

# **OXFAM GB STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF EDUCATION**

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**DECEMBER 2005**

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## ACRONYMS

TOR	Terms of Reference
OI	Oxfam International
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SCO	Strategic Change Objective
CBO	Community-based organisation
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme
EFA	Education for All
EQUIP	Education Quality Improvement through Pedagogy
TENMET	Tanzanian Education Network
CEF	Commonwealth Education Fund
PEDP	Primary Education Development Plan
ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign of Education for All
E-NET	Civil Society Network for Education Reform
BESRA	Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
DFID	UK's Department for International Development
MTR	mid-term review
GCAP	Global Call to Action Against Poverty
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
UPE	Universal Primary Education

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### *Background*

This evaluation was tasked with looking at the impact of Oxfam GB's programmes, at local, national and international level, on target groups, participation and partnership, gender and finance issues, and country government and international policies. It was also tasked with evaluating Oxfam GB's model of change and considering future directions for the education programme. It has included four country case studies, additional reference to other education programme documentation, an analysis of key global partnerships and campaigns and information from both Oxfam GB staff and partners. Reference is also made to the concurrent Oxfam International strategic evaluation which includes education.

Oxfam GB's work in education started in the 1990s and was then scaled up in 1999 through the campaign "Education Now" and subsequent development of the Global Campaign for Education. It now has programmes in 18 countries, most of which are in the regions of East and West Africa and South and East Asia. The main foci of the programmes are education for girls and disadvantaged and marginalised groups, and the quality and financing of education. Local field programmes, which usually include the development of community involvement in education and partnership with local NGOs and government, are complemented by support for national civil society coalitions and international campaigns to strengthen civil society advocacy and engagement with national and international education policies and system financing.

### *Impact*

Oxfam GB's programmes have had a positive impact on target groups, participation and partnerships at local field level. There is evidence of effective community mobilisation, increased enrolment in school, improvements in teaching approaches and in the fabric of schools, the development of various approaches to provision for disadvantaged and marginalised groups, and more continuity of education in countries affected by conflict. At national level, Oxfam GB has supported the development of civil society coalitions and has contributed to advocacy and campaigning on a number of education policy and finance issues. Internationally, Oxfam GB (with OI) has made an important contribution to the development of the Global Campaign for Education and wider campaigns and coalitions.

Oxfam GB's education programme priorities are appropriate. The focus on access to gender-equitable quality basic education for all reflects international commitment to achieving the education-related MDGs on universal primary education and gender parity in education. In turn, Oxfam GB's involvement in international campaigns reflects, and has encouraged, international commitment to provide sufficient finance and other resources to achieve the MDGs and related objectives. Oxfam GB's education programme therefore engages with key international policy priorities and it is well placed to draw from local field experience, national coalition building and international campaigning to advocate on such policy issues.

From its programme experience, and other work such as Beyond Access, Oxfam GB has helped to move the traditional international policy focus on gender parity towards a gender-equitable approach. In relation to the financing of education, it has participated in important advocacy and campaigns at country level and made a significant contribution to international campaigns, including links to the wider issues of aid effectiveness, trade justice and debt relief. However its national work in some countries has been affected by constraints on national coalitions, including the early

stage of development of some coalitions, the fragmented nature of some NGO sectors, and government attitudes to NGO advocacy. And although the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) offers a particular opportunity to develop civil society coalitions, including their capacity to advocate on and monitor education finance, in some of the countries where Oxfam GB works, it has not made a sufficient, or consistent, contribution to CEF.

### *Focus of education programme*

The programmes addressing the quality of education have generated some important lessons for Oxfam GB on how to sustain innovation through effective partnerships with local government and successful advocacy at national level. However its work on quality is not particularly distinctive in that many of the approaches used in its programmes have also been developed and advocated by other organisations. Its work on quality might therefore be better contextualised in its work on gender and education, for example, the development of gender-sensitive curricula and teaching, or in relation to improving education for disadvantaged and marginalised groups.

Oxfam GB has worked effectively on education for such groups, including ethnic minorities, the children of pastoralists, children in urban slums and children in areas affected by conflict. This reflects Oxfam GB's commitment to working with the poor and most marginalised to ensure their rights to basic services. This is also an increasingly important aspect of international education development, since despite increases in school enrolments over the last decade, realisation of universal primary education, and gender parity, will require schooling access and completion by the many children who are still out of school and/or hard to reach. There can be a tension in some instances between developing mainstream services and capacity and ensuring more appropriate or flexible approaches for particular groups. However, in this case, mainstreaming inclusion and diversifying delivery are critical to achieving the education-related MDGs.

Another pressing policy area is education during conflict/in post-conflict countries and in fragile states. Oxfam GB now has programme experience in the Philippines, Sudan and more recently, DRC and Liberia, and there is a lot of potential synergy with emergency and humanitarian work. However any expansion of such work would require more programme investment and/or refocusing of current activities. Limits to the extent of programmes also continue to have an impact on work on educational opportunities for adults. Although this could be an extremely useful aspect of Oxfam GB's work, given its neglect by many policymakers and agencies, it is not clear how can this be pursued with only a limited amount of programming. Oxfam GB is also committed to mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in its programmes. This is an important corporate priority. However it is unlikely that Oxfam GB would have the resources to develop a range of programme experience that can add value to the many existing initiatives and efforts to combat HIV/AIDS in relation to, and through, education systems. There may however be some niches, centred on Oxfam GB's experience of changing community beliefs and developing more community involvement in education, which could be developed to complement Oxfam GB's work on HIV/AIDS, particularly in Southern Africa.

### *Critical mass*

The issue of critical programme mass is addressed in several ways in this evaluation. It is argued that in order to ensure Oxfam GB's credibility and influence at both country level and in relation to international campaigns, there must be a sufficient mass of education programmes to facilitate involvement in national coalitions and

advocacy at local, national and international levels. Sufficient programmes are also required to enable learning from a range of exemplars of innovation and advocacy in relation to the key foci of Oxfam GB's education work. Global distribution of programmes is also important given there are major differences in countries' progress on education and on poverty reduction. Whatever the agreed future investment in education programming, consideration should be given to ensuring sufficient programming in relation to the focal priorities, and to support membership of national and international coalitions, including whether there is sufficient programme critical mass in the regions which are recognised internationally as key to realising the MDGs, namely sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Given the current pattern of Oxfam GB's programmes, and its corporate and regional priorities overall, it is recommended that the education programme should be concentrated in four regions, namely East and West Africa and South and East Asia. Within these regions there should then be programmes in at least two or three countries, and within each country there should ideally be programmes which focus on more than one issue or target group, to generate the programme experience required for effective advocacy. More consideration could also be given to how Oxfam GB's programmes dovetail with those of OI overall, particularly in relation to developing regional coalitions.

#### *Participation and coalition*

A distinctive aspect of Oxfam GB's education programmes is the commitment to develop civil society participation, ranging from the role of communities in managing schools to engagement with government policies by national civil society coalitions. This is both complementary, and a balance, to planning and management by government and the policy and funding powers and relationships between southern countries and northern/international donor agencies. Such a focus in education is also synergetic with the emphasis within Oxfam GB as a whole, through SCO 4, on the right to be heard and civil society empowerment, as part of developing governance. More could be done, particularly at country level, to develop synergies with this (and other) SCOs.

Oxfam GB (with OI) is also an established core member of regional civil society coalitions and of the GCE and wider international campaigns. It has committed to such engagement. This evaluation recommends that the contribution to the GCE should be maintained, including policy analysis, campaigning activities and southern capacity building and co-ordination. This would both enable Oxfam GB to capitalise more on its past contributions and help to move such organisations in appropriate directions, for example towards taking a broader, gender-equitable approach to girls' education, championing civil society involvement in education finance monitoring and improving the interface between international campaigns and country issues and priorities.

#### *Change strategy*

Oxfam GB works at local, national and international levels in relation to education. It believes that inter-twined work at these different levels, with partners and in alliances, and combining a range of programme and campaigning approaches, is an appropriate and effective model of change. This evaluation confirms that assumption and considers that in principle, and in most instances in practice, Oxfam GB is implementing such a model in relation to education. However there are some weaknesses in the linkages. Partnership and advocacy are usually well-established at the local field level. However, there are variations across programmes in respect to the connections between local and national activity, the translation of programme experience into national advocacy and the building of successful national coalitions

to advance civil society participation and address national policies, finance and other issues. This is sometimes due to time, skills and other constraints on Oxfam GB staff capacity but is also linked to the efforts required to build successful national coalitions and the national contexts within which advocacy has to take place. The other weak linkage is between international campaigns and country issues and priorities. This should gradually be addressed as campaigns such as the GCE switch attention, resources and organisational lead to the south but will also require careful iteration of campaign issues and some development of regional co-ordination structures.

### *Basic social services agenda*

International campaigning has secured more development finance, including for education, though the realisation of commitments still needs to be monitored. The basic social services agenda now being developed by Oxfam GB reflects the need to now focus on effective use of new funds at country levels to scale up access, improve quality and other aspects of delivery, and enhance outcomes. Designing governance reform and civil society participation around strengthening the capacity of public institutions and systems, albeit with some role for non-state delivery, is a welcome balance to both state-controlled and neo-liberal approaches to basic services and public management, particularly given how the market approach has dominated some of the thinking and requirements of major development agencies in recent years. This agenda will also enable Oxfam GB to develop a holistic view on such services and within the organisation, will locate education policy campaigning and field programmes within a key focus of Oxfam GB's future work. As a basic right, and (intended) universal service, education is both a central element, and a good exemplar, of social service delivery, including access, outcomes, quality, governance and financing. Oxfam GB's policy and programme experience in extending access, and on gender aspects, community involvement and finance, brings several strengths to this new work.

However, the engagement with basic social services will raise some new programme priority and management issues and may have some implications for current partnerships with other civil society organisations and with government. One issue is perceptions of civil society organisations as deliverers of services, albeit with some partner advocacy and capacity building credibility. At the same time, involvement in civil society coalitions both increases the strength of such advocacy and gives its further legitimacy through the relationship of civil society organisation to citizen rights and democratic accountability. Currently, Oxfam GB's education programmes operate quite well within these frameworks and tensions. However the social services agenda is more complex and would require substantial staff capacity development. Close partnership and a diversity of Oxfam GB roles can be more easily built at local level, and local government is becoming more significant through decentralisation. A focus on capacity building as well as advocacy at local level would build on current strengths and complement the many national reforms now being instituted by government with the support of large international donor agencies. Oxfam GB could take a more critical approach to donor approaches, and in building on its comparative, and legitimate, advantage as a civil society organisation, do much, through stronger civil society involvement, to both balance and change some current approaches to services and the power and decision-making relationships between governments and international donors involved.

In addition, the basic social services agenda should not necessarily lead to less specific work on education. Service needs and demands at local community levels will still centre on particular institutions such as schools. As both service providers and agencies concerned to develop a more holistic approach have learned, technical

knowledge of education will still be needed, in relation to education both as a specific service and as a touchstone and exemplar for evaluating social sector policy and performance more generally. Paradoxically perhaps, good multi-/cross-sector and inter-agency working requires technical confidence and experience to develop innovation, as long as such specialist knowledge is accompanied by a willingness to break down boundaries and think in new ways. The development of this agenda by Oxfam GB will therefore require both analysis of its current technical expertise on education, and development of staff capacity to facilitate more holistic approaches.

### *Learning*

This evaluation has also identified that Oxfam GB's education learning networks are (or have the potential to be) an important supportive element of its model of change, as they facilitate sharing of knowledge and experience in support of engagement on different policies in various partnerships and alliances from local to global levels. Analytic contributions, and sharing of experience, have already been developed in relation to gender and education and access for disadvantaged and marginalised groups. Such learning is also well supported by Oxfam's central Programme Resource Centre. More learning could however be developed in relation to the financing of education, including the best way to monitoring education budgets and spending, as governments and donors move to sector and budget support for education, and the most effective approaches to developing and utilising civil society capacity in relation to monitoring education budgets at all levels.

This evaluation has not included a systematic review of all programmes. However it can be suggested that more attention should be given to: the processes of corporate planning and decision-making, including iteration of regional and country decision-making with global priorities and plans; continued investment in strategic staff functions, particularly policy development, programme co-ordination and learning network support; and contributions to coalitions and campaigns, at national, regional and global levels. Such corporate planning and decision-making should be collaborative and iterative, thus acknowledging the decentralised decision-making processes within Oxfam GB, but within a commitment to Oxfam GB as a global organisation with some common priorities and agenda.

Two other important, and partly related, issues in this evaluation are programme monitoring and evaluation and staff capacity development, to both enhance programme management and facilitate sharing and advocacy of programme experience. Both the case study evaluations and analysis of other programme documentation indicate that there is not a consistent approach to programme documentation. Base-line data, progress indicators and information about outputs and outcomes will vary in content across different programmes but should be a consistent feature of all programme documentation. There is also very little information on cost-effectiveness. Improvements in programme documentation and monitoring would facilitate better monitoring and evaluation, sharing of programme approaches and lessons and how programme experience is advocated or otherwise used for policy change and scaling up. Time is spent on programme documentation, but in some instances on unnecessary planning detail or high transaction costs in relation to management of NGO delivery partnerships/contracts. Auditing and other requirements must of course be met, but the purpose of programme documentation should also include the best means of sharing progress and learning with other stakeholders, including cost-effectiveness. The need for staff capacity development in relation to the time and expertise required for advocacy and coalition building also needs to be considered. This can be addressed in part through better programme management but also requires skills and confidence development on advocacy and

coalition building. There is now considerable experience across the education programme on effective strategies in relation to such work which could be shared as part of learning exchange.

Partnerships and alliances are central to the work of Oxfam GB. A number of points have been made about national and international coalitions, and working within OI in relation to regional coalitions and the GCE. As noted in the OI Strategic Evaluation related to education, more consideration also needs to be given to planning and co-ordination within OI. Oxfam GB could also consider developing more mutual planning with other major INGOs based in the UK (e.g. Action Aid and Save the Children UK). This would make best use of common commitments and the combined impact of all programmes and resources within which Oxfam GB can then appraise and develop its particular contribution and added value.

As Oxfam GB is well aware, there are few quick wins in development, and although fast and effective responses are needed for key policy moments and events (such as G8 summits), the development and impact of field programmes and country coalitions can take a long time. This is particularly true of education which is almost exclusively dependent on people's knowledge, beliefs and skills, and human interaction, for its inputs, processes and outcomes. The new basic social services agenda is an opportunity to develop Oxfam's education programme as an important focus and exemplar over a substantial time period, drawing on present strengths and investing planning, learning, expertise and other resources in those areas which still need to be addressed.

### ***Summary of Recommendations***

Focus the education programme on gender, disadvantaged/marginalised groups, education finance and civil society participation, but also make education a central element of the basic social services agenda;

Review programme critical mass in relation to these foci, and the regional spread of programmes, to ensure a sufficient basis for effective advocacy, partnership/coalition membership and contributions to campaigns;

Develop more systematic programming within and across regions to reflect core foci, with integral M&E/documentation processes and learning networks and planned follow through to advocacy and campaigning;

Continue to invest staff time and other resources in strategic/proven partnerships and alliances e.g. country/regional coalitions, CEF and GCE;

Give more consideration to how programmes/countries can contribute more to southern advocacy and campaigning capacity/activity and how these should iterate with international campaigns;

Give more consideration to co-ordination and synergy with other OI affiliates and to other critical partnerships, for example with UK INGOs;

Maintain investment in strategic regional and global staff functions in order to enhance impact of country programmes, advocacy and campaigning;

Invest more in knowledge development and learning networks to enhance policy analysis, field programme work and advocacy and campaigning;

Identify more explicitly the synergies between education and other Oxfam GB strategic objectives;

Develop staff capacity in relation to advocacy, coalition building and campaigning;

Develop corporate planning and management processes to enhance Oxfam GB's added value, and its investment, in education, including a long-term plan for education.

## A. INTRODUCTION

### 1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

Strategic evaluations are undertaken by Oxfam GB to provide an opportunity to assess the impact of a programme of work across regions and departments. Their purpose is to provide accountability to stakeholders and to incorporate lessons-learned into the decision-making process about strategic areas of the programme, within regions, and across regions/departments. “The right to a good quality education” is a strategic objective for Oxfam GB under its Aim for basic social services. Access to quality basic education for girls is one of Oxfam GB’s four corporate priorities, which has been a major factor in the Senior Management Team’s decision to conduct a strategic evaluation of its education programme.

In its education work, Oxfam GB is using a combination of on-the-ground work to promote direct change at local level, active engagement with governments in the South at national and sub-national levels to create favourable conditions for policy and practice change via planning processes, and campaigning in the North to mobilise extra donor resources for investment in equitable basic social services.

*☞ A central element of the strategic evaluation is to test the assumption that this combination of different levels of intervention – on-the-ground, national and global – is the best way to achieve Oxfam GB’s strategic change objective for education.*

The evaluation is also designed to provide evidence on the quality and impact of the education programme, test models of change, examine in particular whether the current programme is the most appropriate way to achieve a lasting impact on gender equitable quality basic education, and provide strategic guidance for programme management, policy development and overall programme direction.

Annex 1 provides the detailed TOR which is also summarised briefly below. The specific objectives, and associated questions, were developed as follows:

- i) to assess the impact of the education programmes at grass root, national and global levels, including questions on: the impact (qualitative and quantitative) on access to quality education; the impact of a gender equality approach; participation of beneficiaries and stakeholders; impact of participatory approaches; actual improvements in access and quality of education for poor people;
- ii) to examine Oxfam GB’s models of change and test these again what is actually happening, including questions on: the linkages between grass root, national and global levels; Oxfam GB’s work on financing education; work with partners; general lessons about change;
- iii) to provide strategic guidance as to where Oxfam GB should develop its policy and practice in its education programmes, considering both Oxfam’s areas of expertise and the changing external environment, including questions of: the future balance between existing core work and new areas and between grassroots work, advocacy and campaigns; experience and knowledge in relation to mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in education programming; the key foci of future work, including whether scaling up can be achieved without necessarily increasing resources.

The evaluation has comprised several elements:

- four country case studies (Brazil, Mali/Niger, Philippines, Tanzania) comprising documentary analysis and consultant/staff visits;
- documentary evaluation of other education programmes;
- documentary analysis in relation to key partnership and campaigns on education;
- analysis of other relevant documentation e.g. Oxfam GB publications, reviews;
- telephone interviews with selected Oxfam GB staff and partner organisation representatives on aspects of Oxfam GB's programmes, partnerships and campaigns.

