



ALL TOGETHER
Summer 2023 Update

Communities in
the driving seat

**ALL
WE
CAN**

Communities in the driving seat

Welcome to your update for Summer 2023. Thank you so much for your unconditional support and love. As we move onwards from Lent and Easter and enter a summer of events and programmes, we continue to walk alongside our partners on a journey of sustainable, community-led change.

Overleaf, you'll hear stories from Genti and Chrissy, and we invite you to journey with them.

This year, we have been talking about putting communities in the driving seat, and listening to the voices of our partners and the communities they serve.

In Malawi, it is communities that are setting the direction of change, and it's our privilege - as a charity and as supporters - to walk alongside them and support their progress.

Victor Mughogho, Eagles Executive Director, tells us what it looks like to put communities in the driving seat:

'What you need is a push from the outside. It's partnership: people coming alongside a community that is already on a journey.'

In this edition of All Together, you'll see our partnership approach in action, through your support for the interventions that local communities in Malawi have decided to pursue.

Eagles is inspiring people to work with the gifts, talents and abilities they have been blessed with to create transformational change and fulfil their potential. Read on to see what Chrissy and Genti are doing now...





Genti's Story

Genti is a young man living in William Village, he is known in his community as a man who loves to pray. Genti's potential is being fulfilled as a result of his involvement with our local partner, Eagles.

Genti got involved with Eagles through their capacity-building work in William Village. This has focused on changing the mindset of community members, so that they believe in themselves.

'I used to look down upon myself, thinking I cannot do anything, but since I started going through the teachings that have been provided, now I can stand on my own and I'm able to do things and not look down on myself'.

The training sessions Eagles provided to the community prompted Genti to make the decision to buy a taxi bike to help his business. Genti makes money from transporting people on his bike. He uses the money he makes to support his family.

'If I'm cycling, I'm in control'.

Change isn't just happening for Genti, the impact of working with Eagles is obvious throughout his community:

'I see that the transformation is happening, that the change is happening in other people. Because once we have been fully equipped through the training, the church evolves and the community begins to work together'.

Now that the church and the community are working together, Genti sees a bright future for William Village. Committees have begun actioning programmes to develop the community and invest in its future. This has included tree planting programmes, brick-making, so that more houses can be built for teachers, and providing resources and materials to the local school.

'I see the future being bright, it's just a matter of planning'.

Genti has seen the way that capacity building and community-wide mindset change have transformed his own life and the lives of those around him. Because of Eagles' work, communities like William Village get to fulfill their potential and look ahead to a transformative future, where they are in the driving seat.



Meet Chrissy

Chrissy is a single mother of three living in William Village, Malawi.

Chrissy has undergone a significant transformation since working with our local partner, Eagles. As a result, she is making a difference in the life of her local community.

‘Before working with Eagles, I never knew who I was.’

Prior to Eagles, Chrissy did not want to share with others. She wanted to hold onto what was hers and didn't think about the needs of others in her community. This made Chrissy less open to interacting with those around her.

‘I was selfish and unloving’.

Eagles recognises that change within the community can start with a change in mindset. That's why Eagles works with communities like Chrissy's so that potential can be fulfilled for both the individual but also for the community as a whole.

'I have discovered that I am a person with capabilities.'

Eagles helped Chrissy to transform her mindset. She never appreciated how important it was to give to others in need, she never knew the goodness of protecting the environment around her, and she never knew how important it was for her own faith to share the word of God with others. This change in mindset has allowed Chrissy to grow in love and support for herself, her neighbours, and her local environment.

'I believe that love comes from the heart. Not only that but also you have to help people to show them that you love them. I have given people clothes, food, and money and fetched them water.'

One of the ways that Chrissy now makes a difference in her community is through the tree planting programme that her neighbours set up. This work is particularly pertinent to Chrissy's community because the climate crisis is not an issue of tomorrow. The climate crisis is already at Chrissy's door.

'It's very important for us to plant trees as we have erratic rain due to climate change.'

These erratic rain storms as well as cyclones have increased flooding in the area. Chrissy notes that these floods were worse because of how many trees her community had cut down, leaving their homes less protected from the incoming water. This is why the tree planting programme is so significant to the community.

Chrissy has experienced loss due to the storms the climate crisis has brought. She lost members of her wider family, as well as her home, during storm Aana in 2022. She has struggled emotionally with the consequences of these losses



and recognises the devastating impact of climate change not just on her own family but on those particularly struggling in her community such as, the elderly and children who have lost their parents.

Chrissy's message to those of us in the UK is to consider how our actions impact those on the front lines of the climate crisis and to remember how our lives can affect the circumstances of others:

'My message is that they should know that what they do affects us in one way or another.'

A portrait of Victor Mughogho, a Black man with glasses and a beard, wearing a dark blue polo shirt with embroidered patterns. He is gesturing with his hands as if speaking. The background is a bright, slightly cloudy sky. A large yellow curved shape is on the right side of the image, and a multi-colored curved shape (green, orange, blue) is on the left side.

Community mapping

We know why it's important that communities are in the driving seat of development, but how does that affect the 'how' - what kind of interventions are our partners making, and how do they decide what to do?

Knowing the community

'We start with a map of the past: how was life before? And that brings in the elders of the community – they know the past ...You learn from the past, in order to transform your present, and therefore redesign the future.'

Victor Mughogho, Executive Director, Eagles

Victor understands that the people Eagles work with have a significantly better understanding of their local community than his team ever can, and a much better understanding than any of us here in the UK.

