petrol costs.



Education

Almost 30% of children in poverty in Malawi do not start primary school (IFAD). Many of the children in the participating communities were amongst the 30%, many beginning at 2 or 3 on the ladder, when 1 was defined as 'no children in the village attend school; parents do not see this as an issue; no adults can read and write'. They said that an ideal community would be one in which all children complete

secondary school - currently only 58.5% of school-going children complete even the first four years (UNICEF). They said that achieving this would be dependent on the value that parents placed on education, illustrating his by saying that at the times of year when maize grows high and walking to school has risks of violence, parents in an ideal community would walk their children to school instead of letting them remain home. The issues that villages described as currently keeping education levels low were that schools were far away, expensive, and lacking in teachers. Even in primary school, children must pay for a uniform, books and the 'school fund', meaning that many families in poverty cannot send their children. Both TA and CCMP had a roughly equal improvement of +3 on the ladder. In TA, this tended to be a knock-on effect from improvements in livelihoods, while in CCMP it tended to be from direct actions. This shows the strength of the livelihoods aspect of TA and suggests that one of the most significant hindrances to children attending school is the cost.

	Average initial position on 10-step scale	Average final position on 10-step scale	Average change
CCMP	2.75	5.5	+2.75
TA	3.33	6	+2.67

Figure 14. Table showing the average change in education in TA and CCMP communities

Some of the direct actions taken by CCMP communities were extremely creative. In one, chiefs and church leaders worked together to raise awareness about the importance of education with parents and then created by-laws to punish those that did not insist on their children going - a unique idea seen in no other villages that Eagles has worked with. They also built a primary school for over 200 pupils, staffed by community volunteers, paid the costs for all the orphans to attend and held adult literacy classes. Other villages began Community-Based Child Care Centres (CBCCCs), focusing on early childhood development to better prepare children for school (as well as enabling their parents to work in the fields without worry). Another has built teachers' houses to encourage better ones to come. This variety demonstrates a key

CCMP in Action

Eagles trained Kanyazuka church to work with local villages to identify and solve their problems together. The villages tackled education. Before Eagles', most parents were preoccupied with growing enough food to survive and children struggled to adjust when they began primary school - falling behind and dropping out early. So they set up seven child-care centres for the under-fives to give every child the vital social and mental stimulation required for healthy development, staffed by community volunteers. Not satisfied with the quality of the centres, the community successfully advocated to the government for training for these volunteers. They raised funds for the government expert's food and accommodation, feeling it a privilege to invest in their own development.

Everyone contributes food each day so that the children eat a nutritious meal. If a child is ill, everyone helps raise the funds for the hospital treatment. They also welcome children who are often left out of school, including one who is deaf; others with learning difficulties; and another who cannot walk.

"Once our children are educated, our community will change." Volunteer teacher

benefit of CCMP - the way that communities can pinpoint the exact hindrance in their context and take action on that.

