



# Evaluation of the Response to Hurricane Dean in Jamaica, St. Lucia and Dominica

Full Report

Oxfam GB Programme Evaluation

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## **Executive summary**

In 2007, Hurricane Dean (category 4 with sustained wind of 150 mph), made landfall in Jamaica on August 19th 2007 leaving a trail of damage along the Southern coast. According to initial reports, as many as 300,000 people were temporarily displaced by Dean. The communities most affected are located in the southern part of the island that was impacted by hurricanes Emily, Ivan, and Wilma in 2004 and 2005.

On St. Lucia and Dominica, the hurricane made landfall on August 17th causing widespread damage to the agricultural sector. Most of the damage was caused by the hurricane and tropical storm winds but there were several areas where flooding occurred. The banana crop is the main agricultural activity in both islands and farmers are highly dependent on the benefit from this crop. The majority of them are certified and socially organized as banana Fair Trade farmers. Non-banana farmers were also affected as vegetable crops and animal pens were destroyed.

This evaluation carried out after the six-month programmes have closed was to look at the following areas:

- To review the project design and implementation
- To identify and document innovative and good practices
- To identify persistent weaknesses (particularly in internal systems) for organisational learning

The evaluation was carried out by semi-structured interviews with key informants and focus groups in the three countries with a variety of stakeholders. The evaluator talked to all staff in the Barbados office, four staff in the regional centre, one HSP and one contract staff and in the countries three government staff, 16 partner staff, 12 volunteers and 67 women and 25 men from the affected populations.

On the whole, although the implementation was late, the response went some way to meeting people's needs and must be seen as partially successful. It is always important to note the psychological aspect of providing assistance to people who may not have expected it. Certainly all the participants of the focus groups expressed satisfaction and it was only when pushed, that they commented on services or goods received and made suggestions for improvements.

Accountability was more by default than design and must be strengthened in any future responses. While there is good rapport between partners, extension workers and volunteers and the affected population, there is no mechanism for complaints from the partner to the Barbados office. If there had been, it may have been easier to deal with the managerial concerns faced in varying degrees in all three countries.

Having been asked to look at weaknesses, it would appear that HR, finance and logistics are the common areas. As the Hurricane Ivan response was led by the region and HD and as there does not appear to have been an evaluation it is difficult to assess if the weaknesses are persistent. This current response was therefore a good opportunity for the ESC office to identify constraints and to find ways of solving them. Certainly both the clumsy financial system and the lengthy and costly procurement of fairly simple items need to be examined and refined.

The vegetable seeds distribution did tide people over until such time as they could recover their normal activities and was deemed to be appropriate by almost all interviewees. However, given the time and cost of importing the commodities and the lateness of the response, one would question the cost effectiveness and cost-benefit of such an intervention. It is definitely worth taking the time to explore other possibilities that could be carried out quickly and with minimum input. The same could be said for the latrines in Jamaica. Transport costs are on the rise and anything that can be done to reduce expenses should be considered.

There is huge potential for preparedness and mitigation especially in Jamaica. Hurricanes will occur in the future and much could be done to have systems and plans in place beforehand. There was a great deal of time wasted collecting information, designing services and procuring commodities, all of which could have been sorted out during “peace time.”

## **Recommendations**

### **Jamaica – Public health**

- Use the PHE HSP in region to assess latrine designs and to produce suitable options for different areas of Jamaica that conform to Ministry regulations and beneficiary needs
- Determine before an emergency what hygiene messages to use so that time is not wasted doing KAP surveys
- Use the PHPs more for community mobilisation and in preparedness planning for example, train them in assessment techniques
- Explore possibilities for Cash for Work in urban settings with partners and beneficiaries and make a plan that is realistic for the context. Do this before an emergency so that the proposal makes it clear whether this is just a clean up or it is really a cash injection into the community
- Investigate shelter issues such as a survey of extent of Hurricane Dean damage,<sup>1</sup> calculate the cost of simple shelter kits, identify other players and map the gaps as part of mitigation

### **Windwards – livelihoods**

- If funding allows, do a small sample size survey of banana and non-banana farmers in order to determine whether seeds was really the cost effective and efficient way of providing support or whether a straight cash grant would have been better. This survey could be carried out by extension workers
- Have a contingency plan for the islands (in line with the government plan when published) and (if going for this alternative):
  - have a list of suitable seed varieties, pesticides and suppliers in country. Work with the NFTO, WINFA and extension workers to have a strategy for vegetable planting that is adhered to by all expatriate staff
  - Give farmers more of a choice. Make the package and the cash for work slightly higher than the cash grant to make it more attractive and monitor usage. Verify compatibility with ECHO requirements
  - Stagger distribution – better planning – maybe zone distribution with different seeds in different districts – liaise with Ministry of Trade
- Investigate shelter issues such as a survey of extent of Hurricane Dean damage, calculate the cost of simple shelter kits, identify other players and map the gaps as part of mitigation

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<sup>1</sup> By using a sample size, this need not be extensive but would give an idea for future responses. It could be combined with the livelihoods survey proposed in point one

## **Data collection**

### **Learning points**

- KAP studies should be used with caution and with a definite aim. If information for health messaging can be obtained more quickly elsewhere than a KAP study is not relevant. If one is used, it should be repeated to measure impact although in a six-month programme this is probably not very relevant
- Socio-economic as well as demographic data are useful for beneficiary selection in all countries given the fact that remittances play a role in household economies
- Focus groups to measure beneficiary satisfaction are good practice especially if held at intervals during the implementation

### **Recommendation**

- Do a baseline survey in “peacetime” if funding allows using socio-economic data to map vulnerability
- Do not carry out KAP surveys in a six-month programme, obtain information from the Ministry of Health and community focus groups instead
- Carry out focus group discussions every two months during a response to measure beneficiary satisfaction and to get feedback

## **Accountability**

### **Learning point**

Oxfam encourages community consultation and participation but this can be difficult if results are needed quickly. It is better to have had that discussion before the emergency so both parties are clear on selection. We need to avoid fragmentation of existing community structures

### **Recommendations**

- Use existing networks (church services, community groups, schools) to disseminate information about the programme
- Use the PHPs as community mobilisers to give out information and to assist in selection
- Post beneficiary lists for all to see and encourage feedback on the suitability of candidates
- Having feedback mechanisms in place for partners as well as the affected population will improve working relationships – this should be the name and contact details for one specific person in the Barbados office with a record of how the complaint was resolved

## **Management issues including working with partners**

- Explore ways of getting Oxfam registered in the three countries if there is a plan to do some preparedness work or responds to future emergencies
- Assessment of partners before an emergency and a documented discussion as to abilities, areas of expertise and roles and responsibilities. Also assess support systems and ensure that partner staff are conversant with Oxfam systems before a response – for example, make sure partners know which reporting format to use and stick to it

- Second an accountant to the partner during a response and embed them in the organisation to work along side partner staff. Have a contingency plan with possible secondments or short-term contracts
- Explore ways of providing better logistics support in-country either by training to partners, short-term contracts or having lists of possible suppliers and transporters
- Use the Partner Financial management tools for tracking and monitoring
- Put systems in place to performance manage expatriate staff at a distance and set up a feedback system for complaints from national staff
- Do proper inductions so that all new short-term staff know the systems and formats and performance manage the usage. If not already in place, have an induction pack and timetable with responsibilities (stating which points need to be covered) for each member of the Barbados office staff