Documentary analysis ranged from strategies and policies to country programme evaluations. Documentation was provided by Oxfam house, by country staff, by partners and through the Oxfam GB and other websites. Face to face and telephone interviews were conducted by different contributors to the evaluation and were designed to sample both Oxfam staff and partner perceptions. A list of documents and people consulted can be found in Annex 2.

The evaluation was sponsored by the then International Director at the time it started, and was managed by the Senior Adviser, Planning, Evaluation and Accountability, with technical support from the Global Education Adviser. Six external consultants were employed. Two international and four local consultants worked on the country case study evaluations and a further consultant worked on the evaluation of partnerships and campaigns and overall writing of the synthesis report. Three volunteers also worked on the evaluation, one contributing to setting up the evaluation, one on a programme documentation review and one on documentary analysis and interviewing staff and partners, particularly in the regions. A number of Oxfam GB staff also contributed, providing documentary information and participating in telephone interviews, including senior management, regional management and education staff, UK staff involved in evaluations and campaigns and the Programme Resource Officer for Education in the Programme Resource Centre in Oxford. The evaluation has also been supported by an advisory committee representing another OI affiliate, other INGOs, the GCE and other partner organisations and activities, a number of whom were also interviewed. The evaluation has therefore drawn on a combination of internal and external assessments, with the aim of providing both external and internal information and analysis.

The evaluation was undertaken during year 2005, with detailed preparatory discussion of TOR leading to case study fieldwork and documentary analysis between July and October 2005. A draft was shared with key contributors to the evaluation and the advisory committee in November 2005 and the final report was concluded in December 2005.

A strategic programme evaluation by Oxfam International (OI), including education, was also taking place concurrently with this evaluation. Information was shared with the consultants involved who in turn provided details of the OI evaluation. Reference is made these findings, as reported in the "Evaluation of Implementation of 'Towards Global Equity' Oxfam's Strategic Plan 2001-2006".

The evaluation was designed to encompass most aspects of Oxfam GB's education programme. However, there have inevitably been limitations to the range of

documents and external partners consulted and the detail of country programmes. The four country case studies sample rather than represent the range of Oxfam's work, the number of partner informants, including government officials, was limited and some of the evaluation of impact has been hindered by either insufficient baseline and output/come data at field programme level or the difficulties of assessing and attributing influence and impact in relation to complex activities such as international campaigns. Nevertheless the evaluation does capture most of the major foci of education work at different levels in different countries/regions, as well as globally, and in most instances there seems to be reasonable triangulation and an emerging consensus on its main findings.

## **2. OXFAM GB's EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

### **2.1 Strategic Context of the Education Programme**

Oxfam GB's education programme is linked to the second of Oxfam GB's aims, on the right to basic social services. Within this aim, Oxfam GB's corporate priority is access to quality basic education, especially for girls. The specific aim for education is described in its Strategic Corporate Objective (SCO) on the Right to Basic Social Services (SCO 2.2) as:

*☞ Children living in poverty will achieve their right to a good quality basic education, and adults will have access to sufficient educational opportunities to help them overcome their poverty.*

Oxfam GB's approach to education also includes the developing corporate emphasis on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into the overall mission of tackling poverty and suffering, and clear links to other strategic change objectives on gender, finance and civil society voice/participation. Oxfam GB is also involved in global campaigns on the Millennium Development Goals and other aspects of poverty and development, and is developing its programme policy on quality, accountability and delivery in basic service provision, focusing on education, HIV/AIDS and health.

As part of its rights approach, Oxfam GB believes that health and education in particular are indispensable elements of poverty reduction strategies, empowerment of women and men, and the struggle for dignity, justice and equity, beliefs which are also based on strong evidence of the links between investment in health and education services, economic growth with equity, an overall improvement in quality of life and betterment of human development indicators. It recognises that national governments are responsible for the provision of basic social services and its work is designed to support governments in fulfilling this obligation. This is however complemented by a strong community/civil society focus on participation, voice and empowerment. Its current research on public services is being developed to enable a strong understanding of what makes public services work well for poor people, alongside a rights based approach which not only provides a benchmark for the rights that should be enjoyed by all but also sets out the obligations that governments and institutions have towards providing basic services to people.

Global campaigning pertinent to education focuses on the MDGs, particularly the need to see significant additional resources, large-scale ambitious government actions, more donors implementing equitable social policies, a more cohesive and strategic effort by NGOs, rapid spread of best practices on approaches to service delivery and alliances of all those involved to bring together the financial and knowledge resources required. Oxfam GB considers it is in a unique position to make a significant impact on the availability, accessibility and quality of basic social services and HIV/AIDS impact mitigation by using its presence in over 70 countries across the world to identify gaps between promises made and evidence of change.

Oxfam GB's external global policy and practice change targets, as described in its Basic Social Services Strategic Framework (2004) are to:

- (1) Internationally (a) persuade northern governments to honour their commitments under MDG Goal 8 to mobilise \$100 billion extra in financing for basic social services per year by 2008 with \$50 billion secured by 2005 and (b) secure an increase in the quality of overseas

development assistance, by reducing tied aid, increasing the pro poor focus of aid, ensuring countries are selected on the basis of need not foreign policy priorities, and reversing the trend towards privatisation of aid.

- (2) At country level, work with southern governments on policies, plans and budgets in relation to basic health and education that will be needed to meet the MDGs.
- (3) Specifically for education, ensure that girls and boys have equality of access to basic education and that the education itself is gender-equitable, relevant and of good quality.

The overall Strategic Plan for 2003/4-2005/6 states that Oxfam GB will focus on livelihoods, education, gender and its humanitarian preparedness and response, along with HIV/AIDS. It also highlights the development of global campaigning on Trade, Education and Conflict in alliance with other OI affiliates and southern partners, including a shift in emphasis towards increasing campaigning, and effective national Education for All (EFA) planning in the south, \$5 billion of financing for these EFA Action Plans, and action on girls' education to achieve the MDG on gender parity. Access to quality basic education, particularly for girls, is identified as one of the four corporate priorities for this period and gradual growth in education programming is anticipated, up to 8% of total spend.

Although Oxfam GB's work on education is located within Aim 2 on the Right to Basic Social Services, it has a number of links with other Oxfam GB aims/SCOs. For example, the development of gender-equitable approaches to education, and education provision for children from marginalised groups, has links with Aim 5 on the Right to Equity (Gender and Diversity). The involvement of communities/civil society organisations in the management of, and decision-making about, education, including finance, is linked to Aim 4 on the Right to be Heard. Some of Oxfam GB's education programme has developed from emergency, humanitarian and conflict work, which comprises Aim 3, and although education does not now have strong explicit links with Aim 1, the Right to a Sustainable Livelihood, there are historical connections, and potential links in relation to adult literacy and skill development. Within SCO 2, Oxfam GB's objective on HIV/AIDS, namely to ensure that people are in a position to adequately assess and respond to the issues that put them and their communities at risk of HIV/AIDS, are also relevant to education, including the corporate requirement that all programmes address the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS.

As noted in the TOR for this evaluation, Oxfam GB believes that a combination of programme work (direct change at local level), active engagement with governments in the South (to create favourable conditions for policy change) and campaigning in the North to mobilise extra donor resources for investment on equitable basic social services will lever the greatest and most effective impact on the achievement of the right to basic social services. Effective linkages between these types and levels of activity are central to Oxfam GB's model of change. Drawing on learning from programme experience on the ground and through wider research, the aim is to demonstrate sustainable policies and practice to ensure delivery of pro-poor quality basic services through good quality planning processes and at the same time to mobilise extra resources through the MDG campaign and global funding mechanisms, such as the Education For All Fast Track Initiative, which governments can absorb and use effectively. The approach to achieving these objectives is to integrate programmes on the ground with advocacy and campaigning so that learning and experience is linked to lobbying for strategic change. This work is

carried out with others (e.g. local NGOs, CBOs, national NGO coalitions) with the aim of strengthening local, regional and national coalitions and networks. Links between programme, advocacy and campaigning are therefore very important, to support Oxfam GB's comparative advantage of being able to work simultaneously at both international and community levels.

## **2.2 Main Components of the Education Programme**

Oxfam GB's work on education has evolved on an ad hoc basis over the 1980s and 1990s but was scaled up in 1999 with an OI advocacy/campaigning document called "Education Now" which argued in particular for increased political commitment, a Global Action Plan and increased and improved aid, to tackle the education crisis in developing countries. At the same time, Oxfam GB reviewed its programme, which at that time had an annual spend of £1.8 million of Oxfam GB resources on 68 education projects in 18 countries, in every region except MEEECIS and CAMEXCA, of which 40 were on formal/school education and 28 on non-formal education, mostly adult literacy. It was argued that Oxfam GB should build on its particular areas of expertise, its integrated approach to poverty reduction, its capacity to work in partnerships and its strengths in advocacy work to develop a programme prioritising basic childhood education, gender equity and education quality, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Community involvement in education, particularly strengthening the voice of the poor, should be a distinctive feature and particular beneficiary groups could include girls, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, displaced or otherwise at risk, and education for urban as well as rural poor children. Adult education should however remain as an important component of work on public health, rights and livelihoods.

The proposed focus on basic school education, and disadvantaged groups, was adopted and various new programmes, initiatives and campaigns have developed since then. The Education Programme in 2005 can now be described as comprising key objectives and themes, a range of programmes and coalitions at country level, various global partnerships and campaigns and a learning network, all of which contribute to the model of local, national and international linkages for change. Drawing on both the Strategic Framework for Basic Social Services documentation (1999) and the programme and campaign documentary sources made available for this evaluation, key features can be described as follows.

The key objectives and themes are:

- (1) *Financing basic education for all* including support for the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), pressure to ensure the Education Fast Track initiative is an effective global fund, and development of civil society participation in Education for All planning, budgeting and monitoring through strengthening local capacity for analysis, advocacy and campaigning.
- (2) *Access to quality education* including ensuring that gains in access to education are sustained through improving the quality of education for retention of learners and good learning outcomes and developing learning environments which are child-friendly and eliminate gender-based violence and discrimination, and influencing governments to implement realistic policies and plans to deliver quality education which enhances learners' capabilities and which they value.
- (3) *Gender-equitable access to good quality basic education* including sharing learning on overcoming gender disparities and promoting gender equitable

teaching and learning, and lobbying national governments for a strong gender analysis in the design, planning, budgeting and implementation of national education plans. The focus is girls' education but in a wider gender issues/strategy framework.

- (4) *Improving education for disadvantaged and marginalised groups* including ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, pastoralists, street children and other children at risk through innovative programmes and advocacy for improvements in access, outcomes and achievement in basic education.

In relation to all the above, and more generally, work with *partners and alliances* aims to enhance *community participation and other civil society involvement* in education policies, planning and management, at local, national and international levels. It also includes capacity building and involvement in both *national and international campaigns*.

Current overall programme development plans, as identified in the 2004 Strategic Framework for Basic Services, include:

- strengthening the link between voice, accountability and other governance work in SCO4 and EFA planning and budget monitoring for education;
- developing an initiative to improve understanding of education needs in conflict and post-conflict situations;
- improving understanding and analysis of good education programming in the context of HIV/AIDS, using both Oxfam GB's research and programmes and learning from others, and making the education programme relevant to communities and individuals who are affected by HIV/AIDS;
- developing a clear education programme policy on quality, accountability, and delivery.

The last two are grounded in two key developments in Oxfam GB's work as a whole, firstly the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS in Oxfam GB's programmes and the development of its advocacy role in relation to HIV/AIDS, and secondly, the development of a critical and equitable approach to public services provision in developing countries

The country programmes are currently located in 18 countries within six of Oxfam GB's eight regions (see Annex 4) (there is no education work in the UK Poverty Programme although Oxfam GB does contribute to development awareness raising in UK schools, with funding from sources such as the Civil Society Department of the UK Department for International Development). They are delivered largely through partnerships with local government and local NGOs/CBOs and complemented by involvement in various coalitions/networks at both national and regional levels. It is also very important to note that other OI affiliates have programmes in the same countries and/or regions, and that in West Africa, for example, other affiliates fund some of the programmes with which Oxfam GB is involved.

Chapter 3 of this evaluation discusses in more detail the selected country case studies. However, as part of this summary, it is important to note both the foci and the diversity of the education field programmes. The four case studies illustrate core themes, namely girls' education in pastoralist zones (Mali/Niger), education for disadvantaged and marginalised children including children displaced by conflict (the Philippines), improving the quality of education (Tanzania) and community and civil

society organisations' involvement in advocacy and campaigning in relation to the financing of education (Brazil). Other country programmes also focus on these issues. It is also important to note that other OI affiliates have programmes in the same countries and/or regions as Oxfam GB. In West Africa, for example, Oxfam GB funds programmes with which Oxfam Quebec is involved while in Mozambique, where Oxfam GB and Intermon Oxfam each work, their combined efforts have included the training of 4,500 teachers which in turn will benefit more than 300,000 pupils (Burrows, 2005, OI evaluation).

2.16 In relation to girls' education, the programmes in Mali and Niger are part of a regional programme focusing on girls' education (see Box 1). Oxfam GB also works in Mozambique, in its Southern Africa region, to develop quality education for girls through the provision of better school buildings, hostels for students, housing for women teachers and incentives for women to teach in rural schools. Girls' education is also central to the South Asian education programmes and is closely linked to the region's programming on achieving gender equality.

#### **Box 1: Promoting Gender Equitable Basic Education in West Africa**

This programme, which started in Dec 2000, aims to improve access to gender-equitable basic education in five countries in West Africa: Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Liberia. In all five countries there are huge barriers to getting girls into school and all of them have very low levels of gender parity. To address these issues the programme has the following main components:

- Changing community attitudes and beliefs towards girls education—through community mobilization and radio work (in all countries)
- Direct Interventions--the Cross-Border Pastoralist Education Programme (in Mali and Niger) and the Education in Conflict Zones Programme (in Liberia)
- Advocacy—at regional level and at country-level in all programme countries

In all five countries, community awareness-raising is changing beliefs about girls education, leading to an increase in demand for education. In Ghana radio work is promoting girls' education through debates, drama, songs, stories and discussions. The Ghana programme has also established enrolment committees, whose members (40% them women) go from house to house to ensure that every school-aged child is in school.

The direct interventions comprise the Cross-Border Pastoralist Education Programme (see Mali and Niger Case Study), which has created community schools in pastoral areas in Niger, while in Mali it supports public schools, and the Liberia programme, which has renovated schools, allowing them to open again after the war, and also raises awareness about HIV/AIDS in schools and conducts radio work to promote girls education. The programme is creating a demand for education among parents, increasing enrollment rates and has encouraged the government to develop a more global and sustainable strategy for community schools. While the programme has succeeded in increasing the numbers of girls accessing schools—in one region in Niger enrollment has grown by 70% - and in making the education more relevant to girls, there are still challenges in terms of changing traditional stereotypes and roles which limit girls equal participation and achievement in schooling, and which are formidable barriers to women's autonomy and self-fulfilment.

Through the service delivery component, the programme has created strong links with school officials at the local level and has successfully lobbied for improved education services, such as more schools. At the national level the main advocacy work is to build the capacity of national coalitions and support their engagement in the GCE Global Week of Action. The coalitions in each country have focused on different aspects of EFA. For example, in Ghana EFA teams have been created in all ten regions to move the EFA process to the local level, in

Mali a partner has produced gender friendly teaching materials in two national languages, and in Niger the coalition has influenced the government to take on thirty pastoralist community schools in its national education strategy. At the regional level the programme supports the African Network Campaign for Education for All (ANCEFA). Advocacy is having most impact at the local level but the building blocks are there for greater future impact at the national level.

As a regional programme, there are regular regional training workshops on issues such as gender, advocacy and participatory research techniques. These workshops include discussion and cross-programme learning. This programme also links Oxfam GB with Oxfam Quebec, which has managed the program in Niger, and with both Oxfam Intermon and Oxfam Quebec in Burkina Faso.

The Mali/Niger case study, on girls' education, draws particularly from experience with pastoralists. In the HECA programme, there is a major focus on education for the children of pastoralists, and Oxfam GB works in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Sudan to improve access to education for pastoralists and to challenge the assumption that education cannot be developed for pastoralists unless they become more settled communities. Mobile schools and other forms of flexible provision have been developed, demonstrating latent demand, including for girls, if education is provided in ways acceptable to, and supportive of, the communities involved. A pastoralist education community of practice has been established by Oxfam GB to facilitate regional exchange, programme experience is being disseminated more widely through Oxfam publications and learning is now being shared with Oxfam GB in West Africa (see Box 2).

#### **Box 2: Regional Pastoral Programme for the Horn and East Africa: the Education Component**

The regional pastoral programme is a 15-year project (2003-2018) addressing the poverty and marginalisation of pastoralists in six countries in the Horn and East Africa. As an integrated project it involves many other sectors of work, such as drought management, livestock economy, health and peace. The education component takes place in four of the countries: Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania. Pastoralists have extremely low primary enrolment and literacy rates because of their mobility, labour demands for herding, lack of relevance of school curricula, and also a perception that formal education undermines the principles of pastoral livelihoods. To address these issues the programme aims to:

- develop appropriate curricula for formal education, including for girls' education
- develop mobile education approaches linked to the formal system
- develop approaches to functional adult literacy and civic education
- use these programmes on the ground in advocacy at the national level to improve education policies in pastoralist areas

All programmes are conducted in the context of helping pastoralists to build accountable and representative organizations through which they can better claim their rights and advocate for better services. The first phase of the programme has been putting in place these types of community organizations and has developed approaches for educating children not in school. The education work differs from country to country and some of the activities are listed below:

- Sudan—eleven mobile schools in North Darfur; networks of all actors in pastoralist education in the local areas
- Ethiopia—a mobile literacy and non-formal education initiative in the Afar language for children and adults in the Afar region

- Kenya—an adult literacy programme alongside a micro-credit scheme in Turkana
- Tanzania—22 pre-schools in the Ngorongoro region, which are almost entirely community financed, to ease children’s transition from home to primary school; teacher training for formal schools; adult and youth literacy.

One of the main outcomes in this first phase of the programme has been an increase in community demand for education. In response to this demand, several projects are using mobile schools, making schools more flexible to fit into family activities and movements. But more learning needs to be done about how to sustain these types of schools.

In 2004 the ‘Pastoralist Education Community of Practice’ was established to share learning about pastoralist education work within the programme and with other organizations working in this sector. There have been two intra-regional meetings and one teleconference so far discussing the work and its challenges. All twelve projects have been documented and the information disseminated to members and other pastoralist service providers. This has motivated project staff and helped them feel part of the bigger picture. It is also helping them to learn from each other in finding innovative solutions to the challenges of education programming for pastoralists.