Changes in Education on the 10-Step Scale resulting from CCMP and TA

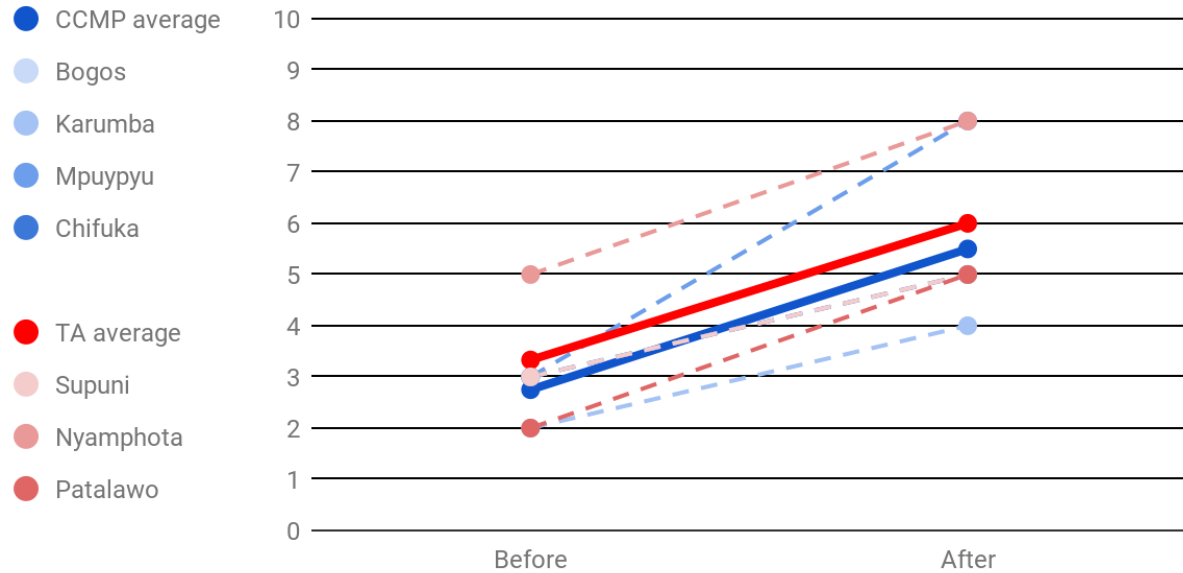


Figure 15. Graph showing before and after position of education in communities in which Eagles has implemented CCMP and TA.

Changes in Education on the 10-Step Scale resulting from CCMP and TA

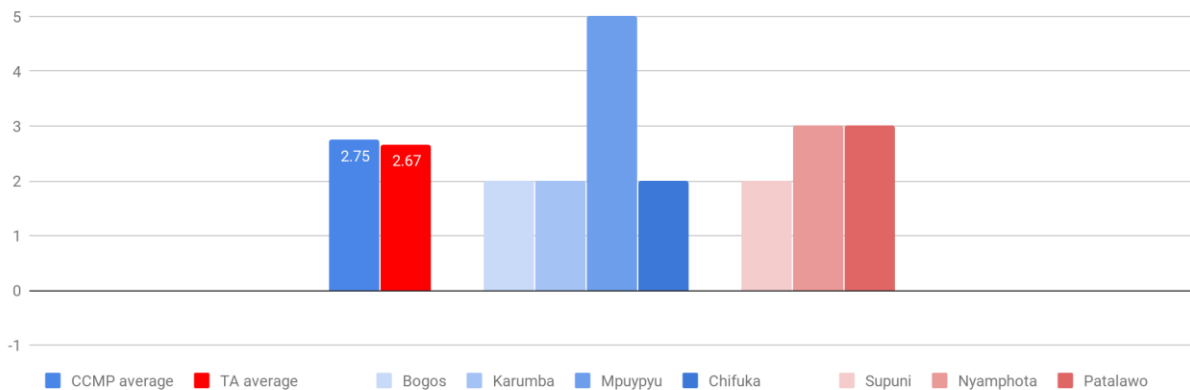


Figure 16. Graph showing change in education on the 10-step scale in each community, as well as the averages for the CCMP and TA communities. The blue communities are those which had received CCMP, and the red communities were those that had received TA through Eagles.

CCMP in Action

In Alawe village very few children could attend school as it was so far. Instead, many laboured long hours. Challenged by Eagles' training, an innovative group of pastors determined to end child labour and ensure every boy and girl has an education. One pastor says: "From the Bible studies, we learned we could use resources that we have in our community. We also learned how important it is to help the needy & how to work together as a church and community. So everyone joined together to build their own school. Seeing their commitment, the government promised to send teachers once it is completed. They have also established an adult literacy class.

Caring for Environment

Communities in Malawi face the daily tension between caring for their environment and their short-term needs. Only 11% of the country have access to electricity (SE4ALL Global Tracking Framework), leaving everyone else dependent on wood or charcoal for cooking. This has led to massive deforestation - the loss of an estimated 33,000 hectares per year (Mauambeta). The government instigated measures such as military protection for forests, but this causes its own challenges. Without alternatives, wood is vital for communities to eat and to build their homes. It has also led to gender-based violence from the forest guards as women gather wood.

The 'Quality of Life' tool described a village at step 1 as constantly cutting down and not replanting trees; a lack of interest from chiefs in the environment; plastic and other waste being dumped anywhere; and cooking done on open fires, requiring large amounts of wood. In contrast, at step 10 there would be no trouble with firewood as community members would constantly replant trees; there would be rubbish pits for all waste; everyone would use fuel-efficient stoves; and everyone would make manure to improve soil fertility. This final point is vital and links to food security as much of the soil is degraded - maize, the staple food, is especially hard to grow without fertiliser, which is too expensive for most farmers to buy. Initially most communities put themselves at close to step 1, cutting trees down without considering the consequences and just cooking on open fires.

