Review of Humanitarian Advocacy in Liberia and Ivory Coast during the Ivorian Crisis

Oxfam International Rights in Crisis Campaign

By
A&B Consulting

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Review of RICs Humanitarian Advocacy work in Liberia and Ivory Coast during the Ivorian Crisis
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DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Oxfam Great Britain or Oxfam international network.
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A response from Oxfam GB’s Regional Campaigns and Policy Manager, and the West Africa Director and Regional Humanitarian Lead is included at the end of this report (from page 40).
### ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRAO</td>
<td>Fondation Rurale d’Afrique de l’Ouest</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT</td>
<td>Humanitarian Country Team</td>
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<td>HPC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Programme Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<td>HSP</td>
<td>Humanitarian Support Professionals</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEL</td>
<td>Monitoring Evaluation and Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTSIP</td>
<td>Mid term strategic Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>UN Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<td>PRT</td>
<td>Preparedness and response team</td>
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<td>RIC</td>
<td>Rights in Crisis</td>
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<td>RHM</td>
<td>Regional Humanitarian Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>RTE</td>
<td>Real Time Evaluation</td>
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<td>SMT</td>
<td>Senior Management Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>TORs</td>
<td>Terms Of Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World food Program</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation was commissioned by Oxfam GB’s West Africa Regional Office’s on behalf of the Regional Oxfam International Rights in Crisis Campaign. The report is part of a learning activity for Oxfam’s West Africa Regional Office in order to improve the way that it conducts its advocacy campaigns during future humanitarian crisis is the region. Oxfam implemented an advocacy program in both Ivory Coast and Liberia. In both countries the advocacy work addressed the aftermath of the post electoral crisis in Ivory Coast. In response to this crisis Oxfam launched an ambitious campaign to strengthen the humanitarian response by addressing the needs of the hundreds of thousands displaced and those threatened by the fallout from the political conflict in the Ivory Coast. Oxfam’s role during the crisis was critical and important; the agency served as a leader for its peers, not only conducting direct interventions in the sectors of water and sanitation, livelihoods, shelter and protection, Oxfam set themselves apart by working collaboratively with peer organizations to advocate and lobby for an improved and better coordinated effort. Their efforts principally aimed to do the following in both Ivory Coast and Liberia:

- Strengthen coordination of the humanitarian response,
- Improve policies and practice related to food security, WASH and protection
- Increase funding for the emergency appeal,
- Raising awareness of the situation and keeping the story the humanitarian crisis alive.

This study demonstrates that Oxfam was successful during their mission at achieving progress on many of these ambitious goals. Their collaborative operations research and the resulting advocacy associated with the findings in both Liberia and Ivory Coast were highlighted by many as critical; helping to shape the policy debates and refocusing the strategies of many of the actors including UN agencies such as OCHA, UNHCR and WFP. This was especially the case around issues such as protection of the displaced and returns policy where it was found that these documents were regularly cited by these actors and reignited dialogues regarding return policy and protection amongst members of the Humanitarian Country Team in the Ivory Coast.

Oxfam’s tactic of working through existing consortiums and platforms such as the Liberian NGO platform, the Convention de la Société Civile Ivoirienne (CSCI) and the UN cluster systems, to build coalitions around certain issues, identify and lobby to fill gaps in the ongoing humanitarian response- was widely identified as an important and significant contribution by many actors.

While Oxfam’s work was viewed positively there were several opportunities identified during the evaluation to improve their advocacy work in the Right In Crisis Campaign department. The evaluation demonstrated that the most important areas for improvement were systemic
factors such as staffing, approach to M&E, resourcing of the advocacy work and internal coordination strategies. This report chronicles the successes of Oxfam’s work during the Ivorian Crisis while also contributing several critical suggestions and recommendations for how the Rights In Crisis Campaigns team and more broadly Oxfam International can systematically improve its advocacy work in preparation for future humanitarian crisis.
INTRODUCTION

Following the 2010 elections in Ivory Coast, an unprecedented wave of violence erupted in the country, as a result, thousands of people have been killed and about 1 million displaced. It’s in that context that Oxfam began implementing its advocacy and communication work to respond to the growing need of a better coordination in the humanitarian action. The advocacy and communication activities were implemented in both Ivory Coast and Liberia. While it was planned that the humanitarian program in Ivory Coast would end in November 2011, Oxfam plans to continue the work in Liberia where thousands of refugees are still in need of support to meet their basic day-to-day needs. The interventions have sought to promote a number of objectives including:

- Improve the coordination of the humanitarian response provided by UN agencies
- Improve the performance of actors in the response in relation to key sectors such as food security, livelihoods and WASH.
- Ensure returns policies are strictly voluntary and support the needs and interests of returnees, refugees, displaced people and host communities.
- Attract political and media attention to the crisis to improve donor and governmental responses and funding levels.

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

Alassane Ouattara seized power and ended a long standoff against his rival Laurent Gbagbo who lost the 2010 elections. His loss and subsequent refusal to leave power led to the 2010 post-electoral crisis. The instability and violence led many organizations to leave Ivory Coast and end relief efforts. Oxfam was among those countries to transition their humanitarian relief and advocacy efforts from the Ivory Coast and now to Liberia. This review will serve as a learning activity for Oxfam in order to improve the way it operates in similar situations in the future. Oxfam has implemented an advocacy program in both Ivory coast and Liberia. In both countries the advocacy work was dealing with the post electoral crisis in Ivory Coast.

As indicated in the terms of reference, the study will look at different dimensions related to effectiveness and impact of Oxfam’s advocacy work during the crisis. A&B consulting will provide extensive and accurate response to the following questions:

1. To what extent did Oxfam’s advocacy work increase political and media attention to the crisis, and influence the level of engagement and funding from humanitarian actors?
2. To what extent did Oxfam’s advocacy influence key policies and practices during the humanitarian response, such as approaches to food security, WASH, livelihoods or voluntary returns policies?
3. To what extent did Oxfam play a role in supporting, facilitating and coordinating the advocacy work of other NGOs?
4. How appropriate were the advocacy objectives/strategies/tactics to the context?
5. What strategies and tactics appeared to be particularly effective? (part of this will include an assessment of refugee surveys carried out in Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire).
6. Were there any strategies A&B think ill-judged or counter-productive?
7. How well did Oxfam’s advocacy work complement, build on and support the humanitarian operations? How well did the two areas coordinate?
8. How effective was Oxfam’s approach to protection, and how well did it link to the advocacy work?
9. How effective was Oxfam’s internal communication and coordination – between humanitarian and advocacy teams, between affiliates and between national, regional and international levels?
10. What were the major challenges faced by advocacy teams in the humanitarian response, with regard to both internal process and advocacy strategy? How could these be avoided or mitigated in future?

THE EVALUATION TEAM
The A&B Consulting team was composed of Dr Brandy Jones and Alexandre Diouf. Both are M&E Experts and have worked in both development and humanitarian settings in various countries around the globe. Below is a detailed bio for each team member:

**Brandy Jones PhD.**: Dr. Jones has a doctoral degree from the University of Michigan in Political Science. She is trained extensively in research methods including qualitative and quantitative approaches. Her dissertation examined the political and economic role of Diasporas in their home countries. She created a typology of Diaspora-homeland relations and highlighted a newly emerging paradigm, termed the Global Nation-state. Dr Jones has been researching and working in the fields of social protection, advocacy, GBV and gender for the past 10 years. She has extensive experience in setting up Monitoring and Evaluation systems for development project. In Senegal she was a visiting scholar with the West African Research Center, where she also consulted for Oxfam America and UNFPA-Senegal, looking at issues such as Irregular Migration, the Economic Community of West African States and Diaspora homeland relations. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Senegal, Benin, Congo Brazzaville, and Liberia, Dr. Jones has worked as technical advisor both for governance/peace building, social protection and M&E. She is currently the Director of Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning for Tostan International.

