

**Oxfam Management Response to the review of:**  
 Humanitarian Quality Assurance - Philippines: Evaluation of Oxfam’s humanitarian response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)  
 (Effectiveness Review Series 2014/15)

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<b>Name of Response reviewed:</b>	<i>Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) Response</i>
<b>Date:</b>	<i>November 2014 (Revised August 2015)</i>

**Summary of Results**

Standard	Level of achievement	Rating
1. Timeliness - rapid appraisal/assessment enough to make decisions within 24 hours and initial implementation within three days	Almost met	4
2. Coverage uses 25% of affected population as an planned figure (response should reflect the scale of the disaster) with clear justification for final count	Met	6
3. Technical aspects of programme measured against Sphere standards	Partially met	2
4. MEAL strategy and plan in place and being implemented using appropriate indicators	Almost met	2
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	Met	3
6. Partner relationships defined, capacity assessed and partners fully engaged in all stages of programme cycle	Partially met	1
7. Programme is considered a safe programme: action taken to avoid harm and programme considered conflict sensitive	Met	3
8. Programme (including advocacy) addresses gender equity and specific concerns and needs of women, girls, men and boys	Met	3
9. Programme addresses differentiated needs of clearly identified vulnerable groups <sup>1</sup>	Almost met	2
10. Evidence that preparedness measures were in place and effectively actioned	Almost met	2

11. Programme has an advocacy/campaigns strategy and has incorporated advocacy into programme plans based on evidence from the field	Met	3
12. Country programme has an integrated approach including reducing and managing risk through existing longer-term development programmes and building resilience for the future	Met	3
13. Evidence of appropriate staff capacity to ensure quality programming	Almost met	2
<b>Final rating</b> Equivalent to	<b>75%</b>	<b>36/48</b>

### 1. Did the HIT identify areas that were particularly strong overall in the programme?

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

**The Typhoon Haiyan Response has several ‘Met’ ratings (21/48) in the evaluation using the Humanitarian Indicator Tool (HIT). Specifically, these are in coverage, feedback/complaint mechanism, safe programming, gender equity, advocacy/campaigns strategy, and in integrated approach.**

The Philippine Country Programme was a small team (42 staff) prior to the Response, with only 4 dedicated staff within the Humanitarian team. But it did have strength in livelihoods development programmes, advocacy for economic justice issues and a gender justice programme. Meeting the needs of such a response was always going to be a challenge.

In addition to the challenge of the response, the Country Director was new (arrived in Aug 2013) and the country strategy was coming to an end, and did require a substantive review (which was completed largely between Dec 2013 and July 2014). A Category 3 response (Oct 2013) to the earthquake in Bohol, Visayas already was stretching the team, which was impacting on the decision of whether to respond to an Internally-Displaced People (IDP)’s crisis in Zamboanga, Mindanao. Adding to this, existing partnerships for humanitarian response were not in a satisfactory position, with decision making/management related issues from previous responses still largely unresolved. The existing Campaigns and Gender teams had not previously been active in humanitarian responses, and only a few staff in Mindanao livelihoods programme had humanitarian experience.

The country programme is therefore proud of the achievements and the areas of high rating. Conscious decisions to promote gender and advocacy were made on day one. To ensure their strength and position of power within the response, they remained as being line managed by the Country Director along with the response manager (in addition to the development and business unit teams) but 100% deployed to the response. There was also a significant scale up of human resources for these areas of work. Integrating longer term objectives was brought in through the Oxfam Country Strategy (OCS) process. Attempts were made to have a stronger development livelihoods component into the response, but this did not take off as would have been anticipated, in part due to (lack of) clarity of roles and staffing skill sets.

The complaint mechanisms where a good combination of previous experience in the Philippines and technical skills brought in by the HSP/RRTs.

The Haiyan Response's 'Met' ratings in HIT evaluation can also be attributed to Oxfam's Regional (and global) support to the Country Programme which was immediately extended with an adequate humanitarian resource deployment. The response needed more than 400 Staff in its implementation peak and it would have been difficult for the Country Programme to manage without reinforcement from global and/or regional Oxfam offices.

## 2. Did the HIT identify areas that were weak or very weak in the programme (e.g. standards partly or not met)?

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

"Technical aspects of programme measured against Sphere standards" and "Partner relationships defined, capacity assessed and partners fully engaged in all stages of programme cycle" were the only two areas that were partially met.

Both are a little disappointing for a global humanitarian responder like Oxfam. Global experience was brought in to lead the response in terms of management as well as technical advice. All of who had extensive humanitarian experience. To not meet the sphere standards is therefore disappoint.

Attempts were made to have partners engaged. A partnership relationship coordinator (C2 level) was brought in within the first month of the response. And while this did help define the approaches to partners, the combination of humanitarian partners with unresolved issues from past responses, a relatively small pool of humanitarian partners that Oxfam in the Philippines had experience with and a mind-set held by some that Oxfam was better placed to be operational (rather than invest in partners) did mean that progress was not as strong as the past.

Both areas have been/are being addressed. Technical leadership for management, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and emergency food security and vulnerable livelihoods (EFSVL) are now retained within the country programme, to ensure that the right leadership on standards is being met. The contingency plan now has lists of partners, and the RiC team has worked primarily with partners in the Typhoon Ruby response (Dec 2014) and continue to train partners up so there is greater depth for future responses

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

**The areas where the Response was rated as 'Almost Met' (12/48) were in timeliness, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) strategy, addressing differentiated needs of vulnerable groups, preparedness measures in place and effectively actioned and in appropriate staff capacity in place to ensure quality programming. The Response, on the other hand, was rated 'Partially Met' (3/48) in programme measurement against SPHERE standards and in partner relationships, capacities and engagement.**

The new Oxfam Country Strategy (2014 – 2020) has a RiC Goal which has better focus on technical skills and partners. It also has a clear direction on Adaptation and Risk Reduction (ARR) laws, policies and programs by the national and local governments, a timely and coordinated government and other relevant actors response to disasters and Oxfam's technical leadership in WASH and EFSVL with gender and protection lenses.

The Programme will work with a larger Rights in Crisis (RiC) team, with staff capacities (all staff – beyond RiC) being advanced through response and



resilience team (RRT) and responding training.

**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?**

None

**5. Overall, how would you rate the HIT process in terms of usefulness to the programme?**

Very useful – the benchmarks were simple, clear and attainable and gives focus on what should worked on in responses.

**NOTES:**

- 1 Elderly, disabled, people living with or affected by chronic illness, single women, female-headed households, religious, ethnic or socio-economic minority / marginalised groups are examples.