	Average initial position on 10-step scale	Average final position on 10-step scale	Average change
CCMP	2.5	6.75	+4.25
TA	2	6.67	+4.67

Figure 17. Table showing the average change in how people care for the environment in TA and CCMP communities

Both CCMP and TA saw significant impact in this area: +4.25 for CCMP and +4.67 for TA. TA communities mentioned project activities such as building fuel efficient stoves and planting trees with material inputs such as the seeds or seedlings. These activities also had knock-on effects in other areas, such as fuel efficient stoves reducing respiratory diseases. In CCMP, some of the changes were attributed to a

theological shift as churches understood the need to value and care for God’s creation. This led to attitudes changing within the community, with every community beginning to plant trees and use fuel efficient stoves. One community chief insisted that everyone plant their own forest at their home and created by-laws to protect the forests around, such as an elected forest committee from whom people have to get permission to cut down a tree.

Changes in 'Cared-for Environment' on the 10-Step Scale resulting from CCMP and TA

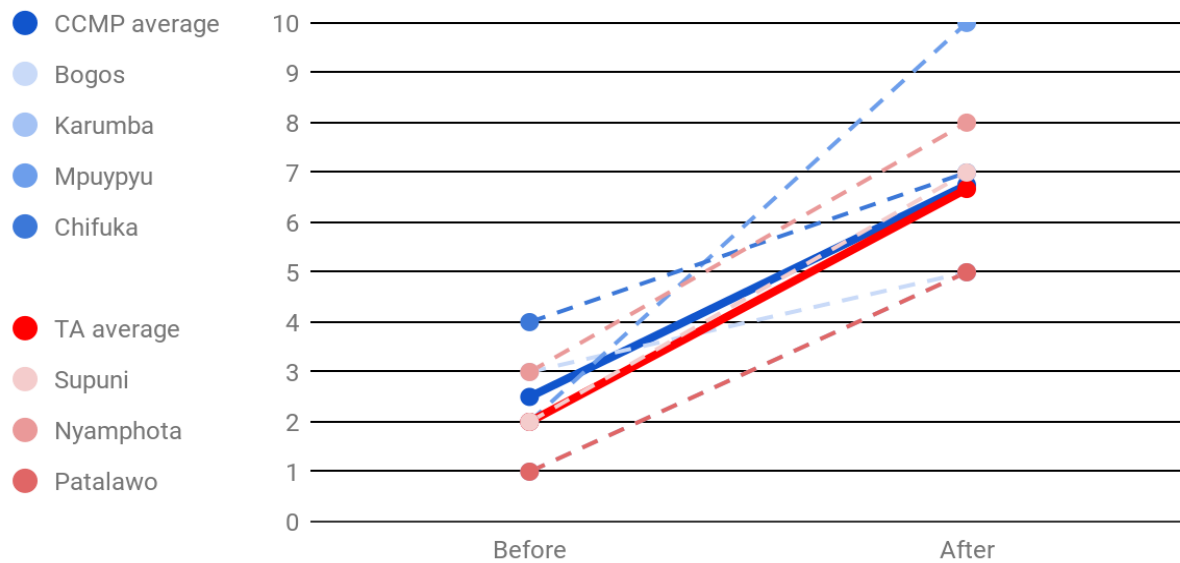


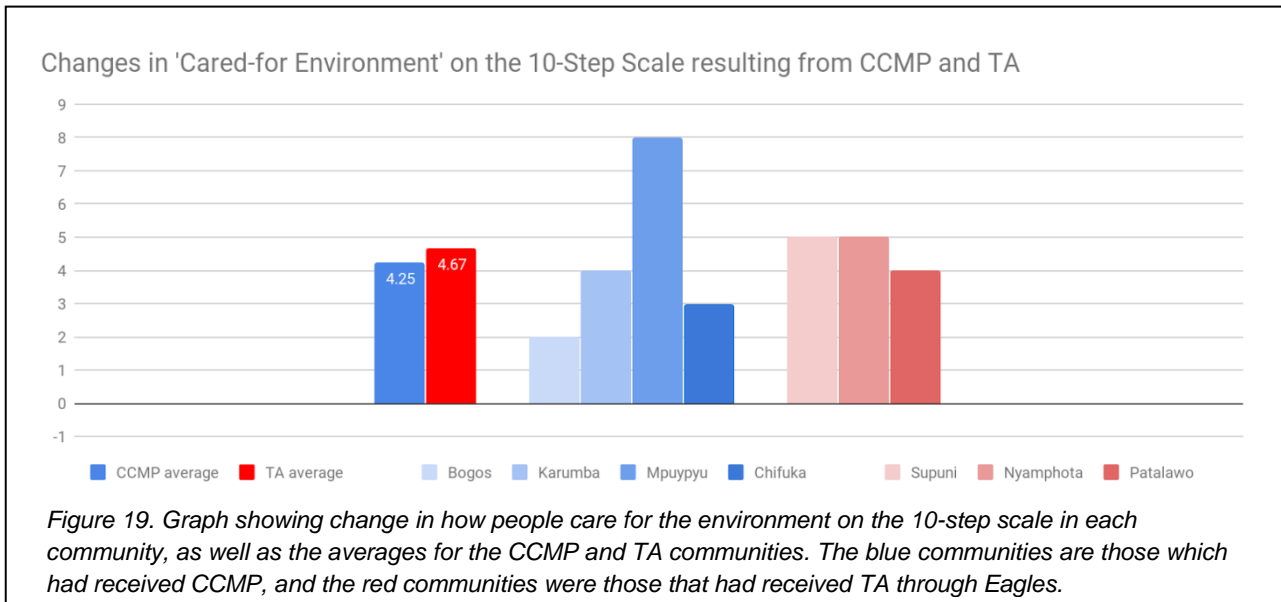
Figure 18. Graph showing before and after position of how people care for the environment in communities in which Eagles has implemented CCMP and TA.