**Alexandre Diouf**: Mr. Diouf is a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist with over a decade of professional experience in Africa. In the recent past, Alex was the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor for the USAID DRC Mission based in Kinshasa. Alex is currently consulting on
various Monitoring and Evaluation projects for UN agencies and various NGOs. He has experience in designing and improving M&E systems, strategic leadership, project design, implementation and evaluation. He is currently providing strategic support and technical assistance UN-HABITAT MTSIP Focus area 4 dealing with global advocacy for more urban environment-friendly infrastructure. His in-country professional experience in more than a dozen countries includes Senegal, Gambia, DR Congo, Central Africa Republic, Rwanda, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Haiti, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea. Alex has provided consulting services to various organizations including USAID, UN-HABITAT, Food for Peace, American Soybean Association, IFAD, FRAO, Catholic Relief Services and Concern universal.
METHODOLOGY

A combination of a literature review (document and internet), e-survey and semi-structured interviews by phone was used to conduct this evaluation. The literature review utilized and built on knowledge gained from existing evaluations already undertaken during the crisis, such as the Mid-Term Evaluation in Liberia (Sep/Oct- 2011), the Real-Time Evaluation in Cote d’Ivoire (Aug- 2011) and a short evaluation document measuring advocacy progress in Liberia (July 2011). Further documents reviewed included campaign strategies, research and policy products (lobby notes, letters, survey questionnaires, research reports etc.). Interviews were undertaken with key internal actors at national, regional and international level, as well as a small number of key advocacy targets identified by Oxfam staff (i.e. UN agencies, key Government officials, donor representatives) in order to effectively measure any outcomes achieved, the process by which they happened, and gauge perceptions of Oxfam’s advocacy work. The consultants employed the following methodologies to execute the:

Desk review: The consultants conducted a desk review of relevant documents on Oxfam’s advocacy program including, program reports, situation reports, emails, internet articles, research reports, and any other available document online or furnished by the RICs team.

Interviews: As indicated by the TORs, the consultants did not visit project sites but instead held semi-structured interviews with relevant staff of the organization at the headquarters and out posted staff, including the two former in country Advocacy and Campaigns managers for Ivory Coast and Liberia.

Questionnaire Administration: The consultants developed and administered two online surveys. One survey targeted relevant staff involved with Oxfam’s advocacy and protection programming in both Ivory Coast and Liberia to examine strengths and weaknesses of the work and missed opportunities for more effective advocacy and agenda building. The second was aimed at external actors and agencies to understand how they perceived Oxfam’s work and its impact.

Developing situational analysis: This report provides a situation analysis that will provide Oxfam International with a clear understanding of the reach of their programming, the impact, strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improving and reinforcing future programming in similar. The situational analysis will cover organizational capacity, human resources, strategy and planning of interventions, appropriateness for the environment and coalition building around social protection in humanitarian crisis.
The following table is a snapshot of the different tools and methods that were used and referenced during this research:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Method</th>
<th>Tools and Aim</th>
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<tr>
<td>Documents Review and Internet research</td>
<td>Project records from Ivory Coast, Liberian and the various regional and international offices were reviewed to get a full picture of program activities, internal coordination and communication mechanism and program impact. We also examined records from Oxfam, UN agencies and other project stakeholders for quantitative and qualitative purposes. This is part of the mixed method approach; it includes collecting and consolidation qualitative as well as quantitative data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key informants, OXFAM, Partners and counterparts. Using recall: asking people (Oxfam staff) to provide quantitative or qualitative data.</td>
<td>To better understand the approach and methodology of advocacy and protection efforts the team used on one-on-one Skype interviews with a limited number of key actors. These interviews helped to better understand how the protection and advocacy program was implemented in both Ivory Coast and Liberia, how activities were coordinated, impact, and opportunities for future programming.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-survey administered with Oxfam staff and external actors.</td>
<td>The E-Survey provided quantitative and qualitative data from a larger sample of individuals than could not be reached during the interviews. The data collected adds another level of information that will be used to clarify how internal staff perceived the Rights In Crisis Campaign work, the weaknesses, strengths and learning opportunities. From this data we were also able to extrapolate about how external actors perceived Oxfam efforts and what they viewed as the primary contributions of Oxfam.</td>
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**EVALUATION CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS**

While Oxfam leadership was very supportive and successful furnishing a great deal of documentation and availing themselves for interviews, the Evaluation is not without its challenges and difficulties. These limitations were due to a number of factors that will be addressed and explained below. The seven key challenges are:

*Complexity and role of external forces*, Humanitarian crisis are typically very complex events, conflict related crisis such as that which occurred in Ivory Coast are among the most complicated and difficult of which to manage. Due to fighting, eminent threats to security,
forced displacement of large swaths of the population, basic services are not only disrupted much of the country’s infrastructure is destroyed. In addition, the risk to security affects the civilian population, local authorities and the aid and relief agencies that are working to respond to the crisis and serve the displaced. The Ivorian case is no different; at its peak over 350,000 persons were displaced fleeing violence and insecurity. Organizing response and coordinating efforts at the outset is always difficult; organizations need time to mobilize and build their presence on the ground, conduct assessments and determine the needs and gaps and to share information and coordinate amongst themselves. **There is natural learning curve over time which makes it difficult to attribute the impact to any particular actor or advocacy effort.** In a crisis various actors have agenda’s and programs and often their efforts and actions are determined by a combination of multiple factors and variables, thus making it hard to tease out the impact of Oxfam’s advocacy program versus other factors on things like the coordination of work, fundraising, policy changes and programming.

**Time Frame and timing:** The Evaluation team was contracted around November 20th, 2011, information was shared contact list and other materials from November 21-24th, and a first draft of the report anticipated by December 8th 2011, the short turnaround time for a final evaluation and during a very busy time frame for most humanitarian agencies; at the end of the year and the build up to the holiday vacation season meant that it was very difficult to secure interviews with various actors. Many emails went unanswered by various individuals beyond the core team involved in the response to the Ivorian Crisis. The timing and limited time frame for organizing interviews with the actors who were either busy or who have already transitioned out of the mission was very difficult to overcome and impacted negatively on the teams ability to interview as many subjects as one might have liked.

**Shifting Strategies and Milestones:** In response to the fluid and changing dynamics on the ground the **Rights in Crisis Campaign** developed and maintained a strategy that was fluid and open to change throughout the life of the crisis and response. As the strategy was a living document it means that the objectives, indicators of success and aims of Oxfam’s work during the crisis transformed during the life of the program which makes it difficult to evaluate success as the milestones and objectives were and are not fixed through, hence making it more difficult to judge success and progress over time.

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OXFAM RIC’S ADVOCACY WORK

In response to Ivory Coast crisis Oxfam’s Rights in Crisis Campaign team launched an ambitious effort and package of advocacy and humanitarian relief programming that sought to respond to the crisis from both the Ivory Coast and Liberia side of the border. Oxfam had already been working in Liberia since 1995. At the outset of the crisis the RICS advocacy work in the two countries was intended to complement the humanitarian operations and advocacy objectives.

The work in Liberia and Ivory Coast evolved overtime. Though the crisis began in November 2010, Oxfam did not decide to begin programming in the Ivory Coast until March and were not functional on the ground until April 2011, the period when Oxfam International decided to establish a presence in the Ivory Coast and put their global effort behind improving the coordination of the humanitarian emergency, raising the profile of the issue internationally, in the hopes of improving the mobilization of resources for the crisis and the quality and coverage of programming. An Advocacy and Campaigns person was on the ground in Liberia from April until early July 2011, during the period that the Ivorian crisis was one of the global RIC campaign’s priorities for reactive work. The Ivory Coast advocacy staff was not recruited and functional until July 2011, meaning there were only a few weeks of overlap between the two advocacy and communication managers.

