

OXFAM'S JOURNEY IN SOUTH AFRICA

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OXFAM



PHOTO © Matthew Willman | OXFAM

Fancy Stitch workers doing a traditional Zulu dance for the Summers family, who are one of Oxfam Australia's major donors.

FOREWORD

Oxfam Affiliates have a long history of supporting civil society organisations in South Africa, spanning the pre and post-apartheid period. This short historical document provides a brief glimpse into Oxfam in South Africa and some of the achievements. Of course, most of the achievements would not have been possible without the work of current and past staff, volunteers, and partners.

The role of civil society organisations and Oxfam has changed over the 59 years that Oxfam has engaged in South Africa: times were different under apartheid, during the transition to democracy and now, under a post-apartheid South Africa.

With the transition to an indigenous Oxfam in South Africa, we have time to look back and ask ourselves how we fared. Have we been a leading donor in South Africa? Did we live up to the expectations of partners and did they live up to ours? Did we make a difference by supporting these partners and did we and the partners influence the political agenda on a national level? Can we conclude that civil society, with the assistance of external donors, has been the driving engine behind some significant changes? Or that citizens now have a much bigger voice?

What we can definitely say is that we tried to walk the path together with partners and to take the hurdles together. We learned a lot from each other and we did contribute to strengthening civil society. We can be proud that in most cases we have supported cutting edge organisations who have taken a leading position in their fields. Some of these organisations are featured in this publication. All our partners in some way contributed to a transformed civil society and of this we are very proud.

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed working with partners in South Africa, a country I visited 46 times since I started in 1997 as a program officer. I loved working in this very complex and vibrant place; a country in transition, where a lot is at stake and to which the world was and is looking because of its peaceful transition.

Although I am no longer a program officer for South Africa I do follow its development and that of some of the partners. In January 2015, during a vision quest in the Cedarberg Mountains, where I was alone for four days and nights, I said goodbye in a spiritual way to South Africa. I thanked the amazing people I met in those 18 years during which we shared hope, sorrow and laughter. I wish you all courage when fighting for gender and social justice.

DENISE PARMENTIER, *Oxfam NOVIB*

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AACES	Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme
ANC	African National Congress
APAC	Australian Partnerships with African Communities
ARV	Antiretroviral
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CAA	Community Aid Abroad
CBO	Community-based organisation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
EC	Engendering change
EMM	Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
GAD	Gender and development
HAPG	HIV/AIDS Prevention Group
JOHAP	Joint Oxfam HIV/AIDS Program
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NOVIB	Netherlands Organisation for International Assistance
OGB	Oxfam Great Britain
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
TCOE	Trust for Community Outreach and Education
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
UCODEP	Unity and Cooperation for Development of Peoples

CREDITS

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Discussions with staff and partners
Oxfam affiliate reports, evaluations and proposals
Oxfam affiliate websites
- Note:** Oxfam was born or became official in 1965. However, the organisation’s work spans decades before this, to the time of the Second World War, starting out as the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief. In the intervening years, the organisation created alliances with other groups of activists in other parts of the world. Later, these groups became affiliates of Oxfam International.

OXFAM TIMELINE

1942

OXFAM'S BEGINNINGS

The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (The Oxford Committee) is formed by a small group of citizens concerned about the impact of the Second World War on communities across Europe. Through their tenacity they are eventually successful in lobbying for the allied naval blockade to be lifted so that food and supplies can reach countries such as Greece, Belgium and Germany.

1953

IN AUSTRALIA

A church-affiliated group called Food for Peace Campaign is founded in Melbourne by Father Gerard Kennedy Tucker. It merges in 1962 with an organisation called The Australian Freedom from Hunger Campaign to form Community Aid Abroad. This organisation will later become Oxfam Australia in 2005.

