



# Evaluation of Oxfam's advocacy work for June 2007 G8 Meeting

Full Report

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1. Cambridge Policy Consultants were commissioned by Oxfam Great Britain to undertake an impact assessment of Oxfam's advocacy work in the run-up and during the June 2007 meeting of the G8 in Heiligendamm, Germany. Oxfam's strategic objectives for this meeting were to ensure that:
  - G8 leaders were held accountable for their aid promises;
  - African voices were heard;
  - There was demonstrable public concern; and,
  - A G8 initiative on strengthening health systems was established.

This report presents the findings of the impact assessment.

2. Chapter 1 (Introduction) gives a brief overview of the research methodology and discusses some of the methodological challenges of the assignment. The assignment mainly built on telephone interviews with policy-makers (16 interviews) and journalists (15 interviews) involved in the G8 process. Assessing impacts, in particular the impacts of advocacy work on decision-making processes, is difficult. This evaluation offers the personal perceptions of 16 policy-makers about the impact of Oxfam's advocacy work on the G8 decision-making process. These perceptions can largely be considered as *informed* opinions of people on the inside of the G8 process, but it is important to remember throughout that they remain perceptions rather than factual information. The journalist interviews are less problematic in that discussions focused on the impact of Oxfam's press work on the journalists themselves; the main challenge for the journalist interviews was the fact that individuals often did not remember much detail about Oxfam's inputs or even their own G8 coverage.
3. Chapter 2 (Impact on selected G8 policy outcomes) discusses the impact of Oxfam's advocacy work on a limited number of specific policy outcomes of the G8 process, in particular the question whether or not Oxfam contributed to placing Africa on the agenda of the G8, to the German Government's €750 million ODA (official development assistance) top-up and to setting the direction in the G8 health systems debate. The main conclusions appear to be as follows:

- Oxfam was generally seen as not having been decisive in placing Africa on the agenda of the G8 but was recognised as having been one of a number of different influences on the agenda-setting process, on the one hand through the 2005 Gleneagles campaign and on the other hand by ‘influencing the influencers’ and by creating opportunities for others to put pressure on the German Chancellor (for example, enabling Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu to write to the German Chancellor).
  - The general impression was that civil society pressure and press coverage (in particular the constant references to keeping the Gleneagles promises in the media) in the run-up to the G8 contributed to creating a general atmosphere which allowed the German Development Ministry to capitalise on existing plans for ODA increases. Oxfam was seen as an element in the overall civil society pressure;
  - Oxfam’s main contribution in the health systems debate appears to have been that they put this debate higher on the political agenda and acted as a counterweight against the lack of interest from the G8 sherpas on the issue. Their influence on the actual direction of the health systems debate appears to have been smaller; they were however described as “*part of a group of avant-garde thinkers*” on the issue. Oxfam’s paper on health systems was considered to have been “*state of the art*”.
4. Chapter 3 (Impact on G8 press coverage) discusses the impact of Oxfam’s advocacy work on the media. Oxfam appears to have succeeded in generating a significant amount of press coverage: a rough but probably conservative estimate puts the number of examples of press coverage with direct reference to or involvement of Oxfam at 1,000 in the months before and during the G8 summit. This included wide coverage in the German and international media of the 4 ‘big head’ stunts which showed the G8 leaders in Pinocchio outfits, sunbathing on the beach, dressed as health workers and ‘gambling’ on the future of Africa. Journalists tended to stress that they do not need civil society to realise that G8 leaders are trying to put a spin on outcomes and were mainly interested in “*hard facts and good quotes*” – two areas where Oxfam was seen to score well. Journalists were generally very positive about Oxfam’s press work, in particular the speed and coherence of press releases and, importantly, the nuance of Oxfam’s messaging. They stressed the importance of a personalised and targeted offer and suggested that there was some scope for more proactive press work in the months prior to and following the summit. The area where Oxfam appears to have had the biggest impact on the G8 press coverage seems to have been Oxfam’s “*number crunching*”: Oxfam’s analysis of aid figures prior to the summit and of the \$60 billion ODA figure in the final Africa communiqué.

5. Chapter 4 (Impact on German public opinion) looks at the impact of Oxfam's G8 popular mobilisation activities on the German public's views on the one hand about Oxfam and on the other hand about development issues. In terms of people's views about Oxfam, there is an indication that Oxfam Germany's brand recognition may have gone up from 2.9% to at least 16%; Oxfam Germany's supporters base increased with 10% and this new supporters' base appears to be fairly solid (with more than 90% individuals indicating that they would possibly sign an Oxfam petition) and to include a significant number of individuals (41%) who had not heard about Oxfam prior to 2007. Most new supporters signed up during the White Band activities in Oxfam World Shops and through the Oxfam G8 website. The Internet was how most new supporters first learnt about Oxfam (in most cases through other sites than the Oxfam homepage); few new supporters first learnt about Oxfam through the press. However, this 10% increase is significantly lower than Oxfam's objective of a five-fold increase of the Oxfam Germany supporters' base. There does not appear to have been any shift in German public opinion about the importance of poverty in developing countries, but Oxfam's G8 advocacy work does appear to have influenced people's views about the G8 itself: almost half of respondents to a Germany-wide opinion poll commented that the *Deine Stimme gegen Armut* campaign<sup>1</sup> had influenced their views about the G8; 16% of all respondents to this poll explicitly credited Oxfam Germany with having influenced their views about the G8. Among Oxfam supporters, the main impact of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work appears to have been to strengthen or confirm individuals' existing views about the importance of development issues. The vast majority of Oxfam Germany's supporter base agrees with Oxfam's analysis of the G8 outcomes: 78% completely or rather agreed with the statement that G8 leaders had failed to deliver on their promise. Among existing Oxfam supporters, awareness of the *Deine Stimme* campaign appears to be high (more than 75%, *based on a small sample size*), but given the nature of the target group (Oxfam supporters) the fact that one in five of respondents had not heard about the campaign is perhaps surprising – although not everyone is necessarily coming to Oxfam from a campaigning perspective. The fact that 80% (*based on a small sample size*) of respondents did not participate in the *Deine Stimme*

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<sup>1</sup> *Deine Stimme gegen Armut*, translated as *Your Voice against Poverty*, is the German version of the *Global Call for Action against Poverty (GCAP)* and the equivalent of *Make Poverty History* in the UK in 2005.

campaign suggests that there might be an untapped potential for use in future campaigns.

6. Chapter 5 (Cost-benefit analysis) attempts to compare the human resource and other financial costs of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work with the outcomes and impacts of Oxfam's G8 activities. A rough estimate puts the total cost of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work at £300,000, including a human resource input of just over 2,000 days. Calculations suggest that Oxfam's contribution to intermediary G8 outputs can be costed at just over 15p for each 'voice' against poverty, £75 for each article referring to Oxfam and £2,000 for a series of direct contacts with one policy-maker. About 55% of the total budget can be allocated to Oxfam's popular mobilisation activities compared to around 20% to Oxfam's G8 policy work and 25% to Oxfam's G8 press work. The question on the relative importance of direct policy contacts, public opinion and media work on influencing the G8 outcomes is a very difficult one to call. Unsurprisingly, there appears to be little doubt about the importance of media work. Policy work may be slightly more complex because few if any policy-makers admitted to having been influenced personally in the context of the G8, but on balance its value seems confirmed in the stakeholder interviews and through the case study on the health systems debate (which did not involve any media work or popular mobilisation activities). The most difficult to call is the role of popular mobilisation in the context of the G8. It is clear that the popular mobilisation activities led to impressive intermediary outcomes including for example 42,000 individuals signing the open letter to the G8 Finance ministers online and about 550 individuals per day accessing G8 material on the Oxfam Great Britain website (between 31<sup>st</sup> of May and 6<sup>th</sup> of June). It is harder to assess to what extent these intermediary outcomes translated into actual impacts on the G8 policy process: interviews seem to suggest that popular mobilisation can play a crucial role in influencing outcomes if a certain critical mass can be achieved, as was the case in 2005, but that this critical mass may not have been achieved in 2007. Oxfam's popular mobilisation activities did, however, contribute to Oxfam's strategic objective of ensuring demonstrable public concern and in particular to a 10% increase in the Oxfam Germany's supporters' base – this increase is significantly lower than the five-fold increase Oxfam was aiming for, but can be considered as a long-term investment. A stronger focus on strategic planning may have significantly increased the cost-effectiveness of popular mobilisation activities: had the

expected five-fold increase in the supporters' base been achieved, each additional supporter would have costed Oxfam only £4 (compared to £165 now). Just less than one third of the total budget was spent during the actual G8 summit; two thirds were spent during the preceding months. The main outcome of Oxfam's G8 presence appears to be that Oxfam managed to counter the G8 leaders' claim that they were keeping their ODA promises, which arguably represents roughly a third of Oxfam's impact on the G8 process. However, one can wonder whether a smaller delegation would not have achieved the same results. It is difficult to undertake a cost-effectiveness analysis of specific activities, but the March 2007 TNS opinion poll appears to score high in terms of cost-benefit analysis. Finally, it is possible to calculate a 'bottom line' for Oxfam's G8 advocacy work on the basis of the German Government's decision to increase its ODA with €750 million. Oxfam's total G8 investment of £300,000 (or €450,000) represents 0.06% of this German ODA increase. For Oxfam to break even, one needs to assume that Oxfam had at least 0.06% influence over the German Government's decision to increase its ODA. This is a reasonable assumption given that stakeholder interviews suggest that the constant references in the media to keeping the Gleneagles promises in the run-up to the G8 (which can at least partially be attributed to Oxfam) contributed to creating the general atmosphere which allowed the ODA increase to take place. This suggests that Oxfam's G8 investment presents value for money.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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1.1. Cambridge Policy Consultants were commissioned by Oxfam Great Britain to undertake an impact assessment of Oxfam's advocacy work in the run-up and during the June 2007 meeting of the G8 in Heiligendamm, Germany. The overall aim of the assignment was to assess the impact of Oxfam's G8 activities on policy-makers, journalists and public opinion in order to enable Oxfam to learn lessons for the 2008 G8 meeting in Japan.

1.2. Oxfam International's strategic objectives for the 2007 G8 summit were to ensure that:

- G8 leaders would be held accountable for their aid promises – in particular, Oxfam was aiming for a public recognition and admission by the G8 leaders that they were not on track to meet their aid promises and a concomitant commitment to increase aid budgets faster;
- There would be demonstrable public concern – in particular, Oxfam was aiming for a big campaign on poverty by the Global Call for Action against Poverty (GCAP) in Germany of around 30% of the size of the 2005 Make Poverty History campaign in the UK, a substantial increase of the brand recognition of Oxfam Germany and an increase of Oxfam Germany's supporter base to 50,000 people (from a base of 10,000);
- African voices would be clearly heard with Japan saying that they too would put Africa and poverty on the agenda for the G8 summit in 2008;
- The G8 would establish an initiative to strengthen health systems with agreement to support the development of country health system plans including strategies for recruiting health workers and an undertaking to resource these plans with aid.

1.3. The research methodology consisted of:

- Desk research – a review of internal Oxfam strategy and evaluation material, Oxfam publications and research previously commissioned by Oxfam (a number of German opinion polls);
- A start-up meeting with Oxfam Great Britain and Oxfam Germany staff;
- Telephone interviews with Oxfam Great Britain, Oxfam Germany, Oxfam France and Oxfam Japan staff (5 interviews)



- Interviews with policy-makers (16 interviews, including 15 telephone and 1 face-to-face interview) – interviews took place with 6 British, 5 German, 3 Japanese, 1 French and 1 EU policy-maker.
- Telephone interviews with journalists (15 interviews including 8 British, 6 Germany and 1 French journalist);
- Telephone interviews with staff from other civil society organisations (5 interviews); and,
- An email survey of German Oxfam ‘supporters’ – two separate surveys were developed: one for individuals who had subscribed to the electronic Oxfam newsletter prior to 2007 (existing Oxfam ‘supporters’) and one for individuals who subscribed to the newsletter in the run-up to the 2007 G8 (new Oxfam ‘supporters’).

1.4. It is important to clarify from the start that assessing impacts, in particular the impacts of advocacy work on decision-making processes, is difficult. It has obviously been possible to ask the different individuals who participated in this evaluation about their contacts with Oxfam staff or awareness of Oxfam materials and to discuss with them the impact of the different Oxfam advocacy efforts on their *personal* views and actions. However, there are a number of limits to what can be achieved by undertaking an impact assessment on the basis of individuals’ perceptions of change:

- G8 discussions and decision-making take place at the highest (political) level and the evaluation did not allow for direct access to the actual decision-makers (G8 sherpas and politicians) to assess what had influenced their views and positions;
- Although most if not all respondents believed Oxfam could be credited with having impacted on the G8 process in one form or other, the vast majority of respondents commented that Oxfam had not influenced their *personal* views in the context of the G8. This was partially because many individuals already shared Oxfam’s analysis and views on the importance of development issues prior to the G8 process: this tended to be the case for many officials in Development Ministries, but was not limited to this group. To a large extent, it is also the nature of the G8 discussions that prevented direct influencing taking place: the G8 discussions are political rather than technical and revolve around issues that have been around in the global political arena for a long time – officials and political advisors are well aware of the different dimensions of these issues and the perspectives of different groups (including civil society perspectives) and are likely to have fairly well-established and thought-through views on the items on the G8 agenda. There are undoubtedly technical aspects to the different issues on the G8 agenda (including climate change, health systems and the ODA discussions) but the detail of these technical aspects is not what sits at the core of G8 negotiations.

- Many respondents commented on the difficulty of attribution, referring to the wide range of factors influencing G8 decision-making, including politicians' personal views, Government peer pressure, press coverage, public opinion and civil society pressure, and to the difficulty of identifying the role of Oxfam in this complex maze of factors, either directly or indirectly, by 'influencing the influencers'.

1.5. To a very large extent then, this evaluation offers the personal perceptions of 16 policy-makers (Government officials rather than political advisors, with one or two exceptions) about the impact of Oxfam's advocacy work on the G8 decision-making process rather than clear examples of direct influences on individuals. To structure the discussions with policy-makers on impacts, the interviews were focused around a limited number of particular case studies each (partially) linked to one of Oxfam's four strategic G8 objectives – respondents were asked whether or not they believed Oxfam's G8 advocacy work had contributed to:

- Placing Africa on the agenda of the G8 – linked to Oxfam's strategic objective of ensuring that African voices were clearly heard;
- The German Government's decision to top up its ODA by €750 million – linked to the strategic objective of ensuring accountability for aid promises;
- Setting the direction in the debate on health systems – linked to the objective of encouraging the establishment of a G8 initiative for strengthening health systems; and,
- Revitalising the debate on development issues in Germany – linked to the objective of ensuring demonstrable public concern. This last case study was also discussed with a limited number of German journalists.

The perceptions of respondents can largely be considered as *informed* opinions of people on the inside of the G8 process; however, it is important to remember throughout that they remain perceptions rather than factual information.

1.6. An additional complication is that relatively few contact details were available for policy-makers, meaning that particular care was needed during the reporting stage to safeguard the confidentiality of individuals' contributions. For example, whereas Oxfam may have benefited from learning about the impact of its advocacy work specifically on the German Finance Ministry, the fact that contact details were available for only one individual in this Ministry meant that it was not possible to specify the

German Finance Ministry's perspective. Similarly, contact details were available for only one individual in HM Treasury, in the German and British Foreign Affairs Ministries and in the European Commission.

- 1.7. The situation is less complicated in terms of assessing the impacts of Oxfam's advocacy work on journalists: the discussions of journalists were very short (often no more than 5 or 10 minutes) but focused directly on the question whether or not Oxfam inputs had influenced journalists' coverage of the G8 summit. The main challenge for the evaluation was that many journalists found it difficult to remember details of Oxfam input or their own articles about the G8. The discussions with 15 journalists gave a flavour of the broad impact of Oxfam's press work rather than detailed information about which press releases or documents were most effective in generating coverage.
  
- 1.8. Oxfam's G8 advocacy work involves close co-operation between Oxfam International, Oxfam Great Britain and other national Oxfam affiliates based in the other G8 countries, as well as partnership with other civil society organisations. Discussions with these partners and in particular Oxfam staff have meant that the evaluation has inevitably come across process issues about communication, co-operation and partnership working. An evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of Oxfam's co-operation and communication procedures and processes is, however, not included within the scope of this impact assessment. This assessment focuses on the outcomes of the advocacy work rather than the process of the advocacy work itself.
  
- 1.9. This report presents the finding of the impact assessment. The next chapter discusses the case studies used to structure the interviews with policy-makers and thus looks at the impacts of Oxfam's advocacy work on a limited number of specific outcomes; this chapter builds mainly on the telephone interviews with policy-makers. Chapters three and four look in more detail at the impacts of Oxfam's advocacy work on specific target groups of the advocacy work, in particular journalists and public opinion. In chapter five a cost-benefit analysis of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work is undertaken.

## 2. IMPACT ON SELECTED G8 POLICY OUTCOMES

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### 2.1. Introduction

2.1.1. To structure the interviews with policy-makers and other respondents, discussions focused on a limited number of particular case studies – respondents were asked whether or not they believed Oxfam’s G8 advocacy work had contributed to:

- Placing Africa on the agenda of the G8;
- The German Government’s decision to top up its ODA by €750 million;
- Setting the direction in the debate on health systems; and,
- Revitalising the debate on development issues in Germany.