### **Preparedness**

- Update the Jamaica contingency plan to make it practical and a useful management tool; include list of useful contacts with a priority top three for “first port of call.” Include practical advice on logistics, suppliers and goods available. Do the same for Windwards.
- Work towards the partners taking over the management of a Category 3 Response in the next X number of years. Have an agreed plan with milestones
- In Jamaica, work with S-Corner on low-cost mitigation if funding allows; this would include roof repairs, training on hurricane proof buildings, latrines for evacuation centres, assessment training and other issues that may arise

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## **1.0 Introduction**

After the destruction caused by Hurricane Dean in 2007, Oxfam responded in Jamaica, St Lucia and Dominica with a semi-operational programme through partners. This evaluation carried out after the six month programmes have closed was to look at the following areas:

To review the project design and implementation

To identify and document innovative and good practices

To identify persistent weaknesses (particularly in internal systems) for organisational learning

It should be noted that an important part of this evaluation is to capture the views of partners, beneficiaries and local staff as all too often the final documentation from such a programme is the donor report and end of deployment reports from HSPs and other expatriate staff: little is heard from the partners. Although at times there was an explanation for some of the delays and constraints, it was important to note how these were experienced by partner staff on the ground.

## **2.0 Background**

### **2.1 Jamaica**

Hurricane Dean (category 4 with sustained wind of 150 mph), made landfall in Jamaica on August 19th 2007 leaving a trail of damage along the Southern coast. According to initial reports, as many as 300,000 people were temporarily displaced by Dean. The communities most affected are located in the southern part of the island that was impacted by hurricanes Emily, Ivan, and Wilma in 2004 and 2005. Insured losses in all the Caribbean are estimated between \$1.5 billion and \$3 billion, with the majority of claims coming from Jamaica. Main damages were to the water and sanitation systems, which were provided to the communities by Oxfam during the Hurricane Ivan response. Also approximately 70% of the shelters lost their roofs due to heavy winds<sup>2</sup>.

The Oxfam response was in collaboration with two partners: S-corner and C-Cam.

### **2.2 St Lucia and Dominica**

Hurricane Dean made landfall on August 17th 2007. On both islands, St. Lucia and Dominica, the agricultural sector was the most severely affected. Most of the damage was caused by the hurricane and tropical storm winds but there were several areas where damage was as a result of flooding from the heavy rain. The banana crop is the main agricultural activity in both islands and farmers are highly dependent on the benefit from this crop. Majority of them are certified and socially organized as banana Fair Trade farmers. Non-banana farmers are also highly dependent on the yields of their vegetable crops, and they are more vulnerable to a very volatile market and are somehow marginalized from official support and investments.<sup>3</sup>

The Oxfam response was in collaboration with WINFA (Windward Isles National Farmers Association) and NFTO (National Fair Trade Organisation).

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<sup>2</sup> ECHO Single document for Jamaica

<sup>3</sup> R. Abaye. End of deployment report March 2008

### **3.0 Methodology**

The evaluation was carried out by semi-structured interviews with key informants and focus groups in the three countries with a variety of stakeholders. The evaluator talked to all staff in the Barbados office, four staff in the regional centre, one HSP and one contract staff and in the countries three government staff, 16 partner staff, 12 volunteers and 67 women and 25 men from the affected populations. The table below shows the interviewees from the three countries:

	Gov officials	Partner staff	Volunteers	Other NGOs	Beneficiaries	
					Women	Men
Jamaica	2	5	12	1	19	6
St Lucia	1	2			32	15
Dominica	0	9			16	4

In order to have a systematic way of reporting findings, the benchmarks from the Real Time Evaluations (RTEs) have been used with extra additions from the TOR. There have been constraints with time as well as only being able to meet small numbers of beneficiaries and almost no non-beneficiaries. This in itself introduces some bias and therefore all conclusions are impressions that may or may not be generalisable. It has not been always possible to triangulate data and where opinions differ a footnote has been added.

### **4.0 Findings**

#### **4.1 Jamaica**

The overall objective of the project was:

To contribute to the prevention of a major disease outbreak among women, men and children in areas most affected by Hurricane Dean in Jamaica.

##### **4.1.1 Timeliness**

Oxfam's last response in Jamaica was in 2004 for Hurricane Ivan; there is no office in country. There are, however, two partners with whom Oxfam has previously worked. As a preparedness measure, these partners were contacted before the hurricane hit while the regional office was also lining people up to carry out the initial assessment<sup>4</sup>. Three days after the hurricane made landfall, the assessment team was on the ground, which is commendable given the logistics of getting to the island. The decision to concentrate on watsan seems to have been based on several factors: Oxfam's previous experience from Hurricane Ivan, initial feedback from partners and discussions with other players during the assessment, as well as a feeling that as Oxfam "we don't do shelter." There was also pressure from the donor not to just reproduce the Hurricane Ivan response. As an initial response, it was probably the right decision.

S-Corner was full of praise for the fact that the country office (Barbados) had contacted them before the hurricane and had made a preliminary financial commitment allowing the NGO to go ahead and use their own funds to purchase items

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<sup>4</sup> E-mail from 17<sup>th</sup> August from RHC



such as tarpaulins and chain saws. The latter were utilised in the pre-disaster cutting of obviously dangerous branches.

Overall it can be said that the initial response was fast but then implementation slowed to an unacceptable pace if this was to be considered an emergency response. As S-Corner put it so succinctly “then we had a breakdown.” Although there are some logical explanations for the delay such as managerial issues and procurement, we need to improve if there is to any kind of impact within the six months of implementation.

#### **4.1.2 Appropriateness of response including impact**

The ECHO proposal clearly states that: “Clean drinking water and good sanitation are amongst the first needs after a natural disaster. Women, men and children are especially vulnerable to infectious diseases as a result of debris and damage to water and sanitation systems. Clearing of the lands or neighbourhoods through cash for work programs will address the public health risks and in addition to it, it will bring immediate incomes to population for their food security and livelihoods recovery and will be a significant injection of cash into local economy.”

Given that this was the rationale for carrying out the response, it is disappointing that only the water component was actually put in place as an immediate measure: the sanitation was not implemented until four months after the hurricane hit<sup>5</sup>. This could not by any stretch of the imagination be seen as responding to “first needs” or “addressing public health risks.”

The shelter issue was considered but it was felt that government and other organisations had this covered. In hindsight, several interviewees felt that Oxfam should have monitored the shelter response more closely and advocated for better support. There would have been possibilities with ECHO for roofing kits but the forum for coordination was weak (after the initial assessment meetings) making advocacy and coordination of response difficult. The exact reasons for weak coordination have been difficult to determine although it would appear that Oxfam could have been more proactive in initiating regular contact with other organisations such as the Jamaican Red Cross.

##### **4.1.2.1 Immediate response**

In Salt River, focus group participants said Oxfam was the first agency to come to their aid with water trucking and later with latrines. As there was about 50% total damage to houses, people in the focus group were asked if a latrine had been their priority. Everyone agreed that getting a latrine had been useful but also that “it would have been nice to fix the house first.” As one lady said when asked if she would have liked to have her house repaired first “the toilet come before the house.” In Portland Cottage, Oxfam and partners were there three days after the hurricane. When people were asked what they needed, they said housing but were told they would be getting water and sanitation. One comment was: “can I live in a latrine?”

According to the Jamaican Red Cross, both they and Food for the Poor were working in shelter but apparently more on re-building houses than roofing kits. The Red Cross admitted that they did not have the resources to meet the needs. The government help for house repair was only distributed in early 2008.