Two interventions particularly contribute to this area of change: agroforestry and fuel-efficient stoves (although both are also relevant to other areas of change, as discussed above). Forests are vital for a community’s survival, not only for fuel and building material, but also for food security. Trees provide nutrients to the soil and stop the nutrient-rich topsoil being washed away in heavy rain; they also provide a

CCMP in Action

“Eagles also taught us to care for the environment. Before, we were cutting trees carelessly. Eagles taught us to care for trees – every time we cut one, to replace it with ten. Trees help us to receive good rains. For example, before Eagles, our mountain was heavily deforested. Now we are proud to say we have trees again and it is looking beautiful. We have a committee trusted to look after the trees on the mountain. People must ask their permission before cutting a tree. Everyone is planting trees. Eagles also showed us fuel efficient stoves – this saves a lot of trees as they use less firewood. Eagles taught us to dig refuse pits to throw litter. Now, almost everyone has a rubbish pit.”
Samson Chidule, chairman of pastors’ & leaders’ committee, Mpuypyu

physical barrier to flood water. Not to mention their value in removing carbon from the atmosphere. Fuel-efficient stoves contribute to forestry by reducing trees being cut down and also have some knock-on effect in health by reducing respiratory diseases. It costs 23 times more to implement fuel efficient stoves through TA than for communities to do it themselves using locally available resources through CCMP, and 24 times more to do forestry. These calculations use very conservative figures for CCMP. This again demonstrates that communities can accomplish the same outcomes using locally available resources as through the external material inputs of a project, once the mindset of dependency is broken.



Inclusion

The final area of change was the least tangible: the inclusion of marginalised or stigmatised groups in the community, the extent to which they are enabled to participate in community life. As defined on the 'Quality of Life' tool, in a village at step 1, people living with HIV would be stigmatised, unable to take part in the community and even made victims of violence; women would not be valued or considered in decision-making processes; and those living with disability would be ignored. At step 10, the village declared that all three of these groups, as well as others, would be enabled to fully participate in community life, leadership and decision-making; there would be no stigma; and there would be strong social cohesion within the community.

While discussing the situation before Eagles, both TA and CCMP communities acknowledged how much they struggled in this area. People were described as isolated, not helping each other. Those with HIV used to hide the fact, scared of the stigma and active discrimination that they would face. Through ignorance about how it is spread, people would not shake hands with those living with HIV and would wash the places they sat before anyone else would sit there. Women were not considered of any importance; their role was considered to be cooking at home, and very few were on committees or in

positions of leadership. They also pointed out that those who had not been able to attend school were stigmatised and their opinions not see as valuable.

This area saw significant improvements through both TA and CCMP - an average change of +5 in CCMP and +4.67 in TA, the highest of all the areas of change. While most of this was attributed to Eagles' work, Nyamphota was also targeted by a government campaign which promoted 'discrimination against discrimination' as well as encouraging working together as a community. Notably, there was a huge change of +8 on the 10-step scale recorded in Nyamphota, while Supuni and Patalawo (the other TA communities) both recorded a change of +4. As a result, we applied a conservative 25% discount rate on the change recorded in Nyamphota to account for the additional influence of the Government campaign. Unlike for the other areas of change, Mwima is included in the CCMP average because, although they had not had any official CCMP training, the bible school module that the pastor had completed was considered sufficient to count as 'CCMP training' in the area of inclusion.