A number of other programmes also focus on disadvantaged and marginalised groups. For example, as noted in the global PIR for 2003/4, over 2000 children in the Kibera slum in Nairobi, Kenya are benefiting from five early childhood centres and two primary schools developed by Oxfam GB’s programme. Nearly 1000 girls from street children populations in Nairobi and Mombasa are now enrolled in rehabilitation centres or schools. Oxfam GB also works with remote and marginalised communities in South Asia, through the Dalit Girls’ Education Programme in India and Indigenous People’s programme in NW Bangladesh.

Oxfam GB’s programme in the Philippines developed from its previous involvement in emergency and humanitarian support. Other work in countries experiencing or emerging from conflict is taking place in Afghanistan, DRC, Liberia and Sudan. As noted in the 2003/4 global PIR, Oxfam GB is providing 320 “winter schools” for 10,000 children in Afghanistan, and is also supporting teacher training and upgrading schools, along with developing advocacy for increased resources at provincial and district levels. In the DRC water and sanitation work at the community level developed into health work in schools, school construction and some support to the Ministry of Education on curriculum development for health. The education work in Liberia has been closely linked with the work of partners there in HIV/AIDS prevention for young people and providing school clubs and supportive environments for vulnerable girls. Whether this aspect of Oxfam GB’s programme on education should be extended is discussed in Chapter 6 on future directions.

In relation to the quality of education, Oxfam has worked with the government in Vietnam for nearly 10 years to develop and promote education services. Its programme, developed to meet the needs of ethnic minorities in northern Vietnam and the poorest districts in the Mekong Delta area, has supported the local government to train teachers in child-centred learning methods and has assisted with improvements in the fabric of schools including 69 new classrooms. As noted in the 2003/4 global PIR, about 12,000 children have benefited, half of which are girls and one third from the Khmer minority group. Oxfam GB is now working with the Ministry of Education in reform of the teaching curriculum and textbooks and in the scale-up of the child centred training approach in two Provinces. There has also been an effective community-based campaign to encourage parents to send their girls to

school, to engage with the Parents Association and the approach to training local members of the community to build schools has been adopted by the World Bank.

The links between quality and education financing are well illustrated in the Brazil case study which looks at Oxfam GB's efforts, with other partners, to secure more education funding to improve the quality of education in schools. This case study also illustrates Oxfam GB's involvement in national NGO coalitions and campaigns. Many of these coalitions still require capacity building. However several are beginning to have some impact. For example, as noted in the 2003/4 global PIR, the coalition in Kenya has lobbied government to enable children in slums to have access to education. The coalition has worked to develop the non-formal education desk at the Ministry of Education and as a step towards providing non-formal schools in Nairobi, the government is now collecting information on existing schools, helped by the association of lobbying groups in the slums that Oxfam GB has nurtured. Work through the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) in a number of countries, discussed further in Chapter 4, also involves civil society coalitions and work on the financing of education.

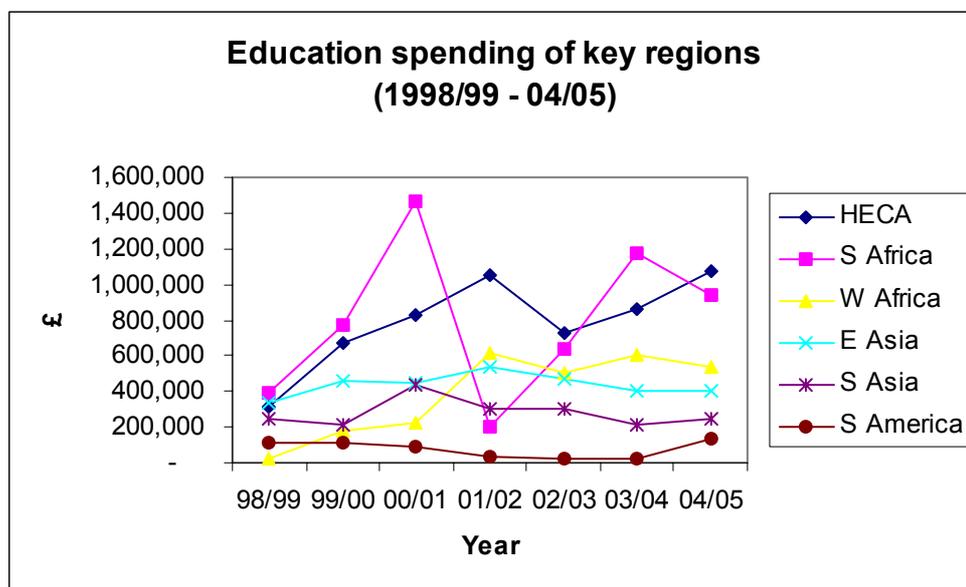
Most of these coalitions are members of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), a global movement of northern and southern coalitions which campaigns on policies and funding for education in developing countries. Oxfam GB's involvement, as part of OI, in global campaigns related to education, will be considered in more detail in Chapter 4 of this evaluation, along with the links to campaigns on the MDGs and related issues such as trade justice and debt relief. Two Oxfam GB partnerships will also be considered, namely "Beyond Access", a partnership with the London Institute of Education and the UK Department for International Development on girls/gender and education, and the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF), which is supported by the UK Treasury to foster civil society involvement in the development and monitoring of policies and funding in developing countries in the Commonwealth.

Finally, as noted in its overall Strategic Plan for the period, Oxfam GB is committed to research and learning, from both its own programmes and from other partnerships and research, in order to further its programme and advocacy plans, particularly in relation to gender, vulnerable and marginalised groups, development financing and public service provision. The Programme Resource Centre in Oxford was set up in 2004 to help support and disseminate learning and includes a part-time Programme Resource Officer for education. As discussed in Chapter 6, knowledge development and management in relation to education include regional learning networks, peer learning, and global learning exchanges. Programme monitoring and evaluation also provides further sources for learning from programme experience. Dissemination includes a number of Oxfam publications on education, including policy papers and books, and there is a range of material on the Oxfam GB website.

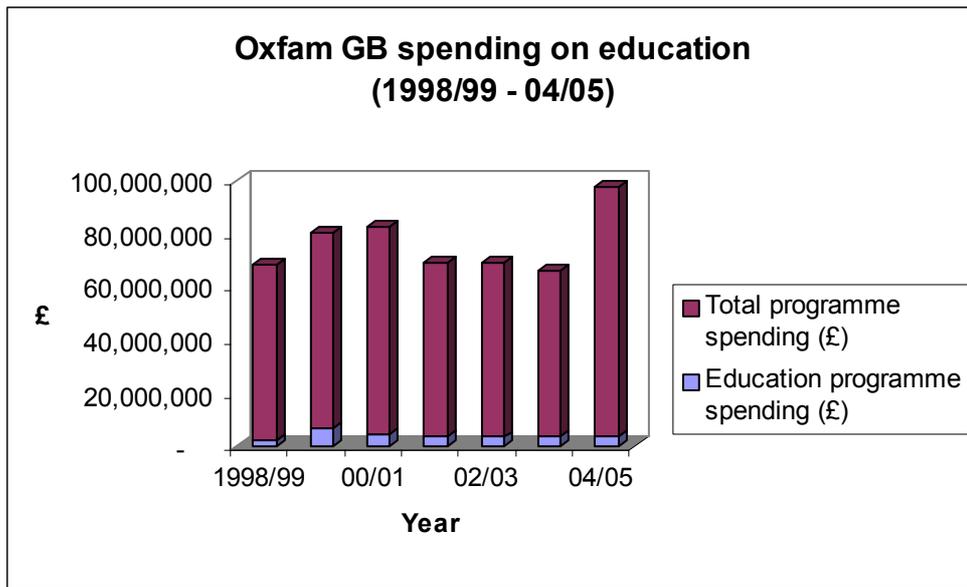
### **2.3 Financial and human resources**

The programme spend in 2004/5 was £3.7 million, which is about 4% of total programme spend, compared with £4.7 million in 2000/2001, which was 6% of total programme spend. These figures cover unrestricted spend, from Oxfam GB allocations, but spend on particular programmes may be increased in some instances by partner co-funding. The pattern of spending reflects that in OI as a whole, namely a peak in 2001 followed by a downturn. Just over 25% of the 2004/5 spend was in HECA, and a further 25% in West Africa and East Asia together. A substantial amount of the remainder was spent in Southern Africa in Mozambique, due in part to the construction costs which are part of the programme, and the remainder was spent in South Asia and in South America. OI spending as a whole is

highest for West Africa, Southern Africa and South Asia. Its spending in South Asia is roughly equal to that in Southern Africa, which could be seen to balance Oxfam GB's lower or reducing commitments in each of these regions respectively while Oxfam GB's high spend in East Africa could be seen to pay a similar balancing role. However, in both Oxfam GB and OI as a whole, spending on education ranks very low compared with the other Strategic Change Objectives, and in the case of Oxfam GB, is a reversal of the Strategic Plan commitment to gradual growth.



Most Oxfam GB country programmes have at least one member of staff working on education programmes. There are Regional posts for education (currently two full-time in West Africa - a Regional Manager and a newly appointed Regional Coordinator - and one full time Coordinator in HECA but this position has been abolished as from January 2006). Two other nominated regional leads in East Asia and South Asia fulfil this function in other regions as part of their other country or regional remits, and as January 2006 the South Asia position is being abolished. There is a Global Programme Advisor for Education in the Programme Policy Team based in Oxford whose work includes advisory support, learning, monitoring and evaluation, research and publishing in relation to selected country programmes and the linking of work on education with other Oxfam GB SCOs, particularly SCO 4 and SCO5 and with the CEF. Further support is currently provided by an additional temporary member of staff, with media/campaigning expertise, for work on Beyond Access and the GCE and other campaigns. Staff in the campaign team, based in Oxford, are responsible for campaigning related to education as part of their work with the MDG campaign. There is a part-time Programme Resource Officer for education based in the Programme Resource Centre in Oxford. The education programme also receives some management, administrative, financial and evaluation input from staff with such responsibilities in-country, regionally and in central departments in Oxford.



## **B. Programme Case Studies**

### **3. COUNTRY CASE STUDIES**

#### **3.1 Mali and Niger**

Both Mali and Niger are part of Oxfam GB's West Africa regional programme, "Promoting Gender Equitable Basic Education in West Africa", launched in 2001 and designed to address some of the education challenges in the region and reinforce the momentum of the 2000 Dakar international Education Forum and the MDGs for education. Managed by the Regional Education Manager based in Bamako, Mali, the programme draws on Oxfam GB's partnerships with local NGOs working in education, and its skills and experiences as a lobbying and campaigning organisation. Currently the programme covers five countries: Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Liberia.

Mali and Niger, the foci of this case study, are among the poorest countries in the world. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for primary education in Mali in 2003/3 was 58.4% with a Gender Parity Index of 0.76 (i.e. only 4 girls attending school for every 5 boys). The GER for Niger for the same period was 43.5 with a GPI of 0.69. About 1.2 million children are not in school in each of these countries. The adult literacy rate is estimated at 19% for Mali and 14% for Niger, with very low rates for women within these figures (UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2006).

The programme in Mali and Niger focuses on education for girls in nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralist people. The approach has been to work with 'animatrices' or community mobilisers as a way of promoting girls' education in both communities and schools that is sensitive to the lifestyle needs of pastoralist peoples. Each community involved in the programme has an animatrice, ideally a local woman, who encourages parents to send their daughters to school through discussing the importance and value of schooling for girls as well as boys. They monitor girls' attendance and work with teachers to ensure a safe and girl-friendly school environment and also follow up when girls drop out of school. Animatrices have a background in community mobilisation and have also had some capacity building in gender awareness.

The case study research was conducted by a local woman and focused on two villages, one in each of Mali and Niger, where the programme had supported an animatrice in the community for at least one full year, there had been a subsequent increase in girls schooling and there was also a micro-credit fund to support girls' education. The researcher observed the animatrices at work and interviewed parents, girls in school and teachers/headteachers.

The animatrices have developed two forms of argument, namely those which underline the benefits of schooling and those which challenge negative beliefs about school. Arguments in relation to the benefits of schooling emphasise the value of: acquiring basic literacy and numeracy for use in the home (e.g. to read medicine labels) and to make a living; developing good behaviour; and being taught basic hygiene and other benefits to health. Parents' concerns about the impact of schooling on behaviour are tackled through stressing the aspects of school education that are line with traditional values and morality.

School attendance and retention have both increased. Mothers are prepared to reduce their daughters' household workload to send them to school as they feel they will benefit from girls' future employment and marriage prospects. Provision of school meals, attendance-related food oils and micro-credit for items such as shoes and school materials is also welcomed. The girls appreciate their activities with the animatrice, the development of their confidence and that value is given to both their attendance at school and their aspirations to continue education. School staff have welcomed making schools more inclusive to girls through more gender-sensitive teaching approaches, oversight of journeys to school to ensure safety, and more gender-equitable sharing of school tasks such as cleaning. Large numbers of people attended the meetings organised during the evaluation, indicating community interest, and the parents felt school equipment, and results, were better than before, though they still wanted more school materials and training for teachers.

This case study illustrates the importance of, and strategies for, changing beliefs and attitudes in relation to girls' education but it is clear that there are still many challenges to changing traditional stereotypes of girls and women and challenging entrenched roles which act as barriers to women achieving autonomy and self-fulfilment. It also suggests that mobilisation needs to be done by locals who are respected and integrated in the community and who can find ways to bring about change based on their 'insider' understandings. Supporting mothers in encouraging their daughters' schooling, and to participate in mothers' organisations, is particularly important, as is the practical help of micro-credit. It is, however, harder to empower women within the community or to challenge gender stereotyping. The workload of mothers who send their girls to school has increased as they have less help with household and village duties, and their participation alongside men in school management committees remains limited, although they are often charged with overseeing finance. If animatrices are too radical at this stage, their work will not be accepted. However, achieving more education for girls should contribute longer-term to lessening gender stereotyping and uneven divisions of labour. The West Africa programme has had success in increasing girls enrolment in school but needs to set this in the context of the bigger challenge of changing the girls' and women's role and the stereotypes which will limit these gains. The animatrice model has raised these more complex questions but not found all the answers.

Experience of changing attitudes and beliefs at community level is now being disseminated through learning exchanges within Oxfam GB, particularly within the West Africa region, and through Oxfam publications. Means to scale up impact are also being developed, for example through gender training with government district partners, focusing on the curriculum and other issues such as gender images in school textbooks.

Although relationships are strong with officials involved in decentralised services at the local level, it has been more difficult to advocate at the national level, particularly when Ministries are unwieldy or disorganised, or the local programme is many miles away from the capital. The main focus of work in Mali and Niger is education for pastoralists, particularly for girls, but as yet, needs and issues have not been raised at national levels. Oxfam GB is involved in various coalitions in West Africa, including those which other OI affiliates also support. It plays a supporting role in all of the countries involved, as civil society is free to express itself and Oxfam GB does not need to take a lead role in lobbying or campaigning. However, Oxfam GB staff still need support to be effective in advocacy work, and many partners also do not yet have the capacity to exert real influence on government. Coalition activity also involves working with the regional coalition, ANCEFA, which is also focusing on country coalition capacity building and needs more human and other resources to

play more of a co-ordinating role in the region, including serving as a link between national coalitions and the GCE since currently, although countries take part in the GCE Week of Action, other contact remains limited.

Improvements in approaches to teaching, more community involvement, and good working relationships with district officials are all being developed. The animatrice model, namely local community mobilisation to encourage school attendance, is not new. However it is being used in a sensitive, effective and inclusive way in the programme's engagement with beliefs and attitudes, girls/gender issues, and the needs of pastoralists. Sharing of learning is taking place within the Oxfam GB West Africa region, and is being expanded to include both exchange on pastoralists and education with HECA, and dissemination to a wider audience through Oxfam publications. There are strong partnerships with local NGOs and a commitment to building, and developing the impact of, national and regional coalitions. However, as in other case studies, building the links between on-the-ground experience, national advocacy, partnerships and coalitions, and the regional and international dimensions of campaigns, remains a challenge.

### **3.2 Tanzania**

Oxfam GB's work in the education sector in Tanzania comprises a primary education programme called Education Quality Improvement through Pedagogy (EQUIP) together with some work with the Maasai of Ngorongoro to support communities to develop community pre-schools within their villages. Oxfam GB also contributes to the advocacy work of the Tanzanian civil society coalition, the Tanzanian Education Network (TENMET), of which it was one of the founder members in 1999 and which is now also supported by the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) with which Oxfam GB is also involved.

Considerable progress has been made in access to education in Tanzania over the last ten years. Primary GER has increased substantially over the last decade. It was 90% in 2002/3 with a GPI of 0.96 (UNESCO, 2006) and is now well over 90%, a growth encouraged by the recent abolition of school fees. However, transition to secondary education remains low, gender disparities persist, there is a shortage of teachers, especially in rural areas, and of buildings and books, and the quality of teaching and learning is still poor. Many bilateral donors now give direct sector or budget funding in support of the Education Sector Development Programme, within which the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) focuses on quality improvement and institutional capacity building.

EQUIP works in two districts of Shinyanga region, which has a population of about 3 million people, in north-western Tanzania. It is a largely agricultural region, a dry, drought-prone area, with some food shortages, where Oxfam has been working on water supply as well as education. EQUIP started in 2003, building on previous work in the same schools since 1999, and will run until 2008, covering 169 primary schools. The aim is improvement of quality through raising teaching standards. The main project activities comprise training in active, learner-centred pedagogy, mentoring systems, and networking activities together with monitoring, evaluation and advocacy, including the cross-cutting themes of gender and HIV/AIDS. As elsewhere in Tanzania, enrolments have increased since the abolition of school fees took effect in January 2002. However, access to quality education remains a problem, due to the impact of increased enrolment on already inadequate resources, including overcrowded classrooms, lack of books and materials, and insufficient teacher training and support. EQUIP's focus on professional development and

support networks is designed to tackle some of these difficulties. It therefore, in its focus on quality, complements the objectives and activities of the PEDP.

In relation to the key outcomes of EQUIP, there has been increased primary school attendance, enrolment and school pass rates together with improved transition to secondary school. For example, enrolment between 2001 and 2004 increased by 28% in Shinyanga municipal district and by 58.8% in the rural district. However, the rise in enrolment in Tanzania in general over the same period, due largely to the abolition of school fees, makes it difficult to attribute a specific proportion of such increases to the impact of the programme alone. However, there is qualitative evidence that teaching and learning have improved, the community is more engaged and there is 'buy-in' at district and regional government levels.

Training is seen by teachers and local officials to have enhanced active learning. The mentoring model, developed as a particular, and alternative, approach to "cascade" training is seen as particularly beneficial and the participatory approach to training has been very much welcomed by teachers. Local discussion of quality education has also led to a proposed set of learning outcomes for all primary school subjects, although it is not yet clear to what extent these are being used in local classrooms for teaching and evaluation, or as part of a national level debate on quality.