OVERVIEW OF OXFAM’S WORK DURING AND FOLLOWING THE CRISIS

Advocacy Programming

In Liberia, Oxfam has been present since 1995, during the countries international conflict (1989-2003) over 314,000 people were displaced. Oxfam began programming for humanitarian relief, particularly to support water, sanitation and hygiene for IDP camps. As the situation on the ground evolved the focus shifted from a fully humanitarian program to development oriented programming, with peace building, transitional justice, literacy and gender equality activities. Owing to the changing circumstances in the East of Liberia on the border with Ivory Coast and the fact that Liberia remained a physical presence country for the Oxfam network, it was able to quickly mobilize and respond to the fast moving humanitarian crisis when hundreds of thousands of Ivoirians fled conflict to Liberia beginning in February/March 2011. The office staff and bureaucratic infrastructure required to run a program in the Liberia already existed hence once the issue was prioritized an Advocacy and Communications person was recruited and was able to begin working with the plethora of agencies on the ground. The main advocacy activities including:

Outline Advocacy Strategy Liberia/Cote d’Ivoire refugee crisis, April 2011.

1. In-country lobbying of UN agencies and donors through HCT, clusters and direct meetings,
2. Supporting Global media work
3. Convening NGOs around specific projects, especially joint letters and policy notes on food security and UN coordination,
4. Providing information and policy analysis to support international advocacy work.
5. Field research which led to several research-based Advocacy Reports.

In the Ivory Coast, in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by insecurity and large scale internal displacement in Western Ivory Coast, Oxfam initiated a short-term mission in the Ivory Coast to help respond to the Crisis. Because Oxfam did not have a physical process in the Ivory Coast, once the Ivorian Crisis was prioritized and Oxfam decided to establish a presence, which happened in April, there was not an advocacy and communications staff on the ground until July 2011. This, according to several staff, is the result of the fact that Advocacy and Communications staff are not part of the first response team that enter a country to establish the presence and begin the mission. As advocacy and communication staff are not part of the first wave, advocacy and communications are not coherently initiated early on in the crisis, especially during short-term missions such as that established by Oxfam in Ivory Coast. While various regional staff and HSPs conducted short-term assignments to begin the advocacy and communications work, but a full time advocacy staff was not engaged and functional until July 2011 around the same time the crisis was being downgraded from global priority status for Oxfam. The main advocacy activities included:

1. National and global media work to raise the profile of the crisis, and the humanitarian and protection needs in general, including by keeping the story alive and giving it a human face
2. In-country lobbying of humanitarian agencies, bilaterally and through clusters, to promote the improvement of the security situation, the implementation of adequate protection measures, the improvement of WASH and food security policies, and ensure the safe and voluntary nature of returns.
3. Support to international efforts to increase funding for the Côte d’Ivoire +4 EHAP, including by identifying sectors and projects in specific need of assistance.
4. Raising specific issues arising from program areas (ie. EFSL and WASH) on the request of program managers, who themselves will advocate at national level in their domains.
5. Undertaking field research in collaboration with two other agencies to inform the humanitarian community about the key needs and concerns expressed by IDPs and returnees.

Here are some of the key characteristics and elements of the Liberia and Ivorian advocacy work:
Liberia Advocacy research, the advocacy and communications team in Liberia produced several seminal documents that established Oxfam as a critical actor that set the tone and identified the pressing issues around which the humanitarian agencies should be organizing to address. The June 2011, Listening to Refugees—A Rapid Survey of Intentions, produced through a collaboration between Oxfam, Care and Project New look, had several key findings that were able to inform agencies responding to the crisis. It made it clear that a substantial numbers of refugees were not intending to return home due to fear of reprisal and concerns about security. The paper also confirmed that 50% of the households were female led and that for all of household’s food and livelihood was the primary concern that they had about their wellbeing. Finally the scarcity of information shared with the population from the government and the UN was also a major concern for the displaced. This work demonstrated a clear collaboration of the Advocacy and Communications staff with the program staff particularly Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods.

Ivory Coast Advocacy research, the advocacy and communications team in Ivory Coast also produced several seminal documents that established Oxfam as a critical actor that set the tone and identified the pressing issues around which the humanitarian agencies should be organizing to address. The October 2011, Toward Durable Solutions For Displaced Ivoirians, was published in collaboration with Care and DRC. Despite having been released toward the end of Oxfam’s Mission in the Ivory Coast, the document has some very important findings that have informed Oxfam’s programming and also helped to inform program decision making and humanitarian policy in the Ivory Coast. The findings include the following:

- Many fear reprisal hence they are not returning home and many that have returned have been the victims of violence.
- Many displaced people and returnees lack basic services. Everything from healthcare, education, water and sanitation as well as basic infrastructure (electricity or telecommunications.
- Food insecurity was identified by returnees and displaced people as the most fundamental concern.

The report again was the result of highly effective operations research led by a synergy of efforts between the Advocacy lead and the Protection technical lead. The report was launched in during a press conference that brought a great deal of attention to the crisis and the work that Oxfam. The document was cited by various agencies, NGOs during meetings as part of the cluster system and its launch renewed efforts to finalize the Humanitarian Country Team Return Strategy.4

4 MEL/Handover Advocacy Comms-Oxfam GB Ivory Coast(July- November 2011)
The advocacy documents and lobbying in Liberia and Ivory Coast are a clear and obvious result of partnership and collaboration, many of the key issues linked to protection, gender and vulnerable groups go hand and hand with the need for a strong coordination of advocacy and communications campaign. In addition, advocacy is better informed when it is coupled with operational research and data from the field. The close work of the Advocacy and program staff in Liberia and the Ivory Coast and Oxfam’s standard of engaging full time advocacy personnel, were highlighted by both Oxfam and External actors as a true advantage and added value of Oxfam work because so few agencies have this competency and many relied on Oxfam to go beyond the work they were doing in the field, to coordinate with the other agencies to help share information, identify gaps in programming and help identify and communicate messages about how to improve the response to the crisis. It should be mentioned it was felt by some that a major gap in the Liberia programming was that no protection officer was recruited and the programming was not informed by a sufficient protection analysis.

**Coordination and collaboration with counterparts: In Liberia,** Oxfam worked through the cluster system and the Liberian NGO Forum, organizations and members of the platforms relied on Oxfam to help manage and coordinate most group advocacy efforts. Most agencies did not have dedicated Advocacy staff hence there focus and strengths were more programmatic and they focused on energy on their activities and operations in the field and. Oxfam with its Advocacy lead filled a critical role helping to develop the key documents that were used to convey the consolidated position of those agencies that chose to sign on to them and push for improved coordination of the humanitarian effort or more appropriate responses from the UN, WFP, HCR or OCHA. Most joint letters, press releases, policy briefs, declarations and research led advocacy papers were primarily led by Oxfam. These documents were often the key to keeping the story alive and increasing the level of attention that was given to the Ivorian crisis. Realizing that collective statements, research and lobbying was more influential and effective than unilateral efforts *Oxfam wisely worked through existing platforms and consortiums to deliver messages and build momentum for their advocacy campaign.* The launch of policy and operational research docs were also key opportunities that Oxfam used in collaboration with their counterparts to raise the profile of the crisis and pressure the appropriate authorities to improve their performance and service provision.

**In the Ivory Coast,** Oxfam also worked through the cluster system and, organizations in La Convention de la Société Civile Ivoirienne (CSCI) relied on Oxfam to help manage and coordinate most group advocacy efforts. As in Liberia, most agencies did not have dedicated Advocacy staff hence there focus and strengths were more programmatic, again Oxfam was relied upon to mobilize and unify the voice of the INGO community with the aim of improving the coordination of the humanitarian response and ensure accountability of the UN agencies and the HCT. Oxfam role as an advocacy actor was highlighted as a critical contribution and
important factor in unifying the efforts and identifying gaps. Oxfam also worked closely with OCHA bilaterally. The launch of policy and operational research documents were also key opportunities and media moments that Oxfam used in collaboration with their counterparts to raise the profile of the crisis and pressure the appropriate authorities to improve their performance and service provision.