	Average initial position on 10-step scale	Average final position on 10-step scale	Average change
CCMP	2.2	7.2	+5
TA	1	5.67	+4.67

Figure 20. Table showing the average change in how much the marginalised are included and participate in community life in TA and CCMP communities

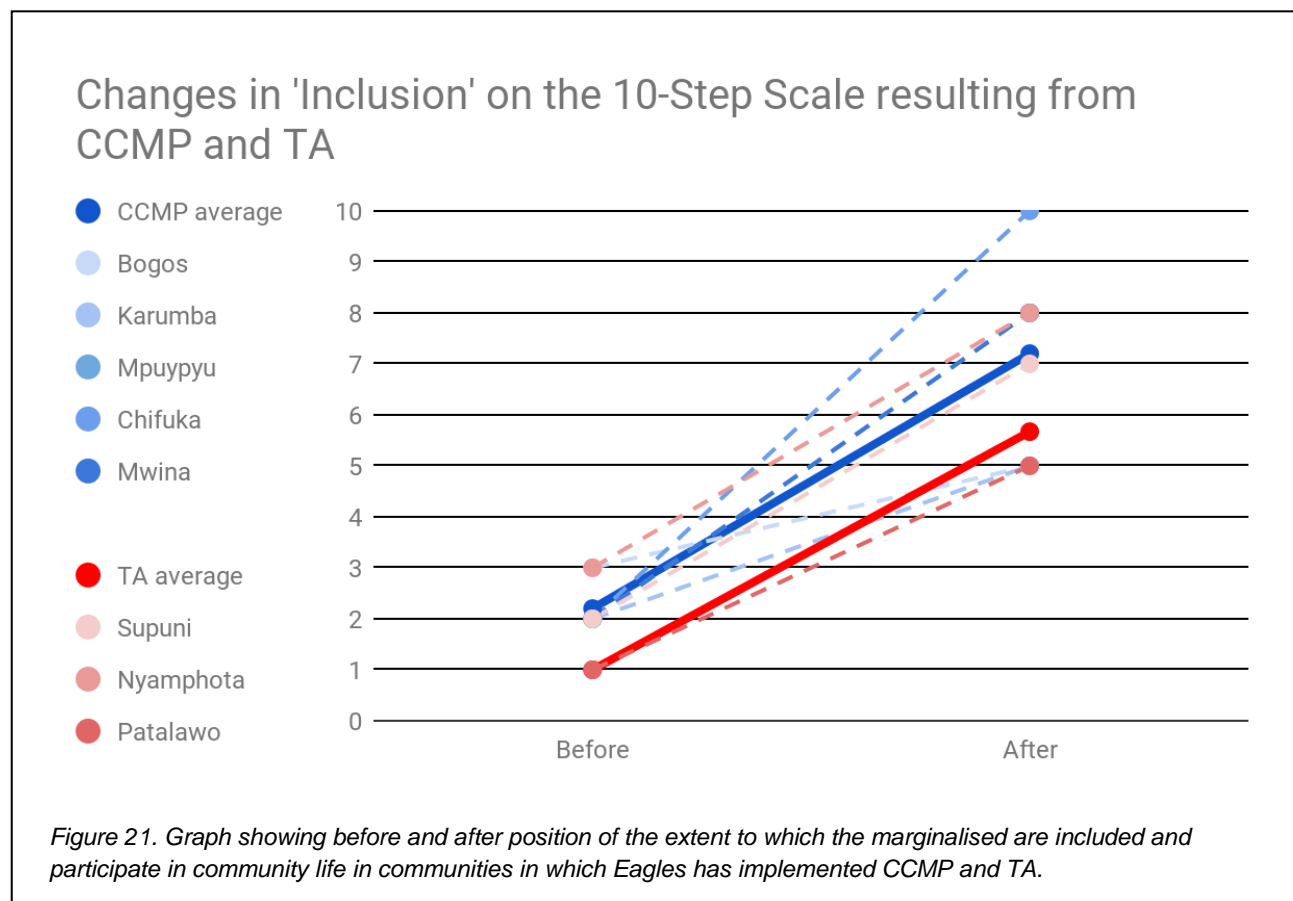
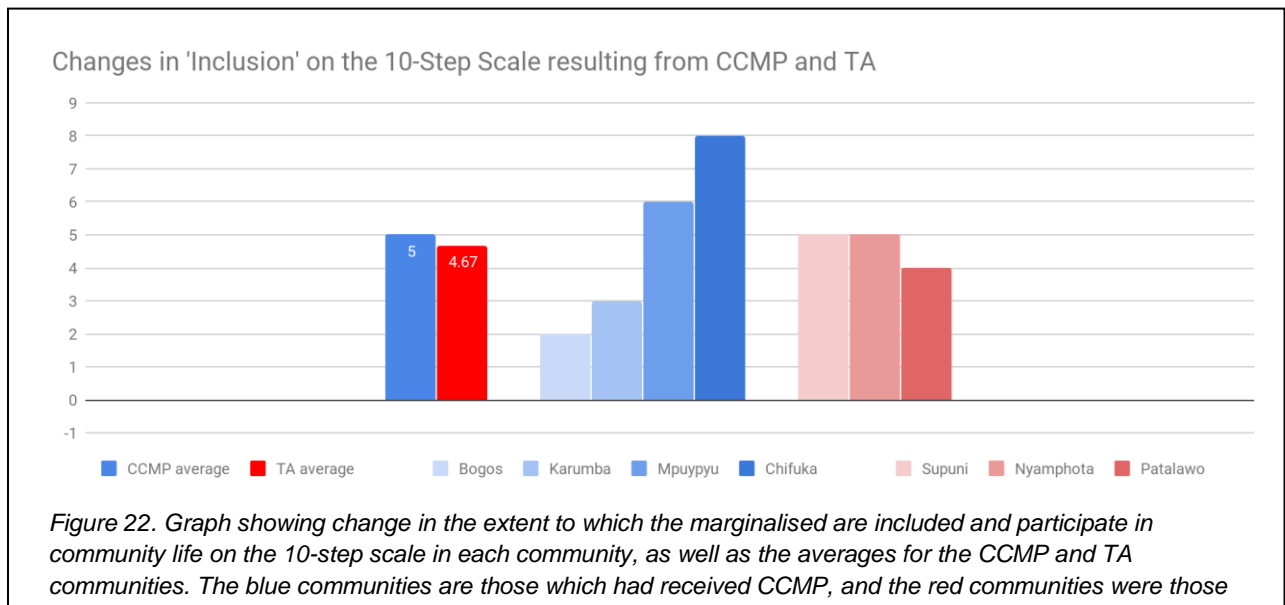