2.1.2. Not all case studies were discussed with all respondents, as some issues were less directly relevant and time pressures dictated that the interviews were clearly focused and targeted. Most evidence could be gathered in relation to the first case study (on the inclusion of Africa on the agenda of the G8). The number of stakeholders who felt in a position to comment on the second and third case study (the German Government’s ODA top-up and the health systems debate) was significantly smaller and to some extent the most valuable insights came from officials in the Development and Finance Ministries directly involved in these discussions; the two political advisors interviewed also offered useful perspectives. Finally, most non-German stakeholders felt less able to comment on the last case study (on revitalising German public opinion).

2.1.3. The case study approach was systematically used in the interviews with the policy-makers and other civil society organisations. The very short duration of the telephone interviews with the journalists meant that there was rarely time for a wider discussion on impacts. However, in a limited number of cases, it was possible to ask journalists about their views on Oxfam’s impact on revitalising the debate on development in Germany.

2.1.4. Unsurprisingly, respondents often commented that they found it difficult to answer the case study impact questions, referring to the political and high level nature of the G8 decision-making processes. Respondents also varied widely in their views on the case studies with some individuals convinced that Oxfam had played ‘a’ role and other erring on the side of not attributing changes to Oxfam’s activities. In most cases however, a degree of consensus appeared to emerge from the interviews as to what were the different factors influencing a particular decision and as to how the influencing process had operated. This means that although no final decision can be made as to the exact nature and extent of Oxfam’s impact, it is possible to clearly set out:

- The decision-making context in which Oxfam’s advocacy work operated;
- The scope for Oxfam to influence key stakeholders; and,
- The different ways in which Oxfam’s may have contributed to change.

2.1.5. This chapter presents the findings of the first three case studies; the findings from the final case study (on revitalising the debate on development issues in Germany) have been inputted in chapter 4, which will focus on the impact of Oxfam’s advocacy work on wider public opinion.

## **2.2. Putting Africa on the G8 agenda**

2.2.1. During the press conference at the end of the St Petersburg G8 summit (July 17<sup>th</sup> 2006) the first headlines of the German G8 agenda were presented; the agenda was officially published on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006. The overall theme of the G8 summit in Heiligendamm was “*Growth and responsibility*”, focusing on the one hand on “*Growth and responsibility in the global economy*” and on the other hand on “*Growth and responsibility in Africa*”. This section looks at the main activities undertaken by Oxfam to influence the German G8 agenda and tries to assess to what extent these different activities actually contributed to putting Africa on the agenda.

2.2.2. Already during the press conference at the end of the St Petersburg summit, the German Chancellor commented that although the agenda of the 2007 summit had not been determined the struggle against poverty would be a priority. However, one stakeholder commented that the German G8

headlines as announced during this press conference appeared to be “*plucked out of the air*” in response to questions from journalists and Oxfam staff indicated that the journalist who asked Angela Merkel whether poverty would be on the 2007 G8 agenda had been prompted by them to do so. During the press conference, Africa was not yet mentioned; the focus was on global poverty. In the context of this press conference, Oxfam sent out a press release calling for the German Chancellor to visit Africa before the 2007 G8 summit.

2.2.3. The official German G8 agenda was published on 18 October 2006. In the run-up to this publication, Oxfam encouraged and supported a range of individuals and organisations to write to the German Chancellor, and Bernd Pfaffenbach, the German sherpa, including:

- More than 30 national GCAP coalitions in Africa and Asia;
- A range of African embassies; and,
- A diverse range of ‘influencers’ including former South African president Nelson Mandela, South African archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama, German top model Claudia Schiffer, Beninese signer-songwriter Angélique Kidjo and American actor Brad Pitt.

Oxfam also arranged for Kumi Naidoo, the chairperson of GCAP, to meet with the German sherpa office and to take copies of some of these letters into the meeting. Barbara Stocking, the director of Oxfam Great Britain, met with the German sherpa office and with German president Horst Köhler. Oxfam’s overall strategy was to ensure that the inclusion of the struggle against poverty in the German G8 agenda, as announced during the St Petersburg press conference, would end up meaning Africa and the strengthening of health systems.

2.2.4. The key question for this evaluation is to what extent these efforts and activities translated in actual influence on the agenda-setting process. For example, the fact that Barbara Stocking met with Horst Köhler can be cited as clear evidence of Oxfam’s reputation or access levels, but does not necessarily mean that the German president changed his views or actions as a result of this meeting. The two main areas for discussion in this respect are:

- Whether or not Africa would have been put on the agenda anyway, irrespective of these efforts and activities by Oxfam – in other words,

whether or not it would have been possible for Germany not to put Africa on the agenda given previous G8 agendas; and,

- The extent to which Oxfam contributed to the agenda-setting compared to other key individuals and organisations.

2.2.5. With regard to the first question, several respondents referred to the fact that Africa has become an almost essential part of the G8 agenda over the last years and in particular since the Genoa summit (2001). One respondent linked this directly to the fact that there is no independent G8 secretariat, which means that G8 countries tend to follow and build on the same agenda year after year. Most respondents tended to agree that it would have been difficult for Germany not to put Africa on the agenda:

*“The simple truth is that no G8 country could get away with not putting it on the agenda”* (UK policy-maker)

*“After the UK fanfare at Gleneagles Africa was kind of there on the agenda”* (NGO respondent)

2.2.6. At the same time, Oxfam staff indicated that all their information at the time of the July 2006 press conference suggested that the inclusion of Africa or poverty was far from guaranteed: they pointed out that the German sherpa office in particular wanted to scale the G8 back to its economic basics and concentrate on macro-economic issues; they also suggested that many key people thought that Angela Merkel should be seen as offering something new rather than focus on Africa which had been Tony Blair’s focus in 2005. They also stressed that Africa had not been included on the Russian G8 agenda. These views were partially confirmed during interviews with officials. In particular, two policy-makers with direct access to their respective Ministers mentioned that they were surprised to see Africa on the agenda:

*“Some agenda items are coming back year after year, but Germany putting Africa on the agenda was a surprise”* (UK policy-maker)

*“It is true that Africa always needs to be on the agenda; however, every presidency wants to put their own mark. It was not really interesting for Angela Merkel to focus so clearly on Africa, because the UK had already been credited with achieving that. The UK already ‘scored’ on this issue. I was quite surprised to see it so high on the agenda”* (German policy-maker)



2.2.7. Likewise, a couple of respondents confirmed that “*maybe right at the start*” there was some discussion as to whether or not Africa would be on the agenda, as some German G8 leads advocated a return to a clear economic focus. However, these respondents suggested that it did not take long to convince sceptics and that Africa was definitely on the agenda before the end of the summer 2006.

2.2.8. When asked about the different influences on the G8 agenda-setting process, respondents tended to agree on the central role played by the G8 presidency in the G8 agenda-setting and the fact that agenda-setting takes place at the highest level: they systematically stressed the importance of the German Chancellor in the agenda-setting process and in the decision to put Africa on the agenda. A range of influencing factors on the Chancellor was mentioned, including:

- Personal conviction – one respondent commented that ultimately, Angela Merkel is “*probably the kind of person who cares about Africa*”. A couple of individuals referred to letters from the pope about the importance of Africa and influence from the German churches, which were seen as likely to have had an influence on the Chancellor, given her Christian-democrat background. Oxfam staff indicated that they had heard via UK officials that the letters from Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu had made it onto the Chancellor’s desk and there was a second-hand report that Angela Merkel had been directly influenced by a letter from Desmond Tutu; a policy-maker commented that he could “*well imagine that a letter from Nelson Mandela would have made an impact*”.
- Within the German Government Horst Köhler, the German president and formerly head of the IMF, and Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, the Federal Development Minister, were singled out as important influences on the Chancellor. A limited number of German policy-makers were quite firm in their view that the Development Minister had played a crucial part in placing Africa on the G8 agenda.

*“Oxfam did not place Africa on the agenda of the G8; it was the German Development Minister who did that”* (German policy-maker)

They pointed out that unlike the British Prime Minister, the German Chancellor does not have her own Department and depends on information and support from the different Ministries. Traditionally, the German Development Ministry has tended to be quite low in the ‘hierarchy’ of Ministries, but it was felt that there had been a shift in Germany away from the politically quite weak position of development. Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul was described by one respondent as one of the most senior Ministers in the Federal Government (with 8 years of



ministerial experience) and as having an excellent political network and strong personal relation with the Chancellor. Also, proactive work on the G8 by the German Development Ministry meant that other Ministries which were less prepared had to depend on inputs from the Development Ministry when they received ministerial requests for information and advice on the G8 summit.

- Peer pressure from other G8 Government was also described as an important factor in G8 agenda-setting; respondents referred in particular to the role played by the UK and to a lesser extent by France in “*pushing the agenda*”. Tony Blair was described by one UK policy-maker as having been an “*incredible influence*” on Angela Merkel. Other respondents (including one NGO respondent, but none of the German respondents) referred to the personal role played by Tony Blair. One Oxfam staff believed that more could have been achieved in this respect if other Oxfam affiliates would have been able to mobilise their respective Governments.
- Finally, one respondent referred to economic motives and in particular China’s increasing investments and influence in Africa. This individual pointed out that this argument had played in the Economics Ministry in particular.

2.2.9. Unprompted, only a couple of respondents referred to public opinion, media or NGO pressure as a factor in the G8 agenda-setting, although stakeholders tended to accept these as partial influences once they were presented to them, in particular indirectly through the 2005 campaigns which was seen as “*bound to have influenced politicians*”.

*“Although they [Oxfam] did not influence the agenda this year, it is NGO pressure that got Africa on the agenda in the first place”* (UK policy-maker)

*“We ourselves were a factor; the media certainly was a factor, public opinion was a factor ...”* (German policy-maker)

2.2.10. Commenting specifically about Oxfam’s role in the agenda-setting process, respondents differed greatly in their views on the nature and extent of Oxfam’s role, but there was a tentative consensus that Oxfam had played a partial role. Oxfam’s role was seen as “*not decisive*” in that most respondents believed that Africa would have been on the agenda anyway, either because Africa had become a standard G8 agenda item or because there were so many other individuals and groups pushing in the same direction. However, Oxfam was credited with having contributed partially. A number of individuals simply pointed to the visibility of Oxfam’s activities, suggesting that all these efforts “*were bound to have had an impact*”. Several suggested that Oxfam

contributed to the agenda-setting process by “*creating opportunities for others to put pressure on Germany*”, referring to Oxfam’s influence on the UK Government and Tony Blair and Oxfam’s letter-writing support for African embassies and world/church leaders.

*“They did contribute indirectly, in the sense that, if Africa would not be on the agenda, Tony Blair would immediately be on the phone to Angela Merkel”* (UK policy-maker)

*“It was not Oxfam itself but other people through Oxfam who pushed it on the agenda”* (UK policy-maker)

2.2.11. German officials in particular tended to see Oxfam as “*one player in a complex orchestra of making it happen*” or as having “*played a part in changing opinions*” without having been decisive. As mentioned earlier, one German official did not think Oxfam had contributed at all to putting Africa on the agenda, but was convinced the German Development Minister could claim credit for this. The fact that a lot of Oxfam’s advocacy work on agenda-setting was done behind the scenes may mean that their influence was less clear to German policy-makers. However, the overall impression from the different stakeholder interviews is that there were indeed a range of influencing factors (including previous G8 agenda-setting processes, the German Chancellor’s personal convictions and beliefs, the German president and in particular the Development Minister, media and public opinion and peer pressure from other Governments) and that, even if some of Oxfam’s letters probably reached and arguably even made an impression on the German Chancellor, Oxfam’s efforts were a part of but not decisive in the agenda-setting process.

2.2.12. Putting Africa on the G8 agenda is only one element of Oxfam’s overall strategic objective of ensuring that African voices were clearly heard. The next chapter will briefly discuss the press conference with the Ghanaian Finance Minister, organised by Oxfam, and the GCAP ‘African Voices’ press conference. Finally, during his press conference at the end of the Heiligendamm summit (8<sup>th</sup> June 2007), the Japanese Prime Minister did not commit to including Africa or the struggle against poverty in the Japanese G8 agenda. However, within the scope of this evaluation, it has not been possible to assess Oxfam’s impact to date on the Japanese G8 agenda-setting process.

## 2.3. The German ODA €750 million top-up

- 2.3.1. On June 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, a few days before the actual G8 summit, the German Government announced that German ODA would be topped up by €750 million in 2008 – an increase of 14 percent. Respondents were asked whether they believed Oxfam had contributed to this decision. Although this question was discussed with different groups of respondents (including NGO staff and UK policy-makers), the issue was discussed in most detail with the 5 German policy-makers. This section does not aim to evaluate the significance of the German ODA top-up or its relation to existing German ODA commitments; the section is only concerned with the extent to which Oxfam contributed to the top-up.
- 2.3.2. The evaluation first sought to assess when the actual decision to increase ODA was taken – the increase was *announced* just days before the summit, but it was necessary for the evaluation to establish whether or not the announcement had been delayed to maximise the decision’s impact on public opinion or on other G8 partners. The timing of the actual decision influences the potential scope for Oxfam’s advocacy work to have influenced the decision-making process. Respondents confirmed that the decision was taken very late; one German official reported that the actual decision was taken no more than one week before the actual announcement.
- 2.3.3. When commenting on the actual decision to increase ODA, German policy-makers stressed the fact that the G8 ODA top-up had to be seen in the wider German ODA context. They commented that the decision to increase ODA was not a new idea developed in the context of the G8 presidency: the German 1998 Coalition Agreement (between the Social-Democrats and the Green Party) already included a commitment to increase ODA and when Angela Merkel’s CDU took over in 2005 this commitment was renewed. Respondents also referred to EU decisions on ODA increases supported and agreed to by the German Government. In short, respondents referred to the existence of a political commitment to ODA prior to the G8 summit.
- 2.3.4. That being said, German policy-makers recognised that the G8 summit had acted as a catalyst in getting the different German stakeholders to agree on the €750 million top-up.

*“It is clear to me that we would not have increased ODA if Germany would not be holding the chair of the G8” (German policy-maker)*

2.3.5. The key decision-makers in the German G8 ODA announcement were seen as being:

- The German Chancellor – Angela Merkel was described as referee in budget discussions between the Finance Minister and sectoral Ministers (in this case the Development Minister). Respondents commented that the G8 was important for Angela Merkel, both domestically and at the international level. One UK policy-maker commented on this case study by saying that Angela Merkel did not want to be seen to fail:

*“There was definitely pressure on Angela Merkel to shine: this was her first international event and she did not want either to renege on her commitments or have a G8 summit fail” (UK policy-maker)*

At the same time, it was stressed that Angela Merkel’s role in the ODA increase should not be overestimated: the Chancellor only referees when there is disagreement between the Finance and the sectoral Minister; *“if there is agreement, the Chancellor cannot intervene”*.

- The German Finance Ministry – several respondents including individuals not directly involved in the German ODA decision-making process (British policy-makers and NGO respondents) commented that the real question for the evaluation was whether or not Oxfam had succeeded in influencing the German Finance Ministry. The German Finance Ministry and by extension G8 Finance Ministries more generally were seen by many as the single most important actor in discussions about ODA increases.

*“The difficulty is to get the Finance Minister to agree”*  
(German policy-maker)

However, a number of individuals cautioned against this approach, pointing out that in their view Finance Ministries tend to interpret ODA discussions as a technical debate rather than a political decision: they tend to look at different options of ODA increases and present the budget implications of these different options to other Ministries. Oxfam staff felt that the German Finance Ministry became more supportive as the year went by; in their view this was both because of a stronger endorsement from the German Chancellor and because of the better than expected economic and fiscal situation.

- The federal Development Minister – there was a second hand report (from a German policy-maker) that the Development Minister herself believed that she had played a crucial role in bringing about the ODA increase. However, another stakeholder described the Minister as *“obviously”* sharing the objective to increase ODA but *“unable to act on her own”*.

- The German Parliament – respondents commented that budget discussions tend to involve the Budget Committee of the Parliament. However, there was a sense that in terms of financial decision-making, Angela Merkel “*had more freedom in the G8 year than she would have had in a regular year*”. Another stakeholder commented that although the Parliament plays a role in budget decisions, this only happens at a later stage, after the initial compromise between the relevant Government Ministries. One respondent commented that German parliamentarians played a role in that “*at least they did not boycott the ODA increase*”.

2.3.6. Respondents found it difficult to evaluate Oxfam’s role in influencing these different stakeholders, but the general impression was that civil society pressure and press coverage in the run-up to the G8 summit had contributed to creating a general atmosphere which facilitated the ODA increase. In particular, individuals stressed the fact that NGOs had kept “*constant pressure on the Government to act*”. The constant references in the media to keeping the Gleneagles promises were mentioned as a particularly important element in this respect. It was suggested by one stakeholder that civil society pressure and press coverage had contributed to the Gleneagles promises being included as one of the options included in the ODA calculations of the Finance Ministry and being on the table during the ODA top-up discussions.

