

## The Flying Metamoja Game

This game can help us to understand the efforts needed to ensure that our projects and programmes benefit the marginalised and poorest people within a community. It demonstrates the difference between traditional development approaches and community driven approaches.

### Instructions

Explain that you are a development worker, bringing resources and ideas to the community to help them 'win' the prize which represents success. As community members, each participant has been randomly assigned a colour to denote their social and economic status:

**RED** You belong to a rich farming family. Your father owns two homes - one in this village and one in the capital city. You were sent to school in the city and have returned home to help run the farm.

**GREEN** Your parents have a small farm. Your mother is non-literate, but your father can read and write. You went to the local village school, doing your farm chores before and after school. Your family owns a radio and you listen to the agricultural programmes. Your family can access the health clinic in town as you can just afford the bus in an emergency. Your family has a vegetable garden and one cow which gives milk. With good nutrition and health, you were able to pay attention and learn in school.

**BLUE** You and your parents are non-literate and of low social status. All women in your family marry young and have many children. The men work as day labourers in others' fields. You take care of your own tiny garden plot in the early morning and late evening. You cannot afford the bus fare or the time to access health care in the town.

Everyone starts at line 7 facing the prize at line 13. As the projects are described, you will be told to either take steps forward or back. A step forward represents increased economic stability and well-being, and a step backward represents further economic hardship and inequality.

### The Game – Stage 1

**PROJECT 1** - A project comes to your village to train farmers and distribute improved quality seeds.

**REDS** You offer to rent some fields for the training. You then not only receive training and seeds (one step forward) but receive income (second step forward).

**GREENS** After seeing the notice for the class you sign up and receive seeds and training (one step forward).

**BLUES** You cannot read the notices and because of your low social status, you have to sit outside the tea shop, so you never hear the discussions about the training. You do not attend (one step back).

#### Materials:

- Coloured strips of paper – one for each participant (roughly 10% red, 20% green and the remainder blue – put a yellow dot on half of the blue strips )
- 13 parallel lines marked on the ground with chalk or masking tape/string, The 7<sup>th</sup> line in the centre should be much longer than the others.
- A prize for 'winners' at line 13



You used to sell a few poor-quality vegetables from your plot, but now you cannot compete with the improved quality seeds, so you lose income (second step back).

**PROJECT 2** - Mothers Union from a parish in the UK wants to support a community drinking water system – they will donate the pipes if community members donate their labour. Everyone attends the meeting to discuss this. **REDS** You take a leading role in the meeting and donate money to help your community (one step forward). After the system is built, one tap is located on your property (second step forward).



**GREENS** You attend the meeting. You donate your labour to help the construction and encourage your neighbours to participate. When the water system is installed, there is a tap five-minutes from your home (one step forward).

**BLUES** You sit at the back of the community meeting. You cannot spare a day away from your day labour job to help with the construction. When the system design is discussed, no-one mentions putting taps near your area. Because you do not help to build the system, you do not get a tap (one step backward) and must continue to carry contaminated water from the stream. This means more illness and lost income (second step backward).

**PROJECT 3** - A Mothers' Union Diocese is keen fund a livestock rearing project in their link diocese. Goats and training are provided, and this is designed to help the **BLUES**.



**REDS** You are hired as project manager and help source the goats from your farm (two steps forward for income and prestige).

**GREENS** You earn income from the goats, and you send your mother to the literacy class, so she is no longer cheated in the market (one step forward).

**BLUES** The men do not want to attend the training because they need to farm their small plots in the evening after they finish their day labour. However so as not to offend the red individual and those coming from overseas, they take the time to attend the training. The women cannot attend because they have too many small children to look after and nearly always at least one child is sick. The goats are received and eat the vegetables in your garden. You must now also get the goats water and vegetation to eat, wasting more of your time and energy (two steps backward).

### End of Stage 1

The **REDS** have now taken six steps forward and should be able to reach the prize. (Do not let them have it though!) While everyone is still standing in place ask:

1. What happened? What do you see? (Unintentional widening of gap between rich and poor).
2. How do you feel? Is your community better or worse off than before?
3. Whose fault is it that the **BLUES** did not benefit from or participate in the projects?
4. In this game did the **REDS** or **GREENS** mistreat or discriminate against the **BLUES**?

As a community, you are now divided and there are negative feelings towards different groups and the **BLUES** are in a worse position than before.

## Stage 2

The first approach created more problems than it solved, with most families left worse off than before and the community fractured. Whilst this was not the intention it was the outcome. We need to try a different approach and this time rather than directly intruding into your village, we'll tell a story.

Ask the **REDS** if they are happy where they are? Did any of the projects seek to support the spiritual side of the community?

Place another line on the ground to represent that living whole and complete lives requires more than just an increase in economic well-being.