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<sup>5</sup> The design was one reason why the latrines were late. It was difficult to assess exactly why an experienced consultant went for such an unwieldy design that was not in line with either Oxfam’s standards or those from the Ministry of Health. Getting approval from the Ministry for the Oxfam design delayed the programme even further.

In Old Harbour Bay, the Oxfam and C-Cam team were there a week after the hurricane. In this area, although there were communal tanks placed at strategic points, none of the nine people in the focus group had known about the tanks during the two months it took to reconnect the water supply. People had relied on bottled water or could fetch drinking water at the power station. Could this lack of information be due to the late recruitment of the PHPs?

In Bennett Lands, although S-Corner had already put in an order to tanks with a local supplier, they were told that Oxfam was going to place a bulk order from a supplier out in Spanish Town. Not only did this delay the process it caused great embarrassment when S-Corner had to cancel their local order. That said, people appreciated the water tanks as the piped water, although still running, was dirty and undrinkable.

The clean-up campaign in Bennett Lands seems to have been particularly successful not because it was a Cash for Work programme but more due to the good participation and spirit of volunteerism that is unusual in a urban community.

#### ***4.1.2.2 Recovery phase***

Monitoring of activities seems to have been a problem partly because activities started so late. The issue around not knowing how many people benefited from the water trucking is a difficult one although a good KAP survey should have given an average for household water use that could have been extrapolated from the number of truckloads data<sup>6</sup>. According to the partners, water testing was not carried out and the donated Delagua kit never used<sup>7</sup>. There were apparently no data on latrine usage but as these are family latrines this is not such an issue. A survey carried out after six months after the Hurricane Ivan response showed that 65% of latrines were still in use although there are apparently no data on why the remaining latrines were not being maintained or used. It would have been useful to know. C-Cam is supportive of carrying out a six-month post-intervention survey but lack the funds to do so.

#### ***4.1.2.3 Data collection***

There were too many surveys with too few results. The selection of beneficiaries took too long and it is difficult to actually determine what process was planned for this. The first KAP study was apparently to decide on the PH priorities and did not include any socio-economic data; the sample size was small. Given that most of the messages seemed to be the Oxfam standard (hand washing) or specific topics such as leptospirosis that are known to be a problem by all in the community, I would question the need for a KAP survey unless it had been specifically to monitor and to show change.

There was no follow-up of the KAP survey to show behaviour change or the impact of the public health. However, an attempt was made to gather some qualitative data although this can never be comparable with quantitative survey results. This attempt should be highlighted as good practice as so often programmes close without ever trying to measure beneficiary satisfaction or perceived impact.

A second survey using observation was carried out but still did not give the necessary information. The selection criteria were around demographics rather than socio-economic data. Everyone interviewed for the evaluation (both PHPs and

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<sup>6</sup> However, even the number of truckloads was not recorded!

<sup>7</sup> According to the HD PHE advisers, even if the water was being trucked from the normal source used pre-hurricane, Oxfam should have done a quality test as well as a chlorine residual test

beneficiaries) felt that the selection criteria were appropriate: “you can’t go to the bush when you are breast feeding” was one comment. However, no non-beneficiaries were interviewed and there is anecdotal evidence that people did not know why they had not been selected. In the focus groups, one or two participants knew of people who should have received a latrine but didn’t. In Old Harbour Town some of those who have received latrines are prepared to share with other family members or close neighbours, which increases the beneficiary numbers but does not necessarily cover all vulnerable families. There were comments from the PHPs around “names getting mixed up” and a need for verification.

The KAP study included information about house damage although this was never used – there was no correlation between the amount of damage to a house and what the beneficiary received. Asking this kind of information raises expectations.

Monitoring generally was poor and there appears to be little documented feedback from beneficiaries until the final round of focus groups.

#### ***4.1.2.4 Public health***

The partners felt that the response was appropriate as latrines are often destroyed and the water system gets either turned off or destroyed. The public tanks were highly appropriate. The latrines were appreciated but came late: in Old Harbour Bay people first received their latrines in December.

The Eco-toilets or “upstairs toilets” have apparently been well received although again, recipients seemed unsure as to why they had been selected. As to whether they would dig out the excreta and use it as fertilizer, the reaction was usually either that it would only be used for such plants as mango trees or else it would be discarded. Only two people felt that they would use it on vegetables. Whether these types of toilets are appropriate in large quantities for an emergency response is a question that a PH engineer needs to explore.

The concrete slabs took six people to lift them. There are still slabs lying in one community as it obviously takes a great deal of effort to move them from where they were dropped off up small lanes to people’s houses. Oxfam has several tried and tested designs for family latrines; it must be possible to have a more user-friendly design. The Ministry of Health and ODPEM has designs but these were never requested by Oxfam. The design of the latrines had a knock-on effect on staff moral as PHEs struggled to implement an unwieldy programme.

The rainwater harvesting tanks and guttering also seem to have been given slightly randomly. The evaluation team visited one lady who lived right next to the communal tanks, which meant that she had both good drinking water and water for washing on-site whereas others had further to walk. These may just be exceptions but it does give the impression that selection may have missed some vulnerable households and those who were not in need received. There were signs of hurried work: gutters not connected or under the overhang of the roof so all rain water would miss the gutter completely<sup>8</sup>.

The PHP was extremely late. The first PHPs were trained in October – two months after the hurricane! According to the partners there was no clear vision as to what the PHP would look like and there was no continuity with coordinators. It was felt that there were too many staff for short periods of time. That said, the PHP component has

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<sup>8</sup> According to one senior interviewee, the team elected to concentrate on latrine building as this was considered to be the most important component. “Fear of the donor” prevented the rainwater-harvesting component from being dropped.

been well received by the community and there is anecdotal evidence of changes taking place. It was not, however, a response to the hurricane and could never claim to have prevented or reduced the spread of disease.

According to both the PAHO website and the Clarendon Health Office, there were no serious outbreaks of disease following the hurricane. There is normally an increase in gastroenteritis cases between October and March (PAHO website). Reportedly there was a slight increase in leptospirosis and dengue cases but no one in the focus groups had suffered from either condition. Some of the women said that there had been an increase in diarrhoea and skin conditions immediately after the hurricane but they did not consider it to be serious. Given that the PHP started in October and the latrines in December, one could safely say that only the water trucking may have had an impact on disease reduction.

The PHPs are motivated and wish to continue their work. Most of them are already volunteers in their communities in one capacity or other so the chances of them continuing their work are high. Some of the women, especially those who were unemployed, felt that they had gained confidence and a feeling of self worth and were more likely now to speak to people they did not know. This is an important side effect that should not be dismissed lightly. They do feel that their work has made a difference and can cite examples of improved hygiene behaviour such as children contributing money to buy soap for the school latrines. Should Oxfam decide to do DRR in Jamaica, these volunteers would be invaluable.

#### ***4.1.2.5 Cash for work***

The statement in the proposal was over-ambitious and probably did not take into account the situation of an urban or semi-urban population used to services provided by local authorities. In the end, the number of people employed to clear debris and assist the contractor was minimal and in no way could it ever be considered “a significant injection of cash into local economy.” Paying people to dig their pits only assists a few households and given that most people had to replace roofs and furniture, the impact on household economy must be minimal. If Oxfam is planning to respond in the future, it might be good to clarify with partners as to what is meant by Cash for Work and exactly how this will be accomplished, given the context.