2.3.7. Although respondents found it difficult to assess the role of Oxfam relative to the role of other NGOs, they seemed willing to attribute a rather significant role to Oxfam within the wider civil society landscape:

*“NGOs were an element in this and Oxfam is important in the German NGO scene because they are always putting pressure, so Oxfam probably was important”* (German policy-maker)

*“Oxfam was one voice but one of the more audible ones”*  
(NGO respondent)

*“Oxfam can probably be credited with having contributed to the ODA increase in Germany to a small extent – they were lobbying in the right direction”* (German journalist)

2.3.8. Oxfam staff believed that the March 2007 opinion poll about development policy in Germany (commissioned by Oxfam and undertaken by TNS) and Oxfam’s estimates of a \$30 billion gap between the G8’s aid promises and actual aid figures were important elements in the decision-making process which led to the German ODA top-up and there is indeed some evidence supporting this view:

- The opinion poll showed that more than 70% of the German public felt that it was important that the German Government kept its ODA promises. Unprompted, none of the German policy-makers mentioned the opinion poll, but when asked one German Development Ministry official indicated that the opinion poll had provided his/her Ministry with “*good arguments*”. The German Development Ministry used the results of this opinion poll in an official April 2007 press release, which also suggests that the Ministry recognised the potential of the poll to influence other stakeholders. A German Member of Parliament likewise referred to the poll in his April 2007 press release. Oxfam staff indicated that other NGOs and organisations also used the Oxfam opinion poll, citing Bob Geldof’s editorial in Bild-Zeitung as an example. Interestingly, one journalist interviewed as part of the evaluation referred to the opinion poll *unprompted* when asked a general question about her views about German attitudes towards development.
- Oxfam staff indicated that their paper with the \$30 billion gap figure provoked an instant reaction from the German Development Ministry’s press office, stressing that Germany would not break its promises. The \$30 billion gap figure was also widely used in the press: journalists interviewed as part of this evaluation often quoted Oxfam’s analysis of aid figures prior to the summit as an example of how Oxfam had influenced their G8 coverage (see next chapter).

2.3.9. Depending on respondents’ perspectives, the constant civil society and media pressure ‘forced’ the Government into a “*face-saving announcement*” or ‘allowed’ the German Government and in particular the German Development Minister to capitalise on existing plans for ODA increases. Most respondents appeared to lean towards the latter statement, stressing the existing political commitment to increase ODA and in particular the expectations automatically created by the G8 presidency. One stakeholder believed that they “*probably would have seen an increase in ODA but not that much*”. The previous year’s increase was €325 million; the Ministry of Finance’s published projections were about €100 million.

## 2.4. Setting the direction in the debate on health systems

2.4.1. The German G8 agenda presented in October 2006 contained a reference to the need for “*establishing effective health systems*” in the developing world. In its G8 strategy paper, Oxfam identified as one of its policy objectives for the G8 “*a G8 initiative to strengthen health systems, with agreement to support the development of country health system plans including strategies*



for recruiting health workers and an undertaking to resource these plans with aid'. As part of this evaluation, respondents were asked whether or not they believed Oxfam had contributed to setting the direction in the health systems debate.

2.4.2. This case study was relatively complex as discussions suggested that respondents interpreted the health systems debate in different ways – they tended to refer to two interrelated but quite distinct questions:

- How to strengthen health care provision at a national level in developing countries – in particular the discussion whether or not a contribution-based system (health insurance) can lead to better access to healthcare in developing countries; and,
- How to increase aid effectiveness and donor coordination in the health sector – in particular the role of sectoral budget support in allowing developing countries to fund national health programmes, including health worker salaries.

This duality seems to be reflected in the outcomes of the G8 process:

- The Providing for Health Initiative launched by the G8 presidency and included in the final communiqué on Africa – described by one (UK) stakeholder as a “*contribution-based initiative*”; and,
- The International Health Partnership jointly launched by the UK and Germany in September 2007 with a focus on donor coordination and budget support to national health plans.

2.4.3. Respondents provided significant detail about the history of the health systems debate and about the positions of individual countries; however, this detail need not be presented here. The crucial question for this evaluation is not the detail of Governmental positions on health systems but the extent to which Oxfam influenced these positions and whether or not Oxfam can be credited with having contributed to the above-mentioned outcomes, in particular the International Health Partnership.

2.4.4. Respondents suggested that health systems were put on the G8 agenda in the very early stages of the agenda-setting process (one respondent suggested September 2006) and that the agenda came from the German Development Ministry. There was, however, some indication that health was initially not going to be included on the agenda as the focus was first going to be on economic development in Africa.

- 2.4.5. There was no evidence that Oxfam had changed the British or German Development Ministries' respective views about the value of contribution-based health systems: individuals had already been working on the issue for a long time and had well-established views on the matter. Also, British and German development officials alike had previously already been convinced about the importance of health and strengthening health systems. For example, the German Development Minister herself was presented as "*strongly committed to health issues*", in particular following her participation in the XVIth International Aids Conference in Toronto in August 2006. One official commented on their long experience on the matter:

*"I had the impression that ... Oxfam had not yet been dealing with these issues as long as we had"* (Policy-maker)

However, there were some indications that Oxfam's arguments on the need for strengthening health systems were well-received among German officials: one German official referred to Oxfam's briefing note as "*state of the art*" and suggested that the note had contained "*new information*" to her/him; another German official described Oxfam as "*part of a group of avant-garde thinkers*" in the health system debate and offering "*good arguments*".

- 2.4.6. Also, Oxfam and civil society pressure were credited with having contributed to placing health systems higher on the political agenda. Respondents tended to agree that health systems had been "*far down the list of priorities of the sherpas*". Both in the UK and Germany, Oxfam was seen not so much as having influenced development officials, but rather as having helped development officials promote the issue at a higher political level. Oxfam's advocacy work on health systems was presented as particularly important given the fact that the HIV and malaria NGOs tend to be "*very loud*" and risk monopolising political attention in the field of health.

*"It needs to be raised in different forums and Oxfam can play a role in this discussion. They already played a great role"* (German Policy-maker)

*"I would say that they [Oxfam] have been influential in the UK – not necessarily by influencing DfID but by bringing it to the attention of Gordon Brown"* (UK policy-maker)



*“Everyone recognises the importance of health systems and Oxfam has been quite important in getting that recognition ... It is not that noone had ever thought about this and then all of a sudden Oxfam got things going; it is an iterative process in which Oxfam contributes”* (UK policy-maker)

2.4.7. In short, stakeholders did not necessarily think that Oxfam had set the direction in the health systems debate, but seemed to agree that Oxfam contributed to allowing the debate to take place at a higher political level, at least in the UK and Germany. Stakeholders commented that no such process took place in other G8 countries.

## **2.5. Keeping G8 Governments to their ODA promises**

2.5.1. This chapter briefly looks at Oxfam’s G8 policy objective on the G8’s ODA promises. Although this was not a ‘case study’ as such for this impact assessment, it can be considered as one of or possibly even *the* central objective of Oxfam’s G8 advocacy work. Moreover, it was often easier to engage policy-makers, in particular outside Germany, in a more general discussion about Oxfam’s impact on national ODA levels when they felt less in a position to comment on the actual case studies. These discussions are briefly summarised in this section.

2.5.2. The immediate outcomes of the Heiligendamm G8 in terms of ODA levels are twofold:

- The German Government’s ODA top-up – discussed as a separate case study in this chapter; and,
- The announcement of \$60 billion in aid for HIV/aids in the final G8 Africa communiqué.

2.5.3. The exact calculations which led to the \$60 billion figure are not included in the Africa communiqué and policy-makers recognised that even if the announcement was *“probably the biggest outcome of the G8”* the figure was *“vague”*. One stakeholder believed that the \$60 billion announcement was a relatively late decision and that it had not yet been included in the communiqué as late as early June. There is not enough evidence to pronounce on the issue, but it is tempting to speculate to what extent media

and civil society pressure in the immediate run-up to the summit contributed to a late G8 decision to announce the \$60 billion package.

2.5.4. However, according to Oxfam's own estimates, the announcement amounts to only \$3 billion in additional ODA by 2010 and Oxfam staff were generally disappointed and dismissive about the \$60 billion announcement: the \$60 billion announcement was seen as an attempt to dress up existing aid levels and avoid additional ODA commitments. It was therefore not included as a specific case study.

2.5.5. The \$60 billion announcement must be seen in the context of systematic comments from policy-makers (in particular in the UK and France) on "*donor fatigue*" and on the practical implications of keeping the Gleneagles promises: aid levels and ODA increases were described as "*massive in budget terms*". Development officials themselves commented that ODA increases had already led to increases of 10% or more for Development Ministries ("*more than for any other Ministry*") – and that it was difficult to go further. A German journalist referred to a discussion with a DfID official who had admitted that they had more funds available (for budget support) than they were in a position to spend. Referring to less 'ODA-friendly' G8 partners, officials pointed out that "*it is very difficult to get new commitments*". Against this backdrop, the fact that additional ODA was committed at all is possibly more significant.

## 2.6. Conclusion

2.6.1. The tentative conclusions that arise from this chapter are that:

- Oxfam was generally seen as not having been decisive in placing Africa on the agenda of the G8 but was recognised as having been one of a number of different influences on the agenda-setting process, on the one hand through the 2005 Gleneagles campaign and on the other hand by 'influencing the influencers' and by creating opportunities for others to put pressure on the German Chancellor.
- The general impression was that civil society pressure and press coverage (in particular the constant references to keeping the Gleneagles promises in the media) in the run-up to the G8 contributed to creating a general atmosphere which allowed the German Development Ministry to

capitalise on existing plans for ODA increases. Oxfam was seen as an element in the overall civil society pressure;

- Oxfam's main contribution in the health systems debate appears to have been that they put this debate higher on the political agenda and acted as a counterweight against the lack of interest from the G8 sherpas on the issue. Their influence on the actual direction of the health systems debate appears to have been smaller; they were however described as "*part of a group of avant-garde thinkers*" on the issue. Oxfam's paper on health systems was considered to have been "*state of the art*".

### **3. IMPACT ON G8 PRESS COVERAGE**

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#### **3.1. Introduction**

3.1.1. Oxfam's media work is one of three pillars of Oxfam's advocacy work, alongside its lobby work targeting policy-makers and its popular mobilisation activities. Part of the rationale for Oxfam's focus on the G8 is the media attention surrounding the summit and the opportunities the summit offers for getting press coverage for their messages. Generating press coverage is seen by Oxfam as an intermediary objective, supporting the ultimate objective of achieving policy change and political outcomes. The previous chapter briefly touched upon the relative importance of the media in generating specific policy outcomes (in particular the German Government's €750 ODA top-up); this issue will be dealt with in more detail towards the end of chapter 4. This chapter only focuses on the intermediary objective of generating press coverage only.

#### **3.2. Analysis of Oxfam G8 press coverage**

3.2.1. An in-depth analysis of the Oxfam G8 press coverage was outside the scope of this assignment, but the evaluation had access to two overviews of press coverage produced by Oxfam staff. Oxfam Great Britain also provided a copy of their internal evaluation of Oxfam's G8 media work.

- 'Oxfam G8 Media Coverage 2007', produced by the media team in Oxfam Great Britain; and,
- 'G8-Pressespiegel 2007', produced by the media team in Oxfam Germany.

3.2.2. The two media teams have followed slightly different approaches in their production of press overviews. The UK document is an internal Oxfam document which focuses mainly on press coverage in the immediate run-up to and during the G8 itself (2-9 June 2007) with a limited number of references to earlier and later articles. The document contains references to coverage (rather than full articles) relating to a series of different countries including

the UK, France, Canada, Japan, Germany and Spain. The document is partially structured chronologically, partially nationally and partially on the basis of language (English, Spanish, French). It includes references to media coverage of Oxfam activities and documents, interviews with Oxfam staff and use of Oxfam's G8 argumentation. The amount of information collected is impressive and gives a clear flavour of the breadth of Oxfam's G8 coverage. The document refers to over 100 articles or other examples of media attention each in English, Spanish and French.

- 3.2.3. More in-depth analysis of the document is difficult. The objective of the document appears to have been to give readers a flavour rather than a detailed overview of Oxfam G8 coverage. Different elements of information (for example the title of the article, the page where the article appeared, the size of the article, etc.) appear to have been added only when considered directly relevant (for example front page coverage). The document included references to Internet addresses which meant it would have been possible to access and analyse these hundreds of articles in more detail, but this was not possible within the scope of this assignment.
- 3.2.4. The German document includes just fewer than 40 articles mentioning Oxfam, selected by Oxfam Germany for distribution among an interested audience; it is a publication rather than an internal document. It focuses on German press coverage between April and mid-June 2007. It presents the actual article rather than references and systematically includes information about the page where the article was found. The document mentions that there were more than 500 articles or other media which referred to Oxfam between April and mid-June 2007.
- 3.2.5. It is obviously not possible to analyse the tone of 500-odd German G8 articles on the basis of the 40 articles included in the press overview. However, the press overview seems to suggest a gradual change of tone in the German G8 press coverage. Earlier articles resonate a sense of cautious optimism about the G8 ("*Africa's Real Chance*", "*In Heiligendamm they can prove it*"). The tone seems to change towards disappointment and fairly sharp criticism ("*Just Empty Rhetoric*"). To some extent this is to be expected, as the build-up towards the G8 creates expectations which remain unfulfilled. However, the apparent change in tone sets in more than a week before the actual summit,

with journalists reporting the sharp criticisms aired by Oxfam and other civil society organisations during the final days in May about unkept promises. It is possible that these sharp criticisms prior to the summit may have lowered expectations of the summit outcomes in advance: to a degree, the tone of the articles in the press review covering the days of the actual summit seem to suggest resignation rather than anger about unkept promises. Similarly, Oxfam's internal media evaluation suggests that German press coverage of the G8 outcomes was fairly positive about the \$60 billion announcement. However, as stressed earlier, the number of articles is too low to warrant any clear conclusions.

- 3.2.6. In terms of assessing the impact of Oxfam's media work, the two documents allow for a cautious estimate of the amount of press coverage generated: Oxfam Germany counted more than 500 articles mentioning Oxfam between April and mid-June; the UK document suggests that there were at least 100 examples of press coverage each in the English, French and Spanish language press in early June. A total estimate of around 1,000 examples of press coverage mentioning or involving Oxfam during and in the months prior to the G8 appears to be a reasonable and possibly even conservative estimate. This includes wide coverage of the four 'big heads' stunts, showing the G8 leaders in Pinocchio outfits, sunbathing on the beach, dressed as health workers and 'gambling' on Africa's future. Oxfam's internal media evaluation indicates that the gambling stunt and in particular the Pinocchio stunt were covered widely and were used by key newspapers, agencies and broadcasters (e.g. BBC News, Channel 4, The Times and the International Herald Tribune). This internal evaluation includes around 25 references to coverage for the Pinocchio stunt alone. The success of the Pinocchio stunt was attributed to its timing (at the start of the summit) and its clear and universal message. The health workers stunt was the least successful and received less coverage Oxfam staff believed this may have been because health did not feature high in the discussions during the final days, when the stunt took place.
- 3.2.7. To some extent, it is difficult to assess what this figure means and whether 1,000 examples of press coverage is 'a lot', in particular without comparison material from previous years. However, Oxfam staff in France and Germany favourably compared the 2007 G8 press coverage with previous years,

referring to a significant increase in references to Oxfam in 2007. The internal UK media evaluation document likewise commented positively about the G8 press coverage.

- 3.2.8. The stakeholder interviews did not generate any comments specifically about the visibility of Oxfam in the G8 press coverage. However, (German) respondents did comment on the increased press coverage for Africa and development issues in the run-up to the G8:

*“I was surprised that there was such great media interest. It was astonishing. The Spiegel did a special issue on Africa in April and there was great interest in the summit, focusing on climate change and Africa”* (German journalist)

Respondents gave a number of different possible reasons for this, including the fact that Angela Merkel herself clearly commented on Africa and development issues which made it more newsworthy. This suggests that, to the extent that Oxfam contributed to placing Africa on the German chancellor’s radar screen<sup>2</sup>, Oxfam may have indirectly contributed to the increased media interest for development. A German journalist believed that the increased media attention could partially be explained because it was possible to tell a different, a more positive story about Africa.

*“There was clearly more focus on Africa in the press. This was because the Chancellor herself raised the issue, for the first time, very prominently. There was also strong lobby work from the NGOs – not one NGO in particular – which helped: there were constant press releases”* (German policy-maker)

Journalists did comment, however, that the interest in development issues had disappeared with the end of the G8 summit.

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<sup>2</sup> As the case study in the previous chapter suggest, Oxfam’s contribution was generally seen as not decisive but respondents suggested that Oxfam had probably had some indirect impact by creating opportunities for others to put pressure on the Chancellor.

### 3.3. Journalists' views on Oxfam's media work

3.3.1. As part of the evaluation, interviews were undertaken with 15 journalists who covered the G8 summit in Heiligendamm, including 8 British, 6 German and 1 French journalist. Most of these interviews were very short (5-10 minutes) and focused on the question to what extent journalists' coverage of the G8 had been influenced by discussions with Oxfam staff, Oxfam press releases or other activities (co)organised by Oxfam such as press conferences or 'stunts'. Journalists were also asked whether they had any recommendations for Oxfam's future media work.

