

South Africa Climate Change Advocacy Programme

Impact Assessment

Executive Summary



Photograph sourced from the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA)

Oxfam GB
Citizen Voice Outcome Indicator
External Evaluation, May 2012

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDC	Alternative Information and Development Centre
C17	Committee of 17 – Civil Society Committee for COP 17
COP	Congress of the Parties of the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change
COP17	17 th Congress of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs (South Africa)
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Co-operation (South Africa)
EU	European Union
GCF	Green Climate Fund
LAMOSAS	Land Access Movement of South Africa
MCJC	Million Climate Jobs Campaign
NACTU	National Council of Trade Unions
OA	Oxfam Australia
OI	Oxfam International
OGB	Oxfam Great Britain
PACJA	Pan African Climate Justice Alliance
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RWA	Rural Women's Assembly
SDCEA	South Durban Community Environmental Alliance
SMS	Single management structure
TCOE	Trust for Community Outreach and Education
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 28th November to 9th December South Africa hosted the 17th Congress of the Parties (COP17) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Oxfam identified this as *“a unique opportunity to push the South African Government to lead by example by becoming a champion for pro-poor adaptation and mitigation at home and ensuring that people’s voices, especially from Africa, will be heard and listened to by decision-makers.”* (Oxfam, 2011a)

In this context, in late 2010 and early 2011, Oxfam Great Britain (OGB) revised its existing climate change advocacy programme in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) that had been running since 2008 to have a specific focus on COP17. By March 2011, Oxfam had defined the following objectives / outcomes for the advocacy programme (Oxfam, 2011a):

1. The South African government steps out as a global leader on national pro-poor adaptation with a powerful adaptation plan as part of a poverty reduction strategy backed with domestic and global resources;
2. South African government runs an inclusive, legitimate Congress of the Parties (COP) that contributes to a fair, ambitious, and legally binding deal, taking particular leadership with progressive voices (particularly with the Africa Group, Mexico and the European Union [EU]) on finance issues;
3. Individuals and civil society in South Africa are mobilised on three levels: to influence the domestic agenda; to influence international decision making; raised public awareness and action through movements focussed on the COP this year and food in coming years;
4. African organisations and people speak for themselves, particularly around women’s leadership, representation and participation in processes up to and at COP17, both inside and outside the negotiations.

This document is an evaluation of the advocacy programme in the lead up to COP17 that took place from late 2010 to December 2011. The advocacy programme was randomly selected for evaluation by OGB and the evaluation will contribute to a larger organisational evaluation and learning process by OGB.

This evaluation used the process tracing approach, which is a qualitative research protocol that was identified as the preferred methodology for the evaluation by OGB. The specific brief of OGB was to use the process tracing approach *“to assess the extent to which: a) the changes around South African climate change policy and mobilisation that the climate change advocacy programme was seeking have taken place; and b) we can evidence that the project contributed to these changes.”*

Summaries of the evaluation of success in achieving each evaluation and Oxfam’s contribution to this are summarised in the tables below:

Outcome 1	The South African government demonstrates leadership on national pro-poor climate change strategies with a strong adaptation plan that is backed with domestic and global resources	
Key activities	Written submissions and verbal submissions on South African Climate Change Policy by Oxfam Support of the participation of partners in South African Climate Change Policy development process	
Evidence	Does the white paper include an adaptation plan?	Yes, the White Paper includes a clear adaptation plan in Section Five.
	Does the adaptation plan include women and small-scale farmers?	Yes, the White Paper as a whole recognises the impact that climate change will have on the poor and specifically references women and small scale producers.
	Is it backed by global and domestic resources?	No, at this stage there is no clear allocation of global and domestic resources to the White Paper.
What was Oxfam's contribution?	Oxfam's Climate Change Advocacy Programme made a notable contribution to the White Paper development process. Oxfam's Climate Change Advocacy Programme was one of many contributors to the White Paper development process.	

Outcome 2	South African government runs an inclusive, legitimate COP that contributes to a fair, ambitious, and legally binding deal, taking particular leadership with progressive voices (particularly with the Africa Group, Mexico and the EU) on finance issues	
Key activities	Formal meetings with SA COP Presidency through 2011 at Bonn, Panama and other occasions. Written submission to and verbal lobbying of SA COP Presidency.	
Evidence	Did the SA government run an inclusive, legitimate COP?	Partially, as there are limitations as a result of the formal accreditation process.
	Did it contribute to a fair, ambitious, and legally binding deal?	Yes, but insufficient progress was made.
	SA Government taking particular leadership on finance issues	Yes, the SA government took leadership on finance issues.
What was Oxfam's contribution?	Oxfam's climate change advocacy programme was able to influence the SA COP Presidency. Oxfam's climate change advocacy programme was one of many influences on the SA COP Presidency.	