#### ***4.1.2.6 Accountability***

There was apparently some discussion during the assessment with beneficiaries although this was not backed up by the focus group participants. There is one good example of an open public meeting in one community (Old Harbour) where people were told about the programme, what to expect and who to go to if there were concerns. The telephone number for C-Cam was made available. The boards for each community stating what Oxfam would provide were designed and distributed quite late in the project. When questioned in focus groups, if people were asked what they wanted or knew what Oxfam was going to do, most said that they were told they would get a toilet and/or a water tank. It is difficult to verify if this is completely true as the focus groups were small.

In Bennett Lands, accountability was by default given the way the community and the partner interact. The information was passed by word of mouth and by the community health workers from the clinic. When asked if people know where to take their complaints, the S-Corner director was mentioned. One partner felt that the culture in the Caribbean is “very vocal” and a formal complaints system is not necessary as “people vent without prompt.” This is a good example of how strong community

participation and trust between agency and community automatically leads to better accountability.

One partner felt that it “takes to long (for Oxfam) to decide on publicity statements” and that a simple statement that could have been disseminated to churches and other institutions to read out to people would have been better. As it was, the teams were constantly being stopped in the community and asked what was going on. This again could be due to late start of the PHP work.

#### ***4.1.2.7 Gender and HIV mainstreamed***

There is absolutely no problem to ensure women’s involvement in Jamaica. Both partners are run by dynamic women with a clear vision of how they want to work. The PHPs are also strong women with a voice in the community. The criteria for selection included all vulnerable groups (including households with chronically ill<sup>9</sup>) although how accurate the actual selection was is difficult to judge. There were no aspects of the programme that specifically targeted women, as the response was either to the community as a whole or else to vulnerable households (including female headed households).

#### **4.1.3 Effectiveness management structure and appropriate decision-making**

The Barbados office made the erroneous assumption that because there was a team of HSPs in place there was no need for pro-active support and monitoring of the project<sup>10</sup>. It was only after two months that the deficiencies around implementation were noticed. The partners felt that there should have been more pre-planning on roles and responsibilities. The second programme manager’s final report states that partner capacity to deliver was limited and at times Oxfam had to take over implementation in order to complete the programme. It would appear that the planning in the initial stages was not well understood by both parties and that there were unrealistic expectations on both sides<sup>11</sup>. If Oxfam is going to respond again in Jamaica, there must be a thorough assessment of partner capacity as well as an agreement as to what emergency measures need to be put in place in order to support the partners during the crisis. An example of this is that Oxfam must have known that C-Cam did not have a full-time accountant when they signed the MOU. Even when one was hired, the person was very inexperienced.

Given that the second programme manager arrived when implementation was behind schedule and that there were only two months to complete the infrastructure, it is commendable that the manager managed to turn things around (albeit with some reductions in outputs) and to satisfy the donor.

#### **4.1.4 Support systems in place**

##### ***4.1.4.1 Finance***

The finance system was laborious partly due to the fact that Oxfam was not registered and did not have a bank account in Jamaica<sup>12</sup>. Money was sent via a circuitous route involving Western Union with all the accompanying concerns of transfer fees and

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<sup>9</sup> A proxy indicator for persons with full-blown AIDS

<sup>10</sup> Due the lack of staff in the Windwards, the Barbados office concentrated their support efforts there

<sup>11</sup> An interviewee from the Barbados office admitted that C-Cam had almost been forced into the partnership as Oxfam put pressure on them to get involved without much discussion. No assessment of this partner had ever been carried out as in fact they were weak in systems and general management

<sup>12</sup> An attempt was made to rectify the situation but this proved to be impossible given the timeframe

exchange rates. Although this is understandable given the anti-money laundering laws in the Caribbean, it still had a knock-on effect on the work. Communication between Mexico, Barbados and the country was poor with a feeling at times from the country office that the regional centre did not understand the complexities of the response and was inflexible. Partners felt that transfers were slow and especially the second round of funding took longer than “was comfortable.” The language barriers of Spanish speakers in Mexico dealing with English speakers in the Caribbean also did not help matters. Partners would have liked to receive the reporting format earlier on in the project. However, despite the challenges of using different currencies and having to follow Oxfam’s procedures, S-Corner felt that “it was a headache but we learned from it.”

#### ***4.1.4.2 Logistics***

The obvious example of non-communication is around the ordering of the tanks and the fact that S-Corner had already put in an order. This is not so much a logistical problem but more about communications and sensitivity to partner relationships in their community. As with all the responses, the lack of a country or regional logistician was palpable. Even when a local logistician was hired, the person was not familiar with Oxfam procedures and regulations.

#### **4.1.5 Co-ordination with partners and other actors**

##### ***4.1.5 1 Partnership***

C-Cam was adamant that they were partnering Oxfam on a specific programme but they were not partners in the true sense. They felt that Oxfam was too operational and that once Oxfam leaves, it is the local partner who is left to cope with any problems. They felt that they should have been “on board with all activities” and there was a general feeling that people were not listened to – “they were not part of the process<sup>13</sup>.” S-Corner, on the other hand, had a really good relationship from previous contacts and felt that the Barbados office had been particularly supportive in committing funds. They felt that Oxfam as an agency respects their beliefs and values. They were, however, disappointed when the Oxfam team arrived as there was a definite personality clash with “persons coming with their own biases.” There were examples of the one partner (who knows the area well and who has many years experience) not being listened to and there were unnecessary delays in paperwork<sup>14</sup> that held up activities. This is unacceptable for an Oxfam programme manager who at the very least needs to be better in explaining procedures to partners.

However, S-Corner had nothing but praise for the second manager who “was very proactive in correcting some of the mistakes.”

In Bennett Lands, there was excellent co-ordination between the INGOs supporting S-Corner but of course, having one strong local agency and a small area of coverage makes coordination much easier.

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<sup>13</sup> This is backed up by a comment from the Barbados office; “we relied on them but they didn’t get a lot in return” However, it was also felt that a key C-Cam staff member was not sufficiently engaged and this non-engagement definitely hindered progress

<sup>14</sup> One example quoted by one partner was around getting a waiver letter for hire of a contractor: a process described by the partner as “a total disaster”

#### **4.1.5.2 Local authorities**

The Chief Public Health Inspector felt that his department had a good working relationship with Oxfam; he felt that plans had been shared and that the Ministry of Health had been consulted. It was interesting to note that the inspector was not aware of the hygiene promotion component! However, Oxfam did not request the existing Ministry latrine designs and only presented their own designs for approval two months into the project.

The ODPEM representative felt that before the second programme manager came “Oxfam was divorced from the system” and that if there had been better coordination from the beginning, most of the problems could have been sorted out. He thought the programme had had far-reaching effects but that as there were gaps in both the response to shelter and in the distribution of hygiene kits, better early coordination would have helped to fill those gaps. The Jamaican Red Cross also felt that Oxfam should have been in contact with ODPEM and the Disaster Emergency Committee earlier. The first contact (according to the person interviewed) was when Oxfam called the Red Cross to discuss what to do with the tanks as part of the exit strategy.

#### **4.1.6 Preparedness**

It was encouraging to see that there was a recently updated contingency plan although according to the programme manager exit report, this was not used as it was deemed not useful. It is a pity because experience from other responses has shown that a great deal of information can be collected in “peace time” that can save time when the crisis occurs.

In Bennett Lands, for example, where there is a relatively small stable population, it would be easy to do vulnerability mapping of households. S-Corner already has a list of 27 houses where people are vulnerable and where roofs are poorly maintained. They would like support to do repairs for as they point out, otherwise we will go on supporting the same 27 households every time there is a hurricane in the area.