3.3.2. To get more in-depth information about how Oxfam influenced G8 press coverage, German journalists were asked to what extent and how Oxfam had impacted on their work. One or two journalists strongly disagreed with the premise that they would have been 'influenced' by Oxfam in any way, stressing their independence as journalists:

*"I absolutely reject the idea that I would have been influenced by Oxfam. There is a need for full objectivity"* (German journalist)

Others presented a more nuanced picture, but many commented that the nature of journalism itself requires journalists to present different perspectives and that it would be unlikely for any self-respecting journalist to simply buy the Government spin. They pointed out that presenting both the Government and civil society perspective is part and parcel of their G8 coverage.

*"I do not need Oxfam to realise that G8 leaders are going to try to put a spin on it"* (UK journalist)

3.3.3. What journalists are interested in and expect from Oxfam and other civil society organisations are technical information and "good quotes":

- Journalists commented on their own vulnerability in terms of technical knowledge and on the importance of the technical information they receive from civil society organisations in areas they are less familiar with: one journalist referred to the wide range of issues a G8 journalist is expected to cover and gave the example of climate change as an area where he had felt less comfortable in 2007.



- With regard to the importance of good quotes, the clarity of Oxfam's message was given as one reason for using Oxfam material as opposed to press releases from other civil society organisations.

*"We have a network of NGOs in Germany, VENRO ... VENRO has a spokesperson, but I never call him because I never get a strong quote from them – they are too busy trying to harmonise NGO positions so they never have any real position so they are not offering anything newsworthy. The advantage of talking to Welt Hunger Hilfe or Oxfam is that they take a stance"* (German journalist)

*"Oxfam offer hard facts and a clear message which is what journalists need"* (German journalist)

3.3.4. Journalists gave several reasons why they like working with Oxfam and would contact Oxfam instead of or alongside other NGOs: apart from the reliability of Oxfam's technical information and Oxfam's clear message, respondents stressed:

- The speed of Oxfam's reactions, as well as the fact that Oxfam's materials are not too long – presented as crucial in the high pressure atmosphere of the G8. Many journalists mentioned the enormous time pressures they were under in the G8 context and the constant demand for rolling copies. One described the G8 media process as *"a sausage machine"*. A number of them linked these time pressures to Oxfam's reputation and the reliability of Oxfam's information: time pressures mean that they are not able to check whether or not information is correct which means journalists have to be able to rely on the information presented to them.

*"They are very fast in getting their views out which is why their information is used. This is really what works: speed and coherence of the messages. If only Governments would work as efficiently"* (UK journalist)

- The fact that compared to issue-based organisations Oxfam can comment on a wide range of issues;

*"They are faster than others and can comment on everything"* (German journalist)

*"I used other CSOs as well, but the advantage of Oxfam is that they have the deepest and broadest knowledge. I would say the two NGOs with the deepest and broadest knowledge are Oxfam and DATA. Oxfam is also able to discuss environmental issues which is not the case for DATA"* (UK journalist)

- The fact that Oxfam has substance and offers alternatives – one journalist mentioned that s/he had contacted Oxfam rather than another organisation because Oxfam “*does not try to spin you a certain line*”;

*“Oxfam is pretty good: they are better than the others. They have more credibility; there is some substance, you can talk to them – even if I don’t share their views”* (UK journalist)

*“They are not too ideological; they do not just rally against the G8 – they also offer alternatives”* (German journalist)

- The slick presentation of Oxfam’s materials: “*nicely bound with graphs and charts*”.

3.3.5. The importance of substance and nuance in particular was stressed by several journalists: in their view, one “*cannot expect leaps forward*” during a G8 process, whatever “*the spin put on Gleneagles*” by civil society. Progress tends to be incremental and there is a risk that civil society creates inflated expectations which are impossible to meet.

*“During the G8 a journalist’s sensors are out: you listen to people’s tones. If you feel you are being lectured to or if the message is too campaigny you dismiss the information; you are likely to switch off. You are especially interested in people who recognise the complexity of the situation, who see that there is some merit in what the G8 leaders are trying to achieve. The situation is always complicated: G8 leaders are not just there to have some nice food and drink”* (UK journalist)

One journalist noted a tension between the nuance and pragmatism in her/his one-on-one contacts with Oxfam staff and the campaign language in Oxfam press releases, indicating that s/he found it sometimes difficult to deal with Oxfam because they operate on two slightly different registers. Another journalist, however, commented that “*you expect press releases to be more campaigny*”.

3.3.6. Several journalists commented on other civil society organisations they work with: German journalists referred to German Watch, Welt Hunger Hilfe and Greenpeace as other sources of information; UK journalists mentioned DATA, Tearfund, Save the Children, Transparency International, the Coalition against Aids and Action Aid. One German journalist commented that Oxfam would not be their number 1 source; they would rather talk to Welt Hunger Hilfe to get the German perspective.

- 3.3.7. A couple of journalists commented that during the early stages of the G8 they receive telephone numbers from a whole series of civil society organisations and that “*very human*” factors also play a role in deciding which telephone number to use when an issue arises and that “*first impressions*” count.

*“Why do you go to one NGO and not another? It is really about the relationship and about some people really being engaged and others just doing their job”* (German journalist)

- 3.3.8. Many journalists had difficulties remembering much detail about Oxfam materials or even their own articles on the G8. Still, the message that appeared to arise most clearly from the journalist interviews is that Oxfam’s “*number crunching*” was (remembered as) the main area of Oxfam’s impact on G8 press coverage. Journalists referred to both Oxfam’s analysis of aid figures prior to the G8 summit and to Oxfam’s assessment of aid commitments in the final Africa communiqué.

*“They provide information on the discrepancy between what the G8 says and what the G8 does. They write good papers ... They did a good overview paper on what Gleneagles was about and what has happened since”* (German journalist)

*“They were quite important. When the aid figures were announced, it was quite difficult to analyse these figures and Oxfam helped”* (German journalist)

*“What is particularly important in the context of the G8 is the flow of aid targets going up and down. There is a real PR battle between the UK Government and Oxfam and other NGOs about the aid targets”* (UK journalist)

*“The main example of Oxfam’s impact is on ODA, following up on what happens and on what the positions of different governments are”* (UK journalist)

- 3.3.9. Although Oxfam’s number crunching was generally highly valued, a couple of journalists added more critical comments about Oxfam’s analysis of aid figures:

*“I found them not as useful as for Gleneagles. DATA had just released a huge study on the Gleneagles promises and Oxfam only did more or less the same. This was not news the second time around. There is more to the G8 than money alone”* (German journalist)

*“I was talking to Oxfam staff for a long time about their analysis of the \$60 billion. I spoke to a whole series of people, who were all trying to explain it to me, but I did not get it. It may have been me, but I got the impression that they did not understand it completely themselves”* (UK journalist)

- 3.3.10. A limited number of journalists also commented that they found Oxfam most useful before the summit, because at the summit Oxfam did more “*set-piece work*” whereas discussions before the summit had allowed a more targeted discussion of issues of direct interest to the journalist. The added value of a more personalised approach was stressed by the vast majority of journalists: respondents indicated that they are more interested in having someone respond to their own questions and issues rather than having to listen to someone else’s story.

*“When I went to visit Oxfam’s Berlin office, they were very keen to present their own issues, whereas it would have been more helpful had they allowed me to raise my issues and responded to them”* (UK journalist)

*“It is good to have press releases, but they should not always just shoot out press releases”* (UK journalist)

- 3.3.11. Oxfam staff referred to two press conferences which they believed had been important aspects of their overall press work and had contributed to their strategic objective of ensuring that African voices were heard:

- The GCAP ‘African Voices’ press conference, organised by a number of different NGOs (including Oxfam) in Heiligendamm on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2007. The panel of speakers included the South African chair of GCAP, a Burundese HIV activist (from the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria), Oxfam’s pan-Africa spokesperson and the former head of Jubilee Zambia (from CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development). The press conference was chaired by Oxfam Germany. Oxfam Great Britain’s internal media report shows that this press conference was well attended (more than 100 journalists) and that, following this conference, the Oxfam pan-Africa spokesperson was interviewed by several radio stations and quoted by several agencies and newspapers.
- Oxfam’s press conference with the Ghanaian Finance Minister – unprompted, one journalist remembers this press conference and was very positive about it:

*“They organised a very useful conference with a Ghanaian minister – they should do more of that. They should try to organise these conferences in advance and also announce*

*them more in advance. What is good about conferences like this is that direct access to politicians is important but very difficult” (UK journalist)*

This last (unprompted) quote is particularly significant because journalists tended to be quite negative about press conferences and did not remember attending press conferences. They commented that time pressures prevented them from attending and that direct, personal contacts are much more effective than attending a press conference: several commented that it was not necessary for them to attend press conferences, as NGO staff were in the press room and directly available for comment. Oxfam’s presence in the press room was generally described as excellent:

*“Oxfam was good in that they walk the floor. They are very visible and present and also give out their telephone numbers, fax sheets, etc. They were very much available; in that sense, they were faultless” (UK journalist)*

*“You are unlikely to ever take more than 2-3 paragraphs from any NGO input and you just take that from a press release. You are not going to a press conference for that” (UK journalist)*

*“I did not attend any press conferences; I spoke to Oxfam staff in the press centre every day” (German journalist)*

- 3.3.12. Two journalists commented positively on the big head stunts, indicating that it is good to have *“anything to lift an otherwise boring, neutral venue”* and that the big heads work because a picture should present *“clarity in a nutshell and this is exactly what the big heads do”*. One of them commented, however, that there were many picture opportunities at the G8 and that s/he was uncertain whether the big heads ultimately made a difference: *“if the big heads would no longer be performed, there would still be other ways of conveying the same meaning in pictures”*.
- 3.3.13. When asked about recommendations for Oxfam’s future media work, most journalists responded that they believed Oxfam was doing a good job and should continue on the same path of *“good quotes and hard statistics”*. The main recommendation appeared to relate to more personalised, targeted, proactive and continuous contacts. A few journalists commented that they themselves had taken the initiative to contact Oxfam in the run-up to the G8 summit and suggested there was scope for a more proactive attitude from

Oxfam's side. Contacts in advance of the G8 were presented as a good confidence-building exercise, in particular given that many newspapers may send their political editors rather than development journalists to the G8 and that these may be more interested in the domestic implications of the G8 processes than outcomes for Africa. Respondents also commented that following up with journalists after the G8 could offer perspectives:

*“They have already got better but they are still a bit shambolic in following up on things ... If something does not make it one time, there are always later opportunities”* (UK journalist)

### **3.4. Conclusion**

- 3.4.1. An in-depth analysis of Oxfam's G8 press coverage was outside the scope of this assignment. However, a review of the press overviews and the internal Oxfam media evaluation suggest that Oxfam succeeded in generating a significant amount of press coverage (with direct references to Oxfam) in the context of the 2007 G8: a rough but probably conservative estimate puts the number of examples of press coverage with direct reference to or involvement of Oxfam at 1,000 in the months before and during the G8 summit. This includes wide coverage of the four 'big heads' stunts. There were also some suggestions that Oxfam may have contributed to the general increase in German press coverage for Africa in the months prior to the G8; however, the evidence base on this was fairly limited.
- 3.4.2. Journalists tended to stress that they did not need Oxfam to realise that G8 Governments are trying to put a spin on the actual G8 outcomes and that presenting different perspectives (including the civil society perspective) is part and parcel of their G8 coverage. In the context of the G8 they were mainly interested in *“hard facts and good quotes”* – two areas where Oxfam was seen to score well. Journalists were generally very positive about Oxfam's press work, in particular the speed and coherence of press releases and the nuance in the messaging. They stressed the importance of a personalised and targeted offer and suggested that there was some scope for more proactive press work and follow-up in the months prior to and following the summit.

- 3.4.3. The area where Oxfam appears to have had the biggest impact on the G8 press coverage appears to have been Oxfam's "*number crunching*": Oxfam's analysis of aid figures prior to the summit and of the significance of the \$60 billion ODA figure in the final Africa communiqué.



## 4. IMPACT ON GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION

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### 4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. This impact assessment can not pretend to measure the overall impact of Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning on German public opinion: the scope of the assignment is fairly limited and focused mainly around a series of interviews with policy-makers and journalists. However, a number of different instruments allow for some partial conclusions in this respect. These instruments are:

- The 2006 edition of the annual opinion poll about civil society organisations in Germany, jointly commissioned by a series of German civil society organisations;
- The March 2007 and July 2007 opinion polls (with 1,001 and 1,003 respondents respectively) about development policy in Germany, commissioned by Oxfam and undertaken by TNS.
- The two email survey of new and existing Oxfam supporters, undertaken as part of this evaluation – the first questionnaire was sent to 1,000 individuals who signed up for the electronic Oxfam newsletter in the run-up to the G8; the questionnaire focused on their reasons for signing up for the newsletter and their previous knowledge of the organisation. The survey had a fairly high response rate with just over 10% of individuals completing the questionnaires (111 responses). The second questionnaire was sent to 1,000 individuals who had signed up for the electronic Oxfam newsletter prior to 2007; since these individuals can safely be considered to have already been interested in development issues prior to Oxfam's G8 campaign, this group is less important for the impact assessment. This second questionnaire mainly sought to assess individuals' awareness of specific Oxfam events and publications mentioned in the newsletters; it also included a series of open questions on whether and how individuals had been influenced by (specific elements of) Oxfam's popular campaigning. The response rate to this second poll was much lower (just less than 4%, 35 responses).
- Finally, the perceptions and views of German policy-makers, journalists and Oxfam staff, interviewed as part of this evaluation, can to some extent shed led on changes in German public opinion.

4.1.2. This chapter presents the partial and very tentative conclusions that can be drawn on the basis of this evidence. It is important to note that this chapter does not review or assess the impact of *all* Oxfam's popular campaigning



activities in the context of the G8: Oxfam did not only support the Deine Stimme campaign in Germany, but also similar GCAP campaigns in other G8 countries; however, this chapter only looks at impacts on the *German* public.

4.1.3. It is not possible to list all activities undertaken as part of Oxfam's popular campaigning, but key activities include:

- A series of events and activities in Oxfam Germany's 25 World Shops, encouraging customers to sign the Deine Stimme campaign;
- Organisation by Oxfam Germany of two concerts in Berlin in May 2007 (a concert with Faithless and Emmanuel Jal and the Sister Soul Concert with Angelique Kidjo);
- Wider support for the GCAP Deine Stimme campaign, including for example support for and participation during the GCAP Deine Stimme concert in Rostock (7<sup>th</sup> June 2007) which attracted 80,000 people,
- Facilitating and financing GCAP's advertisement in the International Financial Times (published in all G8 and EU countries) on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2007 presenting an open letter to the G8 Finance Ministers signed by key public figures and more than 40 economists from G8 countries and Africa, including former German Finance Minister Hans Eichel and South African archbishop Desmond Tutu. The advertisement was also placed in the Financial Times Deutschland and was linked to an online action with Avaaz, an online network which alerts its supporters to campaign opportunities, which led to 42,000 people signing the open letter online. Finally, Oxfam collaborated with DATA in getting copies of the advertisement to key stakeholders, including the G8 Finance Ministries and to African Finance Ministers attending the G8 Finance Minister meeting.
- The development of G8 mini-sites on the national Oxfam websites (including the Oxfam Great Britain and Oxfam Germany websites) and a series of online communications about the G8 including G8 blogs, videos and photos on the Oxfam International, Oxfam Great Britain and Oxfam Germany websites, including during the G8 summit. Oxfam blogs were published on other organisations' websites, including [www.oneworld.net](http://www.oneworld.net). On average, the G8 blog on the Oxfam International website was accessed by about 150 people per day; overall, about 200 people accessed some G8 content on the Oxfam International website every day. The G8 blog on the Oxfam Great Britain website was accessed by about 50 people per day; overall, about 550 people accessed some G8 content on the Oxfam Great Britain website every day (all data for the period between 31<sup>st</sup> of May and 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2007).
- The four 'big heads' stunts during the G8 summit showing the G8 leaders in Pinocchio outfits, sunbathing on the beach, dressed as health workers and 'gambling' on Africa's future – these stunts are closely linked to

Oxfam's media work and were already briefly discussed in the previous chapter.

Within the scope of this assignment, it has not been possible to provide detailed information about the impacts of *specific* activities; where possible and relevant, this chapter refers to specific activities, but overall the chapter takes a generic approach. It focuses on two separate questions relating to Oxfam's impacts on public opinion: whether or not Oxfam's popular campaigning has changed people's opinion about and in particular their awareness of Oxfam as an organisation and whether or not Oxfam's popular campaigning has changed people's opinions about development issues.