Outcome 3	Individuals and civil society in South Africa are mobilised on three levels: to influence the domestic agenda; to influence international decision making; raised public awareness and action through movements focussed on the COP this year and food in coming years	
Key activities	Contributed to development of a civil society strategy that recommended the formation of C17 and funded some C17 activities Co-funded MCJC Co-funded community awareness raising events of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Partnership Hosted three media breakfasts and put on an exhibition to raise the human stories of climate change	
Evidence	Were individuals and civil society mobilised?	Yes individuals and civil society were mobilised despite divisions and funding constraints.
	Was public awareness raised?	Yes, public awareness on climate change was raised in South Africa.
	Was the domestic/international agenda influenced?	Yes, to some extent, the agenda was influenced, although there is debate about how much influence is possible in a global meeting such as COP17
What was Oxfam's contribution?	Oxfam's Climate Change Advocacy Programme made a notable contribution to mobilisation of individuals and civil society. Oxfam's climate change advocacy programme was one of several significant contributors to mobilisation of individuals and civil society. Oxfam contributed to public awareness in the lead up and during COP17. Oxfam was one of a large number of contributors to public awareness in the lead up and during COP17. The Oxfam programme had some limited long term impact.	

Outcome 4	African organisations and people speak for themselves, particularly around women's leadership, representation and participation in processes up to and at COP17, both inside and outside the negotiations	
Key activities	Partnered with organisations that were part of the RWA to gather rural women's stories, develop a memorandum submitted to the South African government on rural women's day, and fund 650 to attend the RWA Supported PACJA Got accreditation for some civil society representatives and some Oxfam staff	
Evidence	Did Oxfam support organisations outside COP?	Yes, financially, although technical and intellectual support also useful
	Did Oxfam support organisations inside COP?	This was not really on their agenda, despite it being part of the outcome
What was Oxfam's	Oxfam was a major supporter of RWA and PACJA. RWA and PACJA would	

contribution?	have been active at COP without the support of Oxfam. Oxfam facilitated civil society voices to be heard inside COP. There is little opportunity for civil society voices to be heard inside COP due to its inherent structure.
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Recommendations and conclusions

OUTCOME ONE

Oxfam had an effective climate change advocacy programme that clearly contributed to the policy development process: Oxfam’s participation in the climate change response policy development process was recognised as vocal and strong by the individual leading the policy development process for the South Africa government. In addition there is traceable evidence of wording from at least one of Oxfam’s submissions being used in the published version of the National Climate Change Response White Paper.

There is no recommendation arising from this conclusion.

There was a mismatch between this outcome and Oxfam’s scale of impact on the outcome. The South Africa climate change policy development process was highly participatory and as a result Oxfam’s own contribution to the policy development process was by implication diluted by the impact that other stakeholders must have had on the process through their participation. In addition since Oxfam is an international organisation contributing in a national policy development process its contributions may not always have been regarded by decision makers as having the same level of significance as those of South Africa organisations. So while Oxfam clearly contributed to the final outcome, multiple players can be regarded as having contributed to this outcome as well.

It is recommended that outcomes of advocacy programmes are written to take into account the likely scale of impact Oxfam can have in the context of efforts by numerous other parties.

OUTCOME TWO

Oxfam SA climate change advocacy programme established an influential relationship with the SA COP Presidency from a low base: Oxfam’s SA team was able to secure formal and informal access to the SA COP Presidency and played significant role in assisting OI policy objectives through its establishment of a relationship with the SA COP Presidency.

There is no recommendation arising from this conclusion.

This outcome was poorly stated and as a result prevents clear evaluation of success. This outcome combines a number of different outcomes in one. In addition the core of the outcome statement was extremely ambitious and reflects a global scale objective, while other components of the outcome have a more national scale. Considering the small size of the Oxfam climate change

advocacy programme in relation to COP17 itself it is not possible to establish a clear chain of evidence linking different concepts in this outcome. In addition, while the SA team achieved a great deal considering its small scale (see previous conclusion), the outcomes statement as it stands sets up the team for failure at the outset. All these factors made it extremely difficult to clearly evaluate this outcome.

It is recommended that outcomes for advocacy programmes are written more simply and focus on single concepts. In addition as per a previous recommendation, outcomes should be at the scale of likely impact of the advocacy programme.

