CLIMATE CHANGE

The Implications for Oxfam's Programme, Policies and Advocacy

Oxfam GB
Policy Department

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Executive Summary

Summary of findings and propositions

Climate change

No one disputes that the earth's climate is changing and that the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases have increased as a result of human activities. The concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide are higher now than at any time during the last 420,000 years. The weight of scientific evidence suggests that the observed changes in the earth's climate are, at least in part, due to human activities.

In most cases climate change is likely to exacerbate problems that developing countries are already facing. Between 1990 and 1998, 94 per cent of the world's 568 major natural disasters and more than 97 per cent of all natural disaster-related deaths were in developing countries.

The latest models of UN's Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (the IPPC - a high level, independent, scientific advisory body) suggest that if no action is taken to reduce greenhouse gases air surface temperatures could rise by **6 degrees centigrade** by the end of the year 2100. This is considerably higher than the IPCC's previous forecast, which estimated a rise by 2080 of between 1 and 3.5 degrees centigrade above 1990 levels. Without action now to limit greenhouse gas emissions, the earth's climate will warm at a rate unprecedented in the last 10,000 years.

The scenario predicted for 2080 is that:

- **Sea levels would increase by 50cm** - almost twice as many people as now would be exposed to severe flooding from storm surges - 18 million people. The majority of people who would be affected live along the coasts of South and South East Asia.
- **Water availability would decline**: over 3 billion people in the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent would be facing acute shortages of water.
- **Seasonal rainfall patterns would be severely disrupted** bringing drought and floods, dramatically decreasing crop yields and areas like sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia and tropical areas of Latin America would face acute food insecurity.
- **The frequency and intensity of extreme weather events could increase** leading to loss of life, injury, mass population dislocations and economic devastation of poor countries.
- **Human health would suffer from a combination of effects**. People's resistance to disease would be weakened by heat stress, water shortages and malnutrition. Increases in air pollution would lead to a rise in respiratory illnesses. In these conditions infectious diseases like malaria, dengue fever, schistosomiasis would proliferate.

No one will be immune, but climate change will have a disproportionate effect on the lives of poor people in developing countries. Poverty increases people's vulnerability.

- Poor people live in overcrowded, temporary settlements, which are erected on unsuitable land - most prone to the risk of flooding, storm surges and landslides;
- Most eke out a precarious economic existence - subsistence farming or fishing - and have no savings or assets to insure them against external shocks;
- They lack sanitation and their limited access to clean water, poor diet and inadequate health-care provision undermine their resistance to infectious diseases;
- Their lack of social status and the informal nature or remoteness of their settlements means that they do not receive adequate warnings of impending disasters;
- Relief efforts are least likely to reach them;
- Lack of education and official neglect means they have little alternative after disasters but to remain in or return to the disaster-prone areas, with diminished assets, and await the next, calamitous event.

Conclusions

- Oxfam GB's programmes are already responding well at the local level. But globally our response to the challenge of global climate change is *ad hoc*.
- It is unavoidable that OGB will become more involved in dealing with the impact of climate change on the lives of people living in poverty.
- It will be far more cost-effective and useful to our mandate if OGB begins to take a more strategic approach to this issue.
- Oxfam has the potential to make a substantial and distinctive contribution to the debate as there are currently few major NGOs with both humanitarian and development experience and advocacy capacity in this field.
- OI has already responded positively to OGB's lead at COP-6. A joint OI position was adopted with everyone endorsing The Equity Manifesto (attached). Novib has a strong programme in this area and others like Oxfam HK, CAA and OA are considering how to develop this work.

Recommendations

- Oxfam GB should develop programme capacity to address global climate change, integrated as elements of right to a sustainable livelihood (SCO1) and right to life and security (SCO3).
- Initially a working group of staff from regional centres, humanitarian department, policy department and media should be tasked to develop a coherent and phased approach and an organisation-wide strategy.
- Some initial, modest alliance building and advocacy will be slowly stepped up based on our existing public policy, programme experience and the new analysis in this paper.
- Improve internal knowledge management about the impact of climate change on poor communities.
- An advocacy pilot programme will be undertaken that attempts to link climate change issues to the anticipated intense monsoon period in August 2001, with specific reference to the River Basin Programme in South Asia. A preparatory background briefing paper should be available for the Bonn follow-up meeting of COP-6, in May 2001.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Implications for Oxfam's Programme, Policies and Advocacy

Section One: Rationale

Oxfam staff have become increasingly aware that it is highly likely that a significant proportion of our programme is responding to poverty and suffering exacerbated by global climate change and that this is likely to grow.

The imperative of climate change has given a new dimension to issues of equity: we need to reduce our impact on the environment whilst enabling many millions of people to escape from poverty and achieve a sustainable livelihood. At the same time, our obligations to future generations are becoming clearer – as stewards of the earth we have to reduce our levels of pollution, so that climate change does not produce avoidable suffering and the right to life and security is upheld. Some climate change is now inevitable but with political will and public support a worse future can be avoided.

Policy makers confront risks in the face of significant scientific uncertainties. Decisions taken today may limit the options in the future - delay would increase both the rate and the magnitude of climate change, hence adaptation and damage costs.

1.1 Why is Oxfam examining the implications of climate change?

The SMT meeting in January 2000 decided that Oxfam must develop its own analysis of climate change and to examine ways in which it can integrate it into existing programmes:

"There is close-to-incontrovertible evidence that global climate change is already bringing more frequent and violent tropical storms and is changing weather patterns around the globe. These have substantial implications for the security and welfare of poor and vulnerable people. They are probably already altering Oxfam's humanitarian response as we find ourselves responding increasingly to climatic disasters." [Framework Paper for Right to Life and Security: SCO 3]

The purpose of this paper is to provide Council with a summary of recent global scientific and political developments in response to climate change and to make clear recommendations about their relevance to Oxfam's programme. Council's input and advice about how to take this aspect of our work forward is also being sought.

Oxfam GB's Previous Policy Positions on global warming

Previously, Oxfam has taken clear positions on global warming and its likely impacts on people living in poverty in developing countries.