**Lobbying donors, the UN and related agencies:** Once Oxfam made the Ivorian Crisis a global priority, the network mobilized its efforts to raise money to improve the quality of the humanitarian response and to urge appropriate agencies such as UNOCHA, UNHCR, and WFP. Oxfam international staff held meetings with government agencies and politicians in UK, US, Spain, Holland, as well as analysis of funding to identify donors. In several *Briefing Notes circulated* as early as April 2011 and continuously revised, Oxfam shared with its wide network to update them on the continuing humanitarian crisis, which endured well after the political crisis had been resolved. They also called for improved coordination on the part of the government and the UN agencies leading the effort and urged for donor governments and agencies to increase their aide to the relief efforts. Oxfam made a consistent effort to bringing attention to the fact that the crisis was not over and that the wellbeing and safety of over 134,000 refugees living in camps or host communities was still at stake. The internal message was the same as the public message and advocacy of Oxfam. The data shows that their efforts sought to improve the quality of the support and assistance offered to those displaced and marginalized populations vulnerable to the changing social political landscape the impact and coherence of the message often made Oxfam the point of reference for UN agencies and other international actors. *Many of those external actors surveyed and interviewed felt that Oxfam’s talking points and statistics were the baseline used by most of the other actors.*

**Media as a tool for keeping the story alive,** Oxfam’s advocacy work in both Ivory Coast and Liberia used media as a critical tool to support the advocacy work and raise the profile of the crisis. It was a critical and effective element of their work; the Regional Media officer claimed that there were over 160 significant media ‘hits’ including articles and reports that emerged from the advocacy and media work on the crisis. Several of the highlights included the visit by a team from Al Jazeera to Ivory Coast, which resulted in an April 2011 story; several videos and advocacy pieces easily located on various sites including YouTube, Al Jazeera, CNN, BBC, RFI, The Guardian and others, that highlighted the ongoing crisis and Oxfam’s advocacy message about the ongoing crisis and what must be done to better serve the vulnerable and displaced. There are multiple articles, advocacy documents, videos and briefing documents that are available on very visible International media outlets including International Alert, Relief Web.

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5 Real Time Evaluation of the Oxfam’s Response to the Conflict in Cote D’Ivoire (July 2011).
6 Many of the videos and advocacy pieces had on average over a 1000 views.
the Oxfam site and YouTube. In addition, national media outlets were used to share knowledge on everything from protection and return policy, food security and health and sanitation in both Ivory Coast and Liberia. The launching of advocacy research documents were often used as powerful media moments to bring increased attention to the crisis, reignite the debate surrounding critical issues and to pressure the various stakeholders to action.
FINDINGS

Here we present the details of the findings from the inputs and findings from the e-survey, in-depth interviews and analysis of the evaluation team. For more details about the questionnaire and survey questions refer to the appendices. The study explored the internal coordination of the response, impact, strengths, weaknesses and opportunities to improve how Oxfam does its advocacy work.

The following table gives a snapshot of views regarding the impact of the RICs advocacy and communication campaign on the key sectors and objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent to which the advocacy and communication work done by Oxfam did the following:</th>
<th>strongly</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>some what</th>
<th>not at all</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased attention and funding for the crisis</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced policies in practices in food sec, wash, protection...</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitated the coordination of advocacy work for other actors</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was gender appropriate and sensitive?</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced external actors like OCHA, UNHCR and WFP etc.</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved humanitarian coordination and effectiveness..</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served displaced communities and returnees.</td>
<td>25.0% (2)</td>
<td>75.0% (6)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table above illustrates most respondents felt like Oxfam’s programming had a moderate to strong impact on the key issue areas. The strongest response is the belief by most respondents that Oxfam facilitated the coordination of advocacy work for other actors, a
sentiment that was corroborated during interviews with both internal and external actors; they all felt that Oxfam was the leader and facilitated the civil society’s voice, both through the cluster system, operational research, press releases and multilateral advocacy toward the UN and donors. Oxfam in country staff felt that the operations research and advocacy work had an impact on the UN targets in various ways.

In Liberia, they highlighted the following as tangible examples;

- OCHA opened a website to improve and better coordinate the humanitarian relief efforts
- Also the WFP made various verbal commitments to help improve the way that food distribution was being conducted relative to those staying in camps those staying in host communities.
- In regards to mobilizing resources for the crisis, staff in Liberia felt that many donors who attended coordination meetings were turned off by how poorly they were organized and by the time Gbagbo was arrested interest amongst the donor community was almost completely gone.

In Ivory Coast;

- There was a feeling that the advocacy efforts helped to impact the HCT return strategy and reprioritize protection relative to returnees and IDPs.
- However, with regard to funding, there was a feeling that it was not clear Oxfam wanted to raise funds for the response especially once it was reprioritized by the agency.
- One staff mentioned the frustration with the continuous dialogue about shutting down the mission that accompanied their arrival and continued throughout their time in mission- clearly; mobilizing resources under these circumstances would be hampered.

**APPROPRIATNESS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The majority of the respondents (9 out of 10 respondents) felt that the advocacy strategy was appropriately aligned to the context. The following chart is a repartition of the different responses received with regard to the appropriateness of the strategy with the prevailing context. In general both survey respondents and those interviewed felt that Oxfam’s response to the crisis was appropriate to the context. However, In the Real Time Evaluation for Ivory Coast and in e-surveys from external actors in Liberia, it was perceived that Oxfam advocacy efforts could be viewed as overly aggressive and/or confrontational at times.

**EFFECTIVENESS OF OXFAM’S INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION**

In general, it was felt that Oxfam had an effective internal communication and coordination strategy. In Liberia there were no major complaints expressed about the coordination of the

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7 Interview data and qualitative
advocacy campaign while in Ivory Coast it was shared that the fact that the program was designed to for only three months did not help motivate the staff on the ground. In addition, in Ivory Coast challenges linked to telecommunication networks was identified as an obstacle to effective coordination with field staff. Overtime this took a toll on the capacity of the teams working from inside the country to effectively communicate international and regional counterparts. It was also mentioned in interviews the initial lack of experience of some staff members linked to humanitarian response was an initial handicap that hurt the response in the early phase of Oxfam’s intervention. However, these things were overcome by good collaboration and a quick learning curve.

**STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN**
The staff that were involved in or impacted by the advocacy activities were asked to list the strengths and weaknesses of the communication and advocacy strategies. Various responses were received and the following tables are summaries of the ideas that were shared by different respondents both field base staff and international/regional counterparts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Good cooperation between the protection and the advocacy staff complementary actions were put in place.</td>
<td>- Each program sector was at times working as a single department not as part of whole- it was felt by some that interdepartmental collaboration could have been stronger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sometimes the advocacy activities were not coordinated with other technical staff in the field; this produced less force in the message since the content of the message was not well structured and supported by technical elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Late arrival of the advocacy and communications lead in Ivory Coast.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of information and messaging on protection / humanitarian situation inside Ivory Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Although Oxfam is supposed to be experienced in peacekeeping operations, it was not able to get messaging on UNOCI.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Liberia**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment of a supportive campaign manager who ensured good linkages</td>
<td>Impact monitoring could have been stronger,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throughout the Oxfam confederation</td>
<td>especially in terms of success indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy was driven by the needs in the field, strong linkages between</td>
<td>Issues with recruitment process meant that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>programs and advocacy staff</td>
<td>deployment of Advocacy and Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint approach with other NGOs to maximize impact</td>
<td>coordinator was quite late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good information on Liberia refugee situation and lobby</td>
<td>The advocacy coordinator left in July, the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>departure was too soon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Campaign wide                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Strengths                                                                 | Weaknesses                                      |
| Good program-based advocacy                                              | Staff in the region did not have a very good    |
| Good quality communication materials, esp. external updates and policy    | sense of the global RiC campaigning goals,      |
| papers; timeliness of the material; responsiveness of regional office    | methods and ideas                                |
| Very useful community surveys, policy leads on both sides                | Inadequate global engagement, especially in     |
| Policy leads actively engaged in working with field staff and HQ support | Ivory Coast where Oxfam was phasing out         |
| Global perspective of the crisis due to presence in both countries       | when the advocacy staff arrived.                |
| Oxfam is an industry leader in advocacy and operations research          | Not enough engagement with national civil       |
| methodologies.                                                          | society.                                        |
|                                                                      | Lack of familiarity with Oxfam's survey          |
|                                                                      | methodology and learning in other contexts;     |
|                                                                      | capacity and resources.                         |