## **4.2. Impact on people's awareness of and views about Oxfam**

4.2.1. The 2006 edition of the annual German NGO opinion poll provides a baseline about Oxfam brand recognition in Germany: 2.9% of respondents recognised the organisation's name in the 2006 poll. The poll will again take place later this year but its results were not available when this report was drafted. Final conclusions on changes in brand recognition must wait until those results are available, but there are two signals which suggest that brand recognition has indeed gone up:

- 16% of respondents to the July 2007 TNS opinion poll commissioned by Oxfam responded positively to the question whether or not Oxfam had influenced their opinion about the G8 summit – this seems to imply that 16% of respondents had heard about Oxfam: it would have been difficult for them to be influenced by Oxfam without knowing about the organisation. Moreover, it is possible that actual brand recognition is significantly higher than 16% since the 16% refers only to respondents who reported to have been influenced by Oxfam (rather than having heard about Oxfam). It is not possible to directly compare the results in this survey with the 2006 NGO opinion poll, but it is clear that the percentage of 16% is significantly higher than the 2.9% brand recognition reported in 2006;
- The table below presents the responses of new Oxfam supporters to the question whether and how well they knew Oxfam before 2007. The table shows that more than 40% of new Oxfam supporters had not heard about Oxfam prior to 2007. This percentage (41%) cannot be directly compared to the 2.9% baseline: the 2006 poll suggested that 2.9% of German people had heard about Oxfam at the time of the survey; the email survey only included people who had already heard about Oxfam at the time of the

survey. However, it is telling that Oxfam in its outreach to new supporters managed to appeal to a significant number of individuals who had not previously heard about the organisation. Only one in five of respondents already knew Oxfam and supported the organisation's aims and objectives prior 2007.

**Table 4.1: Awareness of Oxfam before 2007**

	Nr	%
I did not know Oxfam before 2007	46	41
I knew Oxfam but did not know much about it	26	23
I already knew Oxfam and supported its aims and objectives	23	21
I knew Oxfam only from the shops	12	11
I knew Oxfam but was not very interested in it	1	1
Other	3	3
Total	111	100

Source: CPC email survey of new Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

4.2.2. Oxfam Germany staff report that their email database consists of around 10,000 email addresses. In the run-up to the G8 around 1,000 new email addresses were added to this database, mainly through the Oxfam Germany G8 website and the White Band events which took place in Oxfam shops throughout Germany. A group of people also left their email addresses during the concerts that were organised by Oxfam in the run-up to the G8, but this last group was reported as having been significantly smaller. The 1,000 new email addresses present a 10% increase in the Oxfam Germany supporters' base. Two comments must be added to this percentage:

- On the one hand, the 10% increase or the 1,000 new email addresses do not reflect the totality of German support for Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning. The numbers of people supporting the Deine Stimme campaign were significantly higher: according to Oxfam Germany staff around 15,000 'voices' (signatures or text messages) were collected directly by Oxfam during concerts, through the website and through the Oxfam shops. Not all people who supported the campaign chose to leave their email addresses;
- On the other hand, leaving an email address in reality corresponds to subscribing to the Oxfam electronic newsletter and the question is to what extent subscribers may be really classed as Oxfam supporters. To test this, the email survey asked individuals to describe their support for Oxfam. The responses are presented in the table below.

**Table 4.2: Level of support for Oxfam**

	Definitely		Possibly		Probably not		Definitely not		Total	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
I would sign an Oxfam petition	65	62	34	32	4	4	2	2	105	100
I would participate in an Oxfam event	28	28	63	62	9	9	2	2	102	100
I would support Oxfam financially	17	17	36	37	35	36	10	10	98	100
I would volunteer for Oxfam	23	22	36	35	38	37	7	7	104	100

Source: CPC email survey of new Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

Note: Percentages do not always add to 100 because of rounding.

It is clear from these responses that Oxfam appears to have accessed a firm new supporters' base with at least 90% of respondents indicating that they would definitely or possibly sign an Oxfam petition; a similar percentage would definitely or possibly participate in an Oxfam event. More than 60% would definitely sign a petition. Percentages are lower when looking at individuals' willingness to support Oxfam financially or consider volunteering, but in both cases more than 50% respond that they would definitely or possibly support Oxfam financially or volunteer for Oxfam. None of the respondents answered 'definitely not' to all four questions.

- 4.2.3. As the table below shows, most new supporters (38%) first heard about Oxfam through the Internet – in some cases through Oxfam's homepage (7%) but mostly through other sites (31%). A slightly lower percentage (30%) first learnt about Oxfam through the Oxfam shops. Only a small percentage (7%) first learnt about Oxfam through the press.

**Table 4.3: How individuals first heard about Oxfam**

	Nr	%
Internet	42	38
Oxfam shops	33	30
Friends or family	14	13
Press	8	7
Participation in Oxfam event	3	3
Other	11	10
Total	111	100

Source: CPC email survey of new Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

4.2.4. The 10% increase in the Oxfam Germany supporter base is marginal compared to Oxfam's objective of a five-fold increase of the supporter base (to 50,000 people). This raises the question why the high levels of press coverage (500 German articles mentioning Oxfam between April and June 2007) and relatively high levels of support for the Deine Stimme campaign (15,000 'voices' collected by Oxfam) were not translated in individuals signing up for Oxfam's newsletter. A detailed analysis of this question is outside the scope of this evaluation; however, Oxfam Germany and Great Britain may be able to explore internally a number of different dimensions to this issue:

- The process which led to the 50,000 target – was it realistic to expect a five-fold increase of the supporter base? How large are the supporters' bases of other German civil society organisations active in the field of advocacy on development issues? Were there any capacity constraints?
- The nature of the popular mobilisation activities undertaken in Germany and in particular whether or not these activities lend themselves to signing up for a newsletter: as mentioned, most of the new email addresses were collected through the website and the White Band activities in the Oxfam shops. The concerts, which reached wide audiences, arguably lent themselves far less to leaving an email address, as individuals used text messages to add their 'voice' to the Deine Stimme campaign during these concerts.
- Is signing up for the Oxfam newsletter the only/best method of showing (or measuring) support for the organisation? Only half of newsletter recipients indicate that they signed up for the newsletter to show their support for Oxfam (see next section). What exactly is the added value of receiving the newsletter for recipients?

- Were the newsletter and its added value systematically marketed during the popular mobilisation activities? Could more have been done in terms of strategic planning and prioritisation? One Oxfam staff believed that the promotion of the dedicated Oxfam Germany G8 website should have been a higher priority

### **4.3. Impact on views about development**

4.3.1. Assessing the impact of Oxfam's popular campaigning on people's opinion about development issues is even more difficult than assessing impacts on awareness of Oxfam. The March and July 2007 Oxfam polls (undertaken by TNS) about development issues offer a partial insight as two of the questions from the March poll were repeated in July 2007. The two questions were:

- Do you consider poverty in developing countries to be very important, important, neither important nor unimportant, not very important or not important at all?
- Which of the following activities would you engage in to encourage the German Government to do more in the struggle against poverty in Africa and other developing countries:
  - I would sign a petition;
  - I would support a development organisations such as Oxfam;
  - I would write to a politicians;
  - I would participate in a demonstration.

4.3.2. These questions cannot directly inform the impact assessment since they do not allow for attribution of any changes to Oxfam's activities: for example, it would not be possible to say whether or not an increase in the percentage of people considering poverty in developing countries as very important is the result of Oxfam's popular campaigning. Still, a comparison between the two polls allows for a general sense of any changes in German public opinion.

4.3.3. Individuals' responses to the first question (on the importance of poverty in developing countries) are presented in the table below. This table suggests that German views on the importance of poverty in the developing world stayed roughly the same between March 2007 and July 2007. The percentage of individuals considering the issue very important or important decreased marginally from 82% in the March 2007 poll to 81% in the July 2007 poll.

**Table 4.4: Views on the importance of poverty in developing countries**

%	March 2007	July 2007
Very important	29	26
Important	54	55
<i>Very important or important</i>	82	81
Neither important nor unimportant	6	7
Not very important	9	7
Not important at all	2	4
<i>Not very important or not important at all</i>	11	11
Don't know/no response	0	1
Total	100	100

Source: TNS opinion poll (March and July 2007)

- 4.3.4. Responses are also fairly similar when looking at the second question (on people's willingness to engage in lobbying and advocacy activities). The percentage of people willing to sign a petition or support a development organisation slightly decreased (from 72% to 70% and from 53% to 50% respectively); the percentage of people willing to write to a politician or participate in a demonstration slightly increased (from 31% to 34% and from 30% to 31% respectively).

**Table 4.5: Willingness to engage in lobbying activities**

%	March 2007	July 2007
I would sign a petition	72	70
I would support a development organisation such as Oxfam Germany	53	50
I would write to a politician	31	34
I would participate in a demonstration	30	31
I would not engage	10	7

Source: TNS opinion poll (March and July 2007)

- 4.3.5. The changes between the two Oxfam polls are too small to warrant any clear conclusions other than an overall impression that the German public's general attitudes to development issues have remained fairly similar. The G8 summit in Heiligendamm, the increased media attention for development issues and civil society's G8 campaigns do not appear to have led to any shifts in this

respect. Although this may seem disappointing, it is important to note that Germany started from high baselines (with just over 80% considering development to be an important issue).

4.3.6. Also, even if the different G8 campaigns do not appear to have altered the German public's views about development, they do appear to have influenced views about the G8 summit itself. The July 2007 poll included a question on whether or not respondents had been influenced in their views on the G8 by:

- The Deine Stimme campaign;
- Greenpeace;
- Herbert Gronemeyer/Bono/Bob Geldof; and,
- Oxfam Germany.

The responses are presented in the table below.

**Table 4.6: Impact of campaigns on people's views of the G8**

%	Deine Stimme gegen Armut	Greenpeace	Herbert Gronemeyer/ Bono/ Bob Geldof	Oxfam Deutschland
Strongly	22	16	15	5
To some extent	25	26	23	11
<i>Strongly or to some extent</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>16</i>
Not very much	15	17	16	15
Not at all	33	39	43	55
<i>Not very much or not at all</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>70</i>
Don't know/no response	5	3	4	15
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: TNS opinion poll (July 2007)

At first sight, Oxfam Germany seems to score relatively low (compared to other campaigns) with only 16% of respondents reporting that they have been influenced strongly or to some extent by the organisation. However, considering that Oxfam provided behind the scenes support to the Deine



Stimme campaign, they can be credited with having *contributed* to influencing almost 50% of German public opinion through this campaign: no less than 46% of respondents indicated that they had been influenced strongly or to some extent in their views about the G8 by the Deine Stimme campaign. More than one in five respondents commented that they have been strongly influenced by the campaign.

- 4.3.7. The stakeholder interviews offer some (limited) additional insights in the question of the impact of Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning on German public opinion. Despite the March 2007 opinion poll results (showing high public support for ODA and development) German stakeholders painted a relatively consistent baseline picture, suggesting that it was fairly difficult to get backing for ODA or development issues in Germany.

*“When there is a catastrophe people are prepared to provide so much financial support but there is a reluctance to support ODA” (German policy-maker)*

Stakeholders mentioned a range of different reasons for this reluctance to back ODA, including the complex institutional set-up (Germany has 5 implementing agencies), the belief that it is the quality rather than the quantity of aid that matters and fear of globalisation and migration in Germany.

- 4.3.8. One stakeholder commented that development had been *“almost a new issue for German public opinion and media”* and believed that the G8 had been *“a good exercise in moving German public opinion and the German media”*. Oxfam staff believed that the public debate on aid had shifted to some extent in that *“it had been made clear that people would not tolerate that promises would not be kept”*. However, respondents were not convinced about any major shifts in German public opinion – reflecting the findings from the March and July 2007 opinion polls. One individual commented that the focus of public attention had been *“very much celebrity-based”*; another doubted whether Germany was a more ODA-friendly place:

*“I do not know whether Germany is now more ODA-friendly. Some people are probably more depressed about ODA. They had a sugar rush and are now coming down” (NGO respondent)*

- 4.3.9. To some extent, the email survey of new Oxfam supporters can complement the information collected through the July 2007 opinion poll and the stakeholder interviews. At one level, the email survey is more limited in that it only tests the views of a particular subset of the German population: individuals who have decided to sign up for Oxfam's newsletter and as such can be considered to be interested in development issues. The fact that the email survey focuses on new subscribers can only partially address this limitation. However, the email survey allowed to dig a little deeper on the issue of Oxfam's impacts by asking respondents questions about their reasons for signing up for the newsletter and about the impact of Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning on their views and attitudes towards development issues. Importantly, the email survey of new supporters offered respondents an opportunity to comment on the impact of Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning on their views in an open question.
- 4.3.10. The table below presents the email survey responses relating to individuals' motivation for signing up for the Oxfam e-newsletter. The single most important reason was that people were interested in background information about development issues (55%); more than two fifths of all respondents were also interested in specific background information about the G8 (42%). Interestingly, more than half of all respondents indicated that they had signed up for the newsletter because they supported Oxfam's objectives. Most of these individuals had already heard about Oxfam prior to 2007, but more than a third of them had not.

**Table 4.7: Reasons for signing up for the Oxfam newsletter**

	Number	Percentage
Background information about development issues	60	55
Support for Oxfam's objectives	56	51
Background about the G8	46	42
Oxfam's analysis of development issues	28	25
Oxfam's G8 analysis	17	15
Recommendation from friend/family/colleague	5	5
Other	8	7
Total	110	100

Source: CPC email survey of new Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

Note: Percentages do not add to 100% because of multiple responses.

- 4.3.11. New Oxfam supporters were asked whether they had been influenced by Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning. The responses are presented in the table below: 60% commented that development issues had become more important to them and just under 40% thought they now knew more about development issues. Smaller percentages commented that they were more likely to lobby a politician or support Oxfam financially.

**Table 4.8: Impacts of Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning**

	Number	Percentage
Development issues are more important to me	65	60
I know more about development issues	41	38
I am more likely to lobby a politician on development issues	11	10
I am more likely to financially support a development organisation	8	7
Other	10	9
Total	109	100

Source: CPC email survey of new Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

Note: Percentages do not add to 100% because of multiple responses.

- 4.3.12. Fourteen new Oxfam supporters responded to the open question about the impact of Oxfam on their lives. The number of responses is too small to be statistically significant, but it offers some depth to the question of Oxfam's

advocacy impacts on its supporters. Responses basically split (roughly evenly) in two categories:

- Individuals comment that there have not necessarily been any changes to their views or attitudes, mainly because they were already committed to development issues. They stress that they value Oxfam as an organisation in their field of interest.

*“Hm, difficult to answer, as Oxfam is for me another organisation, alongside World Vision, Unicef, Amnesty ... in my field of interest”* (new Oxfam supporter)

*“I always knew that everyone should participate in politics but Oxfam’s G8 campaign for the first time showed me an organisation (Oxfam) I can identify with”* (new Oxfam supporter)

*“For me nothing has changed – the awareness was already there. I was already active as well. Oxfam came by and I find the information and action very good. An enrichment!”* (new Oxfam supporter)

- The second group differed from this first category in that they indicated that Oxfam’s G8 popular campaigning had *strengthened* their views about the importance of development issues;

*“My attitude to help developing countries was simply made even stronger”* (new Oxfam supporter)

*“It has once again strengthened the awareness about injustice in the world”* (new Oxfam supporter)

*“My attitude has changed in that it is always worthwhile to engage for certain issues and that one can change things”* (new Oxfam supporter)

*“I became more aware as a result. I pay more attention to fair trade”* (new Oxfam supporter)

4.3.13. The email survey of existing Oxfam supporters can also complement the evidence base on Oxfam’s G8 popular campaigning, but as was the case for the email survey of new Oxfam supporters, there are a number of important caveats:

- This second email survey is less directly relevant for the impact assessment as these individuals can safely be assumed to have already considered development issues relatively important prior to Oxfam’s G8 popular campaigning: they were already subscribed to Oxfam’s electronic newsletter prior to 2007. It is intended to give a flavour of existing

Oxfam supporters' awareness of and reactions to Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning. The survey is useful mainly in the sense that it gives a sense of whether or not the Oxfam e-newsletter is actually being read and of whether or not existing Oxfam supporters picked up on different Oxfam G8 events or publications.

- The second email survey had a much lower response rate than the survey of new Oxfam supporters with 35 completed questionnaires (3.5% response rate). This means responses must be treated with caution.
- There is a risk that the response rate is skewed towards more committed Oxfam supporters; this risk was also present in the context of the email survey of new supporters but is more directly relevant for the existing supporters survey given the nature of the questions: questions mainly related to whether or not individuals had heard about, read or participated in particular Oxfam publications and events. More committed Oxfam supporters may be more likely to be able to respond positively to these questions.

4.3.14. The table below shows responses to the question whether or not existing Oxfam supporters read the electronic newsletter. Earlier comments about the response rate must be considered, but the result is still encouraging: 75% of respondents read the Oxfam newsletter every time they receive it, either completely (27%) or partially (48%).

**Table 4.9: Do individuals read the Oxfam e-newsletter?**

	Nr	%
I read the newsletter completely, each time I receive it	9	27
I read the newsletter each time I receive it, although not completely	16	48
I read the newsletter sometimes	6	18
I have not yet read the newsletter	2	6
Total	33	100

Source: CPC email survey of existing Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

4.3.15. Existing supporters were also asked whether or not they had heard about a number of specific events or activities co-organised by Oxfam in the context of the G8, including 2 concerts organised in Berlin, the Deine Stimme campaign and the White Band actions organised in Oxfam shops across Germany. The responses are presented in the table below.

**Table 4.10: Awareness of Oxfam's G8 events**

	Nr	%
Campaign: Deine Stimme gegen Armut	27	77
Concert with Faithless and Emmanuel Jal	12	34
Concert: Sister Soul Summit	12	34
White Band Action in Oxfam shops	11	31
Total	35	100

Source: CPC email survey of existing Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because of multiple responses.