Everyone stays where they are. Explain that the **BLUES** with the yellow spots are Mothers' Union members and part of the local church.

### PROCESS 1 - Church Mobilisation

The Mothers' Union has designed a new approach and process in their village called Eagle (known in other places as Metamorphosis, Pamoja and Awaken). Each village church must choose two people to be trained as facilitators. Pick out two **BLUES WITH A YELLOW SPOT** to be trained as facilitators (one step forward) as this helps build their confidence and interpersonal skills.

After the training, the facilitators start participatory bible studies once a month after the church service. There is new energy and excitement as the church realises that they are blessed with resources including the creativity to bring positive change. All **BLUES WITH A YELLOW SPOT** one step forward to the facilitators.



As one of the facilitators explains, "we have taken CCMP as a big opportunity for us as a church. It has set us on a journey to the New Eden. This is because we are working holistically—before we used to only preach and teach the Word. But now, we are transforming the world around us, through a fish farming project, fattening chickens and goats, and growing spinach, aubergine, tomatoes, bananas and maize." All **BLUE WITH A YELLOW SPOT** take one more step forward.

As well as a sense of hope and the new farming projects, relationships are also being strengthened and restored. One member shared "before CCMP, everyone felt that they were alone. But now that we have started CCMP, we are together. We share our problems together and pray with one another. When one of us is struggling we have something to offer that person." All **BLUE WITH A YELLOW SPOT** take one more step forward.

Tom and Margret were alcoholics, in a violent relationship with no hope. Margret was an occasional church goer and as the church started to be transformed through the bible stories, Margret came to know Jesus and invited Tom to "come and see Gods



love in action". Tom was also transformed by God, both gave up on alcohol and their relationships was restored. Slowly they started working together with their local resources. They made money from selling the rocks on their land and they used this to buy chickens which they eventually sold to buy goats. Eventually they could sell their goats to buy pigs. Tom and Margaret get a YELLOW SPOT and move forward to join the church members.

As church members work together on their livelihoods, people have started to increase their offering to the church which almost triples. BLUE WITH YELLOW SPOT one step forward

The church is not just helping itself, one CCMP member shared "before we Christians didn't feel we had anything to offer to those who needed help. But now, through what we already have, we are able to offer the community hope and practical help. We work together and we are able to show love to those who are not Christian in the community." One example was the pre-school that the church opened with its own resources realising that lots of the poorer families in the village struggled to look after small children when they were working (all BLUES move forward to join the BLUES WITH A YELLOW SPOT).

## PROCESS 2 - Church and Community Mobilisation

The church continues to undertake a pattern of prayer, reflection and action within their church and families. As they continue the bible studies, they come to understand Gods call to go to the whole community and bring them all together.

A process of gathering information and working with community leaders is initiated and all the community are encouraged to come together to understand the reality of their situation. RED you feel threatened by this as your position of authority is challenged and people don't always accept your ideas like they used to, you don't like these new community groups take one step back.

BLUES take one step forward as you are inspired by what you see your friends in the church starting to do and you also start to initiate new activities using your own resources. Lynette has traditionally grown okra by the riverbank far from home. Some years when the river floods the harvest is lost and Lynette realises that if she digs a hole close to her home and lines it with a plastic sheet, she will have water to grow okra close to home that she can eat and trade to support her family.



As farmers they realise that they are dependent on seasonal rain but that together they can pool resources to purchase a pump to create a basic irrigation system, so that food can be grown all year round. BLUES take two steps forward and GREENS take one step forward.

The **BLUES** reflect that they cannot access formal banking even though they sometimes have money that could be saved. A savings and credit group is initiated and because you are used to working together and trust each other, it works well. The **BLUES** use the funds they save to buy a water tap, and with access to safe water, death and illness is reduced as is the huge amount of time spent travelling to and from the contaminated water source. You all celebrate that together you achieved what you thought was impossible. All **BLUES** take two steps forward. An emergency fund is established through the savings and credit group to access the hospital in town. All **BLUES** take one step forward.



As the community gathers information, men start to respect the women and relationships between men and women improve, **BLUE** and **GREEN** move forward one step.

The facilitators initiate a process of community dreaming. They realise that it is considered a cultural norm for the children of the blues and greens to follow their fathers and mothers into subsistence agricultural practices, and none of the blue children attend primary school, and only a few of the green female children have gone to primary school. There is a retired teacher



in the community and so a basic primary school is built and maintained with community volunteer teachers. In addition, it is realised that many of the children are often sick but there is a retired nurse in the community, so a clinic is opened staffed by the retired nurse. **GREENS** move forward one step as you no longer have to prioritise which of your children go for primary education. **BLUES** take one step forward as both your boys and girls can go to primary school.