**HIGHER LEVEL ANALYSIS OF WEAKNESSES**

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

While both the Ivorian and Liberian Oxfam missions conducted Real Time (Ivory Coast- July 2011) and Midterm (Liberia- September 2011) evaluations, the evaluation reports paid little attention to the advocacy aspect of the programming. Moreover, the recommendations were not presented with a clear sense of structure or prioritization. In a humanitarian crisis in a country like Liberia where telecommunications and transportation infrastructure are non-existent and Ivory Coast where armed conflict was essentially destroying the existing infrastructure; recruitment, internal capacity, crisis management and advocacy are all critical and have weaknesses. However, the reports did not provide the country missions with structured first tier immediate recommendations that must be implemented by the missions with all due haste followed by second tier recommendations and so on, instead they present a broad stroke of recommendations for all sectors that in some cases are not concrete actions.
The Liberia evaluations covers advocacy but it is only superficially treated- “Oxfam leading role in Advocacy work has been highly appreciated internally and externally. It needs to be continued by a dedicated advocacy staff.” 8 The analysis is limited, no discussion of advocacy as cross cutting department and how the work could be improved beyond maintaining a staff member.

The Ivory Coast evaluation covered advocacy under relationships with other actors. There were clearer directives, with emphasis on increasing the participation of local authorities, influencing the returnee strategy, work through the cluster system, improve diplomacy and communication. While these thematic areas were clear the evaluation of Oxfam’s performance in this area were weak, the evaluation mentioned that programming staff were over stretched between advocacy work in the clusters and their work in program interventions. Moreover, as with Liberia’s evaluation, there is not enough investment in the how and/or prioritization of what must be done first. In addition, advocacy is treated tangentially and not as a primary field or thematic area, which is a clear weakness for the RICs campaign as advocacy and communication, are the fundamental aims of the RICs team.

The fact that Oxfam conducted a real-time (Ivory Coast) and midterm (Liberia) evaluation is a clear indication of the commitment to monitoring and evaluation. However, the fact that the M&E strategies and systems were not clearly established from the outset of the campaign but instead evolved over time, is a real weakness, while one must be responsive to needs on the ground and flexible in their response, the reality is that after decades of working on humanitarian crisis Oxfam has been exposed repeatedly to crisis and their cycles. Oxfam should be able to anticipate the objective for all phases of any crisis and clearly define the indicators necessary to measure their performance. In both the combined MEL/handover notes for both the Ivory Coast and Liberia for the two advocacy staff, there were no clear pre-defined indicators, in fact activities are listed as the achievements in three different sections on the Liberia document similarly, while there are outputs on the Ivory Coast document and there are no clear indicators identified. Moreover, because there were no clear indicators defined at the outset in the MEL documents, there were no reference points defined by which to measure or judge success or impact or track over time.

**STAFFING**

Advocacy staff was repeatedly mentioned as a problem in both the survey and interviews. While Oxfam was monitoring events in Ivory Coast since November 2010 one the Political Crisis first begins, they did not decide to take action until March 2011. It was not until April that an Advocacy and Communication staff member was recruited for the Liberia to lead Oxfam’s Advocacy work on the ground at 100%, before this time all the work and task associated with

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Advocacy and Communication was shared between the various program, senior program and regional staff. Similarly there was a lag in recruitment for the recruitment of Advocacy staff in Ivory Coast as well. While the recruitment began for an Advocacy and communication person in May 2011, the person was not functional and present on the ground until July, meaning that there was very little overlap between the Liberia Advocacy staff who transitioned out in July 2011 and the Ivory Coast Advocacy lead who started in July 2011.

In Liberia, because Oxfam was present in the Country already they were able to get a staff on the in one month- the work in all cases was viewed positively while the staff was in country. However, many felt that once the crisis was reprioritized in July the staff in Liberia was pulled out too soon, leaving the programmatic and senior leadership to manage this effort; many felt that this was not effective and the changing faces and personalities diminished Oxfam’s impact, in some cases one external survey respondent felt that the changing faces also alternated the quality of Oxfam’s message and some cases respondents felt that Oxfam advocacy staff came across as combative at times.

In Ivory Coast, Advocacy staff was not brought in country early enough. The majority of Oxfam RICs campaign staff feel that advocacy staff should be part of the first response team in a crisis. Currently, they are viewed as second tier response and hence they come after the key sectors and leadership are put into place. This resulted in the Advocacy lead being recruited and brought in when the Crisis had already been downgraded from a global priority.

**INTERNAL COORDINATION**

In general the work of the internal coordination was highly appreciated both at the International/regional level and country level. The regional leadership coordinated interactions and information sharing between the country and international levels through the leadership of the Regional Campaigns and Policy Manager. All staff were happy with the direction provided by the regional team and particularly the availability of the RICs regional lead to participate in decision making, sharing information and to manage through consensus. So of the approaches used at the regional level included, weekly and as needed teleconferences, email groups, intranet resources, and weekly and if needed daily briefing reports. The general availability, consistent communication and dialogue as the issue evolved was viewed as strength of the RICs Campaign work. Some of the key limitations mentioned in interviews and online surveys included the following:

- Some staff mentioned that they did not have access to the Oxfam intranet site and that there were no uniform provisions of access to the site, which they stated slow them down during the critical start up phase of their mission.
• At the country level there were critiques of the management of communication and information sharing, some felt that particularly the staff in Ivory Coast was not accessible or communicative enough to facilitate collaboration on some of the advocacy and media work.

• Conversely, it was felt by field staff in Ivory Coast that once the crisis was downgraded from an international priority that many international and regional staff lost interest and they ended the weekly calls and were less responsive.

• While sustainable response was the aim in Ivory Coast it was difficult to set up a long-term strategy because the intervention was initiated as a short-term mission with uncertainty about the end date.

**Successes and Lessons Learned**

Oxfam’s RIC campaign successfully responded to the Ivorian Crisis on both the Ivorian and Liberian sides of the border. The advocacy campaign efforts were holistic and attempted to address the needs of the displaced and improve coordination and reach of the response. In response to a question regarding major achievements of the advocacy and communication campaign, various achievements were highlighted:

• In Liberia for example, many cited the *Refugee Intention Survey*, which it was felt helped guide the program interventions; by helping Oxfam Senior management and the wider humanitarian community to understand the main barriers to return for the refugees. The campaign has also been reported as having increased awareness on the crisis by attracting more media and political attention, various press releases, briefing documents and moments were identified.

• In Ivory Coast the advocacy and communication campaign yielded similar results. The *Toward Durable Solutions for Displaced Ivoirians* research paper was fundamental document used to influence the government, UNHCR, OCHA and other actors to respect voluntary return policy protocols, give greater attention to livelihoods concerns of the displaced and returnees, and to address concerns about truth and reconciliation. The *significant impact on the protection cluster* was mentioned by different respondents who were based in Ivory Coast when they worked on the campaign. It has also been noted that the greater media attention that was attracted as a result of the RIC campaign in Ivory Coast.