In terms of future preparedness, C-CAM would like to become a “first-line responder” and has already secured funding to set up a small store of non-perishables. They are keen to develop community disaster plans not only for hurricanes but also for floods and fire as they feel they already have the KAP survey results and a team of trained and motivated PHPs. They would like to concentrate on shelter.

The PHPs also feel that they have an important role to play in the preparedness phase with an impending hurricane. In Bennett Lands, the community spirit and the structure of having lane leaders make it an ideal place for community disaster plans and community mitigation.

One area that was of interest to the partners was the suggestion that latrines could be built at evacuation centres and locked between periods of crisis. S-Corner especially supported this idea, as when the staff had to clean up the clinic area after evacuees had left, the mess was so bad “that staff wanted to resign.”

Training needs raised with the two partners include assessments, Sphere and also on better house repair in order to reduce damages.

The Jamaican Red Cross has a preparedness programme with community disaster response teams, early warning systems and kits for early warning, search and rescue and first aid in evacuation centres. They feel that there are possibilities here also for working with Oxfam as a preparedness partner on water and sanitation.

## **4.2 St Lucia and Dominica**

The principal objective of the project was “to contribute to the recovery of livelihoods of farmers whose food security and livelihoods have been severely affected by Hurricane Dean in the islands of St. Lucia and Dominica.”

The operation specific objectives of the project were to improve food security and livelihoods recovery of hurricane affected farmers in Dominica and St. Lucia by restoring their production capacity, targeting especially those who suffered highest losses in crops and the most vulnerable families (female headed households and elderly farmers).<sup>15</sup>

### **4.2.1 Timeliness**

In both St Lucia and Dominica, a livelihoods assessment took place on August 27<sup>th</sup> completed on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. The lateness was due to unforeseen issues with visas and the fact that initial reporting had pointed to limited damage plus the decision from Barbados to primarily concentrate on Jamaica. Recommendations were clear and appear to have for the main been incorporated into the proposal. The original recommendation was for cash transfers in the form of Cash for Work but more flexibility was proposed: it was also to “cover the income gap.” The assessment report is impressive given the time frame and will be a useful document for future work in the islands. It is also a good practice example of the assessment team quickly realising that the target group should also include non-banana farmers, something that was not included in the original TOR.

There were delays in getting a manager for both islands so that initially these were managed from the Barbados office. It is important to note that in other emergencies in a single country, this remote management of a partner on a small response might have been possible but when the operation is not only on another island but also in another country, it immediately becomes more complicated. It is doubtful as to whether HD and the region really realise the implications of the geographical constraints.

As in Jamaica, the immediate response was good but the actual implementation was slow. The original design of the project was based on the assumption that local procurement was possible. This was not the case in reality, making procurement and delivery more problematic. Thus seeds, fertilizer and pesticides only appeared in December although the money for paying labour came earlier in October.

In all focus groups on both islands, it was felt that help could have come earlier as people struggled for the first month or so until Oxfam started the project. St Lucia banana farmers felt that by the time the seeds were sown and spouted, the new banana trees were already too high for successful intercropping. In Dominica where vegetables are grown in separate plots, this was less of a problem. The reasons for the late seed distribution can be explained by the need to import but it is still important to document the knock-on affects. It also highlights the needs to explore possibilities in country and for better planning – weighing up the advantages of the seed distribution programme against the constraints of procurement.

### **4.2.2 Appropriateness of response**

In both islands, focus group participants and extension workers agreed that the response was appropriate in principle as the main damage to the islands were the banana plantations. There was a feeling that the vegetable seeds “opened some farmers eyes to other opportunities.” For non-banana farmers it was a chance to “get

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<sup>15</sup> R.Abaye end of deployment report, March 2008



back on our feet.” The psychological effects of Oxfam aid have been shown in other responses to have a huge impact and should never be underestimated.

As far as measuring impact, the St Lucian Ministry of Agriculture figures show a marked drop in the amount of vegetables imported in 2007. There is a drive to reduce this amount further in the “eat what you grow, grow what you eat” strategy. There is no way of measuring Oxfam’s impact on imports, only that one can presume that there was a small contribution. The programme was in line with the Ministry’s plan for diversification. However, the issue of procurement difficulties has to be also considered when deciding if the response is the most appropriate. If it really does take two months to procure seeds and fertilizers and if these are not available in country, then either Oxfam should reduce the amount given out or should reconsider the mode of response.

The issues around having to push up beneficiary numbers using Cash for Work as a means to pay labourers instead of a cash grant that people could (and did) use for other expenses is not desirable. As one interviewee said:” we are more concerned with ECHO than we are with the beneficiaries.”

#### ***4.2.2.1 Impact and beneficiary satisfaction***

In both islands, the majority of focus groups participants agreed that the help was in response to their needs. Although the assistance given in no way could match their income from the bananas, it did tide them over until such time as production was up and running again. No one interviewed (a total of 92 persons) had had to sell assets, take out loans or remove children out from school although some said that they had come close to doing so. They also did not know of anyone else who had been forced to do so. However, people used their savings making them vulnerable this year if a hurricane causes damage to the same communities. There were no comments about the money not being collected due to the amount<sup>16</sup>.

However, when asked what they would have preferred, several of the St Lucia farmers who do not actually live on their land, would have liked a cash grant instead of the vegetables and fertilizer packages as theft is a concern. Although cash grants were mentioned in the assessment report, there was no choice offered to beneficiaries. Even the cash for work was for paying labourers with a monitoring system to ensure correct usage. Although Oxfam managers stated that the amount was for **partly** paying labourers, certainly all the interviewees in-country understood it to mean **only** for labour. Participants in focus groups spoke of using the money to pay bills, school fees, to repair houses and to buy fertilizer.

In Dominica in both types of farmer groups there were several participants whose first priority had been to repair housing<sup>17</sup>. Others had lost animals from which they derived a large part of their income but they also only received the seeds kit. Several women interviewed would have prioritised rebuilding pens or replacing stock<sup>18</sup>. Government support to housing repair appears to be ad hoc in both countries and there were those in the groups who had been promised but had never received.

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<sup>16</sup> There were reports from Oxfam staff of farmers not bothering to cash their cheques – this was not confirmed in FGDs

<sup>17</sup> At least two participants were still living with a partially tarpaulin covered roof

<sup>18</sup> The Ministry of Agriculture did not, however, see re-stocking as a problem as they felt the statistics of dead livestock were inflated. The assessment report states that no animal losses were identified but that enclosures had been destroyed. Oxfam’s avian flu policy ruled out chicken distribution despite the fact that H5N1 has never been detected in the region

There were several problems associated with the seeds, pesticides and fertilizer. These were highlighted both by the focus group participants and the extension workers.

### **Seeds**

In St Lucia some of these were poor quality and produced very little. The variety had apparently been suggested by the supplier rather than the Ministry of Agriculture according to extension workers<sup>19</sup> who thought that directly sown seeds would have been better. The NFTO was left with “a million seedlings” that nobody wanted. There were too many seeds given and it was not possible to plant all the land, especially after the banana plants started to grow. The seeds per acreage ratio for banana farmers needs to be recalculated for a future response especially if supplies are being imported at increased costs.