In 1992 Oxfam's Report launched at the Rio Summit recommended that if major climatic disasters and continuing environmental degradation are to be avoided, and opportunities for development in the South to be enhanced, then the North will need to recognize its major responsibility for global warming and reduce energy consumption. The Report, No Time to Waste, also called for appropriate mechanisms for funding and technology transfer to allow Southern countries themselves to pursue policies of energy conservation and efficiency.

In the 1995 Poverty Report, Oxfam took a strong line on climate change, its impact on low lying coastal regions and linked it to unsustainable consumption patterns in the North.

Although Oxfam's published reports refer to the likelihood of increasingly disruptive weather patterns, particularly of cyclones and flooding, this did not lead us to prioritize the problem in our advocacy work nor does it appear to have led to any changes in the Humanitarian Department's approach to disaster relief. Disaster preparedness has always been a strong component of Oxfam's work in flood prone areas but local adaptation strategies without a similar effort to develop a wider analysis sustained by an integrated advocacy strategy is arguably of limited longer term benefit.

Some country programmes were "greened" with greater emphasis on forest protection and sustainable natural resource management (particularly in India). But over the past few years, these types of interventions have reduced in number partly out of concern that some of the Oxfam environmental programmes lacked a poverty focus.

1.2 Current OI position

OI has followed OGB's lead around COP-6 and all co-signed an NGO Equity Manifesto, which was presented to the Chair of the Climate Change Meeting by Sylvia Borren and representataives of the NGO Climate Action Network (see Annex II).

Novib has a policy adviser working on climate change issues and they fund a number of explicit activities in this area

CAA has expressed strong interest in developing a climate change programme in SE Asia. Oxfam HK is also interested because of potential impacts in the Mekong area. OA - with its work on the oil industry - is monitoring the debates on fossil fuels closely.

Section Two: Scientific Consensus on Climate Change

The report of the UK's Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution [June 2000] warns: "Some human induced climate change now seems inevitable. There will, therefore, be a need for adaptation by nations and communities. Even if the global use of coal, oil and gas was prevented from rising and held at current levels the climate would change markedly. To limit the damage beyond that already in train, large reductions in global emissions will be necessary during this century and the next. Strong and effective action has to start immediately." This view is strongly endorsed in the draft Third Assessment Report of the UN's Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (the IPPC - a high level, independent, scientific advisory body) which comments that if no action is taken now to reduce

greenhouse gases air surface temperatures could rise by **6 degrees centigrade** by the end of the year 2100. This is considerably higher than the IPCC's previous forecast, which estimated a rise by 2080 of between 1 and 3.5 degrees centigrade above 1990 levels. Robert Watson, the Chair of the IPCC, is emphatic that significant reductions in net greenhouse gas emissions are both technically and economically feasible.

Cost effective reductions can be achieved in the following areas:

energy supply: more efficient conversion of fossil fuels, switching from high to low carbon fossil fuels, decarbonization of flue gases and fuels; coupled with carbon dioxide storage; increase use in renewable sources of energy

energy demand: industry, transportation and residential/ commerical buildings.

agricultural and forestry: afforestation, reforestation, slowing deforestation, improved forest, cropland and rangeland management, including restoration of degraded agricultural lands, promoting agroforestry and improving the quality of the diet of ruminants.

waste management and reductions in halocarbon emissions

2.1 Summary of scientific basis for predictions

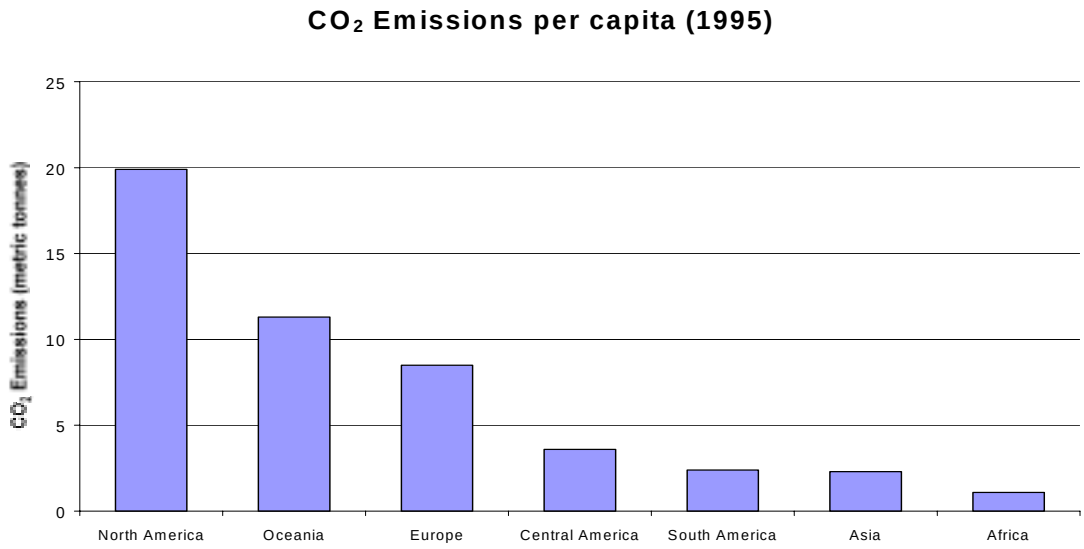
Climate models predict that the global temperature will rise at an unprecedented rate by about 1 - 6 degrees by the end of the year 2100. This projected change over the next 100 years is larger than any climate change experienced over the last 10,000 years. It is based on current emission trends and assumes that no efforts are made to limit greenhouse gas emissions. But there are many uncertainties about the scale and the impact of climate change, particularly at the regional level. Because of the delaying effect of the oceans, surface temperatures do not respond immediately to greenhouse gas emissions, so climate change will continue for many decades after the atmosphere concentrations have stabilised. Meanwhile, the balance of the evidence suggests that the climate may have already started responding to past emissions.