• The operations research conducted by Oxfam was identified as fundamental achievements that added teeth and momentum to the advocacy and program efforts.
They were part of collaborative efforts with partner agencies in both countries and they both brought heightened attention to the plight of the displaced and returnees.

- Strengthened coordination of the humanitarian response: as a result of consistent lobbying UN agencies in country, in Geneva, and through visits by High Commission for Refugees and OCHA, improvements were made in the coordination efforts.

- Improvements in food security policy and practice: partly as a result of advocacy work by actors including Oxfam, greater amount of food aid was provided; host communities were also targeted with distributions, and there was better coordination between agencies.

- Greater funding for the emergency appeal, there has been some limited attributable increase in funding for the crisis due to Oxfam lobbying. Two donors in particular can realistically said to have been directly influenced, mobilizing an extra €5m.

- Improved awareness about the crisis in the media: Oxfam was one of the more visible agencies during the crisis, recording over 160 media hits (articles, interviews etc).

- Policy Implications of the campaign: Oxfam consistently brought attention to the needs of refugees living in host families in Liberia and HCT’s need to re-initiate talks about return policy.

- Medium to longer-term needs: Oxfam’s collaborative research demonstrated that many refugees were not returning due to fear of reprisal, as result more attention was placed on the need to improve protection and livelihood concerns.

Lastly, one of the clearest and most important contributions made by Oxfam during the Rights In Crisis Campaign advocacy efforts surrounding the Ivorian Crisis were its efforts on both sides of the border to collaborate and harmonize its advocacy efforts with counterparts agencies; it was well received and appreciated by all actors and the NGO platforms in both countries respectively and led to the advocacy documents produced through collaboration with multiple agencies.

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

While the RIC campaign during the Ivorian crisis was favorably evaluated in general, Oxfam staff and counterparts observed opportunities for improvement and to learn from the Ivorian Crisis campaign. Various opportunities for improvements have been noted by the review team, here
we summarize higher level suggestions for Oxfam International, the RICs campaign and country program as well. The suggestions mostly reflect systematic changes that Oxfam can make building on their over six decades of working in humanitarian relief work. We present a list of key recommendations here:

- **Include advocacy costs in fundraising proposals as standard practice** and ensure early stage planning of the advocacy campaign. It was felt that a better planning that links the resources to the activities would have permitted Oxfam to cover the full cost associated with communication and advocacy from start to the end. Those costs are related but are not limited to staffing and MEL. Many activities were altered or diminished because of lack of funding or planning, for example the journalist from Aljazeera were not able to visit the field because of issues linked to funding and planning, they remained in Abidjan. Also there was uncertainty linked to the staffing of advocacy personnel because of funding and shifting priorities, had these things been more effectively planned in-terms of timing, budgeting and closeout then the advocacy efforts and activities would benefit greatly.

- In addition, many respondents felt that having a French-speaking roster and advocacy HSP roster for advocacy and communications staff to be recruited from could have helped accelerate the start up of the advocacy and communications response, especially in Ivory Coast where Oxfam did not have a presence previous to the response. Oxfam should seek to establish a larger rapid response roster of advocacy and communications personnel that can be called up to quickly respond to a crisis.

- In crisis situations especially where protection and gender are a concern, Advocacy and Communications staff should be part of the first response team, and viewed as essential staff that make up the first wave of staff that establish Oxfam in a new presence country.

- Oxfam should clearly determine the type of support and resources that should be provided to new staff, that are dispatched to crisis zones (especially) new missions, the staff should be equipped with access to all Oxfam resources including intranet, templates and sample documents and put in contact with staff or mentors that are currently or have worked for Oxfam in similar context, this will promote and encourage a speedy start-up and smoother transition as new staff learn Oxfam systems and protocols. While the work that was done has been found very important, it has been felt and shared that the staff deployed in the response could have benefitted from a better induction.
• Oxfam should **revise its M&E protocols and procedures and systematize the way in which interventions are designed, planned and monitored and evaluated.** After six decades of working on these types of crisis, no organization is better placed than Oxfam to understand the cycle and phases of all forms of humanitarian crisis, Oxfam should invest in examining how to more effectively monitor and evaluate their work on man-made and natural disasters. Some factors to consider include:
  - Developing an M&E plan complete with inputs, outputs, and performance objectives from the outset of a response that consider all the phases and cycles of a disaster complete with an objective linked to closeout and how Oxfam will determine when it is appropriate to pull out of a short-term mission.
  - Ensure that all staff is trained in M&E and understand the basic techniques and approaches for conducting monitoring and evaluation in complex humanitarian situations.
  - Advocacy related M&E is very complicated especially because of the complex combination of factors that influence decision-making in humanitarian context, hence it would be important to evaluate the work as a cross-cutting sector in Oxfam’s work especially as linked to protection, WASH, and fundraising.

• Last Oxfam did not **make the greatest use possible of its experience in gender and protection.** It was felt that it was trying to re-create the wheel when it came to integrating gender aspects in the work that was being done.

• **Develop an effective internal communications strategy for context where telecommunications infrastructure is weak** leaving staff with limited internet and telephone contact with regional and international staff. Options to remedy this include, thuraya phones, vsat, usb modem connections and a clearly mapped out scheduled protocol for expectations regarding communications between field staff and international/regional staff given constraints on access to telecommunication.

• **Ensure three to six month timeline, planning and budgeting for short-term missions** so that field and advocacy staff can work in certainty about how long the mission will be in place and hence plan, budget and execute outputs accordingly. Uncertainty is detrimental to productivity and distracting for staff.

• **Dual presence in country,** Oxfam needs to ensure that it has advocacy and program staff in the field that can communicate talking points and key information to the
advocacy person who is based where the administrative headquarters are for the UN and donor agencies in country.

- Oxfam must find ways to capitalize on its expertise in advocacy in a way that empowers counterparts and local agencies and also illicit the desired impact on targets. This can be done several ways.
  - First engaging in the M&E exercise discussed above and highlighting the difference between mission specific issues in how UN agencies and donors work versus those that are systematic that must be addressed at the headquarters level through lobbying and advocacy in Geneva, New York, Nairobi, and Washington DC and those that can best be addressed in the field.
  - Share an advocacy how to document and/or conduct a training for counterpart agencies on the importance and essentials of advocacy, this may earn Oxfam more effective allies in the field.
  - Ensure that program staff has received training on the basics of advocacy for their relevant sectors so that the quality and momentum of advocacy is consistent even in the face of gaps in recruitment and staff transitions.

- Use global perspective and maximize on presence and complete comprehension of the humanitarian crisis; Oxfam was one of the few agencies that had actors on both sides of the border. They understood the crisis from both perspectives, during future crisis where this is possible, Oxfam must use this to their advantage in their protection and advocacy work by in ensuring that both advocacy and programs staff on both sides of the border communicate, share information and where possible coordinate advocacy work and efforts.

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9 Oxfam is as standing member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and part of the process for advocating for and reviewing the protocols how UN agencies and humanitarian organizations respond and manage crisis response.
TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REVIEW

Background
From February 2011 Oxfam started undertaking advocacy work at national, regional and international level in response to the post-electoral crisis in Cote d’Ivoire which resulted in approximately 1 million people being displaced there and in neighboring countries.

Between February and July 2011 the refugee situation in Liberia provided the main focus of advocacy, where Oxfam was running humanitarian programmes. This advocacy was scaled down, but continued at a small level, after the departure of the Liberia-based Advocacy and Comms Coordinator at the start of July 2011. From May a humanitarian response was launched in Cote d’Ivoire, and in July an Advocacy and Communications Coordinator began work in the country, based in Man.

The humanitarian programme in Cote d’Ivoire is set to finish in November 2011, but continues in Liberia.

The advocacy works in the two countries were intended to complement the humanitarian operations and advocacy objectives included:

- Improving the coordination of the humanitarian response provided by UN agencies
- Improving the performance of actors in the response in relation to key sectors such as food security, livelihoods and WASH.
- Ensuring returns policies are strictly voluntary and support the needs and interests of returnees, refugees, displaced people and host communities.
- Attract political and media attention to the crisis to improve donor and governmental responses and funding levels.