Figure 21. Graph showing before and after position of the extent to which the marginalised are included and participate in community life in communities in which Eagles has implemented CCMP and TA.

The changes in TA were largely due to the trainings that Eagles gave on gender and inclusion at the beginning of other trainings and the stipulation of mixed-gender committees. These had significant impact in areas of HIV and gender equality, but those living with disabilities were still largely excluded. In CCMP, they said that bible studies had shown them the need to love and care for one another, especially those living with disabilities. While in TA, the increase in inclusion was mainly due to a decrease in stigma and increase in participation, most CCMP communities also took direct action, such as building houses and farming for those unable to do it for themselves. One CCMP community tackled the challenge of raising these issues using participatory dramas around sexual abuse and living with HIV.



CCMP in Action

“Before Eagles, people living with HIV were discriminated against, even when we were distributing things. But Eagles has taught us to love one another so we sat together with the chiefs to discuss this – we are all made in the image of God. People living with HIV did not choose it, anyone can be affected. So now we work with community leaders to care for those affected by HIV. Eagles showed us that to be living with HIV does not mean that life is ended.” Samson Chidule, chairman of pastors’ & community leaders’ committee, Mpyupyu

The CCMP Difference – its value-added

Sustainability & problem-solving

While TA demonstrated impressive impact within the scope of the project, the proxy-measurement of sustainability within the participatory tool and the attitudes of community members during the research provide evidence in line with Eagles' Theory of Change: that CCMP catalyses a change in mindset from dependency to taking responsibility for their own development that is key to long-term impact. Within this research, no TA community demonstrated taking the initiative to do anything unprompted by an NGO, suggesting results will be limited and may unravel as new problems arise. Every TA community visited requested that Eagles return and do another project, demonstrating dependency on Eagles and the belief that they could not solve their own problems.

An end-of-project evaluation of TA states the following in reference to sustainability: "There are some instances of dis-adoption of conservation agriculture, of households being unable to manage VSL contributions or of stoves being broken and not replaced. However, there are also signs of new VSL groups being formed, a surplus of stoves being manufactured and of growing areas being put under conservation agriculture." While some interventions were continuing, in other places they had already stopped shortly after the project's end, suggesting lack of ownership by the communities. The low problem-solving ability uncovered in the participatory tool is echoed here by community's lack of response to broken stoves. The surplus of stoves being manufactured suggests that even where communities were keen to take action, TA failed to equip them with the tools to effectively think through their own issues - community analysis could have redirected their efforts into something more productive.