2.2 Has global warming already begun?

There has been a 0.5°C rise in average temperature since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.
The 20th Century's 10 warmest years have occurred within the last 15 years.
1998 was the warmest year on record – ever.
The 20th Century has seen a rise in sea levels of 10-25 centimeters
There is strong evidence of alpine glacier retreat and of a reduction in snow cover in the Northern hemisphere (since 1973)

Carbon dioxide emissions account for eighty percent of global warming pollution.
Carbon dioxide is produced when fossil fuels are used to generate energy and when forests are cut down and burned. Methane and nitrous oxide are emitted from agricultural activities, changes in land use and other sources. Artificial chemicals called halocarbons (CFCs, JFCs, PFCs) and other long-lived gases such as suphur hexafluoride are released by industrial processes. Ozone in the lower atmosphere is generated indirectly by automobile exhaust fumes.

Figure 1



Contraction and convergence

80 per cent of global warming is due to CO2 emissions and the largest polluters are the USA, Japan, Germany, the U.K. and Canada. Bangladesh's total emissions of all greenhouse gases is less than 0.01 per cent of global emissions despite having a population of over 130 million people. In theory, all governments that are parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change recognise the historic responsibility of industrialized countries to make cuts to their emissions. Various ideas have been put forward, such as "the contraction and convergence model" which proposes that industrialised countries should start to reduce over several decades their emissions in order to reach a sustainable level (each countries' share of emissions would ultimately be based on a *per capita* approach). The majority of developing countries are well below this level so they will be allowed to increase their emissions so as to converge with industrialised countries. To achieve a level of equity there is an acceptance by most countries (though not by the US) that developing countries should be allowed to increase their emissions incrementally over the next few decades to enable their populations to reach an adequate standard of living. Following this, all countries should aim to converge at an emissions level of one tonne of carbon per annum per person. The IPCC advises that carbon dioxide would have to be cut by 60% to stabilise atmospheric concentrations at 1990 levels.

2.3 Degrees of uncertainty

There are other explanations posited to explain the foreseen climatic trends that do not implicate global warming. For instance, changes in volcanic or solar activity, or changes in oceanic circulation patterns, could explain some of the variations described. It is important to note that natural emissions also occur and that most of the warming in the 20th Century occurred before 1940. But the role of the IPCC is to collate and review the state of knowledge on climate change and try to reach a consensus. The IPCC's view is that changes in climate since around 1970, cannot be explained by changes in solar activity and volcanic emissions alone. Recent scientific analysis suggests that human activities have

had a discernible influence on global climate and that they will have an increasing influence on future climate. In its draft Third Assessment Report the IPCC explicitly states that "humans have contributed substantially to the observed warming over the last 50 years". A recent NASA study has also challenged the theory that changing levels of energy from the sun are a major cause of global warming. Instead it concludes that greenhouse gases are playing a dominant role in warming the planet. Though there are sceptical voices in the scientific community, all the most recent major studies are coming to similar conclusions about the probable causes and frightening pace of climate change.

Climate is a very complex system. Scientists are unsure, once all associated climatic feedback is taken into account, what the final impact on climatic patterns will be. For instance, it is difficult to ascertain the consequences of an accelerated hydrological cycle on storm patterns, especially as the effects are likely to be more consistent regionally than globally. Policy makers confront risks in the face of significant scientific uncertainties. Decisions taken today may limit the options in the future and delay would increase both the rate and magnitude of climate change hence adaptation and damage costs. Some governments, despite their endorsement of the precautionary principle, are hesitant to act in absence of scientific unanimity and certainty. But, as the case of BSE has shown, failure to act can be catastrophic. "Once carbon dioxide is emitted into the atmosphere it stays in the atmosphere for more than a century. This means that if policy formulation waits until all scientific uncertainties are resolved the time to reverse human-induced changes in climate, and the resulting environmental damages, would not be years or decades, but centuries to millennia." (Bob Watson, IPCC Chair).