In relation to monitoring, key project indicators on enrolment, attendance and outcomes are available, but are uneven and do not examine the processes of teaching and learning practices, nor the specific impact on education for girls. EQUIP tends to address practical rather than broader gender issues such as teacher-pupil interaction. In relation to HIV/AIDS, EQUIP is concerned to see, by 2008, that teachers integrate HIV/AIDS into lessons and that the districts plan and implement a system to support teachers and pupils on HIV/AIDS issues. However the lack of openness, and national government approaches which focus on facts rather than behaviour change, has made for considerable difficulty in mainstreaming.

OSchool committee training has been delayed by various factors external to the project. However there have been substantial efforts to include local government officials in project planning and development activities such as monitoring. There is evidence of practice change at district level, for example a more mentoring style approach for school inspection as result of staff involvement in EQUIP training. There has been substantial investment in partnerships at district level and Districts have taken on responsibility for funding and planning some professional development activities. However, impact at national level has been limited and a clearly articulated message based on learning from EQUIP is not yet in evidence. This is partly because information is not flowing particularly well between project and national levels, despite various opportunities to use EQUIP as an advocacy example. Secondly, the majority of staff resources to date have been concentrated on project implementation. There is now a need to build demand for education, promote more quality community participation, and document the project more fully for advocacy purposes.

In relation to work on education finance, project staff have been involved in budget tracking and were very clear that it had contributed to an improvement in the allocation of resources by District Councils to schools and by schools in terms of choices made with capitation grant expenditure. Impact on national level discussion is less clear. At the national level, TENMET has conducted a budget tracking exercise but found this to be difficult and that NGOs need capacity to do this work, though it can be concluded that increases in enrolment can be attributed to abolishing school fees and to new funding for classrooms, teacher recruitment and

the capitation grant. There has also been some Oxfam GB input into early debates about the cost of quality education and the work of CEF to support civil society capacity building in relation to monitoring education finance.

In relation to both the quality and the financing of education, Oxfam GB staff now feel more focus is required on national advocacy and making Oxfam's international campaigns useful in the Tanzanian context. Advocacy was part of the original design of the project and discussions have taken place from time to time with ministry officials. However, time available for advocacy work has been limited, due in part to the time spent on programme implementation. Oxfam GB is seen by other TENMET members as a widely respected international agency. However Oxfam GB staff in Tanzania do not always draw on this advantage. Another difficulty is that engagement with government planning processes is not straightforward for NGOs in Tanzania. At the national level, Oxfam GB's main alliance building has been through TENMET, the Tanzanian Education Network. Oxfam GB was one of the founder members in 1999, and has continued to give considerable support to TENMET, although its input is not always consistent. TENMET is also still viewed with suspicion by government, which prefers to regard NGOs as additional service providers. Consensus between NGOs has been difficult to achieve and capacity of member NGOs is mixed, with a few dominating. In relation to campaigns, although Oxfam GB, and other TENMET members, participate in the GCE Global Week of Action, the evaluation identified a concern that the situation in Tanzania was not well linked with the wider international picture. Oxfam GB staff also felt that they were not always aware of international campaign impact globally, and that campaigns seem to be geared more to developed rather than developing countries.

The EQUIP project complements priorities in the government's education programme and in focusing on a poor and neglected area of the country, and on quality, has the potential to raise various issues and practices for local, national and international learning. It illustrates the value of participatory approaches, including community involvement in schools and for teacher training, of mentoring approaches to training and of fostering mentoring and other networks between teachers and government officials to discuss approaches to improve the quality of education.

However, this case study also highlights the need to develop more systematic monitoring and evaluation, and better programme documentation for national lesson sharing and advocacy, including indicators of the cost-effectiveness of programme interventions. It also illustrates the time needed to work with district officials to ensure active adoption of programme models and lessons. It also identifies the need to develop staff understanding of gender and of HIV/AIDS, involve field and local stakeholders in national advocacy, and ensure that advocacy and networking plans are backed by sufficient staff capacity and resources. Finally, it stresses the importance of the integration of northern and southern aspects of, and inputs to, international campaigns, leveraging Oxfam GB's international influence but at the same time ensuring that campaigns interface with, and reflect, country issues and priorities.

### **3.3 The Philippines**

Oxfam GB's education programme in the Philippines originated from advocacy work around the Philippines Education for All 2000 Assessment and from education-related concerns expressed by communities involved in Oxfam GB's humanitarian intervention in Mindanao. This is the second largest island in the Philippines but is one of the poorest, with a very diverse population, the lowest education indicators in the country and ongoing unrest and conflict which has led to a number of internally

displaced families living in evacuation centres including schools. The Philippines overall have a primary GER of over 100% with gender parity, although Net Enrolment Rate (NER) for primary education remains at 94%. At secondary level, which is important in middle-income countries, the NER is 60% (with fewer boys attending than girls) (UNESCO, 2006). These figures, and the case of Mindane, illustrate how middle-income countries with apparently good education indicators still have disadvantaged and out of school children.

Oxfam GB's work originally focused in 2000 on a single school in which there were over 450 evacuee children, but has now developed from this emergency response to working to support 11 schools to deliver education for all (displaced and host) children in the community, through a local NGO and with government district and divisional staff. A third phase will involve a further 12 schools affected by conflict and displacement, drawing on programme experience of capacity building supported by a range of resource inputs, and with further development of community participation, school development planning and student tracking.

Concurrently, Oxfam GB has been involved in the development of the Civil Society Network for Education Reforms (E-NET) in the context of an active civil society movement, concerned with advocacy and campaigning with government and aid agencies. The government, supported by key donors to the education sector, has recently drafted the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA), to implement the EFA plan and tackle some of the education system's problems, such as low achievement and non-completion rates of about 30% in certain areas. Three Oxfam GB staff work (though not all exclusively) on education, namely the Country Programme Manager, who is also the Regional Education Focal Point, the Education Programme Officer, based in Manila, and the Education Project Officer in Mindanao.

The proposal for the new stage of the Mindanao project indicates how a comprehensive model is seemingly developing from what was initially an emergency response. The objective is to promote access to, and completion of, education of high quality for children affected by conflict and displacement. Target outcomes include parent and student motivation, strengthened home-school-community partnership, and improved capacity of the formal school system to provide continuing and appropriate quality education in times of conflict and displacement. Strategies include work with parents to improve their skills and participation in relation to education, support to school development and emergency preparedness planning, capacity building for teachers and school managers in various pedagogical aspects of school improvement, repair/rehabilitation of the learning environment and provision of equipment and materials, and monitoring and evaluation. It is intended that the programme will act as a basis for communication, advocacy and capacity building in relation to education in emergencies. Gender is mainstreamed through training and monitoring and the focus on participatory approaches includes participatory approaches to teaching and learning as well as supporting communities in their involvement in schools.

In relation to impact, the schools which have been prioritised for support service highly fluid populations, so the lack of a data base with key statistics from the project schools, or a student tracking system, means the overall picture in terms of enrolment and completion rates remains unclear. However, the building of 59 classrooms has made a significant difference to provision. Other data suggest that the development of three schools to provide grades 5-6 has helped to increase both enrolment in the lower grades and transition to secondary school. There is also some evidence of increased attendance and retention.

Qualitative information also suggests other improvements. Government officials, school staff, parents and the community do perceive improvements have taken place, due to maintaining continuity of education, upgraded school buildings/facilities, better teaching and learning, and strengthened community participation. Schools however do not always actively follow up out of school children and there is little recognition of the issues posed by language of instruction policies within a context of linguistic diversity. There has been an increase in understanding of gender issues, though this has not always, as yet, been translated into more gender-sensitive practice in schools. There has been a lot of learning re those factors likely to make schooling supportive to children who have been displaced and/or have experienced conflict and Oxfam GB has demonstrated the value of tailored, flexible and responsive approaches, covering training and infrastructure, and school and community interventions, which could be scaled up. Oxfam GB is therefore well placed to develop more policy advocacy based on its own programme and research evidence.

As noted earlier, there is a facilitative context and climate for advocacy in the Philippines. The Oxfam GB programme has a clear and agreed approach and is both committed and engaged. Oxfam GB was involved in the early development of E-Net, which started in 2000 and now comprises over 100 NGOs/CSOs. Oxfam GB has also continued to support E-Net in various ways (see Box 3). For example, in 2004, it committed three years of funding support, including support for two full-time posts, one for co-ordination and one for financial management, as part of its commitment to capacity and communications development. The main focus for E-Net has been changes in policy and practice within the Philippines but there has also been the intention to link with the wider global advocacy work of Oxfam GB and other international initiatives in education.

**Box 3: E-NET advocacy work**

The objectives of E-Net's advocacy work include: active participation of civil society; stronger government-civil society partnership in EFA planning and monitoring and democratic governance; equitable access to good quality education for all, including vulnerable children and a gender-fair system; reform of school curricula and pedagogy; and support for non-formal/alternative education and early childhood care and development (Raya and Guzman Castillo 2005). Education finance is also a particular focus, particularly lobbying for more budget priority for education, the efficient utilisation of resources, and the elimination of corruption. Budget monitoring and analysis has been carried out at local and national levels, leading to improved information exchange and transparency in education budgeting, capacity building and civil society participation in monitoring and advocacy. E-Net has participated regularly in the GCE Week of Action, developing the international campaign themes to ensure that they resonate with issues and contexts in the Philippines. E-Net has also tried to engage in UNGEI, the UN initiative on girls' education, and with the UNESCO Regional EFA Forum, though with mixed results as both these frameworks have been complex and sometimes difficult arenas through which to work.

As with all coalitions and campaigns, it is difficult to precisely evaluate impact. E-Net now meets with government and donors and has achieved a well-functioning coalition which can be seen as positive and strategic development. E-Net has both had past successes in influencing policy and is also focused on future outcomes/change. It illustrates how a strong and long-established coalition can bring civil society organisations together to advocate changes in government policy. Given importance in Oxfam GB's change model of learning from specific programme experiences, the programme has been actively networking with other agencies working in Mindanao such as UNICEF, AusAid and Save the Children and making the links from regional to national and international level through the Interagency

Network for Education in Emergencies. The experience and learning in working on education in conflict areas in Mindanao has provided Oxfam with a stronger voice within E-Net to raise the focus education concerns of marginalized/excluded/vulnerable learners, in particular children in conflict-affected areas. Oxfam GB has been requested by these agencies to host a meeting to share learning and coordination to improve practice and policy. Oxfam also constructively engaged in the development of minimum standards for education in emergencies by leading a national consultation (attended by Department of Education, UNICEF, groups working on Psychosocial Trauma, groups working on disaster management, etc) and bringing the results to a regional forum of the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies.

This illustrates the demands, and complexity of coalition work, including the need to develop sub-national organisations where disparities of need or provision, governance structures or other factors make this the most effective approach to change at local level. This case study shows how long-term involvement by Oxfam GB in a national coalition can help to support strong policy dialogue with government and other partners.

The Philippines programme also illustrates the potential synergy between Oxfam GB's emergency and humanitarian work, its contributions to education development in conflict-affected areas and how learning from programme experience can be more widely advocated. Experience from Mindanao was shared with other agencies during the Asia Pacific consultation to develop Minimum Standards in Education in Emergencies, and a subsequent global meeting, during 2004. During this process there was recognition of how Oxfam GB's programme shows the need for, and value of, supporting and strengthening the resilience of education systems to both uphold the right to education and enable schools to perform as mechanisms and mantles of security for children and civilian communities.

At same time, this case study reinforces the broader need within Oxfam GB for a clearer global education strategy, particularly on gender, alternative education, and clarification of the relationship of education to the rest of Oxfam GB programmes. The case study also reinforces the need, as found with other programmes, for more programme monitoring/ research/ documentation with direct links to policy advocacy in mind, the need to complement coalition work with bilateral and INGO networks, and constraints from limited human resource/technical expertise. Other data also emphasises the value of regional learning, for example on issues such as quality.

### **3.4 Brazil**

With an estimated 180 million people, Brazil is the largest country in Latin America both in area and population. Amongst middle income countries it has one of the highest rates of people living in poverty. Its education system has over 300,000 schools and about 2 million teachers. Early/primary education is managed mainly by local governments, states are responsible for secondary education and the federal government oversees higher education. The main challenge twenty years ago was inadequate access, due to lack of sufficient schools and poor families needing to send their children to work. During the 1990s many efforts were made to increase enrolment and extend the availability of education services. Access to basic education is now almost universal due to constitutional obligations to provide compulsory primary education, and adoption of various education policies such as more funding for basic education. However, the decentralised system means that resources are distributed differently across the country and some states and municipalities have increased enrolment rates beyond their capacity to provide a

decent quality of education. Differences related to ethnicity/race, socio-economic groupings and rural/urban areas are still prevalent. Over 11.5 million children are still out of school and of those who enrol, only 10% gain access to higher education. However there are no significant gender disparities in relation to access to education, though inequalities remain in relation to subsequent employment, including within the school system.

Oxfam GB has been engaged since 1999 in a National Education campaign initiative comprising a network of almost 200 NGOs and has recently started to support one special grassroots initiative being implemented by a local partner called Missao Crianca. This organisation is concerned to implement the Bolsa Escola Program which seeks to improve the educational opportunities available to children from poor families by providing income subsidies conditional on children's regular attendance in school. Missao Crianca has helped to implement this programme in 17 municipalities in Brazil and has also helped to transfer its methodology to other countries in Africa in Latin America. The intention is to help local governments to develop this programme, which was adopted as public policy by the Brazilian government in 2001, and is now being implemented as part of a package of anti-poverty policies known as Bolsa Familia, which are linked not only to education but to nutrition and health. The aim of these policies is to break the cycle of poverty rather than just treating its symptoms. The "Education to Confront Poverty" project, carried out by Oxfam and its local partner Missao Crianca, provides complementary pedagogical activities for children and adult education for beneficiary families of Bolsa Escola. This project, which is financed by the European Union, is being developed in five municipalities in Brazil. If successful, this programme is expected to be adopted as a model by other local governments and expanded by the municipalities which are currently implementing it.

It is too early to assess the impact of this work. It is also difficult to assess precisely the impact of the National Education Campaign, the coalition supported by Oxfam GB and other INGOs. Its objective of changing public policies, influencing the political agenda and grass-roots mobilisation do however seem to have had some success. Political visibility has been increased and agenda setting in itself is perceived as an achievement. Campaigning on the financing of education is seen as a crucial way to improve the quality of education. Such campaigning has focused on both the spending differential between primary and higher education and on regional disparities, and has resulted in an increase in the amount to be spent per student on primary education, even though this amount still falls short of the level prescribed by the law. The campaign has also highlighted spending on early childhood education, indigenous education and education for students with special educational needs. Another element of the campaign to increase the education budget is the work done to define a new student-quality cost which has included a wide participatory process, including activities during the 2005 GCE Week of Action. The campaign is also advocating more participation by civil society organisations in education policy and practice in order to promote more democratic governance of the education system, including state and local preparation of education plans.

Impact on education financing is perceived to be modest. However the campaign has had an important monitoring function in a period when government has tried to cut costs on social expenditures. More civil society participation has also taken place in relation to education plans, encouraged and monitored by the State Committees set up by the campaign. The Brazilian campaign is also involved in a number of international forums, including the GCE as a Board member and the Latin American campaign for the right to education, which has seventeen national forums. The campaign considers that international campaign issues need to be modified in

relation to Brazil given the country's better indicators on access and gender parity compared with developing countries. It has however participated in the Week of Action and other activities, although it is felt that agenda setting is still dominated by big northern NGOs. However Oxfam GB is perceived to have contributed valuable financial and learning resources, although revision of future commitments by Oxfam GB and other INGOs is now generating some uncertainty regarding the future of the campaign.

Oxfam GB's work in Brazil illustrates the multi-faceted aspects of building coalitions and campaigns, including the importance of a clear focus and a strategic mobilisation network, the need to identify loci of policy change (for example Ministries of Finance as well as education) and the value of INGOs' international links as means to share experience with other countries and regions. This case study also highlights the importance of documenting field programme and campaign experience, not least to sustain regional engagement by partners when Oxfam GB has few, or no other, programmes in the region to aid this process. It also identifies the need within Oxfam GB to share more widely the most successful strategies for coalition building, advocacy and campaigning, including strengthening the involvement, and lead, of southern coalitions in international campaigns.

The links between quality and education financing are well illustrated in the Brazil case study. As will be discussed in the next section, Oxfam GB contributes significantly to campaigns on the financing of education development and is also, with two other INGOs, involved in the development of civil society advocacy and capacity on this issue through the Commonwealth Education Fund. To date, not many programmes focus on education financing at local or national levels, although the civil society involvement in allocations policy, and monitoring, is being developed through work with national coalitions. Oxfam GB has also developed training materials (source: report on workshop) which could be used, with adaptation, in a number of countries. Such development will be considered in more detail in subsequent sections of this evaluation.

## **4. GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS AND CAMPAIGNS**

This part of the evaluation focuses on global partnerships and campaigns. It considers both the “Beyond Access” project and the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF), with which Oxfam GB has been involved, together with the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and the MDG campaign, and associated coalitions on which Oxfam GB has worked in relation to education in conjunction with OI. It draws on documentary analysis and telephone interviews with selected Oxfam GB staff and partner organisations, largely in the UK. Reference is also made to the draft findings of the concurrent OI strategic evaluation in relation to the GCE and other global coalitions and campaigns.

### **4.1 *Beyond Access***

The “Gender, Development and Education: Beyond Access” project is a three year initiative (2003-5) funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). It comprises a partnership between the Institute of Education, University of London, and Oxfam GB together with DFID, with the aims of:

- sharing knowledge, critically examining practice and undertaking new strategies for learning between policy-makers, NGOs, inter-government organisations, practitioners, academics, teachers and the general public;
- building awareness of debates and practical strategies for the delivery of gender equitable education, through seminars, conferences and a range of publications.

The outputs comprise accessible information for policymakers in government and NGOs, teacher educators and new networks between academics, campaigners, policymakers and practitioners in relation to practice on gender equality and basic education. Most of the measurable outputs are documentary with a commitment to regular seminars and to publishing at least 40 papers in books and journals. The six themes are: rights; policy-making; the politics of policy; HIV/AIDS; learning from practice; cross-sector dialogue. There have been six seminars, with associated papers and teacher workshops, including one in Africa, one in South Asia and four in the UK; bi-monthly Newsletters from June 2003 to December 2005; three books, produced through Oxfam publications, two specialist journal editions; some newspaper articles and radio coverage through Oxfam GB’s campaign team and media department.