In contrast, CCMP communities' responses during the participatory tool as well as anecdotal evidence from experienced Eagles staff and interviews with community members, demonstrate that CCMP equips communities to take responsibility for their own development and solve their own problems with their own resources. The following quotations from community members describe the impact of CCMP:

- "In the past, we used to hope that some NGO or politician would come to help us. Now we just meet as a community, decide what we need to do, and do it." *Community member*
- "If the NGO had just come here to build us a well, people's commitment would not have been there. It was because *we* identified the problem and approached *them* that we were all so committed to the work. One pump was damaged by thieves, and the community immediately repaired it by itself! We would not have done this if it hadn't been initiated by us." *Community member*
- "In the future, our village will be so advanced! If you depend on organisations, they come and go, but if you are self-reliant, you develop yourselves." *Village Chief*
- "We have learned to make the most of our resources. Things we used to think were useless, we now use to develop ourselves. We have learned to be self-reliant." *Village Chief*

- “This process is really helping us here and changing the mindsets of the people... we used to expect people from town to come and do things for us; now we do things for ourselves.” *Area Development Committee Chair*

One particularly notable example of CCMP’s self-propagation is that of Kamkwere village: over three years after Eagles’ last visit with no contact between (they only found out while passing a year later), Kamkwere village noticed and took action on a new problem, the solution entirely designed and resourced by themselves, without any external support at all. By the time of Eagles’ visit a year after, crops and animals were thriving around the earth tank that they had built (21mx16mx2m) as they were able to irrigate at all times of year.

In the words of Victor Mughogho, Eagles Executive Director, “I know 2+2=4. It’s very easy for me to tell a community that - for example, to train them how to increase food security

“Dependency keeps us in poverty. The feeling of helplessness, like you can do nothing on your own. In my view, Malawi remains poor because we have not harnessed what we have. We have but we do not use, so we remain poor. Eagles deals with people’s mindset which is the engine for change. We help people to understand that they have resources and talents to use to change their situation – we show them that their development is their responsibility.” Cuthbert Gondwe, Eagles CCMP coordinator

using conservation agriculture. But what happens when they then come across 7+3? If I’ve failed to equip them to find their own answers to different problems, then I’ve failed.”

Caring for vulnerable

An additional value of CCMP is its emphasis on caring for the most vulnerable, especially within the church. Although TA communities showed impressive impact in the ‘inclusion’ area of change, their description of the change related to attitudes and women’s role on community committees, rather than direct actions to support vulnerable people. Eagles’ reports from the last 10 years demonstrate that most churches doing CCMP bible studies take direct action to care for vulnerable people and make personal sacrifices to do so.

The two most common groups are:

- Elderly people without family or with only young grandchildren. As they are no longer physically able to farm, some churches have directly provided for them, others have helped their grandchildren to set up businesses, and still others have enabled them to continue to support themselves, such as by training them in conservation agriculture, removing the most physically challenging elements of farming. One elderly man said, “In the past, I had nothing, I could do nothing. I have tried to do odd jobs, but it was very hard. When the pastor came to me, it was like God breaking in.”
- Orphaned and other vulnerable children: some are living on their own; others with extended family. Many churches pay school fees for orphans in their community - one village identified the fact that they could build a dam to farm fish and use their proceeds to do so. Community-Based Child Care Centres are one of the most frequent results of CCMP, protecting children and enabling their parents to grow food so they can feed them.

Some pastors explain the link between the CCMP bible studies and their churches' actions:

- "If any pastor takes the Bible's word about social justice seriously and shares it with his church, it will not be long until there is no one poor left there"
- "The Bible studies empowered us to take care of the vulnerable and the needy. We now construct houses and work in the fields of the elderly and provide food and clothes for the orphans."
- "We are poor and we used to think that it was impossible to help others. But now we use the little that we do have."

Additionally, some communities have surfaced and acted on issues of domestic violence. For example, the chief's wife in Karumba says: "Now families are living in peace because the violence and injustice that used to happen in our marriages are now over."

Conclusions

By triangulating evidence from multiple sources, including the participatory tool, the quantitative comparison of intervention costs and the anecdotal evidence, we can conclude with confidence that, in the communities that participated in the research, CCMP is more cost-effective, more sustainable (even self-propagating) and has the additional value of strengthening social security in villages as churches care for the most vulnerable.