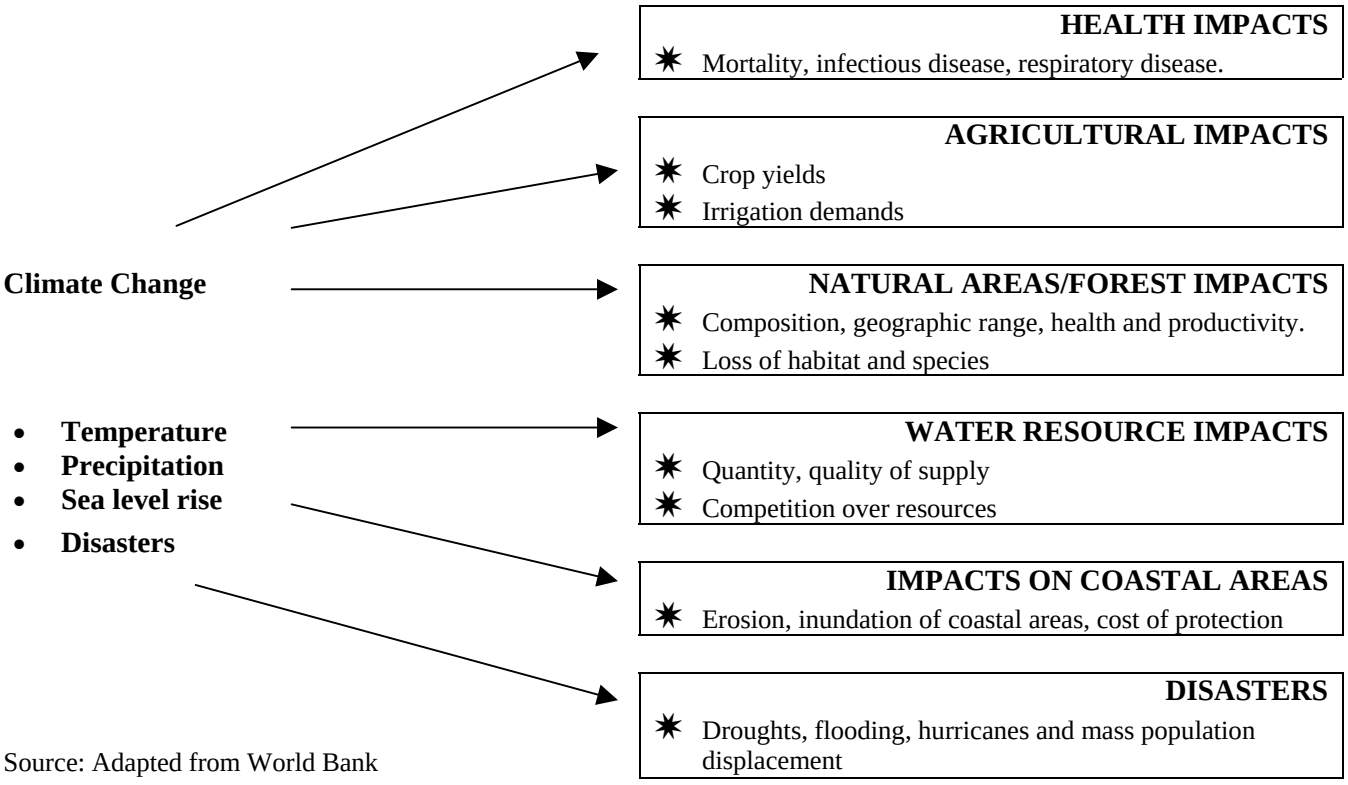
2.4 Disruptive weather patterns

The most debated issue is that of extreme climatic events. Many scientists assert that the recent surge of magnificent storm and hurricane activity is a direct consequence of global warming. However, most are quite cautious. Extreme weather events, such as hurricanes and cyclones, often occur cyclically and thus any increase in their prevalence is difficult to assess. Tropical storms have been more catastrophic in recent years in both human and economic costs. “Hurricane Mitch in 1998 caused 9000 deaths but it wasn’t a particularly severe storm. It just landed in a very unfortunate place.” [New Scientist, 16 September 2000] The mere assertion that recently such extreme weather events have been more frequent and more severe is disputable. But an increase in the frequency and the severity of such extreme weather activity may logically follow the predicted increases in global precipitation and average temperatures. The IPCC - states: "There is some evidence from model simulations and empirical considerations that the frequency per year, intensity and area of occurrence of tropical disturbances may increase”. It also notes that there is observational evidence of regional changes in climate that are consistent with those predicted by climate models. But long-term, large-scale, human-induced changes in climate are likely to interact with natural climate variability such as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation phenomena which is likely to lead to severe floods and droughts in the tropics.

Section Three: Potential Climate Change Impacts

3.1 Potential climate change impacts

The following framework breaks down the potential impact of global climate change.



Source: Adapted from World Bank

3.2 How these changes may impact on the poor

A major study by the IPCC on regional vulnerability shows that while in general the wealthier countries will have the infrastructure to cope with climate change impacts, regions such as Africa will suffer far more. Within countries, the urban elites are likely to cope better than the urban poor or the many living in remote rural areas.

In their study into the regional impacts of climate change the IPCC emphasises that Africa and South Asia are particularly vulnerable to the risks of projected changes because widespread poverty limits adaptation capabilities. They make the statement that global efforts will be necessary to tackle the potential health effects.

Vulnerability to natural disasters

Poor countries, and in particular, poor people, are particularly vulnerable to both natural disasters and changes in environmental conditions. Natural disasters - such as floods, storms, droughts and landslides - have a disproportionate affect on poor people. They tend to live in precarious housing,

which is often located in environmentally vulnerable areas, such as flood plains or steep slopes. Disasters can cause life loss, undermine social structures and destroy livelihoods on a large-scale. Just three days of a major cyclone set back the development of the entire coastal region in Orissa by several years, according to the World Bank. The IPPC notes that even 'small changes in the mean climate or climate variability can produce relatively large changes in the frequency of extreme events'.

If these short- term extreme weather events are indeed related to climate change, they provide terrible examples of what the future might look like if the world fails to curtail its carbon dioxide emissions.

People in low-income countries are four times more likely to die in natural disasters than people in high income countries. [World Bank "Environment Matters", Annual Review, 2000] Globally, disaster losses increased from $71 bn in the 1960s to $608 billion in 1990s. The average costs of natural disasters as a proportion of GDP are 20 per cent higher in developing countries than in developed countries, which reinforces Oxfam's view that poverty and lagging development exacerbates people's vulnerability to extreme weather events.

Capacity to predict and mitigate the impacts of natural disasters is low in poor countries. In 1992, Hurricane Andrew hit the southeastern coast of the United States and caused 32 deaths. In the same year, a cyclone of similar intensity hit Bangladesh and caused 100,000 deaths.

In Bangladesh between 1990 and 1998 three storms, four floods, one tsunami, and two cyclones killed more than 400,000 people and affected another 42 million people.

In Oxfam's experience the degree of vulnerability is essentially determined by prevailing levels of marginalisation and exclusion, which are directly related to patterns of economic growth and the political and social organization of a country.

Rising sea levels

An estimated 10 million people a year are at risk of flooding from storm surges. By 2080 some models predict that 94 million could be affected.

The majority of the people likely to be affected will live in the coastal areas of South and South East Asia. Substantial numbers of people may also be at risk in eastern Africa coastal zones.

Sea level rise would force internal or international migration of population.

Health impacts

Human health is sensitive to changes in climate because of changes in food security water supply and quality. Indirect effects could include increases in infectious diseases such as salmonellosis, cholera and other food and water related infections; and micro-organism proliferation. There could also be an extension in the range and season for vector organisms, increasing the transmission of vector-borne infectious diseases such as malaria, dengue, yellow fever and encephalitis.

Without concerted action rising levels of emissions from factories and vehicles will increase the number of people living in cities suffering from serious respiratory illnesses. A 1996 survey by the Philippines Department of Health estimated that the country lost 294 million days of healthy life as a result of bronchitis and 47 million days from heart disease due to dust pollution. 80 per cent of all residents of Metro Manila are exposed to dangerously high levels of air pollution that far exceed WHO standards.

Water stress

One third of the world's population - 1.7 bn people - already lack access to clean water. by 2050 between 2.3 and 3.2 bn people could be effected. The regions must susceptible to acute water stress will be in South Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. Many of these countries will not be able to afford to take measures to improve water management in order to provide their growing populations with safe water.

One of the main challenges facing African populations will emanate from extreme climate events. Individuals living in marginal areas may become less productive under new climate conditions and water shortages. This may lead to conflict over limited water resources and/or further migration to urban centres.

Droughts now occur almost as often as floods in Central America and it seems that the next few years the region will experience both phenomena regularly.