1940

1950

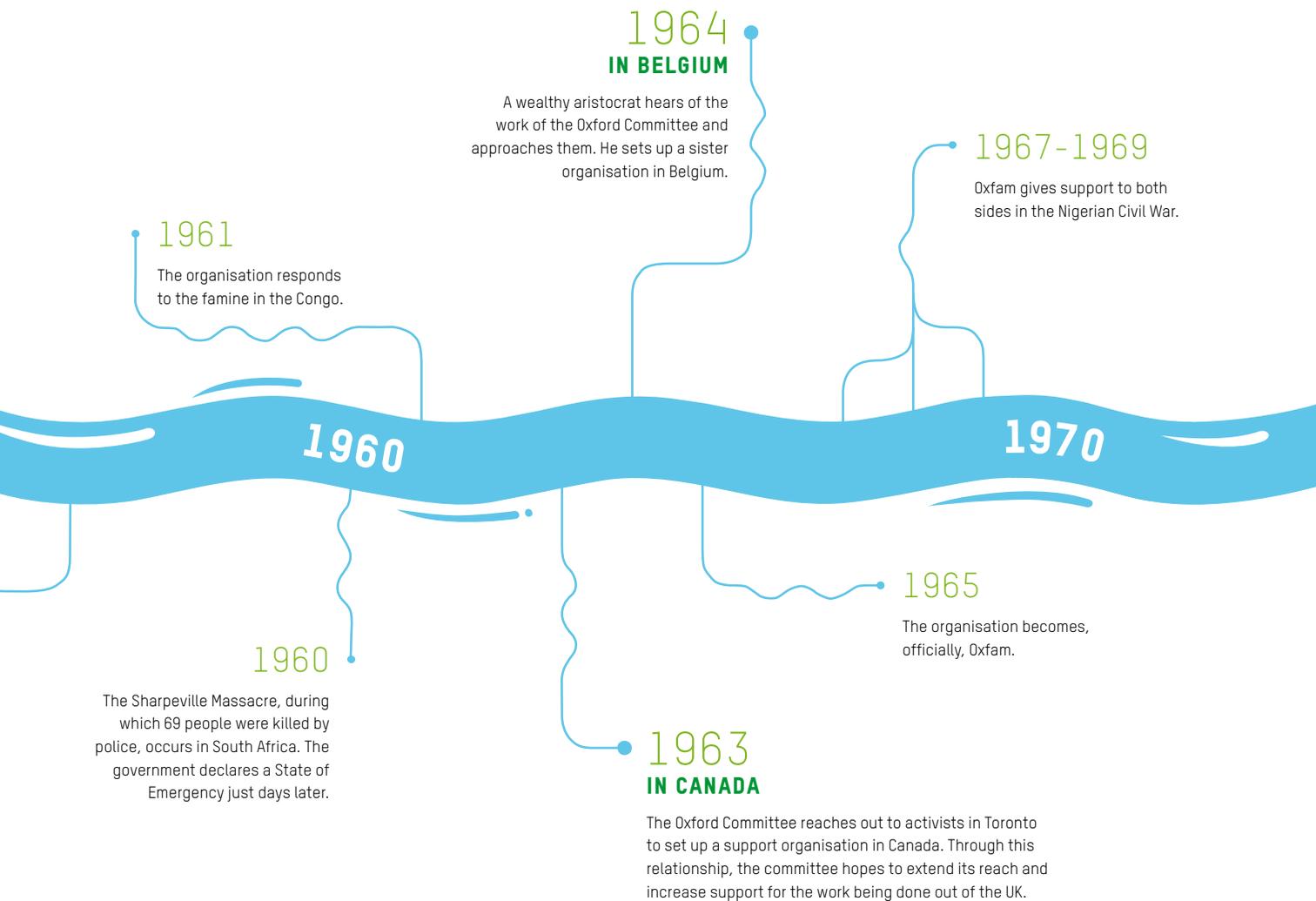
1956

IN THE NETHERLANDS

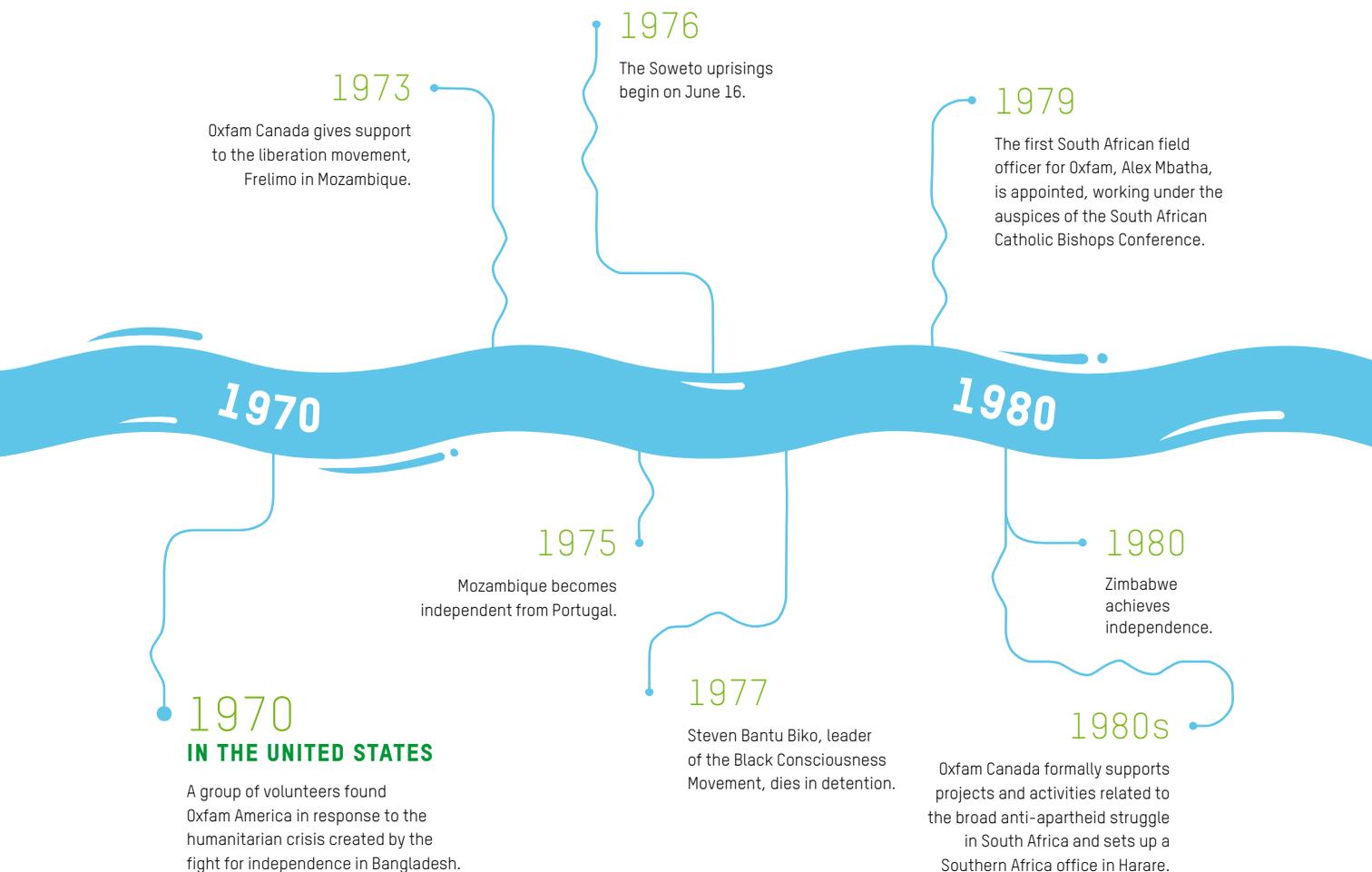
After the Netherlands suffered from severe flooding that killed over 1,800 people in 1953, other countries – including much poorer countries such as India – rallied around to support the Dutch. This display of generosity inspired Father Simon Jelsma to return the favour. Jelsma and others found the Netherlands Organisation for International Assistance (Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Bijstand or NOVIB), the country's first politically independent and non-religious development organisation