Oxfam GB’s specific role includes raising NGO colleague awareness of gender and education in low-income states. It has included: involvement of Oxfam GB regional education coordinators and country programme officers in seminars and publications; links with Oxfam GB campaigns, particularly on the MDGs; links to CEF work through training for CEF co-ordinators and strengthening advocacy for gender issues; active engagement with the UK GCE on policy development for gender and in particular the gender MDG for education, including policy papers; seminars and workshops with a range of NGOs; work on DFID’s Girls’ Education Strategy and UNESCO’s Global Monitoring Reports.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) (December 2004) identified successful production of documentary and seminar outputs, such as policy papers, but mentioned concern over weaknesses in media impact, due in large part to insufficient support from

media departments in the three partner organisations (especially Oxfam GB and DFID). DFID's organisational and promotional engagement was also viewed as too limited, particularly given the need to mobilise high-level policy-makers. It was recommended that Oxfam GB and IOE meet with DFID to clarify policy outcome expectations and improve media dissemination. It was also suggested that thought be given to engagement of NGOs in making operational some of the policy recommendations. It was also recognised that staffing resources were limited, and uneven, which had put pressure on project objectives and staff.

Since the MTR, Beyond Access has largely achieved its objectives, particularly since Oxfam GB's contribution was strengthened by additional staff input on the media strategy, following from concerns expressed on this in the MTR. It has extended its gender, education and media work through to June 2006 and established a number of linkages between academics, policymakers and NGOs both in the UK and in-country where seminars have been held, and provided material for a number of publications, several under Oxfam Publishing.

As well as developing the media advocacy strategy, Oxfam GB has contributed substantially to the analytic work of Beyond Access. Such analysis has contributed to the ongoing shift within most development agencies, and by some southern governments, from the traditional focus on access, as measured, for example, by gender parity in school enrolment, towards a gender equality approach concerned with the gender processes and outcomes of education. Policy papers, publications and seminars have all emphasised the importance of gender analysis and monitoring for policies and programmes, improving the quality of education, developing gender-sensitive curricula and pedagogy and enhancing family and community commitment to gender equality.

Oxfam GB has also contributed the NGO perspective which was part of the purpose and design of Beyond Access. It has emphasised the importance of grassroots issues and experiences as sources of learning for analytic work and advocacy for campaigning. Its programmes and contacts have helped to source such learning and experience for publications, for example on the strategies used to convince pastoralist communities of the value of girls' education in Mali, or to advance girls' education in Kenya, Bangladesh and Peru, to complement and balance the more abstract analytic work (Oxfam GB, 2005, referenced in Annex 3).

Maintaining a focus on gender, and developing the gender equality approach has also been one of the foci of Oxfam GB's contributions to the GCE, including the country Score Card initiative (Unterhalter et al 2005), input on the GCE policy position regarding the 2005 gender parity target and on GCE responses to the G8 and UN summits, and development of a girls' education activity used as part of the GCE media activities in New York around the UN summit.

Developing the influence of Beyond Access in high-level policy terms was not part of its agenda at inception, though there has been some impact at national government and international donor/agency levels. Beyond Access has contributed to the DFID Girls' Education Strategy and to the UNESCO Global Monitoring Reports, particular the report focusing on gender in 2003. Policy makers have attended seminars and received EQUALS, the project Newsletter. However, up to now this impact has been relatively limited, in part due to the earlier uneven contribution of DFID to the Beyond Access partnership and also because the first two years of the project were largely focused on generating learning. Only recently has the focus shifted more to using the learning generated for advocacy purposes.

There was some engagement with the Beyond Access work and messages on behalf of the Oxfam campaigns and policy teams- for example through consultation with project members when developing the OI position around the World Summit outcome. Oxfam GB could perhaps have used its strategic position more to argue within the GCE, for example, the importance of the gender equality approach and the factors which support gender-equitable basic education. Constraints on Oxfam GB's ability to capitalise on Beyond Access in this way include the inevitable focus on selective top line messages and key demands during the 2005 campaign year and the limited resources, in staffing terms, which Oxfam GB was able to commit to this work. However, although many NGO coalitions are still developing in southern countries, Beyond Access's current work with civil society in selected southern countries to support media-advocacy work may enable further policy influencing on girls' education and gender issues at national levels, albeit on a relatively modest scale.

Beyond Access also illustrates an important point about institutional partnerships, namely that the commitment of individuals involved needs to be complemented by institutional commitment to the partnership, for example from media teams. However, from the data available for this evaluation, Beyond Access can be described as a successful, and in many ways innovative, project which Oxfam GB was right to invest in.

#### **4.2 The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF)**

The CEF, which was set up by UK Chancellor Gordon Brown with an initial £10 million grant in 2001, is concerned with achieving the MDGs on education and gender. Its focus is not service delivery but rather, civil society input into the Education for All process, including increasing public debate around education goals in the south, promoting greater transparency around education budgets and focusing attention on children out of school, in low-income Commonwealth countries. It is conceived as a new way of working, namely international NGOs working with governments, civil society and the private sector in the North and South. Oxfam GB, Save the Children UK and Action Aid are managing the fund with each taking a lead role in 16 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR), undertaken in June 2005, concluded that through CEF support, both existing and emerging umbrella coalitions in the target low-income countries are being strengthened to build domestic pressure on governments to move education up the political agenda and be more accountable (see box 4).

##### **Box 4: Some achievements of the CEF to date**

These include four new coalitions, support for twelve existing coalitions, and development of an additional five regional/thematic coalitions, now representing 2,100 organisations across the 16 countries involved, including NGOs, teacher unions, parent associations, faith-based organisations and social movements. Most of these coalitions are now engaging in key national policy forums, and thus in education sector reviews, EFA planning, PRSP processes and dialogue with donor agencies. The coalitions have also organised workshops and seminars on key advocacy issues and training in for example financing and budget monitoring and are actively increasing civil society engagement with local and district level government. The MTR found that supporting and strengthening education coalitions aids civil society participation with government planning and budgeting processes and increases their ability to hold governments accountable to their commitments to EFA and the MDGs. The MTR identified 97 policy and practices changes as a result of the work of the CEF and partners (from policies for displaced children in Uganda to policy on contributing to the Kenyan government's decision to abolish fees).

It recommended that CEF should continue to build the basic capacity of coalition members, particularly the country NGOs/CBOs, and continue to diversify and deepen membership, including private sector and media organisations. It suggested that CEF develop a more explicit focus on gender, develop work on education finance and do more to share effective innovations in relation to the inclusion of out of school children with the aim of mainstreaming these within the government system. In relation to all of these, more learning and exchange across countries were required. It also identified the need to secure longer term funding (with a recommendation that CEF extends beyond 2007). It has subsequently been agreed that the CEF will continue until June 2006 with an additional £2.5 million from the Treasury.

In relation to collaboration between Oxfam GB, Save the Children UK and Action Aid, the MTR recognised that CEF's association with these three internationally respected agencies has created a platform from which to communicate with influential figures and organisations at local, national and international levels, particularly since these three agencies are also at the core of the GCE. However, it also suggested that, given Action Aid's lead agency role in the UK and in 12 of the country programmes (by mutual consent), *all three* lead agencies need to keep actively involved, at the UK level as well as at the country level. It also recommended that CEF should broaden its relationships with a range of partners. The MTR also considered it was important, when working with the private sector, not just to focus on fund raising but also businesses' support for public investment in education, particularly at country level. It was also considered important to ensure that within the three INGO partner organisations, CEF-related elements of staff job descriptions were explicitly stated and targets for CEF acknowledged as part of corporate agenda, including for marketing departments. These issues raised by the MTR are also reflected in comments from INGO partner organisations collected as part of this evaluation. For example, CEF is considered to have benefited from Oxfam GB, Action Aid UK and Save the Children UK working together in the management of the programme and the coalitions. Decentralisation of management decision making to country level is also endorsed as beneficial. However it is also recognised that CEF needs strengthening and since the MTR, a human resource policy has been developed and other measures taken to extend membership of coalitions etc.

CEF can be seen to reflect a larger structural shift in the way INGOs are working, which in turn mirrors a shift by donor agencies to working through a collaborative sector-wide approach with government. CEF is developing the civil society equivalent by encouraging dialogue and debate, galvanising resources and other support, and ensuring independent scrutiny. This enables an important balance to donor involvement to be developed, namely government accountability to its citizens. Funding coalition work is not easy, and CEF has been one way to develop this. CEF also reinforces changes in the role of INGO programmes, towards support for innovations, community involvement and partnerships with government, rather than large scale delivery. Advocacy and coalition work then ensure sustainability and scaling up through government policies and provision.

Oxfam GB has been influential in relation to advocating gender, links between CEF and GCE, and the sharing of work on education financing and other finance issues (e.g. debt). However since it does not have a large/strong programme in all the countries involved, and is only lead agency for Zambia (where the education programme has now closed), its contribution and impact have been somewhat limited to date and has raised important questions about its levels of resourcing to CEF.

The particular aims of CEF are to improve participation in the monitoring of education finances and budgets and identify and disseminate innovative approaches to inclusive education for girls, children with disabilities, street children and displaced children. It has had some success in relation to developing capacity to monitor education finance but still needs to give more attention to disseminating inclusive programmes and to widening its support, particular from the private sector at country level. Many coalitions are still fragile, and need more support, and more human and financial resources, to develop advocacy networks and expertise. It is therefore important that the three UK INGOs (and partner NGOs) involved have sufficient programme experience and staff resources to ensure a seat round the dialogue table with government, the development of capacity and the dissemination of innovations. However, CEF offers a readymade framework, with secured funding, for advancing civil society involvement in education policies and finance. Its objectives are shared by Oxfam GB which has a value-added contribution to make. Learning from CEF is also important in the development of Oxfam GB's own work. Having committed to CEF, it is important to both maintain and develop Oxfam GB engagement. The concluding chapter of this evaluation therefore recommends continued engagement with CEF and an increase in Oxfam GB's contribution to the range of its work.

### **4.3 The Global Campaign for Education (GCE)**

The Global Campaign for Education was started in 1999 by Oxfam International, Action Aid, Education International, the international teachers' association, and four southern NGOs/networks in India, Bangladesh, Brazil and South Africa. It started its campaigning at the Dakar government and donor agency summit in 2000 on Education for All, becoming recognised through its campaigning here as a legitimate umbrella body for civil society participants and establishing a new space for advocacy. It is now an international coalition of national civil society organisations, international NGOs and teacher unions active in more than 100 countries.

The GCE promotes education as a basic human right and mobilises public pressure on governments and the international community to fulfil their promises to provide free, compulsory, public basic education for all people, particularly children, women and all disadvantages, deprived sections of society. It produces policy papers, undertakes media campaigns and orchestrates an annual Week of Action (see Box 5).

#### **Box 5: Weeks of Action**

In 2003, this comprised the World's Biggest Lesson on Girls Education- 2 million children in 70 countries discussing factors which cause girls to be excluded from school.

In 2004, the World's Biggest Ever Lobby- over 2 million people in 117 countries, children lobbying politicians through meetings, debates and letters.

In 2005, the Send my Friend to School campaign which included over 3.5 million silhouettes-buddies- made by 5 million children in 110 countries, to represent the 100m globally still out of school, for presentation to national policy makers and at major world meetings and summits.

The GCE has developed a new advocacy style, with public campaigning and targeted lobbying. It was also developed as an alliance of northern and southern civil society, combining advocacy experience and lobby access to northern policy makers with southern knowledge and experience. It has also developed a very wide coalition including organisations other than NGOs, such as teacher unions. It has a Board and Secretariat, the latter now based in South Africa, and has focused its campaigning on

various aspects of Education for All, including the financing of education, and key policy-making meetings, such as those of the UN, IMF, World Bank, and G8. Its membership now includes other major INGOs such as the Save the Children Alliance, a number of European NGOs, and southern regional and national coalitions and networks of southern civil society organisations.

As noted in the information available for this evaluation, and in an appraisal by Patrick Watt (2005) in the Partnership for Girls' Education Oxfam publication (Rao and Smyth 2005), the GCE has been active in relation to a number of international government and donor agency meetings over the last few years, where education has been an important focus. GCE has argued in particular for more education development financing through a global fund, but has also raised other policy issues, for example, the education of girls. It is difficult to evaluate the precise impact of its campaigning. For example, although the GCE has contributed to developing and maintaining the priority given to primary education in education development, the shift in emphasis from post-primary to primary education in the World Bank and other donor agencies' policies and funding has been taking place since the international EFA meeting in Jomtien in 1990. Policy changes such as abolition of user fees have also been argued for some time by a number of donor agencies as a critical way to improve access to services, and both some southern governments and some agencies, for example, UNICEF, have been particularly concerned to address girls' education. And global funds for education (or health) are seen by some agencies and governments as having high transaction costs along with requirements and schedules which are not always congruent with country planning and funding arrangements.

However it can be suggested that the GCE has contributed to ensuring that education remains a priority in international development policy, that key policy and financing issues continue to be raised at international meetings, and that governments and donor agencies feel more pressure and accountability for their decisions and actions. In addition, its wide membership and focus on southern civil society membership and advocacy priorities and experience has facilitated access to high level policy makers in the south as well as the north. As noted in the OI strategic evaluation (Burrows, 2005), it has also facilitated massive campaign participation, such as the involvement of over 5 million people in 150 countries in the 2005 Week of Action. It can therefore be argued that follow through on the Dakar EFA commitments would have been weaker without the work of the GCE.

Oxfam GB's particular contribution has been wide-ranging. Its overall status and access to key decision-makers in the UN and elsewhere have been important in securing the legitimacy of the GCE. Oxfam GB represents OI on the GCE Board and provides substantial funding. Its strengths and experience in public campaigning and mobilisation are seen by other partners to be a very important contribution, including ideas for the annual Week of Action. Oxfam GB has also contributed its particular knowledge of education and other development finance issues to policy analysis and to headline asks, including the need to increase global funding of education development through the EFA Fast Track Initiative in order to make available more recurrent as well as development funding, and to balance some countries' continued investment through tied aid. Oxfam GB has also tried to widen policy analysis through a focus on the importance of gender equitable quality basic education, as opposed to the narrower focus on gender parity in the MDGs. Oxfam GB has also contributed to capacity building of southern NGOs, as part of redressing the balance of capacity (e.g. personnel, resources, lobby access) between northern and southern GCE members.

Oxfam GB's contribution has therefore been both influential and multi-faceted, and an important part of OI's overall commitment to the GCE. There are inevitably some tensions/dilemmas in supporting such a wide, and organisationally complex, campaign. For example, despite the need, argued by Oxfam GB and others, to develop a more gender-equitable approach to girls' education, the GCE has continued to emphasise the MDG-related goal on parity for girls' education. This reflects a broader dilemma/debate within campaigning by the GCE, between promoting highly focused messages and taking on the wider range of EFA issues. It has also been difficult to balance ongoing commitment to the GCE with OI's involvement in the recent wider MDG campaigns. As noted in the OI evaluation (Burrows, 2005), some concerns have been expressed, within OI and by partners, that education-specific messages can get diluted or lost in wider, generalist messages. It can also be more difficult for programme staff to see how they can connect wider campaigns on aid, debt and trade to education issues and the GCE. Information gathered for this Oxfam GB evaluation also highlights some similar issues, particularly in relation to connecting country staff and country issues related to education to such wider campaigns when even the GCE, with its focus on education, is not always able to interface effectively with country priorities.

A number of lessons have therefore emerged from involvement with the GCE, including: the need to manage the tension between nuanced policy analysis and headline policy messages/asks; the importance of continuing to contribute to policy analysis, particularly on education finance and on girls' education/gender and education; and the need to analyse the best ways of funding education development including dovetailing global funds with country sector/budget support. In addition there would seem to be a strong case for continuing Oxfam GB's (with OI) support for the GCE's development plan and its growing southern-focused structure, for putting effort into the 2006 Week of Action and supporting GCE work with sufficient programming at country level to ensure effective involvement in southern coalitions. More synergy with SCOs, such as the Right to be Heard, including lesson learning from GCE experience, and improved co-ordination within OI, are also important. Given Oxfam GB's (with OI) past commitment to the GCE, and its perceived strengths in policy issues and in campaigning, continued investment in the GCE is one of the recommendations of this evaluation.

#### **4.4 The MDG and related campaigns**

As noted on Oxfam GB's website, campaigning is seen within Oxfam GB and by partners as one of its major contributions to action on poverty and development, alongside its emergency response to disasters and long-term development work. It has been campaigning for change since its formation 60 years ago, and in the last few years has developed its contribution as a truly global campaigning force by: increasing the numbers of individuals who work with Oxfam GB to campaign; campaigning in alliance with other organisations and coalitions, to increase impact through combined effort; communicating with decision makers and the media re critical meetings/organisations e.g. G8, UN, IMF, EU; and ensuring campaigning is informed by the people worked with and issues faced in programme work around the world.

Oxfam GB's (with OI) campaigning support for the GCE has already been discussed. In 2003, it was decided that although support for the GCE would be maintained, campaign work would be broadened to all the MDGs, to increase the scale of mobilisation. Subsequently, campaigning links have also been forged with the UK Make Poverty History and the global GCAP movement, of which Oxfam GB (with OI) is a core member. All these coalitions/ movements have been particularly active

during 2005, putting pressure on northern and southern governments and international donors and agencies to ensure appropriate policies and sufficient funding to realise the MDGs.

Like the GCE, this broader campaign has had an impact on high-level policymaking and accountability and has encouraged southern civil society involvement and advocacy capacity. There has also been an impact on northern public awareness of key development issues, including trade justice and debt relief. This wider campaign has also helped to increase funding from northern governments and multilateral agencies for international development, including for education. As with the GCE, involvement in such campaigns inevitably generates dilemmas in relation to the ordering of priorities. It is also difficult to be definitive as to whether broad or more narrowly focused campaigns have most impact. Co-ordination is also complex given the focus on mass mobilisation, and the many and diverse members and perspectives in such broad coalitions. However, some informant sources for this evaluation suggest that although education has not been the main campaign focus, this wider campaign, with its successes in achieving more funding commitments, may have as much impact in the longer-term on developing countries as working through education-oriented campaigns such as the GCE.

This wider campaign, and the GCE, also illustrate the growing importance of the regional dimension of coalition and campaigning work, as one way of co-ordinating southern advocacy and campaigning. As discussed in Chapter 3, connecting international campaigning with country issues and capacity is another important agenda. It is now planned to develop a new campaign on basic social services ('Essential Services'), as part of shifting the campaign emphasis from securing more development funding to realising its effective use at country level. Both this new campaign, and the issues of campaign development and implementation raised above, will be discussed further in subsequent chapters.