Food security/malnutrition

With climate change crop yields are predicted to improve in developed countries (and in China) but will worsen in developing countries particularly in Africa and the Indian sub-continent. Subsistence farmers will be less able to adapt to more difficult climatic conditions.

A crucial aspect in determining the vulnerability of communities is their degree of food security. Evidently poverty and unemployment affect the level of consumption of a household. In most Central American countries the purchasing power of the salaries of those in work has drastically declined. In Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador families spend more than 82 per cent of the family income on food.

Macro economic reform programmes have restricted support for agricultural production in the region, except in the export industry. This has caused food production to slow down and increased the amount of food imported and the degree of food dependency.

The living conditions of vulnerable groups are deteriorating in contrast with the general trends in the economies of the countries in the region. The livelihoods and resources lost in the many disasters that have occurred have rarely been recuperated. The same areas and groups affected in the past are those that are still exposed to the greatest risks today, in situations of high and increasing vulnerability.

In the early 1990s poor rural families in Zimbabwe had to reduce the number of meals they ate and to sell off their livestock as a means of coping with the prolonged drought. That meant that households with the fewest assets suffered the most and were left more vulnerable to the next drought.

Section Four: Oxfam GB's Current Programme

4.1 Disruptive Weather Patterns and Emergency Responses

Oxfam's humanitarian department is already dealing with a perceived increased incidence of natural disasters, possibly induced or intensified by climate change. Hurricane Mitch, the Orissa cyclone and the Mozambique floods were three of the biggest humanitarian emergencies Oxfam has ever had to respond to.

Figure 2: 'Unnatural' disasters

Year	Disaster	Death Toll (Approx.)	Total Contributions (OCHA)	OXFAM Contribution
1998	Hurricane Mitch (Central America)	14,000	$US 681,350,685	GBP 4,891,087
1999	Orissa Cyclone (India)	30,000?	$US 23,096,638	GBP 3,050,253
2000	Mozambique Floods	1000	$US 161,328,672	GBP 7,096,471

OGB, alongside all humanitarian actors, confronts and struggles with a wholly inadequate response to emergencies on the part of the international community, in terms of aid flows and emergency preparedness.

With declining aid levels and an increase in the number of extreme weather events, clearly international assistance is not going to be sufficient to cover the costs of natural disasters.

International aid following disasters rarely exceeds 4 per cent of the losses incurred. Hurricane Mitch, for example, caused several billions of dollars worth of damage to Honduras but the total amount of ODA committed by the international community amounted to $544million. International assistance is very slow to materialise and often comes too late. A one-year delay in assistance - standard for most massive reconstruction loans - results in adverse macro economic effects. [IDB] All too often the needs of those affected by such extreme events are shamefully neglected. The plight of the people displaced by the 1998 severe floods in Eastern Uttar Pradesh who - two years on - were still living in polythene tents, is not uncommon. . Many victims of natural disasters have no other option but to return to their homes in high-risk areas.

Due to corruption, time pressure and lack of financing, low quality infrastructure is often rebuilt. Lack of funding and emergency needs often prevent the incorporation of pro- mitigation component in reconstruction projects. Many countries rather than taking a proactive approach towards risk management focused on risk reduction and preparedness rely instead on costly reconstruction processes and post-disaster aid.

In South Asia OGB has made an innovative attempt to take a broader approach to the problems affecting disaster- prone areas. The River Basin Programme, RBP, set up after the 1998 floods in the Ganges/Brahmaputra plains, is the first South Asia regional programme involving three countries: Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

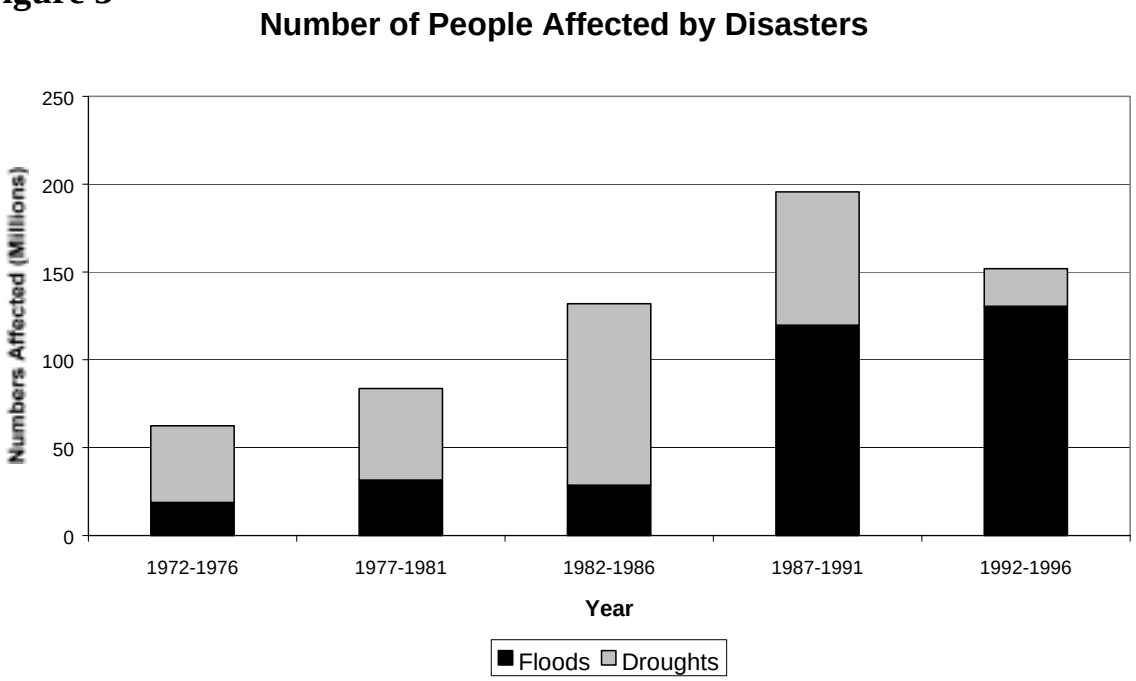
While important advances have been made in warning systems for cyclone risk and, to a lesser extent, in flood warnings, the challenge is how to communicate the risk of a particular phenomenon to the population at large, but especially in the rural areas.