For Eagles, the starting point is to ask local people to identify the problems they face, and identify possible solutions. This process begins with what Eagles calls 'Community Mapping'.

Ways and means



Climate change

As Victor says, 'everything local is sustainable'.

Eagles continue to work to implement programmes by building community resilience through training and support in areas of food security, climate change, and disaster risk management. If an issue will affect a community on a local level, we need to hear local voices to create a response.

'...They are ready to start rebuilding. Help these communities to be ready for any hazard that will come.'

'They have never given up spirit. We invite you never to give up supporting these communities.'

In March, Cyclone Freddy brought devastation to parts of South East Africa,

including some of the communities where Eagles work. All We Can have created an Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) to prepare for severe weather events like this, which are becoming more frequent due to climate change.

Communities in Africa are among those suffering the brunt of climate-related severe weather events, despite contributing least to the causes of climate change. Through the ERF, All We Can seeks to acknowledge this imbalance, and address it, so that these communities can begin to thrive without our support in the future.

Through your support today, we are putting communities first in their journey of development, and supporting them as they forge a more resilient future in the face of these challenges.

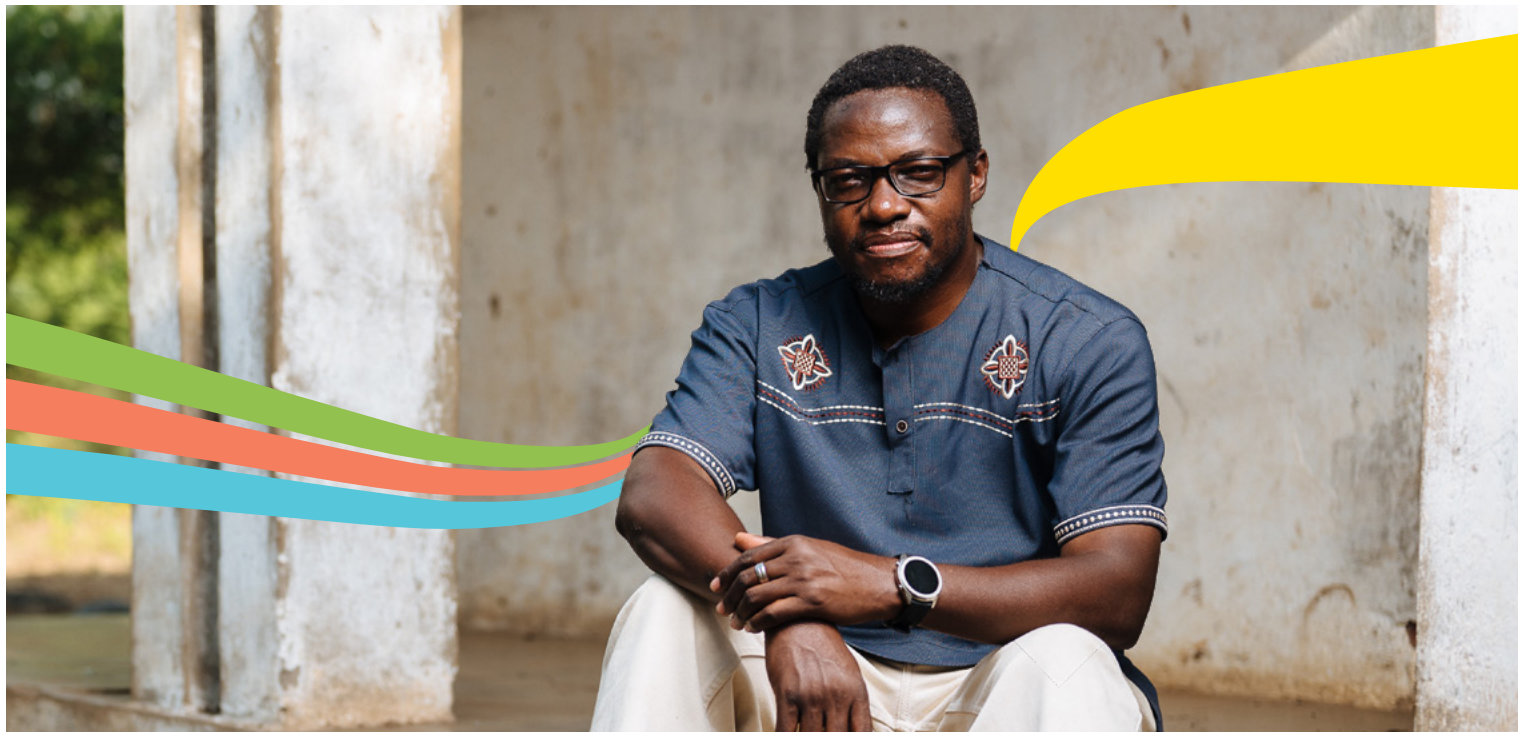


The future, transformed

This year, we are sharing stories of transformation. We want to see communities in the driving seat, identifying and realising that transformation in order to fulfil their God-given potential.

For us, and for our community of supporters, the transformation is about how we see our role. Through our partnership approach, we're saying goodbye to the colonial mindset that says that 'we have all the answers', and giving power back to communities.

Through your support, you're not transforming communities - you're helping them to transform their future. You're changing the way that development is done, for good.



ALL TOGETHER

allwecan.org.uk

   @allwecanuk



Every
person's
potential
fulfilled

020 3758 7700
info@allwecan.org.uk

All We Can is the operating name of The Methodist Relief and Development Fund, a charity registered in England and Wales, number 291691

Image: Victor, the Executive Director of Eagles © Tom Price/All We Can