## **C. IMPACT, CHANGE AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

### **5. IMPACT AND CHANGE**

This chapter will look at the impact of Oxfam GB's education programme, and at the effectiveness of Oxfam GB's model of change in relation to education, which are the focus of the first two objectives of the evaluation. The evaluation objectives on impact include quantitative and qualitative impact on access to education, particularly by girls and for poor people, and the degree and value of participation. Issues listed under the evaluation objective on the model of change include articulation between local, national, regional and international levels of work and influence, Oxfam's capacity to develop partnerships and specifically, the impact of its work on financing education. This chapter will summarise key issues from the case studies described in Chapters 3 and 4, with some additional reference to other Oxfam GB education programmes. Discussion of impact will reflect the three levels of the model of change (local, national and international), and consider impact on education provision, target groups and civil society participation as well as on beliefs, attitudes and policy development. Change factors and strategies will also be discussed. Both of the evaluation objectives will also be considered in relation to the current key themes of Oxfam GB's education programme, namely girls' education/gender-equitable education, the financing of education, the quality of education, and education for disadvantaged and marginalised groups.

However, as noted in Chapter 1 in relation to evaluation methodology, although it is usually possible to cite some evidence of impact, it is difficult, and sometimes inappropriate, to conclude precisely which are the main factors and causal relationships or to attribute impact to Oxfam GB's particular programme contributions. It is also difficult to be definitive in relation to the effectiveness of Oxfam GB's change model. However, some conclusions are drawn and suggestions made as to how both impact and change might be strengthened and enhanced.

#### **5.1 *Impact at local level***

Impact at local level is particularly concerned with direct change for target groups and services. It can normally be defined in terms of contributory outputs towards improvements in specific education services/provision, for example more schools and teacher training to facilitate girls' access to gender-equitable quality education. Such outputs then need to be considered in the light of quantitative measures of enrolment and qualitative indicators such as girls' perceptions of the impact of schooling on their confidence and aspirations. Impact on community participation and programme partners, which is most likely to be assessed qualitatively as it involves issues such as empowerment and capacity building, is also very important at local level. The impact of local (and national) advocacy and coalitions on policies, funding, governance or other aspects of the education system is also becoming increasingly significant at local level, particularly given increasing decentralisation in many countries.

In relation to specific education services and provision for target groups, the case studies indicate some positive impact on access to quality education, particularly for girls and for marginalised groups such as displaced and street children and the children of pastoralists. However, the evidence base in terms of enrolment and other quantitative data is sometimes patchy, and in terms of learning outcomes, is usually somewhat thin. This is due in part to insufficient programme baseline data. It is also

difficult to disaggregate the impact of particular programmes on quantitative measures, such as enrolment, from the impact of more general policy changes, such as the abolition of school fees. However, there is a range of qualitative information indicating positive impact on issues such as community attitudes to, and involvement in education, teaching and learning processes, and governments' approaches to provision for disadvantaged groups. Despite methodological, and data, constraints, it can be concluded that at local/programme level, the impact of Oxfam GB's contribution is both positive and visible in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

In relation to participation and partnerships, a number of issues and strategies are illustrated in the case studies. Oxfam GB has helped to encourage community participation in school enrolment mobilisations, the monitoring of school grants, school construction and school management in countries ranging from Mali to Vietnam. Most programmes are implemented through contractual and other delivery partnerships with local NGOs and CBOs. This both helps to achieve programme outputs and also develop such organisations' own capacity. Impact on government approaches has been developed through use of programme experience to demonstrate, amongst other issues, demand for education, more effective approaches to teaching, and the potential and value of community involvement. Several strategies are evident here. One strategy used in a number of programmes is bilateral dialogue with local officials in relation to specific projects, which is used to share field programme experience and lesson learning, and advocate adoption/adaptation in government provision. Another strategy is the development of training and information networks, as in Tanzania. A further strategy, which has been used in HECA in relation to education for pastoralists, involves wider meetings to bring different partners together for learning exchange. Most programmes also aim to advocate programme experience through local or national civil society coalitions, in order to developing government policies and scale up of successful programme approaches and innovations.

Local impact, participation and partnerships are strengths of Oxfam GB's education programme. However they will continue to need attention to ensure they are sustainable. For example, as the case study in Tanzania suggests, sustained work is required with some government partners to integrate innovatory approaches into their own programmes. Advocacy at local (and in turn at national) level could also be strengthened with better M&E/other programme documentation, including the cost-effectiveness of programme interventions. This is mentioned in some of the case studies and is also relevant to programmes in other countries.

Opportunities for direct change at local level are increasing as government functions are decentralised in many countries. Local coalitions and campaigns may therefore become more important, as mentioned in the Philippines case study. Other sub-national coalitions and campaigns, for example at state/provincial level, are important in large countries like India and Pakistan, and are being developed with the support of Oxfam GB. As national coalitions and campaigns are strengthened, their impact on, and interface with, advocacy and policy development at local/sub-national levels may also become more important. The national aspects of impact will therefore now be discussed.

## **5.2 Impact at national level**

Oxfam GB's work at local/field programme level generally comprises relatively small initiatives so that impact overall on target populations in a country is inevitably quite limited. Oxfam GB is therefore committed to developing impact at national level. There are several important aspects here. First, how does Oxfam GB share and

advocate specific programme experience for potential scaling up through wider adoption at national level? Second, how are more general education policy issues raised? Third, what strategies are used by Oxfam GB to develop partnerships and alliances at national level to increase impact? And finally, how do these interface with global coalitions and campaigning?

In relation to Oxfam GB's approach to advocating its own programme experience, there are some issues in common with advocacy at local level, such as the need for more monitoring and evaluation and programme documentation, including cost-effectiveness. This evaluation also suggests that some Oxfam GB staff can find it difficult to balance the efforts given to field programme development and local partnerships with the need for engagement at the national level. Others lack confidence or expertise in the right approaches. Practical considerations such as the location of staff and programmes, which in some instances may be far from the capital, can also affect impact, as can the attitude of ministries of education to the work of NGOs. Experience of effective programme advocacy, as in Kenya in relation to access to education for children in urban slums, could usefully be shared with Oxfam GB staff in other countries and regions.

It is not entirely clear from this evaluation how much attention and time is given to advocating approaches and lessons from field programme experience as opposed to promoting more general education policies, for example the issues raised in international policy debates and campaigns. The Brazil case study illustrates how Oxfam GB is involved in programme-specific advocacy and also in wider public policy campaigns related to provision in Brazil. It also highlights how global campaigns may need to be adapted for specific country contexts. It could be useful to detail the issues advocated at national level, from field programme or other sources.

This evaluation does however confirm that Oxfam GB staff are committed to building, and participating in, civil society coalitions. In all the country case studies, and many other programme examples, Oxfam GB staff are involved in such coalitions. This is sometimes done, as in plans for the education programme in Pakistan, through the additional support of CEF, which, as noted in Chapter 4, both encourages and funds civil society coalitions. In other countries where Oxfam GB works (but CEF does not), it has developed an important role in some national coalitions, such as in the Philippines and Brazil. Oxfam GB is also helping to build regional coalitions such as ANCEFA in Africa.

Oxfam GB's work within these coalitions reflects the main themes of the education programme, namely: girls' education/gender-equitable education; the financing of education; the quality of education; education for displaced and other children at risk, the children of pastoralists and other marginalised groups. In relation to girls' education/gender-equitable education, some programme experience, for example in West Africa, has still to be advocated successfully at national level due to the still fragile nature of some coalitions, organisational issues within the government, or other factors such as distance of the programme from the capital. However, given the focus on girls' education in a number of countries, and its importance as an international and national policy issue, it can be anticipated that advocacy will continue to develop.

In relation to other programme foci, the case studies in Brazil and the Philippines illustrate how a range of policy issues are being addressed on education finance. And in relation to quality, mentoring approaches to teacher training have been advocated in Tanzania and child-centred approaches to teaching and learning have been adopted by the government in Vietnam. All programmes also work with poor,

disadvantaged and marginalised groups. Programme work and experience in relation to pastoralists, once it has been more widely shared in West, as well as East, Africa, should have significant impact on what to now has been, for governments, a somewhat neglected -and complex- policy issue. The Philippines case study shows how governments, and communities, can be influenced to promote the continuity of education in conflict/post-conflict situations. And advocacy successes in Kenya with the government illustrate how access to education for urban as well as rural disadvantaged groups is an important element of the impact of Oxfam GB's programmes.

The sustainability of our programmes, when they come to an end, is an important aspect to consider when discussing the impact of programmes. This is essential at local programme level and requires good exit management but is also very important at national level in relation to potential national scaling up of programme approaches and learning from programme lessons. As all the case studies were of ongoing programmes, this was not addressed in these studies. However, the programmes in Cambodia (now closed) and Vietnam (continuing but not in current districts) in East Asia illustrate effective approaches to sustainability and thus continuing impact (see Box 6).

**Box 6: Enhancing sustainability and hand-over strategies in Asia (Vietnam and Cambodia)**

The Oxfam GB programme in **Vietnam** has been working in three of the poorest districts in the poorest provinces in Vietnam over the last decade – Sapa District in Lao Cai Province, Ky Anh District in Ha Tinh Province and Duyen Hai District in Tra Vinh Province. Working with the District Education Department as our partner the programme has improved access to good quality primary education for poor children in disadvantaged areas with a focus on ethnic minority children and girls. Over the years Oxfam has developed and refined an integrated approach to achieve this aim.

The early years of the programme had a strong focus on school construction and also worked closely with the school authorities to develop an active approach to teaching and learning. In the later phase of the programme (post 2001/2) the construction work was scaled back as the acute need for buildings was by then being met by the government. A closer partnering with the District and Provincial Education Department was developed to take forward the teaching and learning model and, in Lao Cai in particular, to begin to pilot work with the community and school.

Oxfam has been in the vanguard of the development of a new active approach to teaching and learning (Child Centred Methodology – CCM) to address issues of poor quality and dropout from primary school. After several years of trialling and strengthening it is now a respected and robust model with distinct and important qualities: it is school-based, its teachers are trained in the context in which they themselves will be using the methodology, and it provides ongoing professional development to support the teacher's own learning in this new way of working. The model has produced a cadre of *resource* teachers who train, coach and monitor other teachers, and a cadre of *model* teachers in school who support others to implement a CCM approach in their schools. Based on its success in improving the quality of children's learning the model of training and the new teaching methodology is now being scaled up by the Provincial government in two provinces of Lao Cai and Tra Vinh and the Ministry of Education and Training is now poised to adopt a similar model nationwide. It is anticipated that Oxfam GB will be able to withdraw from these provinces in the course of the next few years as the District, Provincial and National education authorities take complete ownership and ensure its sustainability.

The key factors that contributed to programme sustainability:

- Long-term cooperation with government at district, provincial and national levels.

- Gradual hand over of responsibilities to governments
- Training the trainers, and district and provincial officials in project management .
- Involvement of teachers in curriculum reform

In **Cambodia**, Oxfam has worked with several partners (RDA, KAPE, PNKA) focusing on supporting children who are at risk of dropping out of school or repeating grades. Both boys and girls drop out before completing lower secondary education often due to taking up local jobs in accordance with their parents preference. Girls from distant areas are even more vulnerable as their parents worry about safety. Thus providing dormitories or even bicycles for girls has helped them to continue their education. International funding has focused on provision of scholarships for both girls and boys that cover schooling related expenses. However, some of the poorest families had not benefited from scholarships, because of additional costs related to sending children to schools. Therefore, if all families are to take full advantage of such schemes, programmes that support communities to develop more sustainable livelihoods are clearly needed alongside the education initiatives.

The key factors that contributed to programme sustainability

- Working with partners to coordinate funding
- Provision of scholarships
- Involvement of parents
- Need to complement education with development of sustainable livelihoods

Work with communities, NGO partners and national coalitions is both a means to increase impact and also valuable *per se*, in terms of civil society involvement and more democratic policy processes. Impact has therefore to be considered in terms of both education services, and their users, and also empowerment and the right to be heard. The case studies from Brazil and the Philippines illustrate how established coalitions and campaigns can empower civil society organisations and have an impact on policy, not least through their monitoring functions. The building and maintenance of coalitions can be both slow and complex given the potential number and diversity of members and their different interests. Building a constructive relationship with government is yet a further dimension. However, as Raya and Castillo (2005) note in relation to the Philippines, this can be achieved if NGOs are willing to work together and they continuously track policy developments, cultivate effective and strategic contacts, engage government at all levels, have an advocacy plan, actively promote practical proposals in relation to civil society participation and maintain regular meetings and networks within the country and regionally/ internationally with both government and development agencies. Nevertheless, the country operational context remains significant, ranging from a relatively facilitative political environment in the Philippines, Brazil and Kenya, to more restricted spheres of NGO influence in Tanzania, to a more fragmented or under-developed NGO sector as, for example, in Pakistan and Mali respectively.

Finally, global partnerships and campaigns have had a range of impact at national level. Beyond Access has involved some individuals and organisations at southern country level, and may influence, in the longer term, the adoption of more gender-equitable approaches to education. CEF, working in close coordination with the GCE and its member organisations, is developing the impact of civil society monitoring on education finance policies and allocations, though the emergent nature of many coalitions means there is little evidence of such impact as yet. In relation to international campaigns, the GCE, the campaign which has the closest education-

focused links with southern countries, has had some impact on international commitments to realising the MDGs for education and providing sufficient finance and thus on education development at national level. However, iteration between international and regional/national campaigning still needs to be strengthened. In particular, case studies for this evaluation report some perceptions from southern countries and coalitions that international campaigns are not always articulated that well with country agenda, but rather are led from, and directed towards, northern policy influencing and constituencies.

### **5.3 International and regional impact**

In relation to global partnerships and campaigns, there are two key aspects to address, namely the impact of the partnerships and campaigns of which Oxfam has been a part, and the impact of Oxfam GB's contribution to such activities. Both of these aspects have already been discussed in some detail in Chapter 4 in relation to particular partnerships and campaigns. However there are some common issues which will now be summarised.

For example, Beyond Access illustrates the importance of Oxfam GB's contribution to international policy analysis, in this case on girls' and gender- equitable education. Some of Oxfam GB's contributions to CEF and the GCE also involve such analysis, particularly in relation to education financing. Such policy analysis is not designed to have an immediate impact on education outcomes for children and communities in the south. However, it can contribute to the development of effective strategies by governments, donor agencies and civil society to improve those outcomes. The test is therefore the extent to which such analysis influences policy and strategy, and is followed through at country level. It is difficult to attribute analytical impact, given Oxfam GB's policy contribution may be one of many and take up is dependent on a number of factors. However, this aspect of Oxfam GB's work is valued by partners and is important for both its own programmes and for wider impact.

A second strand of international impact is global partnership and coalition building, particularly in the south. It was suggested in Chapter 4 that Oxfam GB has made a significant contribution in the past to GCE coalition building but has not taken full advantage of the framework, and funding, offered for national coalition development through CEF. More recent contributions (with OI) to the GCE have been limited due to development of the wider MDG campaign while the impact of Oxfam GB's contribution to CEF has been limited by the geographical spread of its programmes and the uneven amount of staff time and other resources it has been able to give to CEF both in-country and in the UK. Partnerships and coalitions are seen by Oxfam GB as an effective means to scale up impact. They also reflect Oxfam GB's commitment to civil society involvement in education, and to the development of southern advocacy. At the same time, as noted above, they need planning, time and other support, which is even more the case at global level. Oxfam GB remains very well placed to contribute more to both CEF and the GCE, particularly in relation to education financing, and thus increase both the impact of its work in this area and the impact, through advocacy and dissemination, of its policy analysis and programme experience. Continued engagement with CEF and GCE is therefore recommended by this evaluation.

A further strand of international impact concerns campaigns. As discussed in Chapter 4, the GCE has had an impact, through international campaigns and southern advocacy and coalitions, on governments' and international agencies' commitments to education development. The broader campaigns and coalitions around the MDGs, poverty, aid, trade, debt and development, in which Oxfam GB has played an

important role, have raised both issues and awareness and had an impact on financial commitments by northern governments and multi-lateral agencies. However the impact of both these campaigns in the south has been constrained by southern coalition capacity and by lack of sufficient iteration between northern and southern members and campaign activities. It is difficult to be precise about impact, or the likely impact of various alternatives, in relation to campaigning. However, this evaluation acknowledges that in a year like 2005, with so many international policy agendas and meetings, wider campaigns may have as much impact longer-term on education as an education-oriented campaign like the GCE. However, to maintain impact on education specifically, it is important to keep it as one of the central and explicit themes of campaigning work. Maintaining impact in relation to specific policies for education also involves ensuring that the necessary focus on key policy asks does not preclude more detailed policy analysis at global levels coupled with and more nuanced and detailed approaches in dialogue with government and other partners at country level.

Finally, elements of this evaluation also suggest that regions are becoming an important pivot/linkage, both within Oxfam GB and externally. This reflects the growing international focus on country-level policy implementation and funding and on government/donor (and civil society) country partnerships, thus moving the locus of action and decision-making towards the south. Such shifts are further reinforced by growing emphasis in the GCE and other campaigns, including from Oxfam GB and other INGOs, on southern civil society advocacy/capacity, and on regional administrative structures for coalitions/campaigns. There are also some significant government/UN/other agency regional/sub-regional structures. Regions may therefore be a more important organisational means to coordinate and strengthening the linkages between south and north in future, particularly in relation to interfaces and co-ordination between national and international campaigns. It can therefore be suggested that regional functions in relation to education need to be maintained and that more investment may be needed to help build regional education coalitions. At the same time, regions remain diverse and there may be limitations as to common needs and policies which should be advocated. National coalitions should also remain the priority, particularly given limited programme/country resources. Regional coalition development might therefore be best done through OI, given the substantial regional and country presence of the four combined OI affiliates with the most significant education programmes, the resources which might then be available and the links to OI collaboration in relation to international campaigning.

#### **5.4 Change linkages, strategies and themes**

Impact therefore varies in relation to different issues and activities and at the global, regional, national and local levels at which Oxfam GB works. Impact is also difficult to attribute, particularly when the capacity of governments, communities, coalitions or other partners is still limited and contexts are operationally complex. There is however evidence of the need to develop Oxfam GB staff policy and advocacy capacity and to ensure a balance of work between programme implementation/management and wider advocacy and coalition activity. Coalition building in particular is slow/complex work, and commitment to this and to other partnerships and activities needs to be followed through with continued engagement and with recognition of the importance of both policy and human resource contributions. There also needs to be better iteration between national and international campaigning, including development of the regional interface. All these issues are linked to the effectiveness of Oxfam's model of change, particularly the assumption that inter-twined work at the local, national and global levels, and

combining a range of programme and campaigning approaches, are both mutually reinforcing and necessary to achieve lasting change.