There are a number of problems:

- Flood warnings - a highly centralised and politicised process - may be given too late.
- Emergency responses are generally delayed
- Emergency plans are not widely known and exist only on paper
- National emergency institutions often do not encourage civil society participation
- Emergency interventions reflect political interests
- Rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes are exploited for electoral and propaganda purposes
- Response favour groups located in accessible places
- Aid distribution often favours friends and acquaintances, rather than reaching those most in need.

In the Philippines 75 per cent of corn producing areas in Mindanao are expected to be highly vulnerable to the destructive effects of the next El Nino. The Government admitted in press interviews that inadequate preparation for the drought in 1998 left some 800,000 people hungry, especially those living in non-irrigated and upland areas in Central and Southern Mindanao. (Philippines Monitor, 16 August 2000)

Figure 3



4.2 Programme work responsive to climate change

It would be a mistaken assumption to view climate change problems solely through a natural disaster lens. Many elements of Oxfam's current programme involve activities that are already highly relevant to climate change concerns:

- food security
- livestock management
- harvesting of water resources
- reduction of vulnerability in coastal areas
- greater access and control over natural resources
- health

Climate change specialists argue that many communities living outside disaster-prone areas are also highly vulnerable to the cumulative impacts of human-induced climate change. Climate change does not therefore set Oxfam a new agenda but reinforces the urgency with which such sectors need to be addressed. The sectors represented here, when combined, form a substantial part of Oxfam's programme, they currently account for over 14% of our funding allocation (see figure 4)

Figure 4: Global Oxfam programme allocation to sectors particularly sensitive to the impacts of climate change, 1999 - 2000

Sector	Allocation (GBP)
Fisheries	206,685
Forestry	464,018
Environment	1,047,904
Crop production	4,645,767
Settlement	878,138
Shelter	2,070,509
Livestock	1,538,913
Total for sectors listed	**10,851,934**
Total for all sector	**77,052,334**
% of total programme allocation	**14.08 %**

Section Five: Proposals for current international action

The following is a sketch of the development of the international legislation on global climate change.

5.1 UN Framework

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), adopted at the Earth Summit in 1992, is at the core of all international efforts to combat global warming. The ultimate objective of the convention is the 'stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that

would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (man-made) interference with the climate system.' It states that 'such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.' The UNFCCC makes explicit reference to co-operation, burden sharing, and common but differentiated responsibilities between parties, based on prevailing social and economic conditions. 181 governments and the European community are parties to the convention.

5.2 Kyoto Protocol

It sets legally binding emission targets for developed countries (also called Annex 1 or Annex B countries) post-2000 to arrest and reverse upward trend in greenhouse gas emissions. The Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC was adopted at the COP-3 in 1997.

Developed countries commit themselves to reducing their collective emissions of six key greenhouse gases by at least 5%. This group target will be achieved through cuts of 8% in EU (with different rates distributed among the member states); 7% cuts by the US; 6% by Canada, Japan.

Each country's emission target must be achieved in the period 2008-2012. Demonstrable progress must be made by 2005. Cuts in the three most important gases carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide will be measured against a base year of 1990.

Countries will pursue emissions cuts in a wide range of economic sectors. The protocol encourages governments to cooperate to improve energy efficiency, reform energy and transportation sectors, promote renewable forms of energy, phase out inappropriate fiscal measures and market imperfections, limit methane emissions from waste management and energy systems and protect forests and other carbon "sinks".

Countries can achieve their commitments by deducting the emissions absorbed by some types of carbon sinks (like forests) from their gross emissions in the commitment period. This provision includes emissions absorbed or emitted by certain land use changes and forestry activities like reforestation. The measurement of changes in net emissions from forests is methodologically complex.

The Protocol reaffirms the general commitments of both developed and developing countries. It reiterates the need to take measures to limit emissions and promote adaptation to future climate change impacts; submit information on the national climate change programmes and inventories; promote technology transfer, public awareness and training. The Protocol stresses the need to provide new and additional financial resources to meet the agreed full costs incurred by developing countries in carrying out these commitments.

Parties will take "appropriate action" on the basis of the best available scientific technical and socio-economic information.

Talks on commitments for the post 2012 period must start by 2005.

For the Kyoto Protocol to enter into force it must be ratified by 55 nations and include Annex 1 countries accounting for at least 55% of total Annex 1 carbon dioxide emissions in 1990. As the US was responsible for more than 36% of 1990 Annex 1 emissions this provision is difficult if not impossible to meet without the U.S. As of September 2000 the Protocol had been signed by 84 countries, including the USA, the EU, Canada, Japan, and China. But only 30 countries have ratified the Protocol and none of them are Annex 1 countries.

The US Senate has unanimously stated that the country should not ratify the Protocol until developing countries agree to "meaningful participation". This is taken to mean that emerging economies, like China, also agree to start reducing emissions now.

The Hague meeting was supposed to develop a non-compliance mechanism with legally binding consequences for countries failing to meet their emissions commitments.

5.3 Flexibility mechanisms

In addition to reducing their internal emissions and using sinks, countries can achieve their assigned amounts using "flexibility mechanisms". These include emissions trading, joint implementation and Clean Development Mechanism projects.

Under the emissions trading provision, Annex 1 countries with emissions below their assigned amounts can sell the unused portion to countries whose emissions exceed their amounts. Trading redistributes the allowed emissions from one country to another but keeps the total emissions within the originally agreed limit.

Details need to be worked out on how a trading regime would work. How extensive national systems for monitoring and verification of emissions must be before countries are allowed to participate in trading?

Joint implementation is a project-based activity in which one industrialised country can receive emissions-reduction credits when it funds a project in another industrialised country where the emissions are actually reduced. The paying country becomes the donor and the receiving one the host country. The countries must demonstrate that emissions are lower than they would have been in the absence of the project. Emissions reductions derived from joint implementation projects are described as emission reduction units and can be generated by projects that cut greenhouse gas emissions. Detailed rules still need to be agreed.

Kyoto Protocol states that both emissions trading and joint implementation must be supplementary to domestic actions. A country cannot fulfill its responsibility to reduce domestic emissions by relying primarily on any of these mechanisms to meet its targets. The EU strongly supported a cap on the use of emissions trading and other flexibility mechanisms to ensure that the majority of emission reductions are made domestically. The U.S and others vigorously oppose it.