In Dominica, WINFA had already drawn up a Ministry of Agriculture approved list of seeds, had worked out amount per acre and had contact with a local supplier. However, they were apparently told that Oxfam would import from the United Kingdom (possibly this confusion arose around ECHO purchasing rules). It has been difficult to determine whether the local supplier would have been a better option (or indeed could cope with such a large order) but again, this is something that a pre-emergency assessment can determine. The Ministry list was respected although farmers expressed a desire to choose their own seeds according to area and market opportunities to reduce wastage. Some inter-farmer seed exchange did take place.

### **Marketing**

In St Lucia, some of the produce was ready at the same time<sup>20</sup>. Markets were flooded with produce and prices fell. Many people gave away to schools, clinics, friends and families, which although admirable, was not really the purpose of the project. It is recognised that families had more vegetables to eat and that they did not need to buy but the amount of money they saved was small compared to what they could have earned. No survey was done to show impact on the household economy. Some groups (those with non-banana farmers) fared better as they had contacts with hotels and restaurants but the banana farmers had to compete on the open market.

In Dominica, due to slow procurement there was some staggered production but it was by default rather than planned. Even the established vegetable growers struggled to sell: “we had to beg people to buy.” There was a feeling of animosity against the newcomers (the banana farmers) to the market:

“Now they are producing bananas again, we hope they will leave our vegetables alone.”

A positive spin-off of this project has been the initiative with the non-banana farmer women’s group looking at pickling and preservation of herbs. The glut in the market has forced the women’s group to diversify but as yet they have no market access.

Generally, all recipients of Oxfam aid in both countries wanted advice and assistance in accessing markets in order to prevent this flood of cheap food that may assist others in buying the produce but does little for those trying to sell it. The Ministry of Agriculture in Dominica feels that production is too small for any kind of external sale but as the country does not import much in the way of vegetables, there might be potential for better in-country marketing. NFTO has an education programme and are

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<sup>19</sup> The Barbados office had been given a different report – it is not important except that it shows communication was poor and there was a lack of transparency

<sup>20</sup> There were differing opinions about which products and the extent of the problem

keen to include market access. There is also possibly a link with the on-going Oxfam development project (recommended in the assessment report to develop the one programme approach). This assistance is of course not appropriate for a short emergency response but should be considered if Oxfam plans to respond in the islands in the future.

### **Pesticides and fertilizer**

The pesticides given to the St Lucia banana farmers were, according to the extension workers, not always the most appropriate (despite there being different kits to choose from). Some were those no longer recommended by the Ministry of Agriculture but were suggested by the supplier. It has been difficult to verify this. In Dominica, advice *was* taken from the Ministry of Agriculture although white lime was added to the kits despite it not being recommended. Although this lime was much appreciated in some areas, as a blanket distribution it was not appropriate. There has possibly been wastage of pesticides due to the blanket distribution as some farmers have been reluctant to use them or have not had the need. A less wasteful system of distribution (such as a pesticide bank) may be worth exploring.

The protective gear for non-banana farmers was added later to a revised budget. This was an oversight in the beginning, as all farmers working with pesticides should have some kind of protective gear. Training on the use of pesticides was also not in the original budget. A preparedness plan would be the obvious place for such items as incoming managers, unless they have the livelihoods background, might not necessarily think of these additions.

#### **4.2.2.2 Accountability**

As in Jamaica, it was shown in both islands that good community participation and trust between extension workers (partner) and the community lead by default to good accountability. Although there was no formal complaints mechanism, all the farmers knew the extension workers (“we see them often”), had their phone number and knew where to go. There were no complaints about the seeds and pesticides at the time but this appears to have been because people were grateful for the assistance they received. In all groups, people said that “half is better than nothing” and “what ever Oxfam gave we used.” The extension workers were aware of the problems but it only seems to have been fed back to the Oxfam staff in the final reporting.

Actually, what would have been useful was a complaints mechanism for partners to feedback to Oxfam. While some complaints could have gone to the in-country team, the issues around management should have gone up the line: a focal point in the Barbados office would have been useful.

On the selection of St Lucian beneficiaries, the criteria were explained and the farmers drew up the first list of people for support. The system appears to be open and transparent. All participants in the focus groups endorsed the criteria and although they felt that some vulnerable families might have been left out, they understood the funding limitations.

In Dominica, although the selection of banana farmer recipients was not very consultative<sup>21</sup>, NFTO was satisfied on the whole. Banana farmers were asked to fill in a questionnaire and Oxfam made the final selection. The questionnaire asked about the vulnerability criteria but not total damage or socio-economic status. There seems to have been a clash here between NFTO wanting to do more community consultation

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<sup>21</sup> In focus groups, a third of the participants did not know why they had been selected

and Oxfam wanting names of beneficiaries quickly. NFTO also wanted a wider distribution although this would have reduced the amount given to each individual. These are all issues that could be worked out in “peace time.”

A negative impact of this lack of consultation has been some fragmentation of the FairTrade groups: as these were not part of the selection process, friction has occurred<sup>22</sup>. Given the long history of Oxfam involvement with these groups in Dominica, it is a pity that there was such a lack of understanding from some of the managers.

In Dominica, WINFA was involved in selection of non-banana farmers. The women’s group would have preferred that all their members benefited rather than using the criteria. They also felt that needs such as roofing could have been done cheaply if iron sheets were made available and community participation was utilised for labour.

This same group had no idea as to what kind of help they would get: “it came as a surprise.” They were given one cheque but “we weren’t expecting the second round of help.” It is difficult to plan if one doesn’t know how much or how little one is going to get. The problem may have been the initial lack of managerial capacity with good accountability skills. However, there are communications channels through the groups and WINFA, which could be utilised in a future response. Publishing recipients’ names in advance is also a way of ensuring transparency.

It is interesting that despite having the same selection system for both islands, there are different perceptions. This is probably due to lack of clear communication and to some degree, lack of transparency.

#### ***4.2.2.3 Gender and HIV mainstreaming***

According to the assessment report from both islands, there is a gender disparity in the core structure of the FairTrade organisations and that women account for only about two thirds of the farmers groups. However, in the hurricane response there was a definite bias towards female-headed households and those with chronically ill (a proxy indicator for those with full-blown AIDS) household members<sup>23</sup>. One very positive spin-off to this project has been the strengthening of the non-banana farmer women’s group. Given that the planned response was for farmers in general, the gender aspect seems to have been covered satisfactorily.

#### **4.2.3 Effectiveness management structure and appropriate decision-making**

There was a feeling among St Lucia partner staff that the Oxfam staff had not listened to or asked the opinion of the partners. There was sometimes a “high-handed approach.” A case in point was the seeds and pesticides procurement where the suppliers were apparently the ones to make suggestions as to type required. The extension workers’ suggestions were ignored ending in delays in procurement and possibly in production, although there were others constraints such as rodents and the weather. As the manager from the early stages has not been interviewed, these issues have not been verified and it remains a question of opposing perceptions.

In Dominica, there was a strong feeling among the partner staff at WINFA and NFTO both at senior management level and at extension worker level, that working relationships were dependent on personalities and that not all Oxfam staff were

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<sup>22</sup> This is according to extension workers. There were issues around NFTO wanting to do lengthy community consultation and Oxfam pushing for quick decisions as in a six-month programme, speedy implementation is a priority. However, more sensitive management may have eased the process.