**BLUES** take another step forward as you don't have to wait until your family are really sick before you take the long and costly journey to the town, you can access basic health care and make an informed decision about your family's health.

**REDS** you come more into contact with the church and are encouraged by the facilitator to be actively involved in the project meetings in the new church building, your relationship with the village is rebuilt and you become a church member, your children also use the local primary school rather than being sent to boarding school. **REDS** move one step forwards.

A storm hits the village, the roof is blown off the school and the church, **REDS GREENS** and **BLUE** move back two steps.

You put the roof back on the school together; and because everyone sees the church as integral to the community you all work to replace the church roof as well. You have a party to celebrate, **REDS GREENS** and **BLUE** move forward two steps.

As a group you evaluate what you have done and consider what to do next, together. **REDS, GREENS** and **BLUE** All move forward one step to the finish line and the prize, remembering the words of one MU member from Zimbabwe "We only win when we win together."

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What have you learnt from the game about how we work for change in our own local communities or support projects in other countries?
2. Who might be the REDS, GREENS and BLUES in your community and how would you describe them?
3. How can we support the BLUES without excluding the REDS and GREENS?
4. What examples can you share of initiatives that are locally owned that engage with the whole person and bring lasting change?

## What is Church and Community Mobilisation?

This game was built upon real life stories from the Mothers' Union and its church and community mobilisation processes across the globe. These processes have a variety of different names - Eagle, Metamorphosis, Awaken, Pamoja and Vicoba, but the principles are the same - prayer and bible study which transform mindsets are at its heart and an understanding that change is possible from within a community by working together using our God given resources. Some of the quotes used in the game came from MU's transformational savings and credit programme in Tanzania:

The Amani MU Vicoba Group, Natshingwera Parish in Masasi diocese (pictured below) started in 2018 following a training from Mothers Union and Five Talents. Amani has 25 members and together they have saved TZS 5,698,000 (£1,823) and lent TZS 5,500,000 (£1,759) in small loans for members to invest in their businesses. The members of the group have invested in many different forms of business such as animal fattening, farming, drying and selling salt and boda boda taxis. As the group walks around their village, they can see many examples of the fruit of their group's activities. For example, their children coming home from school, homes with solar power and electricity, and all the small livestock and chickens prowling around.



Elisabeth (left) is the group's chairperson, and she took a loan of TZS 600,000 to install a water point and tap in her house. This is one of the only taps in the village. She sells water for TZS 100 per bucket and sells about TZS 10,000 of water each day. Before Elisabeth started her business, villagers had to walk a long distance to fetch water from the marshes and carry the heavy load back. This business has not only changed Elisabeth's life but that of many of the women in the village who have access to safe water.

The Amani group has also helped to build a new church building. In previous years at share out, they have bought bags of cement and this year they plan to pay for the iron sheets for the roof. The weekly offertory has increased by almost 50% since the group started.



While the financial impact of the group is wonderful, the pastor mentioned that the best part of the group is its outreach activities to the community. They invite local Muslim women to come together with them for fellowship and to 'talk about business and fighting poverty.' They also have a fellowship group with Christians from other churches that they host. At each share out, they also contribute to support sick and needy people in the community. The group is also supporting the Mothers' Union which is growing in the parish.

In Kilosa Church, Mt Klement, Lewa Parish in Tanga Diocese there are 189 church members doing



CCMP and 32 that have formed a Pamoja Group. The church is a vibrant place, with 3 different choirs that sing on a Sunday, a growing Mothers' Union and lots of children in the Sunday School.

Kilosa Church has 2 CCMP facilitators. One is a retired teacher and the other is a young mother. They facilitate participatory bible studies once a month during the church service. Everyone in the church is involved. They have kept written flip charts from these bible studies up on the walls of

the church. These include excerpts from 'Feeding of the Five Thousand,' a resource mobilisation bible study and the 'Good Samaritan,' a relationship building bible study. This is so that people can continually remind themselves of what they have learned through CCMP and are now putting into practice.

Kilosa church is working hard to bear practical fruit from CCMP – they have started a fish farming project that the church members manage together. They are fattening chickens and goats. They are also farming spinach, aubergine, tomatoes, bananas and maize. One of the church members who participates shares that these projects have helped individual members in their homes and has enabled them to bring increased offertory to the church. She noted that 'before CCMP, as a church we would contribute no more than 30,000 TZS per week, now we reach up to 80,000 TZS each week.'



When asked how the group is reaching out the community, one CCMP member shared that 'before CCMP, Muslims would establish projects in the community—they improved people's lives but drew people away from the Church. At that time, we Christians didn't do anything. We didn't feel we had anything to offer to those who needed help. But now, through what we already have, we are able to offer the community hope and practical help. We work together with them. We are able to show love to those who are not Christian in the community.'