Again, responses must be treated with caution given the fairly low response rate, but respondents were most likely to have heard about the Deine Stimme campaign with more than one in four of all respondents (77%) having heard about the campaign. This result is high, but given the nature of the respondent group (Oxfam supporters) the fact that more than one in five of respondents had not heard about Deine Stimme is perhaps surprising – although not everyone necessarily comes to Oxfam from a campaigning perspective. Awareness about the Deine Stimme campaign does not appear to be related to whether or not individuals had read the newsletter: the 2 respondents who never read the newsletter were aware of the campaign; of the 6 respondents who only read the newsletter sometimes 3 knew about the campaign and 3 did not. Seven respondents (or one in five) reported that they had participated in the Deine Stimme campaign.

- 4.3.16. Existing Oxfam supporters were also asked whether they recognised key Oxfam G8 publications. Responses are presented in the table below.

**Table 4.11: Awareness of Oxfam's G8 documents**

	Nr	%
Press release: G8 misses its objective – big numbers hide failure	17	49
Position Paper: The world cannot wait	13	37
Position Paper: Adapting to climate change	12	34
Opinion poll on development policy in Germany	10	29
Background Paper: View from the summit – Gleneagles 1 year on	9	26
Total	35	100

Source: CPC email survey of existing Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because of multiple responses.

Although the response rate against cautions against firm conclusions, responses appear to be quite high, especially when considering that Oxfam's supporters are not the main target group of Oxfam's position and background papers: each of the documents was recognised by at least one in four of respondents. Oxfam Germany's concluding statement on the G8 'G8 misses its objective – big numbers hide failure' was known by almost half of respondents. Moreover, 8 individuals (or more than one in five) had read at least one of the documents: Oxfam Germany's concluding statement on the G8 was read by 8 individuals; 'The World cannot wait' was read by 4 individuals.

- 4.3.17. Eleven existing Oxfam supporters responded to one or more of the open questions on the impact of Oxfam events, Oxfam publications or other aspects of Oxfam's popular campaigning. Their responses were similar to the comments made by new Oxfam supporters: most commented that their attitudes had not really changed as they had already been committed to development issues, but that their attitudes had been strengthened or confirmed:

*"My attitude has actually not changed, but my assessment of the urgency of the issue has again been confirmed for me"*  
(existing Oxfam supporter)

*"It strengthened and confirmed my opinion"* (existing Oxfam supporter)

*"The presence of Oxfam in Heiligendamm and Rostock strengthened me in my attitude and political convictions"*  
(existing Oxfam supporter)

- 4.3.18. One supporter commented that the issue had become "*more familiar through the campaign*". Another mentioned that s/he had spoken to other people about Oxfam and hoped that they had changed their views. Two supporters suggested that Oxfam's popular campaigning encouraged them to continue to engage or to do more:

*"That one should not stop to deal with the issue of poverty in the third world and to help"* (existing Oxfam supporter)

*"I feel that I should engage even much more, as more could be achieved"* (existing Oxfam supporter)



- 4.3.19. One individual recommended that Oxfam should start its campaigning activities earlier:

*“Oxfam delivered good information as did a series of other organisations. Maybe Oxfam could have started a little earlier: I often lacked concrete information to motivate others PRIOR to the summit. But: keep up the good work!”* (existing Oxfam supporter)

- 4.3.20. One question was put to existing and new Oxfam supporters alike: Oxfam staff hoped that one outcome of their G8 popular campaigning was that *“the vast majority of the public if they know anything about the G8 now, they know that they are failing to deliver what they said”* and to test this premise Oxfam supporters were asked whether they agreed with the statement that ‘during the recent G8, G8 leaders failed to deliver on their aid promises’. Responses are presented in the table below.

**Table 4.12: Did G8 leaders fail to deliver on their aid promises?**

	Nr	%
I completely agree	66	46
I rather agree	45	32
I neither agree nor disagree	24	17
I rather disagree	4	3
I completely disagree	3	2
Total	142	100

Source: CPC email survey of new and existing Oxfam supporters (September 2007)

The vast majority of respondents (78%) completely or rather agreed with the statement; almost half of respondents agreed completely. Three respondents only completely disagreed with the statement. Although this question does not allow attributing these individuals’ views to Oxfam’s G8 popular campaigning, it is clear that the majority of the Oxfam supporters’ base agrees with Oxfam’s analysis of the G8 outcomes.

#### 4.4. Conclusion

- 4.4.1. There are some indications that Oxfam's German brand recognition has gone up: the July 2007 TNS opinion poll suggests at least 16% brand recognition (compared to 2.9% brand recognition measured in the autumn 2006 German NGO opinion poll). Oxfam Germany saw a 10% increase in its supporters base and there are indications that this new supporters' base is fairly strong with more than 90% individuals indicating that they would definitely or possibly sign an Oxfam petition. Most new supporters signed up during White Band activities in Oxfam world shops or through the Oxfam G8 website. The Internet was how most new supporters first learnt about Oxfam (mainly through other websites than the Oxfam homepage); few new supporters first learnt about Oxfam through the press. Just over 40% of new Oxfam supporters had not heard about Oxfam prior to 2007 suggesting that Oxfam's outreach succeeded in reaching a group of individuals previously unaware of Oxfam. This 10% increase is, however, low compared to Oxfam's objective of a five-fold increase in its German supporters' base.
- 4.4.2. There does not appear to have been an overall shift in German public opinion about the importance of poverty in developing countries. However, Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning does appear to have influenced people's views about the G8 summit itself: almost half of respondents to the July 2007 TNS opinion poll commented that the *Deine Stimme* campaign had influenced their views about the G8; 16% of all respondents to the poll explicitly credited Oxfam Germany with having influenced their views about the G8.
- 4.4.3. The email surveys of Oxfam supporters can further complement the evidence, although the findings from the existing supporters' survey in particular must be treated with caution given the response rate. No less than 65% of new supporters suggest that development issues have become more important to them as a result of Oxfam's popular campaigning; just over 40% feel that they now know more about development issues as a result of Oxfam's popular campaigning.
- 4.4.4. Among existing supporters, awareness of the *Deine Stimme* campaign appears to be high (more than 75% have heard about the campaign, *low response rate*), but given the nature of the target group (Oxfam supporters)

the fact that one in five of respondents had not heard about the campaign is perhaps surprising – although not everyone necessarily comes to Oxfam from a campaigning perspective. The fact that 80% of respondents (*low response rate*) did not participate in the Deine Stimme campaign suggests that there might be an untapped potential for use in future campaigns. Key Oxfam publications appear likewise well-known, especially when considering that the Oxfam supporters' base is not necessarily the target group for Oxfam's background and position papers.

- 4.4.5. Responses from new and existing supporters to open questions suggest that the main impact of Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning appears to have been to strengthen or confirm individuals' existing views about the importance of development issues. The vast majority of new and existing supporters (78%) completely or rather agreed with the statement that the G8 leaders had failed to deliver on their promises; almost 50% completely agree with the statement. Although this general agreement cannot be directly attributed to Oxfam's G8 popular campaigning, it is clear that the majority of Oxfam Germany's supporters' base agrees with Oxfam's analysis of the G8 outcomes.

## 5. COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

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### 5.1. Overall costs

5.1.1. This chapter attempts a cost-benefit analysis of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work, looking at the overall cost of Oxfam's policy, media and campaigns work and positioning the estimated costs against the outputs and outcomes of Oxfam's activities. This section tries to quantify the total cost of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work, looking on the one hand at the human resource input and on the other hand (other) financial expenditure in the context of the G8. The calculations are based on estimates provided by Oxfam staff on the amount of time they spent on the G8 Heiligendamm summit. Information about (other) financial expenditure was also provided by Oxfam staff.

5.1.2. It is important to stress that this cost-benefit analysis can offer *estimates* of the total cost of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work only. This is because:

- Information was not available for all staff or all expenses;
- Information provided by staff, in particular the information about time spent on the G8 process, are estimates; and,
- To allow for meaningful interpretation of the information provided by staff, a number of assumptions had to be made – whenever this is the case, this will be clarified.

#### *Human resource input*

5.1.3. Estimates of the amount of time spent on the G8 were available for 39 individual Oxfam staff. Estimates were presented as a percentage (e.g. 5%) or a number of days (e.g. 2 weeks). Most estimates specified a time frame (e.g. 60% from January to June); for a limited number of estimates this was not the case. All 39 estimates were transferred to a single numerical value, giving the (estimated) number of days worked on the G8 by individual members of staff. In calculating these numerical values:

- The analysis assumed 240 working days per year or 20 working days per month – for example a 25% time investment over a two-month period was presented as 10 days;

- Where no time frame was given, the calculation assumed that percentages referred to a six month period – for example, a 5% time investment was translated into 6 days (5% of 120 days);
- Where individuals referred to time spent during the actual summit without specifying an exact number of days, the analysis was based on an 8-day period for the actual summit;
- All calculations were done on the assumption that staff work full-time. In other words, if an individual commented that they had spent 60% of their time on the G8 in a particular month, 12 days were allocated to this individual. This probably led to too high estimates in a number of cases;
- Overall, the names of about 50 Oxfam staff who have worked on the G8 are known to the evaluation team; it is possible that the total number is higher still. Estimates are available for 39 individuals or just less than 80% of individuals who are known to have worked on the G8. With one or two exceptions, the individuals who did not provide estimates can be assumed not to have spent significant amounts of their time on the G8: the individuals concerned are either Oxfam directors or the information provided about their role in the G8 suggests that this role was fairly limited. Nevertheless, the fact that time estimates of only 80% of staff are included has almost certainly led to too low overall estimates. To some extent, these too low estimates will have been compensated by the fact that all staff were assumed to be working fulltime, but the final estimates are still more likely to be too low than too high.

5.1.4. The 39 Oxfam staff for whom estimates were available jointly spent just over 2,000 days or just over 100 months on the Heiligendamm G8 summit – this translates into just over 8.5 years: in other words, if all Oxfam’s G8 advocacy work had been undertaken by a single individual s/he would have spent 8.5 years on the Heiligendamm summit.

**Table 5.1: Human resource input in G8 advocacy work**

	Number
Total number of days spent	2,050
Total number of months spent	103
Total number of years spent	8.5

Source: Oxfam staff estimates and CPC calculations

5.1.5. The table below presents the estimated number of days spent by Oxfam staff in different national Oxfam affiliates. The availability of information was similar for Oxfam staff from different national Oxfam affiliates, with at least 80% of staff providing estimates from Oxfam Great Britain (17 out of 21),

Oxfam Germany (15 out of 18) and other Oxfam affiliates (6 out of 7). Information was only provided for one member of staff from Oxfam International which is why the information from Oxfam International has been excluded from the table below. Oxfam Great Britain staff who acted as Oxfam International leads on the G8 were counted as Oxfam Great Britain staff.

**Table 5.2: Human resource input by different Oxfam affiliates**

	Nr of days	Nr of months	Nr of years	%
Oxfam Germany	1,106	55	4.6	56
Oxfam Great Britain	789	39	3.3	40
Other Oxfam affiliates (5 organisations)	65	3	0.3	3
Total	1,960	98	8.2	100

Source: Oxfam staff estimates and CPC calculations

Note: The sum of the number of months does not add to 98 because of rounding; the percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

The table suggests that over half of the human resource input came from Oxfam Germany (with just more than 1,000 days spent on the G8) alongside a significant human resource input from Oxfam Great Britain (just under 800 days spent on the G8) and smaller inputs from the other Oxfam affiliates.

- 5.1.6. Oxfam staff involved in the G8 process spent on average 53 days (or just over 25% of their time) on the G8 process. Average spent in Oxfam Germany was 74 days (or just under one third of their time), 46 days (or just under 25% of staff time) in Oxfam Great Britain and 11 days for staff in other affiliates (or just over 5% of staff time). These averages hide significant variety, with time spent by individual members of staff varying between 5 and 191 days (this last figure over a 14 month period).

**Table 5.3: Average staff time spent on G8 in Oxfam affiliates**

	Nr of days	% of staff time
Oxfam Germany	74	37
Oxfam Great Britain	46	23
Other Oxfam affiliates	11	6
Oxfam overall	53	27

Source: Oxfam staff estimates and CPC calculations

5.1.7. A limited number of staff provided detailed information about the different activities they undertook in the context of the G8. However, the number of individuals providing this level of detail was too low to allow for any in-depth analysis. It has, however, been possible to allocate the time of 22 individuals to one of the three main areas of Oxfam’s advocacy work: policy work, media work or campaigning.

- The time spent by each of these 22 individuals was allocated to one focus area only, according to the information provided about the individual’s role and activities. This method of allocation is imperfect in that most members of staff are likely to have spent time on more than one focus area: for example, a ‘policy’ person may have participated in media interviews. However, this spillage is likely to have worked in different directions and allocating individuals to policy, media or campaigning gives a rough estimate of the human resource inputs in these three different fields.
- In 17 cases allocation was not possible because of lack of information or the general nature of staff roles (e.g. administrative or general support roles); this also included a limited number of instances where roles crossed different focus areas (e.g. Internet work). The time of these remaining 17 individuals was allocated to the three focus areas proportionate to the time of the 22 individuals spent on policy, media and campaigns. In other words, once it had been established that 21% of staff time could be allocated to policy work, 21% of the time of the remaining 17 individuals was likewise allocated to policy work.

**Table 5.4: Human resource input in policy, media and campaigns**

	Nr of days	Nr of months	Nr of years	%
Policy work	429	21	1.8	21
Media work	479	24	2.0	23
Campaigns	1,142	57	4.8	56
Total	2,050	103	8.5	100

Source: Oxfam staff estimates and CPC calculations

Note: The sum of the number of years does not add to 8.5 because of rounding.

The table suggest that over half of the human resource input went towards campaigning (more than 1,000 days). The human resource input for policy and media work appears to have been fairly similar with 429 days spent on policy work and 479 days spent on media work.



- 5.1.8. No detailed information was available about the wage cost of individual Oxfam staff. In order to try to provide a financial estimate of the human resource input into the Heiligendamm G8 calculations were based on the assumption of an average annual wage cost of £26,200<sup>3</sup>. The table below presents the overall estimates.

**Table 5.5: Cost of human resource input**

	Cost
Oxfam Germany	£120,776
Oxfam Great Britain	£86,159
Other Oxfam affiliates	£7,098
Policy work	£46,847
Media work	£52,307
Campaigns	£124,706
Total	£223,860

Source: Oxfam staff estimates and CPC calculations

Note: The sum of the human resource inputs of the different national Oxfam affiliates is lower than the total human resource cost because Oxfam International costs were excluded.

The table suggests that the financial cost of Oxfam's human resource input into the G8 process amounts to just under £225,000. It is important to remember that this figure is based on (partial) estimates provided by Oxfam staff and on a number of assumptions; however, it provides an order of magnitude of the human resource input. The question whether or not £225,000 is 'a lot' needs to be seen against the backdrop of what was achieved through Oxfam's G8 advocacy work; an attempt to answer this question will be given towards the end of this chapter. However, it is possible to put this amount in some perspective by comparing it against the total human resource budget of Oxfam.

- 5.1.9. No overview figures are available for the different Oxfam affiliates, but figures are available for Oxfam Great Britain's payroll costs. The total

<sup>3</sup>

This assumption is based on Oxfam's 2006 Annual Report and Accounts: the report mentions a total payroll cost of £47.9 million for 1,828 full time equivalents, which suggests a payroll cost per full-time equivalent of just over £26,200. The actual calculations were done on the basis of a wage cost of £109.2 per day spent on the G8 – daily wage costs were used to limit differences due to rounding.

payroll for Oxfam Great Britain adds to just under £48 million (2005-2006 figures). Given that 176 out of Oxfam’s 1,828 full-time equivalents are working in the Campaigns and Policy Division, the payroll for this Division can be estimated at £4.6 million. The G8 human resource input from Oxfam Great Britain staff amounts to 789 days or £86,159. This means that just under 2% of the payroll cost of Oxfam Great Britain’s Campaigns and Policy Division was spent on the G8.

*Financial expenditure*

5.1.10. Partial information was provided about other financial expenditure in the context of the G8, mainly by Oxfam Great Britain staff. The information is presented in the table below.

**Table 5.6: Other financial expenditure**

	Cost
World Cannot Wait campaign	£15,000
G8 logistics (including accommodation)	£25,000
Stunts	£14,000
Financial Times open letter	£8,000
German public opinion surveys	£4,000
Travel expenses ( <i>see note</i> )	£15,100
Total	£81,100

Source: Oxfam staff estimates except for travel expenses

Note: No information was provided about the travel costs, but Oxfam staff mentioned 14 trips in the run-up to the G8 (almost all between the United Kingdom and Germany). Moreover, 20 Oxfam staff are known to have participated in the G8 summit in Heiligendamm from other Oxfam affiliates (other than Oxfam Germany), requiring 13 European and 7 long distance flights. If European flights are costed at £300 (27 flights) and non-European flights at £1,000 (7 flights), travel expenses can be estimated at £15,100.