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is essentially joint implementation between a donor country with a quantified emission limitations commitment (a developed country) and a host (developing) country without such a commitment. Developed countries (or companies in countries

that have devolved their obligations to the private sector, as the U.S. intends to do) pay for projects in developing countries, generating certified emissions reductions, which can be used to meet the donor's emission limitation obligations. The Kyoto Protocol makes no mention of whether land use projects are eligible for the CDM. This became a contentious issue at The Hague.

A share of proceeds from the projects activities will be used to help developing countries particularly vulnerable to adverse impacts meet the cost of adapting to these impacts. Developing countries were calling for this adaptation fee to be placed on emissions trading and joint implementation transactions as well.

The US and other OECD countries (though not the UK/EU) are reluctant to agree to fossil fuel reductions, which they claim would wreck their economies and result in massive job losses. They want to be able to offset their emissions by trading with other countries (e.g. with Russia which has an emissions deficit) or by creating or enhancing a "carbon sink" (forests) in a developing country.

OPEC is afraid that a strong climate treaty could lessen their income from oil sales and is demanding compensation for loss in oil revenues. Brazil, China and India are the leading G-77 countries in the negotiations. China and India are worried by any attempts to limit their exploitation of fossil fuels.

Business is concerned that the Protocol through its call for clean technology transfers will undermine their competitiveness.

Most developing countries are at a severe disadvantage during these negotiations. Even though the Kyoto Protocol makes explicit references to the needs to protect the interests of poor, low emitting countries most of them lack the capacity to participate fully. Decisions taken at the follow-up to COP-6 will have lasting consequences for the development, health and well being of poor communities around the world yet they have no voice. By contrast, the most powerful and heavy emitting countries (US, Japan, Canada) and powerful industrial lobbies (oil companies, nuclear industry and the CBI) exert a major influence on the proceedings.

The flexibility mechanisms create opportunities for trading in CO2 emissions between countries and open the way to potentially vast transfers of resources and technology between CO2 producers (US/Europe/Japan) and developing countries. These mechanisms are designed specifically to promote exchanges in energy efficient and alternative energy technology between the developed and developing world.

In the face of uncertainty over how the trading mechanisms will work, TNCs and industry associations like the CBI are moving quickly to develop their own initiatives. Certainly one objective of these 'early birds' is to pre-empt government legislation with initiatives that are more favorable to the business interest.

The oil majors, including Shell (through the Shell Tradeable Emission Permits (STEP) system and BP/Amoco (through its internal trading arrangements) have developed company-wide platforms to trade carbon emissions. The CBI, too, has played a prominent role including the development of a fully-fledged carbon trading system by including a credit auction. The CBI argues that a carbon tax would cause business to go abroad and that taxes will not reduce emissions or encourage energy efficiency.

Section Six: Outline of Recommended Strategy

Overall goal

OGB's long-term objective is to reduce the vulnerability of poor communities in poor countries to the potentially devastating impacts of global climate change.

International objectives

1. Mitigation: reducing greenhouse gas emissions

1.1 Work with the UK and EU Governments and with the governments of key Southern countries - most at risk from climate change - to bring about equitable, effective actions to reduce emissions, particularly by industrialised countries.

1.2. Ensure that the rules and procedures of the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change do not damage the interests of developing countries and poor communities with whom we work. The Kyoto Protocol must deliver:

- substantial and genuine domestic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by OECD governments, in line with their Rio commitments;
- a rejection of "carbon sinks" in the Kyoto Protocol - large-scale industrial timber plantations, which would threaten biodiversity, the livelihoods and resource entitlements of indigenous and other poor, forest- dwelling communities;
- a limit on the use of emissions trading between countries (via the purchase of "hot air") as a means of meeting targets ;
- a transfer of additional resources and clean technologies to developing countries to enable them to mitigate their emissions, adopt a sustainable development path and/or adapt to the predicted impacts of climate change.

2. Preparedness

Ensure that relief and reconstruction efforts [ECHO, multilateral, bilateral] incorporate pro-mitigation and/adaptation components and improve the capacity of local communities to participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of such interventions to reduce vulnerability and corruption

3. Humanitarian response

Develop greater climate change awareness in our humanitarian work and with our partners. Build in, where possible, climate change references to public communications and advocacy work around extreme weather events - flooding after prolonged monsoons or extreme drought.

Examine the potential for conflict linked to climate change exacerbation of environmental sustainability (e.g. Israel/Palestine).

4. Longer term development

4.1 International

Develop climate-sensitive/vulnerability indictors for screening debt initiatives, new (foreign) investments and all development assistance programmes.

Engage with the World Bank and other donors in discussions about the lending policies to fossil fuel industries/activities.

Incorporate a climate change perspective into the forthcoming Trade Campaign, which will coincide with the 10th Anniversary of the Earth Summit in 2002.

4.2 Regional level objectives

Bring about change to their regional policies and practices that expose poor communities to repeated risks from natural disasters by for example:

Improving regional climate change awareness [S Asia, Southern Africa, CAM] enhance cooperation in disaster preparedness implementation of effective regional planning over equitable distribution of water cooperate in restoration of watersheds, reforestation.

An advocacy pilot programme will be undertaken that attempts to link climate change issues to the anticipated intense monsoon period in August 2001, with specific reference to the River Basin Programme in South Asia. A preparatory background briefing paper should be available for the Bonn follow-up meeting of COP-6, in May 2001.

4.3 National level objectives

Governments to take measures to develop, in a participatory way, plans to adapt to predicted climate-change impacts; to reduce the risks to current extreme weather events by, *inter alia*, enhancing the security of tenure and resource entitlements of poor communities.

Governments should not rely on costly reconstruction processes and post-disaster aid but adopt a risk-management strategy by improving disaster-preparedness, emergency response and encouraging civil society participation in the development and implementation of emergency plans.

Reduce corruption and waste in use of resources through greater transparency; enforce urban planning regulations - but in consultation with poor communities.

Help to promote the adoption of climate friendly measures and technologies through our programmes in urban, rural and coastal areas.

