






Oxfam GB Project Effectiveness Review Management Response

Regional Director: Fran Equiza

Country Director: Makarand Sahasrabudde

Name of Project reviewed: North Karamoja Development Project

Date: 24th September 2012

Outcome/Impact	Rating	Short Commentary
Outcome 1 – Greater household income (global outcome indicator)		No evidence for impact on global indicator or complementary measures.
Outcome 2 – Improved food security		Modest evidence of impact in Kotido district, but none for Kaabong district.
Outcome 3 – Women’s empowerment		No evidence to suggest that the supported women have greater involvement in household decision-making.
Outcome 4 – Increased agricultural production/income		Evidence of impact in Kotido district (self-reported), but none for Kaabong district.
Outcome 5 – Improved livestock health		No positive difference from comparison group in relation to numbers of livestock lost to disease.

1. What follow-up to the review have you undertaken or planned (if any) e.g. discussion, analysis, workshop?

Some of the findings of the review have been incorporated into regular programme processes. i.e. the aspects of programme impact assessment processes were incorporated into the mid-term review processes of the ongoing Irish Aid funded programme (UGAB45) that took place in early August 2012. All key programme players were reminded to take issues of programme impact as part and parcel of programme implementation.

We are seeking support from the PQ officer (country programme who has returned from maternity leave) and the regional gender adviser to improve the quality of programming – design, implementation, M&E and review processes.

2. Overall, do the findings concur with your own expectations or assessment of the project/programme's effectiveness?

Generally the findings of the review are in conformity with what is currently designed for the Karamoja programme delivery processes from identification of interventions to phase out. The only puzzling fact was the finding that there was no significant impact on loss of livestock from disease (Outcome 5). We (the programme) need to review and assess the situation better.

3. Did the final results of the Effectiveness Review identify areas that were particularly strong in the project (i.e. large impact)?

Yes; evidence of impact under Outcome 4 in one of the districts, Kotido of 'improved agricultural production / income'.

If so, please comment briefly on why you think this was so.

Apart from advocacy interventions, the other major interventions in this conflict prone semi arid area of Karamoja is increasing agro-pastoral production and changing people's mindset from subsistence production to market oriented livelihoods work. Government & donor policies also favour this shift in mid-set and that helps. In our internal review we are also trying to determine why the impact in Kaabong differs from that in Karamoja.

4. Did the final results of the Effectiveness Review identify areas that were weak or very weak (i.e. no or very little impact)?

Yes; specific areas of weakness noted under Outcome 1; Outcome 3; and Outcome 5.

If so, please comment on why you think this was so.

- The entire Karamoja population is just emerging from a dependency syndrome of handouts and are not yet fully abreast with aspects of development work. Indeed all Oxfam's development interventions involve a lot of community sensitization and therefore the processes are of long term nature. Moreover the majority of partners in this region are still involved in humanitarian emergency programming and this has continued to tie down the people's mentality to handouts rather than working for progress and development.
- There is also an issue of the capacities and perspectives of the team and partners in thinking about and managing long term development

interventions of a sustainable nature.

- The Greater North of Uganda has been under-developed; exacerbated by the prolonged conflict that ended only a few years ago. The policies of Government of Uganda favour agro-pastoralism and agriculture. The local population is still heavily into pastoralism and transhumance. Pastoral forums have been in discussion with government (mainly the Minister for Karamoja) on this and a slight thaw in approach to pastoralism is expected. These policy conditions affect the work NGOs do since they can at best help create only part of the conditions that are necessary for sustainable growth. One of the areas of focus in the coming years remains advocacy for better policies. Under the SMS, Oxfam Ireland is going to be leading on pastoral rights. Oxfam Ireland is looking to appoint a national policy co-ordinator while Oxfam GB will appoint a policy officer for local advocacy on pastoral issues. We are hoping that with the renewed emphasis on policy advocacy and signs of a thawing in government policy, we will be able to improve impact in the coming years.
-

5. a) Is the reviewed project continuing? If yes, what actions are being taken in response to the weak areas identified in question 4?

The project is no longer continuing as it was a one-time intervention to support communities that were in distress during the prolonged drought spell in Kotido.

However most of the aspects of the project are part of the current programme delivery processes, e.g. improved food security, women's economic empowerment, increased agricultural production / income, and improved livestock health. These findings therefore remain relevant even now. We are using the findings to reflect the challenges and opportunities in the present programme. This gives us great grounds for improvement planning and investment.

b) What actions are you planning in response to the Programme Learning Considerations?

Programme Learning Considerations:

- **Assess whether Oxfam's advocacy strategy for Karamoja is sufficiently relevant**

The current advocacy strategy is sufficiently relevant given the operating arena in Karamoja where some development actors are still hugely involved in humanitarian emergency delivery rather than development orientation for the people. Stronger grassroots campaign for shifting mindset of community and government officials may be needed. It becomes difficult to plan for longer term sustainability in a humanitarian planning mindset.

- **Assess relevance of programme interventions (& logic) from point of view of impact**

Oxfam GB intends to revisit its theory of change for the Greater North and ascertain if the assumptions made are still valid. Apart from this effectiveness audit, we have in hand the findings of a Mid Term Review of the Karamoja programme and also a review of a key intervention (Gum Arabic value chain) in livelihoods. It is possible that some of the assumptions for instance, around women taking on an active role in community decision making based on interventions around economic activity, need to be re-examined. Another such area that needs to be examined is around using value chains for specific commodities for increasing income. The gains on the income front, as seen from this study, are very limited. This necessitates a re-examination of, inter alia, choice of commodities, methods for producer group formation etc.

- **Review intervention implementation and uptake in both Kotido and Kaabong to identify why there are reported differences in impact between the two districts**

The current and proposed programme interventions for both districts are aligned in such a way as to focus on what is most relevant for each district. Kotido is more arid in nature and interventions of livestock development remain most relevant, whereas Kaabong is relatively greener and interventions of agro-pastoral nature are more appropriate. To realize appropriate impact, these interventions will have to be viewed in their own perspective and not compare the same parameters for both districts but rather focus on what promises to deliver better results / impact under the existing circumstances.

- **Review the portfolio of support being provided to the women’s groups and consider undertaking qualitative research to identify more focused support that is more likely to leverage substantive, sustainable change**

Karamoja is traditionally a patriarchal society. As a result Oxfam’s current programme portfolio is designed in a such a way as to give women more focus in decision making, appropriate livelihoods programmes and access to and control over resources. The current value chain approaches being implemented by Oxfam are aimed at ensuring that women are recognised in the society as equal players and partners in development work. This is the basis of the current introduction of the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) approach being piloted and to replicated to all programme sectors. *This theory of change needs to be re-examined, as stated earlier.*

- **Explore the potential of investing more in agricultural production and commodity marketing**

Karamoja remains predominantly pastoral and agro pastoral environment and agricultural production will only continue to be practised in relatively green belts as a support mechanism to the more resilient and adaptable pastoral production system. We also may need to re-examine this assumption. It is possible, for instance, that in the area only an animal produce commodity value chain makes full economic sense.

6. If the project/humanitarian response is ending or has already ended, what learning from the review will you apply to relevant new projects in the future? How can the Regional Centre and Oxford support these plans?

The greatest learning is to keep conscious of impact at all levels of project / programme implementation so as to ensure that all interventions, after their phase out, leave residual effect among communities. The Regional Centre and Oxford should be kept abreast of the specific circumstances pertaining in particular project / programme locations so as to ensure conformity with prevailing factors when fundraising for such locations.

The reports will be published by Oxfam. If you have objections to this, please say so and explain why.

No objection. However, we would like to see the final draft before publication.