A rough estimate of other financial expenditure encountered by Oxfam in the context of the G8 is just over £80,000 – although a number of costs are not included in this table: for example, no figures were available on the costs of organising the two Berlin concerts.

5.1.11. To be able to evaluate this amount, it needs to be put against the total budget available for Oxfam’s advocacy work. Again, no overview figures are available for the different Oxfam affiliates, but Oxfam Great Britain’s 2006

Annual Report and Accounts indicate that £14.4 million was spent on campaigning and advocacy in 2006. Assuming that this includes the estimated £4.6 million wage cost of the Campaigning and Policy Division, just under £10 million was available for other financial expenditure in advocacy work. This means that the estimated £81,100 spent on the G8 campaign presents just under 1% of Oxfam Great Britain's annual campaigning and advocacy budget (excluding staff costs).

*Total G8 budget*

- 5.1.12. Combining the estimates for the human resource input and other financial expenditure provides a very rough estimate of the total cost of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work at just over £300,000 (£304,960). This amount does not include the opportunity cost or the other activities that Oxfam could have accomplished with its budget of £81,100 and its human resource inputs of over 2,000 man/days. It has not been possible to undertake a detailed analysis of the opportunity costs of Oxfam's G8 activities within the scope of this assignment, but Oxfam may wish to further explore this issue internally. To do so would imply *benchmarking* Oxfam's G8 resource input against Oxfam's resource input in other, similar advocacy (or possibly non-advocacy) activities.
- 5.1.13. It is possible to compare estimates for the total cost of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work during the actual G8 summit and during the months in the run-up to the summit. These calculations were done on the assumption that all 39 staff for whom estimates were available spent more or less all their time on G8 advocacy work for a 10 day period in the immediate run-up to and during the summit: 390 days of staff time were allocated to the actual summit; the remaining 1,660 days were allocated to the months prior to the summit. Allocation of the other financial expenditure to either the summit or the run-up was fairly straightforward; estimated travel expenses were split between 14 European flights in the run-up and 20 (13 European and 7 long-distance) flights for the actual summit

**Table 5.7: Total costs for the G8 summit and preceding months**

	Actual summit	Preceding months
Human resource input	£42,588	£181,272
World Cannot Wait campaign		£15,000
G8 logistics (including accommodation)	£25,000	
Stunts	£14,000	
Financial Times open letter		£8,000
German public opinion surveys (2)		£4,000
Travel expenses (see note)	£10,900	£4,200
Total	£92,488	£212,472

Source: Oxfam staff estimates and CPC calculations

The table suggests that just under a third of the budget was spent during the actual summit; two thirds were spent during the months preceding the G8.

5.1.14. Similarly, it is possible to give estimates of the total amount of money (human resources and other financial expenditure) spent on policy, media and advocacy work. Human resource costs for the three different areas have already been calculated. The other financial expenditure was allocated as follows:

- Costs for the World Cannot Wait campaign were allocated to campaigns;
- Costs for the stunts were split evenly between media and campaigns;
- Costs for the Financial Times ad and the opinion polls were split evenly between policy, media and campaigning;
- Pre-summit travel expenses were allocated to policy;
- Costs for G8 logistics and travel expenses for the summit were split between campaigns, policy and media proportionate to the total costs for each of these three areas – in other words, once it had been established that the costs for policy work presented 21% of the total costs (excluding logistics and summit travel), 21% of the costs for logistics and travel expenses for the summit were allocated to policy work.

**Table 5.8: Total G8 budget on policy, media and campaigns**

	Policy	Media	Campaigns
Human resource input	£46,847	£52,307	£124,706
World Cannot Wait campaign			£15,000
Stunts		£7,000	£7,000
Financial Times open letter	£2,667	£2,667	£2,666
German public opinion surveys (2)	£2,000	£2,000	
Travel expenses (before the summit)	£4,200		
Travel expenses (summit)	£2,289	£2,616	£5,995
G8 logistics (including accommodation)	£5,250	£6,000	£13,750
Total	£63,253	£72,590	£169,117

Source: Oxfam staff estimates and CPC calculations

This table suggests that just over 20% of the total G8 budget was spent on policy work, just under 25% on media work and 55% on campaigns.

## 5.2. Cost-effectiveness of Oxfam's advocacy work

- 5.2.1. In trying to assess the cost-effectiveness of Oxfam's advocacy work, two routes are followed. The first route is to attempt to provide additional quantitative information and to assess the unit cost of a limited number of G8 outcomes. These unit costs are an oversimplification and relate to intermediary outcomes only, but they give some (quantitative) sense of the cost-effectiveness of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work.
- 5.2.2. The total campaigning budget amounted to a little over £165,000. The main focus of Oxfam's campaigning activities was arguably the Deine Stimme campaign. Overall, 1 million 'voices' were collected. The campaign, if heavily supported by Oxfam, was managed by GCAP and supported by a number of other NGOs, so caution is needed when placing the £165,000 campaign budget against the 1 million voices. Still, to the extent that Oxfam's £165,000 campaign budget contributed to the 1 million voices, Oxfam's contribution can be costed at just over 15p per 'voice'.

- 5.2.3. The total media budget amounted to just under £75,000. Earlier calculations suggested that it is not implausible that overall, Oxfam was mentioned, pictured or involved in about 1,000 examples of G8 media coverage. This suggests that Oxfam's G8 media work can be costed at about £75 per article.
- 5.2.4. Finally, Oxfam's G8 policy budget amounted to just under £65,000. It is much more difficult to point to quantitative outputs in the context of Oxfam's policy work. However, if we assume that Oxfam's policy staff was in direct, regular and fairly intense contact with about 30-35 individuals, this would suggest that Oxfam's advocacy work can be costed at about £2,000 per individual targeted. One way of interpreting this figure is that adding a new policy contact to the list of Oxfam's G8 advocacy target group 'costs' Oxfam £2,000.
- 5.2.5. These unit costs refer to intermediate outcomes rather than the final policy objectives of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work, which was to influence the political outcomes of the G8 discussions. It is not possible to continue the quantitative analysis and at this point the cost-benefit analysis must return to the stakeholder interviews and individuals' perceptions about the relative importance of public opinion, media and direct interaction with policy-makers in influencing policy outcomes. It may be useful to keep in mind when looking at the qualitative evidence from the interviews that, given the unit costs of 'voices', press articles and policy contacts, the analysis should roughly equate contacts with one policy-maker with around 25 press articles and around 15,000 'voices' against poverty.

*Relative importance of policy contacts, media and public opinion*

- 5.2.6. Although most if not all officials interviewed valued the direct exchanges with Oxfam staff, only one hinted that s/he had been influenced personally by Oxfam in the context of the G8: some of the information in a particular Oxfam publication had been new to her/im. The apparent lack of any direct influence on policy-makers appeared to be partially caused by the fact that individuals already shared Oxfam's views on the importance of development issues; this was true for most development policy-makers, but was not limited to this group. Another explanation is the political nature of G8 discussions: the items on the G8 agenda have been around in the global political arena for

some time and policy-makers are likely to be aware of the different dimensions and perspectives on the topics and to have well-established and thought-through views on them. This appears to be confirmed by the fact that several policy-makers commented that they had been personally influenced by Oxfam in the past, outside the direct G8 context. Examples quoted included discussions about Economic Partnership Agreements and debt.

- 5.2.7. Most of the UK policy-makers described their meetings with Oxfam as exchanges of information and strategy discussions rather than advocacy work, pointing out that the UK Government's and Oxfam's positions on the G8 were fairly similar and that there was little 'influencing' to do as such. One or two of them suggested that the exchange of information had mostly been in one direction:

*"To some extent we were talking past each other; it was an exchange of information which went in one way: we were feeding Oxfam intelligence"* (UK policy-maker)

This was also the case for a number of non-UK policy-makers, although in particular among development officials.

*"Younger Oxfam staff, when they come to see me, just start from the beginning, not realising that I basically share their views"* (Development policy-maker)

As a result, a number of policy-makers believed that Oxfam had possibly less to gain from its direct contacts with policy-makers as Oxfam was seen at risk of "*preaching to the converted*".

- 5.2.8. That being said, several of the policy-makers interviewed seemed to suggest (if often indirectly) that contact with policy-makers was an effective method of influencing policy in the context of the G8. One (non-development) policy-maker commented that the G8 leaders are being briefed by different teams and Departments and that it was "*crucial*" that Oxfam talks to those teams. Another (non-development) policy-maker likewise commented on the importance of direct contact: "*if people just sent a publication, I may not read it; we get so many publications*". Similarly, a development policy-maker believed that "*writing letters to ministers is important but does not move things; ministers just give it to their staff*". A senior development policy-



maker commented that *“the most effective method is direct contact with policy-makers, although media work is also important”*. Several stressed the importance of continuous discussions:

*“The intervention would be more efficient if there was a continuous contact, not just one-off. This would be better to build confidence”* (Policy-maker)

*“The more interventions, the higher the chance that something will happen”* (German policy-maker)

- 5.2.9. Policy-makers formulated a number of recommendations or suggestions to Oxfam on its policy work. One senior G8 policy-maker commented that it was:

*“Important to remember that the G8 negotiations are paper-based negotiations. If you don’t focus on specifics and on language you get the same kind of wishy-washy outcomes for which NGOs then criticise you afterwards”* (Policy-maker)

This respondent pointed out that the ideas s/he gets from NGOs are *“not very different”* from the ideas presented to her/im by the development ministry and that even when *“giving people a blank piece of paper and asking for their ideas”* s/he never gets *“anything particularly sexy or novel”* from the development ministry. Another senior policy-maker commented that they had probably not seen enough senior staff and that Oxfam probably *“underestimates the appetite at ministerial level for a strategic dialogue”*. A third official believed that Oxfam had something to gain from differentiating their messages more and *“distinguishing more clearly what they want from different Departments”*.

- 5.2.10. Policy-makers in the four countries included in this evaluation pointed out that, although peer pressure from other Governments was important, public support for ODA at national level was absolutely crucial to achieve G8 outcomes on ODA. Respondents believed Oxfam had an important role to play in generating public support for ODA, in particular in G8 countries less committed to ODA. When asked whether Oxfam had played this role in the context of the 2007 G8, respondents presented different pictures for the UK and German context.

- 5.2.11. UK respondents tended to agree about the “*fairly robust and strong support*” for ODA in the UK and they credited Oxfam with having contributed to this support. Several believed that Oxfam had “*clearly been influential in 2005*” and that Oxfam and other civil society organisation played an important role in “*repeating the same message about the importance of keeping commitments*” and ensuring that the general pressure remains and that development “*stays on the UK radar*”.
- 5.2.12. However, the general impression of the stakeholders involved in the evaluation was that there had not been a wide popular movement in Germany. One UK policy-maker commented that Oxfam Germany staff themselves had told him/her that “*they were not at the forefront of a big movement in Germany to make poverty history*”. Many respondents (including policy-makers, NGO respondents, Oxfam staff and journalists) pointed to the divided German NGO landscape; individuals also pointed to a number of lost opportunities in the Deine Stimme campaign and the challenge of working with a German pop star who did not want to engage with the Government. A number of respondents commented that the German NGO scene focused more on the development of a parallel process (in particular the parallel civil society summit) and less on direct interaction with the actual G8 process; these individuals believed that lower levels of direct interactions almost automatically limit the scope for influencing the summit outcomes. One NGO respondent believed that the Sister Soul summit had been strategically unwise and had not contributed to the policy objectives of Oxfam’s G8 advocacy work.
- 5.2.13. Several contrasted the German situation with the UK: it was felt that in the UK NGOs and public opinion play a particular role in the G8 process but that “*German public opinion was not hugely important in influencing the German Government*”. One respondent thought that the formal G8 outreach to NGOs felt a bit like “*a showpiece*” and that there was “*no influence from any mass mobilisation*” as had been the case in 2005 in the UK. A senior German policy-maker appeared to confirm the limited impact of German public opinion on the G8 outcomes by commenting that “*public opinion is not really different from media work*”, suggesting that it was press coverage rather than a broad popular campaign that influenced the policy process. As reported earlier, none of the officials referred to the opinion poll of German attitudes

to development aid (commissioned by Oxfam) but the findings of the poll were used in the German Government's press releases and, when asked, one German development official confirmed that the poll had given them "good arguments".

5.2.14. Unsurprisingly, press coverage was generally seen as an important influencing factor on policy-makers, in particular the relentless focus in the press on the importance of keeping the Gleneagles promises. At the same time, stakeholders pointed to a number of possible weaknesses or risks in this respect:

- One member of Oxfam wondered whether "by insisting too much on financial issues" Oxfam had "got on the nerves of leaders". This individual wondered whether Oxfam should have taken up the issue of good governance more, especially in the German context where there is a strong debate on the effectiveness of aid. Discussions with German journalists seemed to confirm this view to an extent: one German journalist who seemed to have a positive overall attitude towards Oxfam and accept the importance of development aid commented that s/he was "not convinced that more money is the answer". A UK policy-maker presented a similar view, accepting that it was important that Oxfam kept repeating the message of keeping promises but that this was not the only thing that mattered: "ODA is not just floating there in the ether; there are other things to say about development aid".
- Several UK officials expressed a concern that Oxfam's "glass half-full approach" carried a risk and that it was important for Oxfam to get its strategic messaging right. If the balance shifts and public opinion starts to become more critical of ODA, then the UK Government will have less of an incentive to focus on ODA which will make it more difficult to keep the Gleneagles promises.

*"We are getting into a scenario of boom or burst: there is no middle ground; it is either a great success – Bono and Geldof giving the UK Government 10 out of 10 in 2005 or a complete disappointment. The next two G8s in Japan and Italy are perhaps more likely to be disappointments. Will all the negative G8 publicity not lead to a backlash against development aid?"* (UK policy-maker)

*"Their weakness is that, although they are relatively close to influencing the agenda, nothing is ever good enough. This happened in 2005, to a lesser extent in 2006 and again in 2007"* (UK policy-maker)

- Finally, several officials interviewed as part of this evaluation also felt that Oxfam should differentiate more between the efforts of different G8 partners: a French policy-maker commented that the French Government

had followed a number of Oxfam's debt suggestions, whereas other G8 countries had not, but that there had been no follow-up. S/he felt that Oxfam should make individual G8 members' efforts more visible. The need to also focus on ODA achievements was also echoed in the interviews with Japanese and in particular UK policy-makers.

*“There is always a lot of engagement during the summit, but there is little administrative follow-up”* (French policy-maker)

- 5.2.15. It is important to point out that the duration of the policy-maker interviews did not allow for detailed discussion with *all* policy-makers on the relative importance of direct contacts, public opinion and media. Those policy-makers who did comment on the relative importance of these three different approaches tended to stress that it was difficult to know what ultimately influenced the decision-making process and that undoubtedly popular support (including the *Deine Stimme* campaign), press coverage and direct policy contacts had all played 'a' role in a complex maze of influencing factors. The picture painted above on the basis of policy-makers' responses hides some of this nuance that was present in many interviews. Ultimately, the question on the relative importance of direct policy contacts, public opinion and media work is a very difficult one to call. Unsurprisingly, there appears to be little doubt about the importance of media work. Policy work may be slightly more complex because few if any policy-makers admitted to having been influenced personally in the context of the G8, but on balance its value seems confirmed in the stakeholder interviews. The case studies described in chapter 2 also appear to confirm the importance of policy work: in particular, the case study on the health systems debate can be considered a test in this respect as health systems did not generate (much) media coverage or wider public interest. Oxfam was generally credited with having allowed the health systems debate to take place at a higher political level and having acted as a counterweight against the lack of interest from sherpas. This outcome can be directly attributed to Oxfam's direct contacts with policy people.
- 5.2.16. The most difficult one to call is the role of popular mobilisation and thus Oxfam's campaigning work in the context of the G8. It is clear that the popular mobilisation activities led to impressive intermediary outcomes including for example 42,000 individuals signing the open letter to the G8 Finance ministers online and about 550 individuals per day accessing G8 material on the Oxfam Great Britain website (between the 31<sup>st</sup> of May and the 6<sup>th</sup> of June). It is harder to assess to what extent these intermediary outcomes

translated into actual impacts on the G8 policy process: interviews seem to suggest that popular mobilisation can play a crucial role if a certain critical mass can be achieved, as was the case in 2005:

*“Why do Tony Blair and Gordon Brown care? Because they probably genuinely care about Africa and because of their voters – magnified through NGO action”* (UK Policy-maker)

If this critical mass is not achieved, as arguably was the case in 2007, the effectiveness of popular mobilisation is in all likelihood much more limited and there may be value in the advice of one NGO respondent that *“Oxfam is not an activist organisation, they should not spread themselves too thinly. They should focus on what they do well: their policy and media work”*. The fact that the total budget for campaigning activities presents around 55% of Oxfam’s G8 advocacy budget suggests that the cost-effectiveness of popular mobilisation – *in terms of achieving policy change* – may also have been more limited.

