

Oxfam GB Project Effectiveness Review Management Response

Regional Director: Aboubacry Tall

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Name of Response reviewed: 2012 Mali Food Insecurity Response

Date: 01/06/2013

Participants in the Management Response: David Macdonald

Summary of Results

Standard	Level of achievement	Rating
1. Rapid appraisal of facts within 24 hours of pre-defined trigger, plans in place and scale-up or start-up commenced within three days	<i>Partially met</i>	2/6
2. Coverage uses 10% of affected population as a planned figure with clear justification for final count	<i>Partially met</i>	2/6
3. Technical aspects of programme measured against Sphere standards	<i>Partially met</i>	2/6
4. MEAL strategy and plan in place and being implemented using appropriate indicators	<i>Partially met</i>	1/3
5. Feedback/complaints system for affected population in place and functioning and documented evidence of information sharing, consultation and participation leading to a programme relevant to context and needs	<i>Almost met</i>	2/3

6. Partner relationships defined, capacity assessed and partners fully engaged in all stages of programme cycle	<i>Fully met</i>	3/3
7. Programme is considered a safe programme: action taken to avoid harm and programme considered conflict sensitive	-	-
8. Programme (including advocacy) addresses gender equity and specific concerns and needs of women, girls, men and boys and vulnerable groups ¹	<i>Partially met</i>	2/3
9. Evidence that preparedness measures were in place and effectively actioned	<i>Partially met</i>	1/3
10. Programme has an advocacy/campaigns strategy and has incorporated advocacy into programme plans based on evidence from the field	<i>Fully met</i>	3/3
11. Country programme has an integrated approach including reducing and managing risk through existing longer-term development programmes and building resilience for the future	<i>Partially met</i>	1/3
12. Evidence of appropriate staff capacity to ensure quality programming	<i>Not met</i>	0/3
Final rating Equivalent to 45%		19/42

¹ Elderly, disabled, HIV positive, single women, female-headed households are examples

1. Did the HIT identify areas that were particularly strong overall in the Region or in a particular country? (i.e standards fully met?)

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

Partnership
Accountability
Advocacy strategy

2. Did the HIT identify areas that were weak or very weak in the Region or a particular country (e.g. standards partly or not met)?

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

The HIT identified several standards which, according to the assessment, were only partly met. The methodology used in the HIT, however, is currently not always adequate for slow-onset response to a food crisis (example – standard 1), as confirmed by Oxfam PPAT team. The assessment also covers only the period until September 2012, As many activities on the ground had been delayed (see below), several of the criteria have since improved significantly. For example, the target for beneficiaries (coverage) has been fully met with a total of 255,000 beneficiaries reached, representing 116% of the agreed target of 220,000 (source: Oxfam International Sahel Food Crisis: 2011 – 2012 Summary Report of Response, June 2013).

Oxfam was one of the first agencies to advocate and the whistle blower to push for humanitarian action in the north of the country. It was also one of the first agencies to settle back in Gao following the security crisis. Teams assessed and evaluated the situation, got authorisations and adapted to the rapidly changing environment in order to respond to the needs of the population. The difficult funding situation, especially at the beginning of the response, impacted on the organisation's capacity to enhance areas which required stronger support. At the end of the response, Oxfam's ambitions were funded at a satisfactory level of 86%. The insecurity following the coup d'Etat and the rebellion take over and control of Oxfam areas of work impeded negatively on the working environment and our capacity to attract the staff required to manage such programmes.

The humanitarian response in Kayes (Mali) was launched in a difficult context since Oxfam did not have a humanitarian presence in this area before. Consequently, Oxfam implementation in Kayes area was affected, especially its timeliness. This was the case for all other actors of the humanitarian community. In Kayes despite this delay, Oxfam was the first international organization to provide direct humanitarian response in the Circles of Kayes and Yelimané and has been continuously active since.

Because Kayes was a new area for implementation for Oxfam, and there were no experienced partner in humanitarian programme, the emergency response was difficult to launch and it was not easy to meet standards in some areas in time including:

- 1) the capacity of staffs to make an effective response;
- 2) the integrated program for more impact.
- 3) MEAL plan to provide indicators of emergency
- 4) Knowledge and or implementation of Sphere standards

All these aspects have been introduced during the program response and improved significantly, including through training.

Another aspect which has affected negatively the rating of this emergency response is the lack of systematic documentation on what was done – the Mali team recognises that more systematic documentation of decisions and activities is needed, and has worked on improving it since the HIT.

3. What actions are being planned in response to the unmet or partially met benchmarks identified?

Some measures have already taken after September 2012 to improve the quality of programme results:

The capacity building of national staff and partners has resulted in staff and partners now able to react in case of any crisis. Training courses have been held in Gao and Kayes between implementing period and end of program. Such are:

- Overview of humanitarian programs
- Technical Training Programs
- Training on the MEAL Plan and accountability
- Responsibilities and ways of working between technical Program and MEAL
- Cross Training `s gender policies and programming approach in Oxfam.

Other training including spheres standards and tools and all documents for capitalization as required (for example, several activities have been made in the standards of SPHERE but the need for the traceability of these sources was not capitalised at the time of the evaluation period – the Mali team thinks that this criteria should have been appreciated as “done partially”). Programme capitalisation is useful (Tools, reports and all documents should be capitalised).

4. Are there HIT findings that you would recommend for action by the Humanitarian Department? And how can HD support the Region's response to the HITs?

Three methods are needed to support an effective response to humanitarian emergencies.

- 1) Support in terms of cost of rapid financing (Cash Funds and Reserve Funds and How to access them) to cover emergencies needs before donors sign the proposals. For us, this could facilitate our timeliness and programme implementation. Oxfam added value is the CATFUND and the ability to send a team of experts (HSPs) in a very limited time frame. This needs to be reinforced as it is one key value in a humanitarian context.
- 2) Support for the acquisition of other funds in emergency period.
- 3) Support the establishment of a pool of staff with ability to react immediately in case of emergency interventions, to do initial assessments, basic training (emergency interventions, gender approach adapted to the context, MEAL Plan) and to plan the first activities, to do hand over with local staff and partners.
- 4) Support to the regional contingency plan or enable existing contingency plans in case of new humanitarian interventions.