OUTCOME THREE

Individuals and civil society were mobilised. Oxfam played a role at the beginning of C17, as part of the process to galvanise civil society resistance to the global event that was COP17, and funded two organisations (Earthlife and SDCEA) to be part of C17. The monies were received by Earthlife in November, and by SDCEA at the beginning of 2011. In addition, Oxfam financed and offered intellectual support for the MCJC and assisted in the amplification of the campaign through its networking abilities. Oxfam has supported both Earthlife and SDCEA for a number of years and it was the fact that they are mature organisations that have developed capacity for administration, financial systems, and databases of supporters that allowed them to play a role in educating and mobilising for the global day of action.

Organisations with years of support tend to be more administratively and financially accountable for their funds. Therefore it is recommended that when Oxfam considers funding organisations for large-scale one-off events, it considers the maturity of organisation and how much support it has given it over the years.

A number of partners said that if they had had more money, they would have been able to mobilise more people. Having the funding earlier would also have given them time to focus on mobilisation and education rather than logistics and payments. This was due to internal processes and policies which could in part have been avoided if planning had begun much earlier. It should also be said that funding was insufficient for a global event with such ambitious outcomes.

It is recommended that Oxfam consider more timely grant payment by improving its internal appraisal processes and lowers expectations of programme staff engaging in fund-raising for their work.

In addition, if Oxfam wants to engage in global events, funding for it should be commensurate.

The scale of COP17 limits influence of small scale programmes. The sheer scale of governments and organisations involved in COP17 means that small programmes of the scale of Oxfam have limited influence. The review of civil society participation in COP17 made the following observation regarding this “It is important to support ideals based on climate science but also to know the limits

of the multilateral system to achieving these ideals. In terms of ambition, civil society is far ahead of multilateral systems and this is set to continue into the near future. In this context it must be questioned whether it is more essential to be building movements on the ground and to defocus from the multilateral process that is failing to deliver than to continue in the present mode.” (Hallows, Reddy and Reyes, 2012: 5). Perhaps it would be more useful to focus on getting different results by doing different things. Is Rio going to be any different from Durban? Would the money be better spent on building local movements?

It is recommended that for single country programmes Oxfam consider alternatives to engaging in the multilateral process of COP.

OUTCOME FOUR

Organisations (or rather networks) did speak for themselves. Oxfam played an important financial and technical role in allowing these voices to emerge. The RWAs that emerged with memoranda handed to government and to the COP Presidency indicates an impressive level of organisation that Oxfam contributed to.

There is no recommendation arising from this conclusion.

Perhaps one of the more important outcomes of the October and COP assemblies is that **women shared their own climate change adaptation strategies**. This is an interesting outcome as it could be argued that the narrative around COP is a disempowering one. That narrative suggests that people can only cope with climate change if the government negotiates on their behalf for an adaptation plan. There is no sense that people need and have their own local adaptation strategies which can be shared and implemented.

It is recommended that Oxfam look to fund knowledge sharing events that actively engage people and communities in sharing their local solutions to their climate change challenges. This should NOT be a ‘best practice’ exercise, but a genuine exchange of information, strategies, reasons, hopes, and results of experimenting. Best practice is not useful here because it offers blanket solutions which are not delicate enough for different contexts.

Inside COP, African voices were not heard. It is not clear what the strategy inside COP was, or whether it is worth engaging in that manner at all.

OVERALL

The initial impression of the programme outcomes is that they are too ambitious for one organisation to affect. This was particularly the case regarding outcomes linked directly to COP17. Many commentators suggest that most people knew that very little was going to be achieved at COP17, despite Africa having three clear demands. Given the structural difficulties of influencing one of the most complex and most expensive global processes, having programme outcomes that refer to COP17 outcomes is not useful.

On further investigation, the limitation on funds and the delay in them being disbursed came down to internal Oxfam processes. Planning began only nine months ahead of the event, and the two new staff members in the programme were asked to devise an action plan. Once completed, they were asked to raise funds for the plan, which they felt was not in their capacities. Therefore, the programme did not get the funding it expected and this tied activities. Internal appraisal processes and the requirement of a monitoring, learning, and evaluation (MEL) framework delayed the acquisition of funds by the programme, and it was only in August 2011 that the programme had funding it could disburse to partners (Mistry and Roussel, 2012, pers. comm.). These internalities directly hampered the effectiveness of this programme.

It is recommended that longer lead times should be included in Oxfam project planning for large events.