- 5.2.17. This leaves Oxfam with a difficult decision in the context of the 2008 and 2009 G8s in Japan and Italy: on the one hand policy-makers in the UK, Germany, France and Japan stressed the crucial importance of popular support for ODA if G8 outcomes on ODA are to be achieved. On the other hand, it may be unlikely that the ‘critical mass’ of popular support required to impact on decision-making can be achieved, especially given current low (reported) levels of support for development issues and ODA in Japan and Italy and, in particular in the case of Japan, the available timeframe. Oxfam may end up spending a large proportion of its G8 expenditure and human resource input on achieving fairly limited results (in terms of policy change). One possible option that may be worth considering would be to strongly focus 2008 popular mobilisation efforts on Italy in preparation for the 2009 summit.
- 5.2.18. One important comment must be added to the tentative conclusion that Oxfam’s 2007 G8 campaigning activities had a fairly limited impact on the G8 policy outcomes. Even if Oxfam’s campaigning activities or the *Deine Stimme* campaign would not have had any impacts on the G8 policy outcomes, they are likely to have directly contributed to the 10% increase in Oxfam Germany’s supporters’ base. Ensuring demonstrable public concern

was one of Oxfam's four strategic G8 objectives and increasing the German supporters' base was a crucial element of this objective. Even if the impact of new supporters on the actual G8 outcomes were small, the new supporters can be seen as an important long-term investment. If the new supporters' base is seen as the main result of the campaigning arm of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work, it may be important to keep in mind that more new supporters signed up to the newsletter through the G8 website and the White Band actions in Oxfam shops than during the concerts and that the Internet (mainly other websites than the Oxfam homepage) was the main channel for how new supporters first learnt about the organisation.

- 5.2.19. The 10% increase in Oxfam Germany's supporters' base is low compared to the initial aim of a five-fold increase in the supporters' base. If for the sake of argument the main outcome of Oxfam's campaigning activities are the 1,000 new Oxfam supporters and that new Oxfam supporters mainly joined because of the different campaigning activities (as opposed to say press coverage), a new Oxfam supporter can be costed at £165. If 40,000 new supporters had signed up, as initially planned, each new supporter would only have costed £4. In that sense, the message coming out of the cost-benefit analysis is not necessarily that Oxfam should reduce its popular campaigning activities but rather that there is a need for clear strategic planning and prioritisation to ensure that the popular campaigning activities result in higher support levels.

*Relative importance of activity during the actual G8 summit*

- 5.2.20. The total budget showed that just less than one third of Oxfam's G8 budget was spent during the actual G8 summit and just over two thirds during the preceding months. It is difficult to be definite about the timing of Oxfam's impact on the G8 policy outcomes, especially given that one stakeholder suggested that the \$60 billion announcement may have been a late decision. However, policy-makers seemed to suggest that decision-making takes place at an early stage, especially given the paper-based nature of the G8 negotiations:

*"To be honest if something is not in the draft by February or March, it is not going to get in" (UK Policy-maker)*



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Policy-makers suggested that the “*general atmosphere*” during the G8 played a role, but did not think this general atmosphere should be overplayed, especially given that “*the G8 has a bad reputation anyway*”.

5.2.21. The main outcome of Oxfam’s presence during the G8 appears to have been in Oxfam’s press work and in particular the analysis of and comments on the final Africa communiqué and specifically the \$60 billion announcement. Oxfam staff themselves recognised that their G8 delegation may arguably have been too big during the initial days of the summit and that the delegation maybe needed a stronger focus on press officers and may have been too policy-heavy. It is clear that the speed of Oxfam’s press releases during the G8 was important and stakeholders also commented on the fact that spokespeople and press releases were available for different countries and in different languages – suggesting that there was value in a fairly substantial delegation.

5.2.22. In terms of cost-effectiveness, the question is whether Oxfam’s impact during the actual G8 summit represent roughly a third of Oxfam’s overall impact on the G8 outcomes. Essentially, Oxfam managed to counter the G8 leaders’ claim that they were keeping their ODA promises. Given the fact that Oxfam staff were generally rather disappointed about their impact on the G8 process, for Oxfam this fact may represent roughly a third of Oxfam’s impact on the G8 process. However, one can wonder whether a smaller delegation would not have achieved the same results.

#### *Cost-benefit analysis of specific activities*

5.2.23. It has not been possible, within the scope of this assignment, to undertake a detailed cost-benefit analysis of specific Oxfam activities, mainly because there was little or no evidence to link particular impacts and outcomes to specific activities: stakeholders already found it difficult to attribute impacts to Oxfam (as opposed to other actors and elements influencing the G8 process), attributing impacts to specific Oxfam *activities* would have been even more difficult. However, a number of tentative points can be made:

- The stunts can tentatively be costed at £16,000 (£14,000 plus an estimated £2,000 – or 18 days in human resource input). It is likely that the stunts may have contributed to increased pressure on G8 leaders or popular support for Oxfam’s G8 positions, but there is no evidence linking these



outcomes to the stunts; the overall cost-effectiveness of the stunts can only be measured in terms of media coverage generated by the stunts. Oxfam's media work was costed at £75 per article. This suggests that photographs of the stunts would need to have been published just more than 200 times (or 50 times per stunt) to have similar levels of cost-effectiveness as Oxfam's overall media work<sup>4</sup>. As mentioned earlier, Oxfam's internal media evaluation document includes 25 references to coverage of the Pinocchio stunt. This internal Oxfam document does not aim to give a comprehensive overview of press coverage which means that the actual coverage of the Pinocchio stunt will probably have been higher. At the same time, the Pinocchio stunt was reported to have been the most successful. It is difficult to reach definitive conclusions, but there is no clear evidence that the big heads photographs were published 200 times and on balance the big head stunts were probably slightly less cost-effective than the totality of Oxfam's media work (in terms of media coverage – not in terms of the *impact* of the media work).

- The opinion polls costed Oxfam £4,000; however, this included both the March 2007 poll (the results of which were released and used in Oxfam's advocacy work) and the July 2007 poll (the results of which were only meant as internal comparison material and as such were not part of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work) and an assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the opinion poll should start from the cost of the March 2007 poll (£2,000). This means that the opinion poll cost Oxfam as much as the unit cost of its policy work (£2,000 for a series of contacts with one G8 policy-maker) and the relevant question is whether the impact of the opinion poll was at least as high as the impact of discussions with one policy-maker. It is difficult to be definitive on this (as any) aspect of the cost-effectiveness calculations, but it is a reasonable assumption that the impact of the opinion poll was indeed at least as high (and arguably significantly higher) than Oxfam's contacts with one of its 30-odd G8 policy-maker contacts: as mentioned earlier, the results of the poll were widely quoted (including in a German Government press release) and although none of the German officials referred to the poll unprompted, when asked one development official responded that the poll had been useful by providing his/er Ministry with "*good arguments*".
- The open letter costed £8,000<sup>5</sup> but assessing the impact of the open letter is difficult: the advertisement was published in the International Financial Times (in all G8 and EU countries) and distributed to the G8 Finance Ministries but it is difficult to estimate how many people actually noticed,

<sup>4</sup> At one level, the comparison between the stunts and Oxfam's overall media work is flawed, because press coverage for the stunts does not always include a direct reference to Oxfam. The main impact of the press coverage for the stunts lies arguably in its impact on public opinion; however, this impact could not be tested as part of this evaluation.

<sup>5</sup> A large proportion of the human resource input for the open letter came from (unpaid) interns. This means that the human resource cost of the open letter should be seen mainly in terms of the opportunity cost (what these interns would otherwise have done with their time) rather than actual financial cost.

read or were influenced by the advertisement. It is a fair assumption that the press offices of the G8 Finance Ministries (or G8 Governments) noticed or were alerted to the advertisements, but their actual impact is unclear. Unprompted, the open letter was not mentioned by any of the policy-makers and time constraints meant that with one possible exception<sup>6</sup> the open letter was not discussed during the stakeholder interviews. As mentioned earlier, the open letter was signed by 42,000 supporters through Avaaz – this is an impressive figure; however it can only be considered as an intermediate outcome and it is an open question whether or not these 42,000 signatories had any impact on the G8 policy outcomes. Given that the open letter was presented as a GCAP initiative (even if it was funded by Oxfam), it is reasonable to assume that there will not have been any real impacts in terms of increasing support for Oxfam or increasing Oxfam’s name recognition.

*Bottom line of Oxfam’s advocacy work*

- 5.2.24. Finally, the German government’s €750 million ODA top-up allows for a (tentative) analysis of the budgetary bottom line of Oxfam’s G8 advocacy work. Oxfam’s total G8 budget is costed at around £300,000. Oxfam’s total G8 investment of £300,000 (or €450,000) represents 0.06% of this German ODA increase. For Oxfam to break even, one needs to assume that Oxfam had at least 0.06% influence over the German Government’s decision to increase its ODA. This is a reasonable assumption given that stakeholder interviews suggest that the constant references in the media to keeping the Gleneagles promises in the run-up to the G8 (which can at least partially be attributed to Oxfam) contributed to creating the general atmosphere which allowed the ODA increase to take place. This suggests that Oxfam’s G8 investment presents value for money.

### 5.3. Conclusions

- 5.3.1. A rough estimate puts the total cost of Oxfam’s G8 advocacy work at £300,000, including a human resource input of just over 2,000 days. Calculations suggest that Oxfam’s contribution to intermediary G8 outputs can be costed at just over 15p for each ‘voice’ against poverty, £75 for each article referring to Oxfam and £2,000 for a series of direct contacts with one

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<sup>6</sup> The one exception was a journalist doubting the newsworthiness of the advertisement.

policy-maker. In other words, contacts with one policy-maker stand for around 25 press articles or around 15,000 ‘voices’ against poverty.

- 5.3.2. About 55% of the total budget can be allocated to Oxfam’s campaigning activities compared to around 20% to Oxfam’s G8 policy work and 25% to Oxfam’s G8 press work. The question on the relative importance of direct policy contacts, public opinion and media work is a very difficult one to call. Unsurprisingly, there appears to be little doubt about the importance of media work. Policy work may be slightly more complex because few if any policy-makers admitted to having been influenced personally in the context of the G8, but on balance its value seems confirmed in the stakeholder interviews and through the case studies, in particular the case study on the health systems debate. The most difficult to call is the role of popular mobilisation and thus Oxfam’s campaigning work in the context of the G8. It is clear that the popular mobilisation activities led to impressive intermediary outcomes including for example 42,000 individuals signing the open letter to the G8 Finance ministers online and about 550 individuals per day accessing G8 material on the Oxfam Great Britain website (between 31<sup>st</sup> of May and 6<sup>th</sup> of June). It is harder to assess to what extent these intermediary outcomes translated into actual impacts on the G8 policy process: interviews seem to suggest that popular mobilisation can play a crucial role in influencing G8 policy outcomes if a certain critical mass can be achieved, as was the case in 2005, but that this critical mass may not have been achieved in 2007. Oxfam is left with a difficult decision for the 2008 and 2009 G8s in Japan and Italy: on the one hand policy-makers stress the crucial importance of popular support for ODA if G8 outcomes on ODA are to be achieved; on the other hand, it may be unlikely that the critical mass of popular support required to impact on decision-making can be achieved. One possible option may be to strongly focus 2008 popular mobilisation on Italy, in preparation for the 2009 summit. Oxfam’s popular mobilisation activities did, however, contribute to a 10% increase in the Oxfam Germany’s supporters’ base – this increase is significantly lower than the five-fold increase Oxfam was hoping to achieve but can be considered as a long-term investment.
- 5.3.3. Just less than one third of the total budget was spent during the actual G8 summit; two thirds were spent during the preceding months. The main outcome of Oxfam’s G8 presence appears to be that Oxfam managed to

counter the G8 leaders' claim that they were keeping their ODA promises. Arguably, this fact represents roughly a third of Oxfam's impact on the G8 process. However, one can wonder whether a smaller delegation would not have achieved the same results. It is difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness of specific activities, but the available evidence suggests that the March 2007 opinion poll of German attitudes to development scores quite high in this respect.

- 5.3.4. Finally, the German government's €750 million ODA top-up allows for a (tentative) analysis of the budgetary bottom line of Oxfam's G8 advocacy work. Oxfam's total G8 budget is costed at around £300,000. Oxfam's total G8 investment of £300,000 (or €450,000) represents 0.06% of this German ODA increase. For Oxfam to break even, one needs to assume that Oxfam had at least 0.06% influence over the German Government's decision to increase its ODA. This is a reasonable assumption given that stakeholder interviews suggest that the constant references in the media to keeping the Gleneagles promises in the run-up to the G8 (which can at least partially be attributed to Oxfam) contributed to creating the general atmosphere which allowed the ODA increase to take place. This suggests that Oxfam's G8 investment presents value for money.

## ANNEX PERCEPTIONS ABOUT OXFAM

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1. This assignment focused on assessing the impacts of Oxfam's advocacy work but interviews frequently touched on individuals' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of Oxfam. As these perceptions may be of some value, they are being presented in this annex. They focus on the views of policy-makers and other civil society organisations; the perceptions of journalists of the strengths and weaknesses of Oxfam were presented in chapter 4.
2. Overall, respondents in all four countries included in this evaluation were generous with their praise for Oxfam and several found it very difficult or impossible to point to weaknesses.
3. Policy-makers stressed the credibility of Oxfam's materials and arguments and the friendly and constructive attitudes of staff, often contrasting this with other civil society organisations; this was particularly true for German respondents. A number of German policy-makers pointed out that Oxfam explain rather than just asking. One German policy-maker commented that the G8 in Heiligendamm had been the start of their cooperation with Oxfam and hoped that this cooperation would continue.

*"They are not just one of many NGOs; they have good people. Oxfam staff are very capable, they know what they are talking about and they are constructive. They play an appropriate role: they do a good balancing role between advocacy and being constructive"* (German policy-maker)

*"They produce high quality, are open and transparent. Together with DATA they are the only ones who are heads and shoulders above the other NGOs. They are the easiest to communicate with and share information; they are constructive"* (UK policy-maker)

4. Several UK policy-makers believed there was a tension between their one-on-one relations with Oxfam and the Oxfam press releases.

*"You engage in a constructive cooperation only to be hammered at the end with a damning press release ... We then all sulk for a bit and get on with the cooperation"* (UK policy-maker)

However, many accepted that this was “*part of the game*” and a few commented positively on the brief follow-up by Oxfam staff after the G8, who had pointed out to them that the Oxfam press releases should not be seen as value judgments on the work of individual UK officials. One UK policy-maker even mentioned that Oxfam’s work at different registers – sending down a “*very genial chap*” to establish a good relationship with people and talk policy while having someone else “*taking an aggressive stance in blogs*” – was something Oxfam did well. A couple of individuals suggested that officials were able to deal with the duality of Oxfam’s approach but that the real problem was at the political level:

*“The annoyance is more a problem with the political people: if Bob Geldof says that the outcomes are a load of crap that matters”* (UK policy-maker)

5. Civil society organisations also spoke highly of Oxfam, in particular its attitudes of “*proactively sharing information*”. One NGO correspondent called Oxfam “*one of the most respected NGOs*” and commented that Oxfam’s views were being “*highly sought when people are trying to decipher what the figures mean*”. One individual commented that “*there are not many people in the world who are experienced and able at the international chess that the G8 negotiations are*” and referred to individual Oxfam staff as part of this select group of able people.
6. Some cautioned that their cooperation with Oxfam was based on strong interpersonal links rather than institutional contacts and that they send information to Oxfam staff to get their personal views – “*not Oxfam’s institutional views*”. When asked whether this was a problem for Oxfam, one respondent believed that this was “*absolutely*” the case; another individual however did not see an immediate challenge since Oxfam’s staff turnover was not high.
7. Several NGO correspondents commented about the place of NGOs in society and in particular in relation to Governments and about the different perspectives on this in the NGO world. One believed that Oxfam was right in cooperating closely with Governments: “*others see the state as an enemy, whereas it is necessary to find common ground; other NGOs don’t want to win*”. Another respondent, however, commented that Oxfam was seen by

some in the NGO world as sometimes “*sacrificing the movement to get closer to the Government. They are sometimes seen to just move a little bit away from the Government’s position and that’s it*”. This is in contrast with officials’ views reported earlier that not enough credit is given to their Governments’ ODA efforts – although not to much can be read into this contrast, one possible way of looking at it is that, if Oxfam is seen as both too close to and too critical of Governments (in particular the UK Government), there might be a chance that they are doing something right.

8. Finally, several NGO respondents commented about Oxfam’s size and in particular the size of their G8 delegations. One individual described Oxfam in terms of size as “*a bit of a bulldozer*” and that Oxfam’s size made some other NGOs circumspect.
  
9. Several policy-makers, journalists and NGO respondents were asked whether or not they believed Oxfam was seen as a British NGO and, if so, whether or not this was a problem. Many respondents, in particular UK respondents, thought that Oxfam was indeed seen as a British NGO and that this potentially led to lower advocacy impacts in other countries. Several individuals commented that UK NGOs take the lead in campaigns across the world, often resulting in “*a sense that the usual suspects are back in town*”. One believed that there was “*a certain resentment about this*” and that officials were “*more likely to listen to credible spokespeople from Africa than UK NGOs*”. Other respondents, including non-UK officials, commented that the Oxfam teams are quite international and that other Oxfam affiliates were staffed by nationals from their own country. One German official commented that:

*“Oxfam is still mainly considered as a UK NGO, but that is not a problem, at least not for me. Of course, political leaders want to do what German NGOs suggest and what the German press says, but there is growing attention for Oxfam”* (German policy-makers)



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