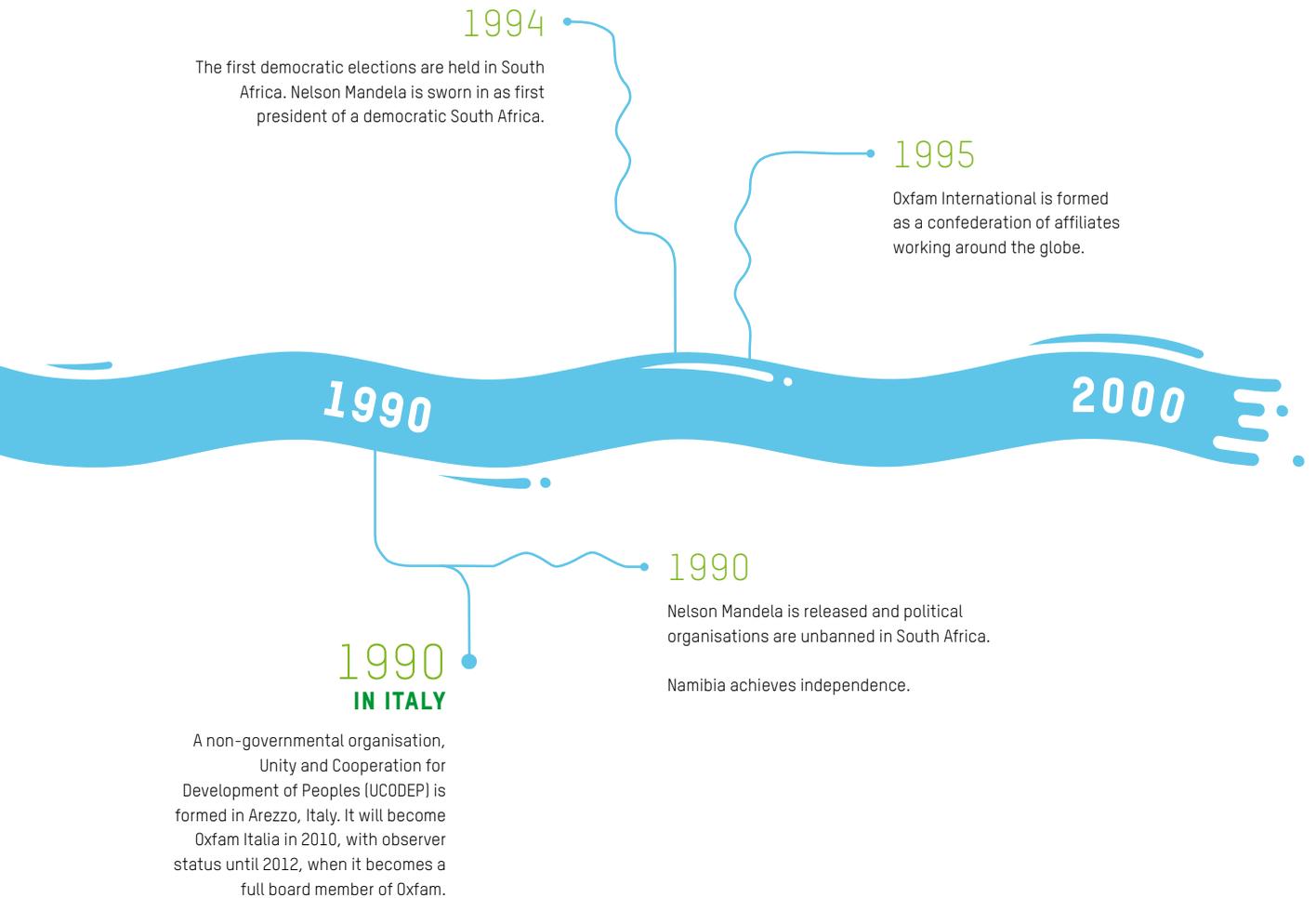
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