A key question concerns articulation and effectiveness of these linkages in relation to education and how they support and strengthen both Oxfam GB's programme work and its involvement in partnerships, coalitions and campaigns. A related issue is particular change targets and strategies, for example working to change beliefs and attitudes in communities or the policies of governments. Another important dimension is the effectiveness of these linkages in relation to each focal theme of the education programme. Another area concerns the strategies used to foster the organisations at the pivots of such linkages, such as coalitions. Finally, there is the issue of internal and external knowledge development and management across different levels, and countries, including the role and value of Oxfam GB learning networks for education, particularly at regional level. These questions surrounding the change model are also linked to impact as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Oxfam GB's overall change model seems appropriate in principle, in that efforts are directed towards change processes, and their links, at international, regional, national and local levels. Global campaigns are the main strategy for policy and related change at international level and are mirrored by support of coalitions at national level, and partnership with local government and community involvement at local/field programme level. Regional work is less developed, and not always considered appropriate given the diversity of issues and countries in a region, but includes working with emerging regional coalitions such as ANCEFA in Africa, and regional learning networks. Overall, the education programme does reflect the change model in that it involves engagement at, and articulation between, a number of levels, through programmes, coalitions and campaigns, and with a focus on key policy issues and on civil society engagement with government. However, for a number of reasons, both articulation and effectiveness vary.

The clearest and most evident aspect of Oxfam GB's model of change in its education programme is the change strategies and approaches used at different levels. For example, the use of animatrices in Mali and Niger to work with the community shows how local women can both support and influence changes in beliefs and attitudes about schooling for girls. The international campaigns also use popular mobilisation, to put pressure on governments to change policies on funding education development. Such mobilisation is also used at national level, as in Brazil. Partnerships with local district officials tend to rely more on bilateral dialogue, or networks of professionals, supported, where appropriate, by community participation. Coalitions can be a means of mobilisation, a forum for advocacy and/or a network of support, knowledge exchange and capacity building. In the examples above and elsewhere, there is also evidence of a strong sense of what is appropriate and realisable in relation to achieving change at different levels, from sensitivity to the threats to traditional community values posed by female education, through to acknowledgement that public vigilance on national government spending on education is an achievement, up to using a political moment such as a G8 summit to press for focused policy asks but also for a real step change. It would however be a valuable learning exercise, and a contribution to staff capacity development, to exchange and explore these different strategies, and the contexts in which they are most likely to be successful in achieving change, as part of Oxfam GB's internal learning agenda.

In relation to Oxfam GB's main focal themes or areas of work in education, the linkages vary, as do their contributions to change. In focusing on education financing and access to gender-equitable quality basic education, Oxfam GB is reflecting key

international policy issues in relation to education, poverty and development. The education MDGs are concerned with ensuring universal primary education (UPE) by 2015 and gender parity by 2005 (which latter target will be missed but will continue as a gender goal, albeit over a longer timeframe). Financing universal primary education is the main focus of northern and southern government and donor agency financial commitments to education. And reaching more disadvantaged and marginalised children, alongside educating girls, is now central to the realisation of UPE. The potential to engender change through effective linkages is therefore substantial.

In relation to gender and education, Oxfam GB has contributed to moving thinking beyond access/parity of enrolment towards a broader gender-equitable approach. At international level, this has been done primarily through the Beyond Access partnership, including policy analysis, knowledge/research sharing, evaluation tools and a range of seminars and publications. Approaches to girls' education/gender equitable education have been taken up in the GCE campaigns and as part of DFID's Girls' Education Strategy. At same time, such an approach is being raised at local and national levels, through programme exemplars, work with communities, partnerships with government district officials and advocacy and campaigning through national coalitions.

In relation to education finance, most of Oxfam GB's efforts have been directed towards international campaigns and coalitions with the aim of securing more finance overall, rather than local programme work, though it has worked at local level with some communities on school budgets and at national level with some national coalitions/campaigns on government financing policies. It is therefore beginning to engage with civil society capacity building in this area, and has the potential to do much more, including through CEF.

Programmes on education for pastoralist children have been developed in a number of ways at local level, including developing positive community attitudes and experimentation with different models of delivery such as mobile schools. Dissemination and advocacy of programme experience at national, regional and international levels is still limited, partly because some programmes are new, partly because of limited local civil society capacity and networks, partly because such education has been neglected by some governments and international agencies and partly because education is not seen as a major component of the Oxfam GB Regional Pastoralist Programme. Other local programme work with disadvantaged and marginalised groups also engages with communities and local government officials but with a few exceptions has not been translated into successful national advocacy or a key international campaign issue. Work on quality has developed capacity for change at local level and there is some evidence of successful links to advocacy at national level. However, this evaluation has not found much evidence of well-linked advocacy through national coalitions or in international campaigns. Programme experience in relation to HIV/AIDS and education is new, except in Mozambique, so it would not be appropriate to look for national or international links at this stage.

### **5.5 Two important gaps**

Within these overall trends, there seem to be two important gaps. One concerns the interface between regional coalitions and international campaigns and the other, the regional and global learning dimensions of Oxfam GB's own programmes. Both are linked to building pivotal coalition organisations, and the shifting balance of change

linkages between local, national, regional and international levels, and between north and south.

Although Oxfam GB's model of change encompasses all levels of change, historically it has focused on international campaigning on education and the development of local, field programmes. The move to national level advocacy and coalition building both reflects a concern to scale up innovations and other programme lessons, and a recognition that although international campaigns can achieve global change in relation to international policies and finance, implementation of change has to take place at southern national and sub-national levels. This is acknowledged in the change model but Oxfam GB resources, like those of other INGOs or indeed, many bilateral and multi-lateral agencies, have only recently been put to effective use at this level in most countries. As suggested earlier, the regional dimension is also becoming more important, particularly as a locus for articulating links between international and national campaigns. To be effective therefore, the change model requires more investment at both national and regional levels.

This in turn links to learning networks. Although these were not identified at the start of the evaluation as being critical to the model of change, they have emerged as an important supportive component, including both regional programme experience exchange and regional and global reviews of work on, and lessons learned in relation to, education. Such learning also reflects the differences discussed earlier in relation to impact and linkages between focal themes. Since there is the greatest critical mass of programme work in relation to girls/gender and education within countries and across different Oxfam regions, there is more experience to learn from and contribute nationally and internationally, whereas such exchange is more patchy on other themes. Some areas of work lend themselves more to global learning. For example, gender and finance are relevant to all countries, whereas the education of pastoralists, or children displaced through conflict, is more relevant to specific countries (though countries emerging from conflict and fragile states are becoming more important in high level policy priorities). These may therefore need more regional learning, precisely where coalitions and other networking are least established and more difficult to build. The regional pivot in relation to knowledge development and management, within Oxfam GB and with partners, could therefore usefully be given more consideration.

Oxfam GB does stress the importance of learning in its model of change and the impact it has. Oxfam GB staff involved in education, with support from the Programme Resource Centre and Oxfam Publications, have made great efforts to share programme learning and develop policy analysis, including for wider dissemination. The value of well-resourced learning networks in engendering better policies and sharing knowledge is also illustrated by Beyond Access. Knowledge development and management is also an important element of staff capacity development. Its contribution to impact and change should not be overlooked and more investment in this aspect of the education programme is likely to be very cost-effective.

Finally, although not a focus of this evaluation, education programme experience and learning, and its impact and contribution to change, seems to have many synergies with other Oxfam SCOs. This will be considered as part of the following discussion on future directions.

## 6. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Oxfam GB has a number of comparative advantages and has contributed a range of added value through its education programme. Its impact is evident at local, national, regional and international levels of change. However, the ongoing development of corporate priorities, and inevitable limitations on the resources available for education programming, necessitate careful consideration of future directions. This section will consider the importance of selecting priority/focal themes, ongoing appraisal of Oxfam GB's particular added value and developing a more effective approach to some partnerships and alliances. It will also argue that these need to be complemented by sufficient critical mass of programming and staffing to take the work forward. It will also suggest that more consideration needs to be given to organisational learning, to other aspects of corporate planning and operational processes and to ways in which education can draw from, and contribute to, corporate synergy.

### 6.1 Focal themes

Oxfam GB's choice of core themes to date matches key international policy priorities. Its focus on education financing and access to gender equitable quality basic education for all reflects both the education-related MDGs and northern and southern government and donor agency prioritisation of universal primary education (UPE) with gender parity, and the related need for more finance. Its concern with disadvantaged and marginalised children also reflects the importance of these target groups in achieving UPE. Oxfam GB has a range of programme experience in relation to improving access to, and the quality of, education for girls, pastoralists, and displaced and other disadvantaged children. It is thus well placed to draw from grass-roots knowledge and experience for advocacy and campaigning on such policy issues.

Oxfam GB is committed to gender-equitable, quality basic education for all. However this is a broad agenda. A distinction can be made between the overall strategic objective and Oxfam GB's comparative advantage, and capacity to add value, on particular aspects of policy and practice. Cognisance also needs to be taken of current strengths and of synergy with other areas of Oxfam GB's (and OI's) work. From its programme experience, and other work such as Beyond Access, Oxfam GB is now particularly well placed to help reinforce moving the current international policy focus on gender parity towards a gender-equitable approach. This focus on gender also has synergy with, and could be seen as having much to contribute (for example, from work with communities on beliefs about girls' education) to the SCO on gender. In relation to education financing, experience of civil society involvement at local/country levels is being developed but is more mixed, and needs to be enhanced through more sharing of effective strategies and mechanisms such as CEF. This would then balance Oxfam GB's broader, and widely acknowledged, expertise on international education financing issues, including links to economic growth through fairer trade and debt relief.

In relation to other themes in Oxfam GB's education programme, the picture is more mixed. Comparative advantage/added value in its work on the quality of education is not that clear. Although there has been impact at local level, some important lessons have been learned, and the participatory approach used has considerable value as an illustration of effective processes, it does not seem to be the case that Oxfam GB's work is, or has the potential to be, distinctive. Many of the programme approaches which have been developed, such as child-centred pedagogy and mentor-based teacher training are still not widespread, but the need for such

approaches is acknowledged by many other organisations. It could be argued that Oxfam GB can continue to play a useful role in demonstrating the value of such approaches. However, given its limited resources, work on quality might be better contextualised in other priority areas, for example, the development of gender-sensitive curricula and teaching, or the best ways of delivering quality education for disadvantaged and marginalised groups, such as through mobile schools for the children of pastoralists.

Another pressing policy area is education during conflict/in post-conflict countries and in fragile states. There is programme experience in the Philippines, Sudan and more recently, DRC and Liberia, and a lot of potential synergy with emergency and humanitarian work. However any expansion of such work would require more programme investment and/or refocusing of current activities. Limits to the extent of programmes also continue to have an impact on work on educational opportunities for adults. Although this could be an extremely useful aspect of Oxfam GB's work, given its neglect by many policymakers and agencies, it is not clear how can this can be pursued with only a limited amount of programming, except in a more general way as part of the livelihoods programmes.

Oxfam GB is also committed to mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in its programmes. This is an important corporate priority. However it is unlikely that Oxfam GB would have the resources to develop a range of programme experience that can add value to the many existing initiatives and efforts to combat HIV/AIDS in relation to, and through, education systems. There may however be some niches, centred on Oxfam GB's experience of changing community beliefs and developing more community involvement in education. The development of such programming, particularly in Southern Africa, would reflect both the corporate priority given to HIV/AIDS and redress the potential problem of critical programme mass in Southern Africa following the running down of some programmes in this important region.

As noted many times during this evaluation, Oxfam GB's commitment to developing the role of communities in managing schools and other civil society participation in policy advocacy and monitoring is a central and distinctive aspect of the education programme. Such civil society involvement both complements and balances other policy and funding powers and relationships between southern countries and northern/international donor agencies. This focus in education is also synergetic with the focus in Oxfam GB more generally on the right to be heard. Internationally this is becoming more important, to both redress the dominance of northern countries and donor agencies in international debate and at country level, and to reiterate southern governments' accountability to citizens as paramount. It is also needed to develop southern government and other southern contributions to the international policy process, galvanise northern political demands and southern political processes in relation to key policy issues and resources, monitor action and generally improve accountability. At southern country level, it is also needed to improve government-civil society dialogue, monitor government policies, action and resource allocation, develop service delivery capacity and ensure community involvement at local level. Oxfam GB has substantial comparative advantage and added value to contribute to all the above, particularly in relation to education.

## **6.2 Education and the basic social services agenda**

The basic social services agenda being developed by Oxfam GB also represents an opportunity to develop this key comparative advantage. Designing governance reform and civil society participation around strengthening the capacity of public institutions and systems, albeit with some role for non-state delivery, would be a

welcome balance to both state controlled and neo-liberal approaches to public management, particularly given how the latter has dominated the thinking, and requirements, of major development agencies in recent years. As noted earlier, strengthening civil society advocacy and participation, and government accountability to citizens, would also balance the current power nexus between southern governments and major donor agencies. Emphasis on service delivery would also reflect the need in future to both scale up access and provision and make best use at country level of the increased international finance envelope. As recognised within Oxfam GB, securing finance is a means, not an end. Improving services requires southern government commitment and planning with particular attention to enhancing access and quality, different modes of delivery, developing system and human capacity and resources, strengthening governance and management and, where relevant, more cost-effectiveness. This also dovetails with Oxfam GB's current focus on programme innovation and on developing southern advocacy and capacity.

Looking at basic social services as a whole would also enable Oxfam GB to take a holistic approach and develop more synergy between SCOs. Within the organisation, it would locate education policy campaigning and field programmes within a key focus of Oxfam GB's future work. As a basic right, and (intended) universal service, education is both a central element, and a good exemplar, of service delivery, including access, outcomes, quality, governance and financing. Oxfam GB's policy and programme experience in extending access, and on gender aspects, community involvement and finance, brings several strengths to this new work.

However, the engagement with basic social services will raise some new programme priorities and management issues and may change some of the current partnership understandings with other civil society organisations and with government. Currently Oxfam GB, like other INGOs, works with governments through a service delivery role, an advocacy role and a capacity building role. In general Oxfam GB, like other INGOs, is shifting its emphasis from service delivery which it might then develop on a larger scale, to developing and promoting innovative exemplars for adoption and scaling up by government. Programme experience is also used to advocate on key issues, such as rights and civil society participation, and/or to share experience of effective approaches and solutions to critical policy issues, where possible in alliance with other partners through local networks or national coalitions. Capacity building is currently addressed mostly at field level, for example, through teacher and district official training, but at national level is more a by-product than major objective of advocacy work, except in relation to policy capacity.

This evaluation did not gather information from government partners across a range of programmes. However the evidence available suggests that in some instances governments still see INGOs (and their partner NGOs and NGOs in general) primarily as partners in service delivery, with some concurrent legitimacy to then undertake advocacy work and capacity building. At the same time, (I)NGO involvement in civil society coalitions both increases the strength of such advocacy and gives its further legitimacy through the relationship of civil society organisations to citizen rights and democratic accountability. There is however an ongoing tension between citizenship, service consumer/use and service provision, and particularly between advocacy and responsibility for delivery. Currently, Oxfam GB's education programmes operate quite well within these frameworks and tensions. The strength of local relationships, and the appreciation of local programme achievements, enables advocacy and capacity building to be conducted in a positive and effective way. Support for national coalitions is facilitative, and does not confuse the role of Oxfam GB with that of indigenous organisations and the citizen rights they represent. An increase in coalition capacity would be beneficial and is a legitimate focus of

Oxfam GB's role. However, major capacity building at national level would require more resources and a different relationship with government. It would also replicate the agenda of major international donor agencies which in many cases are already focused on wide-ranging service reform in conjunction with country governments.

The social services agenda is also more complex than any single sector and will require substantial staff capacity development. This will be needed to underpin the general agenda but might be better focused on staff strengths at the local level and on developing understanding (rather than the major experience required) of larger systems issues and different approaches to delivery and management, rather than capacity building. Local level delivery is becoming increasingly significant due to decentralisation and local work would complement and help to monitor the many national reforms now being instituted. There is however one area which Oxfam GB could develop. Its position will differ from some of the market-led approaches espoused by some major international agencies. It could take a more critical approach to such approaches, and in building on its comparative, and legitimate, advantage as a civil society organisation, do much, through stronger civil society involvement, to both balance and change some current approaches to services and the power and decision-making relationships between governments and international donors involved.

In addition, the basic social services agenda should not necessarily lead to less specific work on education. Service needs, and demands, at local community levels will still centre on particular institutions such as schools. As both service providers and agencies concerned to develop a more holistic approach have learned, technical knowledge of education will still be needed, in relation to education both as a specific service and as a touchstone and exemplar for evaluating social sector policy and performance more generally. Paradoxically perhaps, good multi-/cross-sector and inter-agency working requires technical confidence and experience to develop innovation, as long as such specialist knowledge is accompanied by a willingness to break down boundaries and think in new ways. The development of this agenda by Oxfam GB will therefore require both analysis of Oxfam GB's current technical expertise on education, and development of staff capacity to facilitate more holistic approaches.

### **6.3 Critical mass**

Oxfam has stated that one of its comparative advantages is its capacity to utilise its presence in over 70 countries to identify gaps between commitments, policies and practice and work simultaneously at international and community levels. However, it only has active education programmes in 18 countries, of which a number are small or newly developing programmes. Several others are being closed down. Although it is not necessary to have a presence in all countries in order to be effective, there would seem to be a need for sufficient critical programme mass to support the learning from, and legitimacy, of Oxfam GB's work in education. Even where the focus is on advocacy and coalition building, it could be suggested that some programme involvement both provides the innovatory learning required to say something particular/new, and also buys the seat round the coalition and government dialogue table at country level, and it could be argued, the international campaigning table as well. Programme work also supports the staffing required for broader advocacy and coalition work at country level, including capacity development from involvement in programme experience.

It is difficult to assess why Oxfam GB's programme is in danger of becoming both more patchy and less of a priority than previously. However, one reason may be that

its approach to education, including programme investment, reflects the history, and fairly patchy development, of its work in education. It started larger-scale and more strategic work on education by developing advocacy (Education Now) whereas for many other INGOs the process has been the other way round. Although Oxfam GB has therefore not had to undertake the learning about too much involvement in direct service delivery, and the sustainability issues arising from this, and recast its work accordingly towards supporting innovations, capacity building and advocacy and coalition work, it could be suggested that the lack of substantial long-term programme development, experience and staffing may be having some impact now on how important a priority education is in some countries/regions.

