

EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW SERIES

'enhancing effectiveness through evidence-based learning'



Scotland

Policy Influence

2013/14

Beyond the Horizon

Oxfam works to tackle poverty in Scotland by developing projects with people living in poverty to improve their lives and show how things can change; raising public awareness of poverty to create pressure for change; and working with policy makers to tackle the causes of poverty. Since 2011, the Beyond the Horizon project has been a key area of activity in contributing to this. Oxfam recognises that the prevailing model of the economy is not working to eliminate poverty so it developed two key documents (the Oxfam Humankind Index and the Our Economy Report) with the key aim of influencing how the economy of Scotland develops to respond to the needs of the many, not the few.

Activities	Inputs	Outputs	Final outcomes	Impacts
Research	Research and Policy Officer time	HKI report, Our Economy report, HKI Policy Assessment Tool	A debate is commenced around alternative performance measures to GDP that better reflect the full spectrum of society, including the flourishing of the poorest in Scottish society in terms of social and environmental, as well as economic well-being	Pro-poor society based on an equal, green economy
Lobbying	Head of Oxfam Scotland time	Prepares briefings for relevant parliamentary questions, motions, and debates. Responds to relevant committee inquiries	The National Performance Framework is reconsidered in terms of its purpose. Targets included that more fully address the socio-economic and environmental situations of those in poverty in order to provide 'a broader assessment of national well-being and success'	Pursuit of a pro-poor economic model, based on social justice and environmental sustainability
Advocacy	Media Officer time	Attendance at events, media coverage, blogs	The Scottish Government considers an alternative economic approach based on community-led economies that focus on the quality and distribution of growth. This includes specifically influencing the Economy Committee and the Minister for Finance, as well as creating a tolerant attitude towards the creation of a Poverty Commissioner	Oxfam able to utilise high quality research reports to further UKPP advocacy and programme goals
Launching of HKI and Our Economy	Partners' time	Production and dissemination of discussion papers emerging from research		Government policy, parliamentary legislation and parliamentary inquiries address poverty and inequality in Scotland
HKI consultation	Production costs for reports	Influences Scottish politicians to proactively support Oxfam Scotland's change objectives		
Produce HKI advocacy impact assessment tool	Donation from trust	Civil society and academic engagement including speeches and presentations; building awareness and support for the HKI agenda		
	Event costs	Media hits relating to HKI	Anti-poverty organisations reframe their agenda by placing the economy as a central issue/topic that needs to be addressed and acts upon this through campaigning/advocacy	The Scottish economy is transformed so that wealth is shared and the poorest women and men benefit from a new economic model

Work of, and with, partners

This diagram presents the theory of how this project was expected to achieve change, summarising project activities and outcomes expected to contribute to the overall project goal. It should be noted not all aspects of this model (e.g. media coverage) were covered in the research undertaken

Project date: May 2009 - March 2012

Evaluation: February 2014

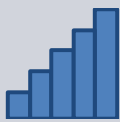
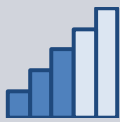
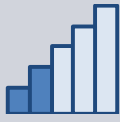
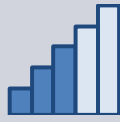
Publication: November 2014






Evaluation Design

The evaluation identified and sought the effectiveness of specific outcomes the project sought to achieve. Areas of improvement or approaches that can be replicated in other projects were also identified.

For details on evaluation design, see the 'How are effectiveness reviews carried out?' document, and the full report for how these designs were tailored by individual reviews.

Results

Project outcome	Rating	Commentary
A debate is commenced around alternative performance measures to GDP that better reflect the full spectrum of society, including the flourishing of the poorest in Scottish society, in terms of social, environmental, as well as economic well-being.		The evidence is that the HKI was the catalyst for the current debate about alternative performance measures to GDP. The activity of external partners has influenced the scope and pace of the debate about alternative performance measures to GDP, but much of this has been achieved using HKI as evidence to the cause.
The National Performance Framework (NPF) is reconsidered in terms of its Purpose Targets to fully address the socio-economic and environmental situations of those in poverty in order to provide 'a broader assessment of national wellbeing and success'.		The current Scotland Performs round-table discussions and commitment to public consultations are evidence that the National Performance Framework is being reconsidered. The current amber rating may evolve into green once there is more confidence of this translating into changes to the NPF, which provides a broader assessment of national wellbeing and success. While Oxfam Scotland, through the HKI, was a catalyst to bring forward the discussion, it is evident that a wide range of partners has been important in supporting the distance travelled relating to Outcome 2. Nevertheless, in terms of its influence, we regard Oxfam via the HKI as being critical.
The Scottish Government considers an alternative economic approach based on community-led economies that focus on the quality and distribution of growth. This includes specifically influencing the Economy Committee, the Minister for Finance and regeneration actors, as well as creating tolerant attitude towards the creation of a Poverty Commissioner.		In terms of directly influencing the transition to an alternative economic model there is limited direct evidence that HKI or Our economy has achieved this. Our direct consultation revealed limited awareness of the content of Our economy, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty Commissioner • Decent work, including the living wage • Community involvement in decision making • Sustainable Livelihoods Approach.
Anti-poverty organisations reframe their agenda by placing the economy as a central issue/topic that needs to be addressed, and acts upon this through campaigning/ advocacy.		Evidence exists to demonstrate that a number of key anti-poverty organisations have reframed their agendas by placing the economy as a central issue within their organisation.

Rating key:  - Outcome realised in full; evidence that intervention made a crucial contribution;  - Outcome realised in part & evidence that intervention made a crucial contribution; Outcome realised in full & evidence that intervention made an important contribution;  - Outcome realised in part & evidence that intervention made an important contribution;  - Outcome realised in part & evidence that intervention made some contribution; Outcome realised to a small degree & evidence that intervention made an important contribution;  - Outcome realised, to any degree, but no evidence that the intervention made any contribution

Going forward

The Humankind Index gained its legitimacy and reputation from its participative focus. Oxfam in Scotland will seek to build this into future research/policy projects wherever possible. In relation to Our Economy, it is important to recognise the additional capacity pressures created by increasing demand for Oxfam to comment on, and input to, domestic economic agendas. Whilst this is recognised as a key success of these advocacy outputs, this needs to be balanced against international advocacy agendas and consideration given to how these are appropriately resourced. Learning from Beyond the Horizon project has informed the work of the Global Research adviser with Oxfam in South Africa, India and Brazil. This very welcome development happened due to staff changes, but could have been a more central element to the design of the project.

Oxfam GB has recently launched a new global inequality campaign, as such continued work on the Humankind Index and Our Economy will be undertaken within this context. Both advocacy products will be used as the basis for our campaigning around the nature of the Scottish and UK economies, and will embed them within our advocacy work in the build up to the 2016 Scottish Elections. This will, of course, take place within the context of evolving UK-wide advocacy objectives.

Photo credit: Andy Hall/Oxfam