Advocacy work was intended to complement humanitarian operations and also to facilitate joint NGO campaigning and advocacy work.

Until late July 2011 this was one of the global RIC campaign’s priorities for reactive work.

Purpose of the Review
The Cote d’Ivoire humanitarian programme is coming to an end, and thus the majority of the current humanitarian advocacy relating to the Ivoirian crisis that has been ongoing since
February 2011 will be drawing to a close, apart from some ongoing work in Liberia. Oxfam in West Africa is keen to learn from the work undertaken during this period to improve ways of working and approaches to humanitarian advocacy in anticipation of future crises in the region, and to share learning across the Oxfam system.

The review should look at both the effectiveness and impact of our advocacy work in meeting our external objectives (ie. achieving impact on the response to the crisis) and the effectiveness of internal ways of working and coordination within Oxfam.

**Key Questions for the Review**

11. To what extent did Oxfam’s advocacy work increase political and media attention to the crisis, and influence the level of engagement and funding from humanitarian actors?
12. To what extent did Oxfam’s advocacy influence key policies and practices during the humanitarian response, such as approaches to food security, WASH, livelihoods or voluntary returns policies?
13. To what extent did Oxfam play a role in supporting, facilitating and coordinating the advocacy work of other NGOs?
14. How appropriate were the advocacy objectives/strategies/tactics to the context?
15. What strategies and tactics appeared to be particularly effective? (part of this should include an assessment of refugee surveys carried out in Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire).
16. Were there any strategies you thought ill-judged or counter-productive?
17. How well did Oxfam’s advocacy work complement, build on and support the humanitarian operations? How well did the two areas coordinate?
18. How effective was Oxfam’s approach to protection, and how well did it link to the advocacy work?
19. How effective was Oxfam’s internal communication and coordination – between humanitarian and advocacy teams, between affiliates and between national, regional and international levels?
20. What were the major challenges faced by advocacy teams in the humanitarian response, with regard to both internal process and advocacy strategy? How could these be avoided or mitigated in future?

**Methodology:**

A combination of a desk-based literature review, e-survey and semi-structured interviews by phone is proposed.
A the literature review should first of all utilize and build on knowledge gained from existing evaluations already undertaken during the crisis, such as the Mid-Term Evaluation in Liberia (Sep/Oct), the Real-Time Evaluation in Cote d’Ivoire (Aug) and a short evaluation document measuring advocacy progress in Liberia (July). Further documents to be reviewed will include campaign strategies and policy products (lobby notes, letters, survey questionnaires, research reports).

Interviews should be undertaken with key internal actors at national, regional and international level, as well as a small number of key advocacy targets identified by Oxfam staff (ie. UN agencies, key Government officials, donor representatives) in order to effectively measure any outcomes achieved, the process by which it happened, and gage perceptions of Oxfam’s advocacy work.

**Competencies**

Knowledge/ experience evaluating advocacy and/ or campaigns essential;
Knowledge of the Cote d’Ivoire context helpful;
Fluency in English is essential;
Fluency in French is highly desirable, but there may be ways of working around this

**Timeframe**

The RiC team would like a draft copy of the review report by 2\textsuperscript{nd} December, to feed into the Humanitarian Learning Review starting on 5\textsuperscript{th} December. The review report will be finalised following this meeting, with some flexibility as to deadlines.

The team will look to identify an evaluator by 18\textsuperscript{th} November to start immediately. Interested evaluators should, **by 16th November**, submit:

- their CVs,
- a rough outline of how they would propose undertaking this review, and
- an indication of their availability

**TIMELINE OF THE ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION**

- 30 Nov 2010: Disputed Presidential election
- Mid-Dec: First small waves of refugees in Liberia, continuing slowly over the coming two months
- Dec: Oxfam monitoring situation but not yet acting
- Jan: Continuing to monitor situation and evaluate possible responses. Oxfam International advocacy working group set up.
- Mid-Feb: First outbreak of large-scale fighting sends tens of thousands across border - biggest escalation. Oxfam prepares to fly in teams and equipment, and begins to undertake more advocacy analysis and activities.
- March: Launch recruitment for advocacy and comms coordinator for Liberia
- Early March: Agreed as a short-term priority for Oxfam Rights in Crisis campaign
- 24th March: Failed recruitment for comms position - candidate accepted then could not come.
- 26th March: Media HSP arrives in Liberia to work for 6 weeks.
- 5th April: Recruitment of Advocacy and Comms Coordinator for Liberia - in country by 14th April.
- 11th April: Arrest of Laurent Gbagbo
- 11th April: Evaluation mission in Cote d'Ivoire launched - programme begins to be set up by 18th April.
- Early May: Interview for advocacy and media comms position in CDI
E SURVEY FOR OXFAM'S EMPLOYEES

1. Country
   - Country  Ivory Coast
   - Liberia
   - Senegal
   - UK
   - New York
   - Other

2. Are you an Oxfam employee?
   - Are you an Oxfam employee?  Yes
   - No

   of the RICs advocacy activities in Ivory Coast and Liberia

Review of RICs Humanitarian advocacy work in Liberia and Ivory Coast 33
4. Please suggest three things that you would do differently to improve future Rights in Crisis advocacy campaign interventions (leadership, planning, budgeting, funding and human resources etc.)?

Suggestion 1

Suggestion 2

Suggestion 3

5. Was the internal communication at the national, regional and/or international level effective in coordinating the advocacy efforts in the field?

6. Who were the key external partners for the Rights in Crisis campaign work in Liberia and/or Ivory Coast?

7. What are the three most important results of Oxfam's Rights In Crisis Work in Liberia and/or Ivory coast?

Liberia impact 1

Liberia impact 2

Liberia impact 3

Ivory Coast Impact 1

Ivory Coast Impact 2

Ivory Coast Impact 3

8. What were the top three objectives of the Rights In Crisis Campaign and advocacy work during and after the Ivorian Crisis?
Objective 1 (during the political crisis)

Objective 2 (during the political crisis)

Objective 3 (during the political crisis)

Objective 1 (after the political crisis)

Objective 2 (after the political crisis)

Objective 3 (after the political crisis)

9. How appropriate were the advocacy objectives/strategies/tactics to the context?

☐ Not appropriate at all
☐ Moderately appropriate
☐ appropriate
☐ Extremely appropriate

10. To what extent did the advocacy and communication work done by Oxfam do the following?

   strongy  moderately  some what  not at all

☐ Increased attention and funding for the crisis

   Influenced policies in practices in food sec, wash,
**Review of RICs Humanitarian advocacy work in Liberia and Ivory Coast**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>protection...</th>
<th>strongly</th>
<th>moderately</th>
<th>somewhat</th>
<th>not at all</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Facilitated the coordination of advocacy work for other actors

Was gender appropriate and sensitive?

Influenced external actors like OCHA, UNHCR and WFP etc.

Improved humanitarian coordination and effectiveness..

Served displaced communities and returnees.