Despite the necessary limitations of the research, the greatest of which was the difference in the context of the TA and CCMP communities (the TA communities being in a highly disaster-prone area), the research proves that in many cases even villages in severe poverty can mobilise the resources to solve their own problems or take the initiative to partner with others. It also proves that the mindset change brought about through the CCMP process, catalysing communities to take responsibility for their own development and equipping them to problem-solve, is vital to long-term change.

The quality of life participatory tool suggested that communities were able to achieve equal overall impact using their own resources as when they were given physical resources by an NGO; moreover, it costs 27 times more to achieve the same impact through TA than CCMP. In other words, without any material inputs from Eagles, communities achieved the same impact as a project that gave drought-resistant seeds, livestock, treadle pumps and more, at less than 5% of the cost for Eagles. This is such a large difference that it remains significant, even taking into account the fact that the figure may have been lower if the CCMP communities had faced such frequent disasters.

This evidence is reflected in the quantitative comparison of intervention costs, where the same interventions were consistently many times cheaper through CCMP, despite using very conservative figures. This demonstrates that, in many situations, it is more cost effective to equip communities with the skills to mobilise their own resources to solve problems than to intervene directly and that even communities in the fourth poorest country in the world (Global Finance Magazine, 2019) can do this.

The results of CCMP are also more likely to be sustained. It was particularly striking how much more confidence in problem-solving CCMP communities consistently showed than TA communities – an average confidence of 8.09 out of 10 that the community would take action to solve particular problems in comparison to 2.21. This suggests high sustainability as communities are able to solve challenges as they emerge, even once Eagles has stopped working with them, as demonstrated in the anecdotal evidence. TA results are impressive but limited to project activities. The low level of their belief in the need to solve their own problems or their ability to do so indicates low sustainability as communities are likely to just stop an activity when they meet a challenge – something evidenced in the independent evaluation done of TA. Their desire for Eagles to come back further indicates high levels of dependency and the belief that others should solve their problems. Despite its many successes, TA failed to equip communities with the tools to effectively think through their own issues. Therefore without continued input from NGOs, it is likely that the positive interventions achieved through TA will be eroded and community quality of life will regress, as members have not been equipped to tackle challenges that will inevitably arise.

Although more research must be done, this report suggests that sometimes the expectations that NGOs have of communities may be prohibitively low and paternalistic, sometimes even hampering long-term transformation. In the words of Eagles' Executive Director of 15 years Victor Mughogho, "Donating solutions can be as inhibiting to sustained change as donating objects." The evidence suggests that, where possible, NGOs need to shift from direct interventions to facilitating problem-solving processes, or to a combination that integrates mindset change into programmes in more fragile areas. NGOs need to focus on investing in people rather than investing in things; not just training communities in more skills but challenging how people see themselves and their world.

Recommendations

1. **Further (properly funded) research should be conducted to test the reliability of the conclusions of this report and explore the issues raised:** robust research across different organisations implementing CCMP and different projects would establish a much stronger evidence base and using a larger number of communities with larger and more representative participant groups would reduce the potential sources of error within this research and enable its claims to be properly tested. It is also important that a traditional method be compared with CCMP in contexts as similar as possible. In addition, this report was limited to only analysing communities in which CCMP and TA had been successfully implemented. Further research determining the incidence of successful implementation, and how it could be increased, would also give a more nuanced and useful picture of the exciting potential of CCMP.
2. **Where possible, NGOs should shift from ‘donating solutions’ to facilitating problem-solving processes:** Eagles’ belief that dependency is one of the key inhibitors of sustainable, community-led development was well evidenced in this research, and CCMP is shown to have a very significant impact on communities’ confidence in solving problems and taking responsibility for their own development. This research demonstrates that it is often more cost effective to equip communities with the skills to mobilise their own resources to solve problems rather than directly intervening. NGOs should shift towards this way of working wherever possible, or integrate mindset change and problem solving into other projects in more fragile contexts where some direct intervention is still necessary.
3. **The Church should not be overlooked by secular NGOs as a key player in community development:** although this research did not explore the issue, part of the reason for the cost-effectiveness and impact of CCMP is Eagles’ approach of using local churches to facilitate the process. The church is one of the most influential and powerful institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, giving it access to large numbers of trusted volunteers in every community. Once they have gone through CCMP bible studies, these volunteers are convicted by their faith that they have a responsibility to work with their communities to improve everyone’s quality of life. They also provide easy networks for replication and, in the Malawian context, have significant influence over others. For these reasons, it seems ideally situated to facilitate change processes, irrespective of the beliefs of the NGO.

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