<sup>23</sup> The chronic illness should have been a proxy indicator for full-blown AIDS but illnesses such as hypertension, heart disease and diabetes were usually cited

culturally sensitive<sup>24</sup>. The Caribbean community are extremely proud and have a horror of a colonial type of management where commitments are not honoured and ideas are “superimposed.” The partners wanted a working relationship with consultation and discussion; they felt that their extension workers had a good understanding of the situation and of the possibilities for assistance. They felt that at times, it was almost as if they were being judged as to not telling the truth.

#### **4.2.4 Support systems in place**

##### **4.2.4.1 Finance**

The whole funding system between Barbados, Mexico and the three islands appears to be overly complicated. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to analyse the system but all partners complained about lateness of reimbursements, lack of petty cash, exchange rates and other complications<sup>25</sup>. There is confusion, which could in part be due to lack of clarity and poor communications between all parties. There does seem to be a problem also with new staff coming in not knowing Oxfam financial and reporting systems and not receiving sufficient support and training.

However, the finance officer from NFTO in St Lucia had a good relationship with Oxfam and felt that there were few problems apart from the delay in getting payments. In Dominica, NFTO had to use their own funds before being reimbursed and at times they almost “drained the account.” There was confused communications and lack of clarity around exchange rates and an apparent foreign exchange tax that was not included in the MOU<sup>26</sup>. The NFTO accountant was full of praise for the support she had received from the Barbados finance officer but would have liked information about the Oxfam system earlier.

It has been difficult to judge if this is a recurring problem as the Hurricane Ivan response was handled from the regional centre and no evaluation was carried out. However, one would assume that some of the same problems must have also occurred in the earlier response but were possibly never reported.

##### **4.2.4.2 Logistics**

The seeds arrived in Dominica over the Christmas holidays (entirely unplanned) resulting in extra storage charges and forcing the extension workers to put in long hours on Christmas Eve to clear and pack kits. Although this was an unforeseen hitch due to overseas procurement and transport, Christmas is an important festival and a time when everything closes down in the Caribbean. Better pre-planning and factoring in storage charges for example, may have prevented what extension workers see as unfair working conditions and poor management. It could also have been due to poor communications between the manager and the extension workers.

One major constraint is that there is no logistician either at country or regional level. Other evaluations have shown the negative impact that this can have on efficient programming and it remains one area with which Oxfam programmes tend to struggle.

Not only is there no logistician but also there is no logistics system in place. The discussion about where to purchase and ECHO requirements were apparently not known to the programme managers. If there were clear guidelines in the country

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<sup>24</sup> This issue has been dealt with through the appropriate channels

<sup>25</sup> Absence of in-country bank accounts in the three countries is an example

<sup>26</sup> Mexico was not aware of this tax

office around procurement as well as supplier capacity information, the response may have been faster.

#### **4.2.4.3 HR**

There is no HR person in the country office and there were difficulties getting staff to all three programmes. The region assisted to an extent but there is as yet, no database of potential candidates. HD was reluctant to send HSPs as there were other placement priorities. Even when HSPs arrived, there was an assumption from the Barbados office that these were experienced people who needed little pro-active support. In many instances, this assumption is correct but even the most experienced HSP needs support and some supervision. Cultural orientation should be part of an induction given the Caribbean history and the horror of “colonial” managerial styles.

#### **4.2.5 Co-ordination with partners and other actors**

In St Lucia, the working relationship with NFTO appears to have been amicable and apart from delays in receiving payments, there appear not to have been any critical hitches in the system. The extension workers, however, felt that cooperation could have been better although this does appear to be dependent on a few personality clashes and a lack of cultural awareness on the part of some Oxfam staff. The extension workers felt that Oxfam was at times inflexible that “they tend to go by the books.”

According to the assistant principal secretary of the St Lucian Ministry of Agriculture, the extension division was “not happy” with Oxfam for not sharing plans or working more closely with them<sup>27</sup>. Although the Principle Secretary was aware of the Oxfam support to farmers, the details apparently were not shared. An example of this is that the Ministry could have supplied lists of suitable seeds and pesticides if requested.

In Dominica, there were complaints of high expatriate staff turnover and a culturally insensitive approach from some of the staff. National staff grew tired of constantly having to provide information and of not getting the right reporting format from the beginning. NFTO was happy with the programme but not with the management. They felt that changes were made without consultation and that “different people came with different ideas.” An example of this was the fact that the kit was agreed and then changed without any consultation. WINFA’s assessment of Oxfam was that they are a reliable but not always equal partner if we use the Partner Policy indicators. They would like a closer relationship between WINFA, Oxfam and NFTO with clear roles and responsibilities including information flow.

The Dominican Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (MAFF) were pleased with Oxfam’s response and would like to work together in the future; they would like support on training in rapid assessments, not in terms of money but in technical input. As in many of Oxfam’s humanitarian responses in a country where there are also development programmes, there is some friction between those who are permanent (in the Barbados office) and those who come in on short-term contracts. More consultation would be a starting point as well as maybe training for Barbadian development staff in humanitarian response such as assessments. In the Guatemalan response, for example, all staff were invited to weekly half-hour briefings and updates

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<sup>27</sup> This would have been problematic given that Oxfam was not registered and international staff were in country on tourist visas. Contact was through partners. Nevertheless, the perceptions of the Ministry are important

on the humanitarian response whether they were involved or not. Could the Barbados office emulate this practically?

#### **4.2.6 Preparedness**

There is potential for disaster risk reduction in both islands that would not be too costly. Simple interventions such as preparation planning and collection of vulnerability data could be carried out during non-hurricane time.

The Ministry of Agriculture in St Lucia is working on a hurricane response plan with the National Emergency Management Office. Oxfam should keep this in mind and obtain a copy as soon as it published in order that our next response is in line with the official plan.

NFTO in Dominica recommended having a focal point in each country from the beginning of the response. They would prefer someone to work alongside them almost in secondment style in order that in a couple of years time, the response can be locally led. Given the managerial problems experienced, this is probably the best viable option.

#### **4.3 Other issues**

There were obvious constraints in the Barbados office from the onset: limited capacity, no logistics support either at country office level or regionally, no emergency response database of potential staff (although one is being developed) and a very centralised finance system. There was almost no support from HD as the region was told there were other priorities and no HSPs were available.

The unique geographical layout of the ESC office must be taken into consideration when evaluating the response. There are other country offices covering a large area with multiple islands but this must be the only so-called country office that actually covers several countries. There appears also to have been a tendency among some of the recruited staff (HSP or contract) to view the Caribbean as being less needy than other regions of the world, which meant at times they had a poor understanding of how to respond.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

On the whole, although the implementation was late, the response went some way to meeting people's needs and must be seen as partially successful. It is always important to note the psychological aspect of providing assistance to people who may not have expected it. Certainly all the participants of the focus groups expressed satisfaction and it was only when pushed, that they commented on services or good received and suggested improvements.

Accountability was more by default than design and must be strengthened in any future responses. While there is good rapport between partners, extension workers and volunteers and the affected population, there is no mechanism for complaints from the partner to the Barbados office. If there had been, it may have been easier to deal with the managerial concerns faced in varying degrees in all three countries.

Having been asked to look at weaknesses, it would appear that HR, finance and logistics are the common areas. As the Hurricane Ivan response was led by the region and HD and as there does not appear to have been an evaluation it is difficult to assess if the weaknesses are persistent. This current response was therefore a good opportunity for the ESC office to identify constraints and to find ways of solving them. Certainly both the clumsy financial system and the lengthy and costly procurement of fairly simple items need to be examined and refined.