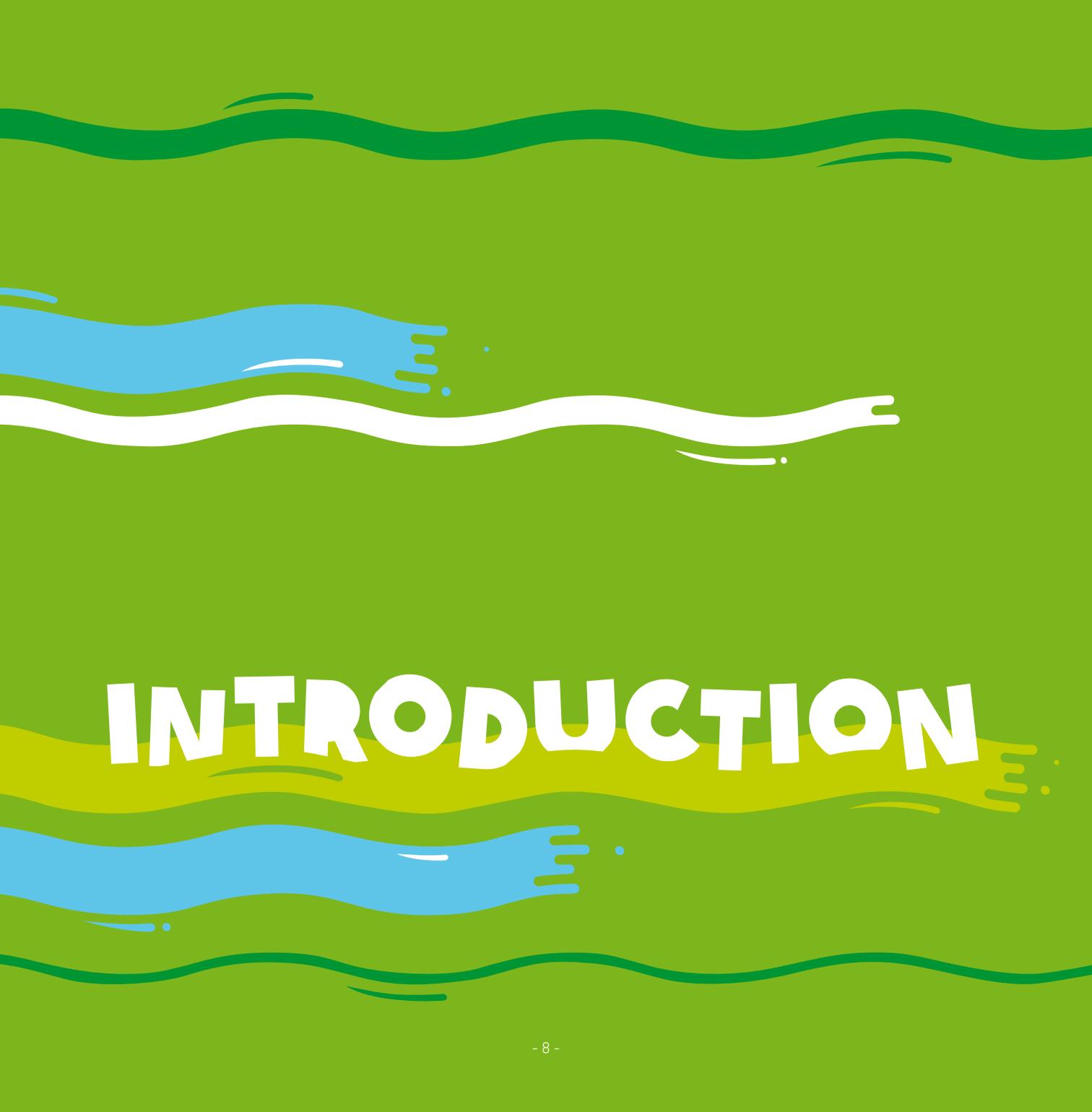
The Oxford Committee gives its first grant to South Africa.