Decision-making about education programming is also decentralised almost entirely to regions/countries, which may have other understandable priorities. Given the short history of programme work, and the impact, currently, of Oxfam GB's international campaigning work, it may be felt that further investment in programming at country/regional level is not necessary to maintain Oxfam GB's presence regionally or globally in relation to education. The assumption that education work can possibly be scaled up without additional resources may be having some influence on plans for future investment in education programmes and staffing.

The number, and focus, of programmes, thus needs to be considered. There is also the issue of regional spread. Global distribution of programmes is important given there are major differences in countries' progress on education and on poverty reduction. Whatever the agreed future investment in education programming, attention should be given to whether there is sufficient programme critical mass in the regions which are recognised internationally as key to realising the MDGs, namely sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. This evaluation suggests that critical mass should comprise at least four regions, namely East and West Africa, and South and East Asia, within which there should be programmes in at least two to three countries and in each country there should ideally be a focus on more than one focal issue or target group to facilitate advocacy, coalition building and learning from a range of programme experience.

Critical mass can also be increased by making programmes more focused and effective. It has already been suggested that a focus on particular themes will strengthen the impact of Oxfam GB's work. Critical mass should then be directed towards support of the chosen focal themes. In addition, the focus on innovative exemplars, rather than major service delivery, will make best use of available resources through advocacy and scaling up. The programme on girls' education in West Africa and the work on education for pastoralists in HECA illustrate how focus, with a range of programme experience in different countries, can be brought together to have more impact in terms of learning and international dissemination as well as on individual target groups and countries. This more strategic and comprehensive approach to planning, including advocacy and coalition building, is beginning to be adopted (for example, there is evidence of similar cross-regional thinking and learning on girls' education in South Asia) and is recommended as the way forward in future.

#### **6.4 Key partnerships and alliances**

Whatever the focal themes selected, and the supporting programme critical mass, strategic partnerships and alliances etc are critical to expanding impact Oxfam GB has always recognised its work can be scaled up and have more impact through partnership with others. Some partnerships are working well, others less so. In general, partnerships are still strongest at local/project level with district governments

and local communities. These are beginning to be complemented with coalitions at national level and tied in, albeit somewhat tenuously, with international campaigning.

As well as a strategic and selective focus on policy and programme areas, Oxfam GB could take a more focused, and strategic, approach to partnerships. Oxfam GB (with OI) is an established core member of a number of country and regional coalitions and of the GCE and wider international campaigns. It has been suggested in this evaluation that national and regional coalitions are particularly critical and should be a priority in future. It has also been suggested that continued investment in policy analysis and campaign approaches is important to future success of the GCE, as is strengthening the interface between international and national/regional coalitions and campaigns. This does not imply major changes in the way which Oxfam GB currently works, rather the development of its added value contributions and the human resources to support them.

This evaluation has been conducted concurrently with that of OI as a whole. Oxfam GB should give careful consideration to the findings of the evaluation on education including future opportunities for more synergy and links. It could also give more strategic consideration to other partnerships and frameworks. The case for more involvement in CEF has already been identified. Oxfam GB could also look more broadly at its partnership with the other two UK INGOs involved in both CEF and other UK and international activities and consider how common aims, different programmes and other work could be more mutually planned and synergised.

### ***6.5 Knowledge development and management***

This evaluation has identified that Oxfam GB's education learning networks are (or have the potential to be) an important supportive element of its model of change, as they facilitate sharing of knowledge and experience in support of engagement on different policies in various partnerships and alliances from local to global levels. Analytic contributions, and sharing of experience, have already been positively noted in relation to gender and education and access for disadvantaged and marginalised groups. Such learning is also well supported by Oxfam's central learning resource centre. More learning could however be developed in relation to the financing of education, including the management of global funds as governments and donors move to sector and budget support for education, and the best ways of developing and utilising civil society capacity in relation to finance dialogue and monitoring at country levels. It would also be useful to develop more sharing on effective strategies to build coalitions and other civil society organisations. All this learning will however need more appropriate programme M&E and other programme documentation. However, investment in staff time, resource networks and regional and other learning meetings, and in dissemination through publications and other means, should be seen as cost-effective.

## D. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This strategic evaluation, as stipulated in the ToRs, analysed the impact of Oxfam GB's education programme at different levels, examined Oxfam GB's models of change, testing the assumption that combining work at different levels– on-the-ground, national and global – has a greater impact, and finally, proposed some future directions for Oxfam GB to carry forward.

This evaluation has provided a range of evidence in relation to positive impact on target groups, participation and partnership, and the impact of its coalition and campaigning work. It showed that Oxfam GB's change model is appropriate and particularly effective at local level. However linkages still need to be strengthened between local and national working, and further iteration developed between international campaigns and country issues and priorities.

Oxfam GB does have a range of good programme experience on which to draw and which can be developed in future. However it is a relatively small programme (although critical to Oxfam GB's future agenda on basic social services). To make the best use of resources there is a need for: more critical mass; a sharper focus; a more strategic approach to partnerships; and more corporate synergy and commitment to improve contribution, harness comparative advantage and scale up work/impact. Otherwise there is a danger that the range and value of Oxfam GB's contribution will diminish, its legitimacy in relation to involvement in education, particularly its campaign contributions, will be questioned by other stakeholders, and it will have less impact on improving education and thus, poverty reduction .

In this context, Oxfam GB shall prioritise development of key partnerships and alliances, including national coalitions, support for GCE and CEF plus work better within OI, and with other major INGOs to make best use of shared commitments, the range of programme experience and learning and human and other resources in each organisation, and Oxfam GB's particular added value and contribution.

This evaluation has not included a systematic review of all programmes. However it can be suggested that more attention should also be given to: the processes of corporate planning and decision-making, including iteration of regional and country decision-making with global priorities and plans; continued investment in strategic staff functions, particularly policy development, programme co-ordination, learning network support, and contributions to campaigns, at both regional and global levels; stronger monitoring and evaluation; staff capacity development.

As Oxfam GB is well aware, there are few quick wins in development, and although fast and effective responses are needed for key policy moments and events (such as G8 summits), the development and impact of field programmes and country coalitions can take a long time. This is particularly true of education which is almost exclusively dependent on people's knowledge, beliefs and skills, and human interaction, for its inputs, processes and outcomes. Long-term planning and impact evaluation are therefore required.

The key recommendations from this evaluation are:

Focus the education programme on gender, disadvantaged/marginalised groups, education finance and civil society participation, but also make education a central element of the basic social services agenda;

Review programme critical mass in relation to these foci, and the regional spread of programmes, to ensure a sufficient basis for effective advocacy, partnership/coalition membership and contributions to campaigns;

Develop more strategic and systematic programming within and across regions to reflect core foci, with integral M&E/documentation processes and learning networks and planned follow through to advocacy and campaigning;

Continue to invest staff time and other resources in strategic/proven civil society partnerships and alliances e.g. country/regional coalitions, CEF and GCE;

Give more consideration to how programmes/countries can contribute more to southern advocacy and campaigning capacity/activity and how these should iterate with international campaigns;

Give more consideration to co-ordination with other OI affiliates and to other critical partnerships, for example with UK INGOs such as Save the Children and Action Aid;

Maintain investment in strategic regional and global staff functions in order to enhance impact of country programmes, advocacy and campaigning;

Invest more in knowledge development and learning networks to enhance policy analysis, field programme work and advocacy and campaigning;

Identify more explicitly the synergies between education and other Oxfam strategic objectives;

Develop staff capacity in relation to advocacy, coalition building and campaigning;

Develop corporate planning and management processes to enhance Oxfam's added value, and its investment, in education, including a long-term plan for education.

**Annex 1: Evaluation TORs**  
**Strategic Evaluation of Oxfam GB's Education Programme**

**Terms of Reference**

**January – December 2005**

**Background**

Strategic evaluations provide an opportunity to assess the impact of a programme of work across regions and departments. They are one of the activities conducted within Oxfam GB's overall framework for monitoring, evaluation and learning<sup>1</sup>. Their purpose is to provide accountability to stakeholders and to incorporate lessons-learned into decision-making process about strategic areas of the programme, within regions, and across regions/departments. They are commissioned annually according to organisational priorities, and should provide learning, which is relevant to other programmes as well as the ones under review. Recent strategic evaluations were on food security (2000), Gender (2001/02) and conflict reduction (2003/04).

'Access to quality basic education, especially for girls' was stated as one of Oxfam GB's four corporate priorities in the 02/03 – 04/05 Strategic Plan. The fact that education was a corporate priority has been a determinant factor in the Senior Management Team's choice to conduct a strategic evaluation on education.

**Oxfam's education programme**

Oxfam GB has currently 44 education projects worldwide (which are part of 19 PIPs)<sup>2</sup> on gender equitable education and education financing as well as a global campaign. This campaign was formerly the 'OI Education Now' campaign, which has been subsumed within the new 'MDG campaign'. Oxfam International is an active board member of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE).

Oxfam GB started work on education in the mid 90's. In the late 90's, it decided to scale up education programme. This has never been accompanied by significant increases in financial terms: expenditures for education programmes remained relatively stable over the past five years. However, the assumption is that scaling up leads to bigger impact through more strategic programming.

In its education work, Oxfam is using a combination of on-the-ground work to promote direct change at local level, active engagement with governments in the South to create favourable conditions for policy change via planning processes<sup>3</sup>, and campaigning in the North to

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<sup>1</sup> Oxfam GB Framework for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning. Operational Guidelines. November 2002

<sup>2</sup> This is based on current OPAL information for projects recorded as 50% or more on education. More detailed analysis using OPAL information will be done as part of the evaluation.

<sup>3</sup> such as PRSP, sector reforms, and global funding mechanisms

mobilise extra donor resources for investment on equitable basic social services. Our assumption is that this combination of different levels of intervention – on-the-ground, national and global – is the best way to achieve our strategic change objective for education<sup>4</sup>. A key challenge of this evaluation is therefore to test out this assumption and examine whether it is an appropriate way to achieve a lasting impact on boys and girls' equal access to quality basic education.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the strategic evaluation is to provide evidence about the quality and impact of our education programme, to learn 'what works and what does not', to test our models of change, and to provide strategic guidance for programme management, policy development and overall programme direction.

In particular, the strategic evaluation will contribute to the development of Oxfam GB's Basic Social Services Strategic Framework, and will help countries and regions in making strategic choices about their education programmes.

## **Specific objectives**

1. To assess the impact of our education programmes at grass root, national and global levels on access to quality, gender equitable education.

### Some key questions:

- What are the particular impacts (qualitative and quantitative) of our education programmes in terms of access to quality education?
- What specific impacts a gender equality approach to education is making on girls' sustainable access to quality education and on other gender-related aspects?
- What is the degree of participation of the 'beneficiaries' of the programme and of stakeholders involved in the programme? What are the particular benefits of participatory approaches for the performance and impact of our education programme?
- Is there evidence that policy and practice changes have translated into improvements in access and quality of education for poor people?

2. To examine our 'models of change' (e.g. our set of assumptions, explicit or implicit about how changes happen) and test these models against what is actually happening.

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<sup>4</sup> Strategic Change Objective for education: 'All children living in poverty will achieve their right to a good-quality basic education, and adults will have access to sufficient educational opportunities to help overcome their poverty'.

Some key questions:

- An underlying assumption in Oxfam's work is that inter-twined work at the grass-root, national and global levels and combining a range of programme and campaigning approaches are mutually reinforcing and necessary to achieve lasting change. In the case of education programme, how are these linkages articulated in reality and how do they reinforce the impact of our work?
- 'Financing education' (in terms of more and better quality aid and debt relief, as well as better allocation and management of resources by national and local governments) is a particular focus in a number of Oxfam education programmes. How does improvements in financing contribute to better service delivery and ultimately school age children's equal access to quality basic education?
- Most of the changes are achieved through work with partners and ultimately Oxfam aims to build organisations' capacity of sustaining change. What is our capacity to develop partnerships and work with partners and how does this contribute to reaching our programme objectives?
- What general lessons can be learnt about how change happens, and what implications this has for our future strategy?

3. To provide strategic guidance as to where Oxfam GB should develop its policy and practice in education programmes, considering our areas of expertise and the changing external environment.

Some key questions:

- What should be the balance between our core work around 'financing education' and 'quality gender equitable education', and new areas such as education in conflict/post-conflict situation, education in pastoralist zones, or education for adults?
- What is our current experience and knowledge in relation to mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in education programming?
- Do we get the right balance between work at grass root level (through direct implementation or work with partners), advocacy and campaigns?
- Given the changing environment in which we work, and where Oxfam has greatest potential to make a difference, what should be the key focus of our education work in the coming years?
- Is the assumption that scaling up education programme without necessarily increasing resources as stated in the introduction supported by evidence, and if not, what changes in our programme (allocation of resources, structure...) would be required?

**Process and methods**

The strategic evaluation will draw on (a) a large range of existing or planned materials such as project/programme reports, assessments and evaluations, (b) on interview with key staff and stakeholders, and (c) on commissioned work. Whenever possible, it will rely on existing or planned work in order to minimise the time required from programme staff and the need for extra input.

The strategic evaluation will consist of a combination of external and internal assessments in order to provide solid external analysis as well as a well-informed insight from the staff involved in education programme. The strategic evaluation should be a learning process around specific issues yet to be defined for staff and partners engaged in education programmes.

The strategic evaluation will be a contribution to OI evaluation of its Strategic Plan, which will have a strong focus on education. It will therefore be closely co-ordinated with the OI Learning and Accountability group (leading the evaluation of OI strategic plan) and with some OI affiliates.

A combination of methods will be used, such as:

- Synthesis of findings and conclusions from previous reviews and reports;
- Desk based review of grey literature (external and internal to Oxfam);
- Programme impact reports (as part of the PIR process);
- Programme reviews by external consultant(s) and staff from other programmes;
- Cross-programme visits/peer-review;
- On-going review/assessments carried out by OGB's partners
- Small workshops with staff, partners, and other agencies to review case studies

A detailed plan of action (including a budget) will be developed on the basis of these ToRs. The combination of methods to be used, depending partly on the on-going and planned activities in the regions and on 'getting the right balance' will be further specified.

### **Management of the review**

Sponsor	Jasmine Whitbread – International Director  Role: provide steer and guidance to the strategic evaluation.
Evaluation Manager	Charles-Antoine Hofmann – Senior Adviser Planning, Evaluation and Accountability  Role: responsible for the management and timeliness of the overall process and ensure relevance of the content of the strategic evaluation
Technical Support	Sheila Aikman – Policy Adviser Education and external consultant  Role: provide technical support on education in development and on evaluation methodologies.
Advisory Group	Regional Leads from 6 regions, campaign leads (including OI campaign), and external stakeholders (from OI, DfID, Trustees, educationalists, partners...)  Role: provide guidance and ensure relevance with developments in the education sector.

### **Timeframe**

End December 2004:	Draft ToRs
Mid-January 2005:	Selection of evaluations that will contribute to both the PIR and the Strategic review Plan of action drafted ToRs agreed by Advisory Group and Sponsor
End January 2005:	Plan of action agreed by Sponsor and shared with Advisory Group
Feb-Nov 2005:	Implementation phase. Monitor implementation of plan of action
November 2005:	Education strategic review completed
December 2005:	Final report published and disseminated

### **Output**

A synthesis report will be produced at the end of the strategic evaluation, with a set of recommendations pointing at strategic directions for Oxfam GB's education programme. An Executive Summary will highlight the key findings and recommendations of the strategic evaluation.

### **Further information**

Please contact Charles-Antoine Hofmann ([cahofmann@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:cahofmann@oxfam.org.uk) Tel +44 1865 312 274)

## ***Annex 2: List of people consulted***

### Oxfam

Barbara Stocking	Executive Director
Caroline Nursey	International Director (Interim)
Becky Buell	Head of Programme Policy Team
Audrey Bronstein	Acting Deputy International Director
Sheila Aikman	Global Education Advisor
Othman Mahmoud	Programme Development Manager – Social Policy and Governance
Owain James	Education Campaign Manager
Amy North	Policy Adviser, Beyond Access Project
Kate Geary	Programme Resource Officer – Education
Francisco Roque	Regional Director, South America
Harold Brown	Regional Programme Manager, South America
Tim Wainwright	Regional Programme Manager, East Asia
Paul Smith Lomas	Regional Director, HECA
Lan Mercado	Education Lead, East Asia and CPM Philippines
Janice Dolan	Regional Education Policy Coordinator, HECA
Heather Johnston	Regional Education Programme Manager, West Africa

### Partners

Chike Anyanwu	Coordinator or Secretariat in London, CEF
David Archer	Head of International Education, Action Aid
Rashida K. Choudhury	Director, CAMPE (Campaign for Popular Education), Bangladesh
Lucia Fry	Acting Global Coordinator, GCE
Sally Gear	Gender and Education Adviser, DFID
Anne Jellema	Coordinator, GCE
Andiwo Obondoh	Representative for East and Central Africa, ANCEFA (Africa Network Campaign on Education for All)
Elaine Unterhalter	London University Institute of Education
Katy Webley	Head of Education and Policy, Save the Children

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**Annex 4: Table of Oxfam GB's country/regional education programmes**

All programmes have a main focus on gender equality (and girls' education) and the financing of education (which includes a range of strategies including civil society participation at community, school and national levels, coalition and education campaigning).

REGION	Education programme	Focus	Regional support	OGB Engagement with the CEF	Change since 2001
HECA	Kenya Ethiopia Tanzania Sudan DRC	Pastoralist communities Quality and teacher development School Management Committee support and training IDPs Urban poor Post-conflict education	Regional Education Adviser post terminated Dec. 05	Kenya Tanzania	
WEST AFRICA	Mali Niger Ghana Burkina Faso Liberia  This is an integrated regional programme	Pastoralists and marginalised rural peoples IDPs and peoples living in post conflict, PTAs and school management	Regional Education Manager,  Regional Education Coordinator	Ghana <i>Nigeria</i> <i>Sierra Leone</i>	
S. AFRICA	Mozambique	School Management Committee support and training, HIV/AIDS in education		Mozambique <i>Malawi</i> <i>Zambia*</i>	Malawi Zambia Programmes ended/ closed down
EAST ASIA	Vietnam Philippines	Teaching and learning quality Marginalized ethnic minorities IDPs PTAs			Cambodia/ Indonesia programmes ended/ closed down. Timor Leste closing in Dec 05
SOUTH ASIA	India Pakistan Bangladesh Afghanistan	Dalit, indigenous and marginalized groups	Regional post on quality (with education) ending Dec 05	India Pakistan Bangladesh	
SOUTH AMERICA	Brazil	School bursaries; education campaign			

\* OGB is the Lead Agency for the CEF in Zambia