Other (please specify)

---

E survey for external stakeholders


---

[ ] Country where you worked on the Ivorian Crisis. **Liberia**
Ivory Coast

Other (please specify) ____________________________________________________________________________

2. How would you rate the impact of Oxfam’s advocacy on the following issues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>No impact at all</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian coordination</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Refugee return policy and practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food distribution</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Camp and host family issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kept the story alive and brought greater media attention</td>
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Review of RICs Humanitarian advocacy work in Liberia and Ivory Coast 37
### Fundraising

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>No impact at all</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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</table>

Other (please specify):

3. Was the strategy and message of Oxfam's advocacy work clear and effective?

- [ ] Very
- [ ] Somewhat
- [ ] Not at all
- [ ] Not sure

4. What part of Oxfam's Advocacy work during the Ivorian Crisis worked well and why?

5. What part of Oxfam's Advocacy and Campaign work did not work well and why?

6. How would you suggest that Oxfam's Advocacy and Campaign work could have been improved?

7. Did Oxfam's advocacy and campaign work consider adequately enough the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not adequately enough</th>
<th>Negative impact</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
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Gender and diversity..
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not adequately enough</th>
<th>Negative impact</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection of vulnerable populations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The needs of IDPs, refugees and host families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Returnee's and policies concerning return.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contextual appropriateness..</td>
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Evaluation of humanitarian advocacy in Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire – Management Response
24 January 2012

Background
Throughout 2011, Oxfam was heavily engaged in responding to the displacement caused by the post-electoral crisis in Cote d’Ivoire, including advocacy work in both Cote d’Ivoire (July – Dec) and Liberia (Apr – Jul). Towards the end of the mission, Oxfam’s regional office decided to commission an external evaluation of the humanitarian advocacy taken in both countries, aiming to assess the impact of the work, as well as the effectiveness of various advocacy approaches and the degree of internal coordination. The evaluation included a document analysis of the campaign’s strategies and outputs, built on some of the monitoring done throughout the year, and drew on information provided by respondents from national, regional and international levels through e-surveys and telephone interviews.

Response to main findings
Oxfam agrees with the main findings of the evaluation, and the main strengths and weaknesses highlight. We do believe that the advocacy work undertaken Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire did have tangible positive impact on the overall humanitarian response by raising the media and political profile of the crisis, influencing the funding decisions of at least two medium-sized donors, improving some UN policies and practices on coordination and returns policies, and influencing in particular food security policies benefiting host communities in Liberia. We do accept also that Oxfam played a contributing role in these changes, and that direct attribution is not 100% certain in all cases.

We believe that the findings in the report highlight a number of important reasons contributing to areas where success was had. These include the development of high quality policy documents, including innovative field research that added value to country and regional debates; an investment in advocacy capacity that allowed Oxfam to coordinate and link up other partners to do joint in-country advocacy (a unique added value of Oxfam); good working with field staff on some specific issues or projects such as the field research and food security policies; proactive approach to media; and good internal coordination.

We would agree that there were also a number of challenges in the advocacy response, and a number of key areas that could be strengthened in the future. These include a lack of analysis on some policy areas including gender and protection of civilians limiting the areas of advocacy we could work on (although we feel it was not realistic to work on issues of civilian protection or peacekeeping issues given our lack of history or analysis in country on these issues), gaps in advocacy capacity at key times of the crisis (ie. no advocacy staff after July in Liberia, and none before July in Cote d’Ivoire), a weakened engagement with global levels after the peak of the crisis, communications gaps with country levels and the lack of sufficiently long-term plans due to uncertainty over the length of the programme.

We believe that the main underlying reasons behind these challenges include the fact that advocacy staff and budgets may not have been sufficiently prioritised at the beginning of the response as a core competency, but arrived too late and was pulled out too quickly. A lack of instantly available advocacy staff compounded this problem, as did budget issues in Liberia and competing demands from the Horn of Africa, whilst poor communications equipment in Cote d’Ivoire also hampered effective coordination and communication. A clearer MEL framework from the outside would have helped, as would have a greater utilisation of gender and protection resources – either those that could have been deployed as part of the response, or those that exist already in the Oxfam system.
Response to main recommendations
The findings and recommendations outlined in the report are timely in that Oxfam is preparing advocacy responses in response to the coming food crisis in the Sahel. The recommendations will be considered immediately in the light of this crisis.

1. Include advocacy costs in budgets and fundraising proposals as standard practice
We agree that including budget lines for advocacy, research and communications is essential to ensuring sufficient capacity for an advocacy response, and that a number of donors (though not all) are open to funding these activities. We commit to ensuring that national and regional budgets and proposals for the current and future response systematically tries to integrate advocacy work into its core work, and involve advocacy staff at the development stage, and will communicate this to Country Directors, Programme Managers and Fundraising staff.

2. Build a roster of French-speaking advocacy staff and consider French-speaking advocacy HSP
OGB is currently in the process of rebuilding its Humanitarian Register, and applications were requested for advocacy and communications post. A roster should be created by the end of February 2012, prioritising French speakers, and will be open to other affiliates as needed. The suggestion for a French-speaking advocacy HSP will be communicated to the Humanitarian Department.

3. Ensure advocacy staff are part of the core team deployed in the early stages of the response
We agree that advocacy staff should be part of a core early team in most humanitarian responses, certainly those that are Category two and above. Rapid onset crises require quick deployment of both advocacy and communication staff, while slow onset crises (such as food crises) benefit from these staff in advance of peak crises to focus on prevention and preparedness. We will ensure that each national programme has sufficient advocacy capacity in the response to the coming food crisis, aiming for at least one full-time advocacy person in each country and full-time media staff where needed.

4. Improve inductions and materials for new advocacy staff
We shall aim to improve the materials available for new humanitarian advocacy staff, and aim to ensure proper induction time with advocacy and non-advocacy staff before deployment wherever possible. When it is feasible to have inductions in the regional centre and/or in a global office before deployment we should aim to do this.

5. Improve the MEL framework for advocacy
The Regional Campaigns Team shall work with the Regional Programme Quality Manager to develop a much stronger MEL framework for advocacy around the coming food crisis, being much clearer about key objectives, indicators and the timing of ongoing monitoring and periodic evaluations. We shall discuss ways of improving advocacy indicators in Real Time Evaluations with the Humanitarian Department.

6. Develop an effective internal communications strategy for locations where communications is difficult
This recommendation will be considered by the broader humanitarian team.

7. Make better use of Oxfam’s expertise in gender and protection
The gap in gender and protection expertise has been recognised, and capacity in these areas will be sought for the Sahel Food Crisis response.

8. Ensure three-six month timelines for budgeting and planning
There were a number of financial constraints hindering a clear decision on programme length in Cote d’Ivoire, but seeking to ensure clear and predictable plans in the future will remain a priority. Communication of decisions around programme length will be ensured.

9. Ensure a dual presence in country, with programme/advocacy staff in the field being able to communicate to advocacy staff in the location where UN HQs and government ministries are based.
The lack of advocacy staff in Abidjan reflected the lack of programmes in the capital city and the exclusive focus of the short-term mission in western Cote d’Ivoire, where the majority of the humanitarian needs were. Given financial constraints and the short-term nature of the mission it may not have been practical in this instance to have a single advocacy person in Abidjan to undertake representations there, but an advocacy presence in the capital city/humanitarian hub is certainly recognised as being an important element of most humanitarian operations.

10. Capitalise on expertise in advocacy to empower local partners and other agencies
Given the short nature of the missions, in-depth advocacy training to local partners was not prioritised, but could feature more in future responses. Efforts were made to work with both local and international partners in both Cote d’Ivoire and Liberia in both field research and ongoing advocacy, and we agree that one of the major added value of Oxfam’s advocacy work is its investment in specific advocacy capacity and its ability to convene and coordinate advocacy undertaken by multiple actors in the country. This role will continue to be encouraged. We also agree that basic advocacy training would be important for field staff so that they understand the value and purpose of humanitarian advocacy, and this will be communicated to the Humanitarian Department and included in staff inductions.

11. Capitalise on global presence and comprehensive expertise
We agree on the need to make best use of the Oxfam’s global network to influence humanitarian actors at all levels. In multi-country crises, such as the coming food crisis in the Sahel, we will ensure effective regional coordination and spaces for staff from different countries to communicate and share information. This has already been set up with email lists and weekly teleconferences between national focal points and the regional office.

Signed

Steve Cockburn, OGB Regional Campaigns and Policy Manager and OI RIC Change Goal Lead
Mamadou Biteye, OGB West Africa Director and Regional Humanitarian Lead
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