The vegetable seeds distribution did tide people over until such time as they could recover their normal activities and was deemed to be appropriate by almost all interviewees. However, given the time and cost of importing the commodities and the lateness of the response, one would question the cost effectiveness and cost-benefit of such an intervention. It is definitely worth taking the time to explore other possibilities that could be carried out quickly and with minimum input. The same could be said for the latrines in Jamaica. Transport costs are on the rise and anything that can be done to reduce expenses should be considered.

There is huge potential for preparedness and mitigation especially in Jamaica. Hurricanes will occur in the future and much could be done to have systems and plans in place beforehand. There was a great deal of time wasted collecting information, designing services and on procurement; all of which could have been sorted out during “peace time.”

### ***Acknowledgements***

I would like to thank all those who assisted in this evaluation of the Hurricane Dean response in Jamaica, St Lucia and Dominica, especially Joost, Tess, Janice and Lorraine in the Barbados office, the partners C-Cam and S-Corner in Jamaica and Cleve, Simon and NFTO in St Lucia and NFTO, WINFA and Josephine in Dominica. My appreciation also goes to the drivers in all three countries. I hope that people found this exercise to be useful and a means of expressing their views in order to improve Oxfam’s responses in the future. Any errors in the report lie solely with the evaluator.



## **Appendix 1: TOR**

### **Evaluation of Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods Recovery for Populations Affected by Hurricane Dean in St. Lucia and Dominica, Eastern Caribbean**

**BRBB01 ECHO, DFID and Oxfam America**

**June 2008**

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#### **Background**

Hurricane Dean, a category 4 hurricane with sustained winds of 150 mph, impacted St. Lucia and Dominica on Friday, 17th August 2007. The Hurricane passed extending 15 miles from the eye (100mph). Dean affected St. Vincent on Saturday August 18/2007 through outer banded winds of less intensity with wind gust of 60mph. St. Lucia and Dominica were the most affected areas, being the northeast coast the zone that got the main damages. In both island, St. Lucia and Dominica, the agricultural sector was the most severely affected. Most of the damage was caused by the hurricane and tropical storm winds but there were several areas where damage was as a result of flooding from the heavy rain.

Insured losses in all the Caribbean were estimated between \$1.5 billion and \$3 billion. Banana crop is the main agricultural activity in both island and farmers are highly dependent on the benefit from this crop. Majority of them are certified and socially organized as banana Fair Trade farmers. Non-banana farmers are also highly dependent on their yields, are more vulnerable to a very volatile market and are somehow marginalized from official support and investments.

Banana farmers faced a potential significant loss in their plantations due to the hurricane, due to the demand for rehabilitation of land and the length of time it would take to get to harvest new or young crops. This would cause a significant loss in income because these farmers depend highly in incomes that they get regularly every 1 to 2 weeks from the banana sales. The reduced banana production would also threaten the operation as a group in the banana industry locally and internationally. These operations are crucial to maintain the Fair Trade label, without which the Windward bananas cannot compete with South and Central American bananas.

Non-banana farmers also suffered a significant drop in production, losses of their productive infrastructure and faced not only an important gap in their main income sources but also a shortage in food supplies harvested for their own consumption (being the most critical the losses of tubers and starchy fruits that are the staples for the family). Non-banana farmers are also highly vulnerable due often not being considered in the response plans already set by the Government and other institution of the banana industry

In response, with the support of ECHO and DFID, OGB implemented a project which targeted 1,630 families (both banana and non banana farmers) with a view to improving the food security and livelihoods recovery in both Dominica and St. Lucia, based on the results of the rapid assessment

1. Livelihood recovery: rehabilitation of farms and production activity, including banana and non-banana farmers.

Contribute to fill the up-coming income gap related with crop losses and the shortage of basic foods at family level

Support the production of short-term crops for rapid income generation and food availability at family level.

The project was implemented in collaboration with the local Fair Trade Organisations.

## **Proposed Assignment**

### **Purpose**

The overall objective of this evaluation is to review Oxfam's response to Hurricane Dean in Dominica and St Lucia to establish whether the project met its objectives, and capture lessons that are of interest for the ESC and future responses.

### **Objectives**

To review the project design and implementation

To identify and document innovative and good practices

To identify persistent weaknesses (particularly in internal systems) for organizational learning

### **Activities**

- To assess as to what extent the program has been successful in achieving the expected results as outlined in the proposal.
- To provide an analysis of the methodology and appropriateness of the project interventions in relation to the needs of beneficiaries

To review the appropriateness of partners and the management/support of the same by Oxfam GB

- To assess the coordination and relationships built between Oxfam and the Partner organisations, including appropriateness of partners and the support and management provided by OGB
- Evaluate the quality/extent of coordination between different offices (St Lucia, Dominica, Barbados and Mexico) and functions (finance, HR, Logs) – and identify factors that enhanced and or hampered our ability to implement quality programme
- To review the quality of co-ordination with local community, local government and other actors.
- To evaluate successes and failures and analyse the reasons for each
- In all aspect of programme, evaluate to what extend the programme mainstreamed gender, HIV/AIDS and diversity.

### **Outputs**

1. Evaluation report including:
  - a. Executive summary
  - b. Methodology,
  - c. Analysis and findings
  - d. Lessons learnt
  - e. Recommendations for future programming

2. Presentation and documentation of findings and recommendations

The initial findings will be presented by the facilitators to relevant members of the ESC team (and CAMEXCA regional staff as necessary) at the end of the evaluation

Copies of the final review report will be distributed internally

## **Appendix 2: Itinerary**

June 2nd	Depart from London, arrive Barbados
June 3rd	Barbados
June 4th	Fly to Kingston
June 5 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with C-Cam staff - Ingrid Parchment and Velia Espeut Meet with C-Cam PHPs Meet with Mr Webster – Clarendon Health Department Focus group at Salt River Phone call with Ronald Jackson, ODPEM
June 6th	Focus group at Old Harbour Bay Focus group at Portland Cottage
June 7 <sup>th</sup>	Writing up
June 8 <sup>th</sup>	Writing up
June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with S-Corner staff – Angela Stulz and Marlene Campbell Visit to Bennett Lands and met with individual beneficiaries
June 10th	Telephone interview with Jamaican Red Cross Leave for Barbados
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Fly to St Lucia Meet with Roseau Fair Trade Group
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with Desruisseaux and Micoud Fair Trade Group Meet with extensions workers
June 13 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with Mr E Compton, Deputy Director of Agricultural Services
June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Fly to Dominica Writing up
June 15 <sup>th</sup>	Day off
June 16 <sup>th</sup>	Focus group with Morne Prosper women’s group Meet Marcella Harris, president of WINFA Meet Mitchell Roberts, president of DNFTO Meet Rose Nelson and Catherine Ormond – women farmers from Bellette Chopin and Girouden Meet with Amos Wiltshire, extension worker Meet Josephine Dublin-Prince, extension worker Focus group with Mahoud banana farmers
June 17 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with Josette Williams, accountant DNFTO Meet with extension workers Focus group with Castle Bruce farmers Visit to Carib Territory Fly to Barbados
June 18 <sup>th</sup>	Telephone interview with Hauke Hoops Meet with Janice Bourne
June 19 <sup>th</sup>	Telephone interview with Victoira Argueta and Javier Osorio in RC Mexico Telephone interview with Caroline Hotham, HSP Telephone interview with Dagmar Vorechovska Telephone interview with Maret Laev
June 20 <sup>th</sup>	Meet with Joost van der Lest
June 21-	Writing up

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June 23rd	Debrief with Barbados office team Travel to London

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