5. Partners and allies

Try to forge or strengthen alliances with private sector leaders particularly in the financial/insurance sector (ABI, Swiss Re, CGNU); the automobile industry – e.g. FORD and some of the more progressive oil majors (e.g. BP) and emerging leaders in renewable energy field.

Engage constructively with the World Bank, UNDP, UNEP and the World Resources Institute, who at the UN's Millennial Assembly, jointly confirmed their commitment to making the viability of the world's ecosystems a critical development priority for the 21st Century.

Continue to cooperate with Climate Change Network of environmental NGOs to increase lobbying impact at inter-governmental meetings: such as the COP-6 follow-up meeting in Bonn in May 2001 and in preparing the agenda for COP-7 (2001)

Develop the capacity of southern partners and vulnerable communities - particularly in South Asia, South East Asia, Southern Africa and Central America - to bring about change to their regional and national policies and so that they can have an input into international level negotiations. This will entail helping to disseminate information about local climate change, facilitating training and workshops and supporting the development of local, national and regional networks.

Work with the Humanitarian Ombudsman to scrutinise the quality and effectiveness of reconstruction efforts.

6. Research options

To improve OGB's understanding of the importance of climate change, undertake specific pieces of research. Possible options include:

Collaboration with WWF on a joint study examining vulnerability to climate change (possibly in Brazil and the Philippines/Vietnam)

Developing joint research with other relief agencies and partners into post disaster reconstruction efforts from a climate-change perspective.

7. Improve knowledge management systems

SMT is currently engaged in reviewing Oxfam's work in relation to the environment the results of which should be available by June 2001. In this context consideration will be given to the extent to which Oxfam, if it wishes to have credible voice in climate change debates - should strive to improve the energy efficiency of its operations and offices.

Annex 1: Initial Outline for the Climate Change Programme

Global SCO to which this programme primarily contributes:
SCO 1, The Right to Sustainable Livelihoods and SCO 3, The Right to Life and Security (cross cutting with SCO 4).

Ideas, beliefs, policy and practice changes[1]	Strategies/ approaches[2]	Partners and allies and Oxfam responsibilities[3]	Geographical area reached	Number of people expected to benefit [4]	Estimated resource requirements[5]
Genuine and substantial reductions in emissions by OECD Governments	Integrate climate change concerns into planning via PSRPs/ CAS Joint ACP-EU resolutions / additional resources Lobby for National planning regulations to be implemented or strengthened; give greater security to vulnerable hazard prone communities in coastal areas, flood plains.	WB responsible for climate change funds/GEF EC/EU committed to reducing green house gases and funding adaptation in South IPCC independent Advisory body on climate change Voice of Southern Govts, esp. Bangladesh, Vietnam, South Africa, Nicaragua strengthened in international arena. Ensuring equitable spread of emissions, and funding via CDM	S Asian/ S E Asia Southern Africa CAM	50 million + 10 mn in Bangladesh 4 mn in Mekong delta 2-3 mn Central America	

Carbon trading should provide net benefits and exclude "sinks"	Joint research on Vulnerable communities/ vulnerability indicators feed into COP-7/IPPC	CLIMATE Change network of NGOs .			
Emissions trading to be regulated and verifiable OECD countries should transfer additional resources and clean technologies to assist developing countries mitigate and adapt to impacts of climate change Governments in South Asia/ SE Asia/ Southern Africa ?/ CAMEXCA to take proactive approach to risk management, risk reduction and preparadness ECHO/ Disaster Relief/reconstruction ensure pro-mitigation/adaptation components Corporates reduce reliance on fossil fuels/develop low cost, pro poor alternatives	Reduce vulnerability of communities by land use planning/ resource management/ disaster preparedness Collaborative research to improve mitigation/adaptation policies: e.g. monitoring use of reconstruction funds; mapping patterns of population shifts in response to extreme weather events/climate change.	Build-up capacity of NGOs and vulnerable communities in high risk countries by workshops/training Dissemination of best practice via RED de Desastres in CAM/ RBP in South Asia Constructive engagement with Progressive Business to push for greater energy efficieny and low cost solutions in CBI/ World Forum/ Biac/IPE Outreach of OGB as major relief and development NGO different to that of environmental groups.			

Annex 2: Equity Manifesto for COP-6

"The Hague Mandate"

A statement prepared and endorsed by an international group of concerned organisations from the South and the North, for the sixth conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP6) in The Hague, November 2000.

Whereas:

- the World's climate is changing because of man-made emissions of greenhouse gases;
- the people least responsible for these emissions are affected most by the impacts of climate change;
- cuts in emissions can and should be made by industrialised countries as agreed in Rio in 1992;
- cutting emissions will bring about the innovation needed for sustainable development in North and South

We believe that:

- no citizen has a right to pollute more than any other;
- every citizen has an equal right to the resources of Earth for sustainable development;
- every country has a duty to ensure its emissions do not exceed its global per capita share
- past, current and future emissions from industrialised countries have, do and will exceed for an unknown period their fair share by far and that this is unfair

We *note* that the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change could fail to stabilise atmospheric greenhouse gas concentration at a sustainable level and, in its current form, is also inequitable. We therefore call on the Governments of the world to implement the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol so that:

- the overwhelming majority of emission reductions are made in the high per capita polluting countries (domestic action first)
- poor countries who are less able to develop in a low polluting way are helped to do so by industrialised countries in a way which ensures that only sustainable technologies and necessary know-how are transferred, leading to long-term economic benefits for those countries
- mechanisms are developed whereby those who emit above their fair share provide adequate resources to developing countries vulnerable to the impacts of climate change for both disaster preparedness and disaster relief and rehabilitation
- other environmental and social problems are prevented by a clear focus of the Protocol's flexible mechanisms on renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

We specifically call on governments to adopt "**The Hague Mandate"** committing all Parties to secure further global reductions in emissions beyond the first step taken by the Kyoto Protocol until 2012, ensuring that:

- Total emissions are reduced to levels that do not lead to dangerous changes in the world's climate. This implies agreement of a global limit on greenhouse gas emissions and a time plan after 2012.
- After 2012 greenhouse gas emissions are reduced and distributed on an equitable basis so that within decades each country's share of allowed global emissions reflects its share of global population.