OXFAM TIMELINE CONTINUED





The background features a vibrant green color with several horizontal, wavy bands. From top to bottom, these bands are: a dark green wave, a light blue wave, a white wave, a yellow-green wave, another light blue wave, and a final dark green wave. The waves have a hand-painted, brushstroke-like texture.

INTRODUCTION



OXFAM – AN OVERVIEW

When a group of English citizens, who were concerned about the serious impact the World War was having on people across Europe, got together in Oxford in 1942, they had no idea of the far reaching consequences of these first actions. The commitment to change led them to form an organisation that would offer relief in crisis, support in political change and a voice for transformation throughout the world. Oxfam today is a confederation of 17 organisations across the globe.

As the organisation has grown, so has its essence. Starting out as a response to starvation, the organisation has been challenged as time has passed to become so much more than that. With its growth has come the inevitable difference in opinion – about development, involvement and politics.

In South Africa, the involvement of Oxfam grew from just one affiliate to at least ten affiliates working in the country at various times over the years. In 2016, those affiliates hand over the baton to an indigenous Oxfam in South Africa, an entity that has been years in the making. It is thanks to the efforts over the years of the women and men, from affiliates and their partners, who have made invaluable contributions to development in South Africa that Oxfam can have an indigenous affiliate in the country.

It is not possible to give a fair account of such a huge and significant contributor to change in a few pages. The purpose of this brief reflection is to offer a light overview of the Oxfam affiliates and their work in South Africa. Each of the affiliates has brought its own flavour to the mother body and so an attempt has been made to reflect this. The affiliates have had significant impacts on the South African landscape over the years. The need for an in-depth look at these is a task worthy of undertaking. It is not, however within the scope of this brief publication.

OXFAM IN SOUTH AFRICA

The first grants from Oxfam to South Africa came in 1956. These were to support feeding schemes run by churches for children in townships affected by cutbacks imposed under the Bantu Education Act.

South Africa's history is important in the story of the role that Oxfam played.

The Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 was an important moment in the country's history, and perhaps an indication of what more was to come. This occasion, remembered as Human Rights Day on March 21, commemorates the day when 69 Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) members were killed by police during a peaceful demonstration against the pass laws¹ of the time.

Following on this, the African National Congress (ANC) and PAC were banned, senior leaders of both parties detained without trial and the ANC and South African Communist Party (SACP) set up Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the military wing of the alliance, and the underground 'struggle' began.

In 1961, Robben Island was turned into a prison for the purpose of detaining political activists.

It is against this backdrop that the support for South Africa intensified. The June 16, 1976 uprising, which began in Soweto, against the introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at schools, set the tone for heightened awareness worldwide about the atrocities taking place in South Africa.

Sanctions were one way in which the rest of the world expressed solidarity with the people of South Africa. This was always a source of tension and debate. Some believed that sanctions would have a negative impact on the poorest people while others felt that sanctions were the only way to bring down the apartheid government. Oxfam was not exempt from this debate.

¹ The pass laws were created to control the movement of black people in certain areas, particularly those reserved for white people.

Up until Zimbabwean independence, Oxfam's attitude towards the southern African liberation movements had been one of resolute Quakerish fence-sitting. Grants had been given both in Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa for school-based feeding and agricultural training since the 1950s, and for people directly hurt by apartheid such as Black man's burden revisited as families of those killed at Sharpeville in 1960. But the liberation movements were another matter. With the rarest of exceptions, involvement with the humanitarian activities of those who had taken up arms against white rule was scrupulously avoided on political grounds. //

MARGE BLACK, in *A Cause for our Times: Oxfam – the first 50 years*

However, a firm policy on apartheid (in Namibia and South Africa) was put into effect in 1982, after much debate and deliberation. Through this policy, it was agreed that Oxfam's involvement in these countries would be in support of liberation movements opposed to the governments of the day.

The affiliates made contributions in various ways, some through support of the underground movements and others through partnerships with organisations working in the country. Some anecdotal accounts of the early days are shared in the sections following.

Over the years their support shifted from clandestine (such as bringing money into the country surreptitiously) in some cases and apolitical in others (supporting education projects regardless of affiliation) to developmental or firmly political. Affiliates such as Oxfam Canada and NOVIB took a strong and clear line on gender; Oxfam Belgium focused on specifically grassroots organisations and others, such as Australia, had a leaning towards building strong relationships with partners.

Throughout this publication partners are highlighted to illustrate the work in South Africa. There are organisations whose work provides an exemplary mirror of sound partnerships and shared values. The partners chosen simply illustrate these points.

As Oxfam undergo a major transformation, the ushering in of a South African Oxfam, they can look back and be proud that it has come to this.

The background is a solid green color. It is decorated with several horizontal, wavy lines of varying colors: light blue, white, yellow, and a darker green. These lines are stylized and have a hand-drawn, brush-stroke appearance. The text is centered over the white and yellow waves.

OXFAM AFFILIATES IN SOUTH AFRICA

OXFAM CANADA

// My first and most memorable encounter with Nelson Mandela coincided with a moment marking one of his basic goals – the equal right to vote in South Africa. The moment was Nelson Mandela voting for the first time in April of 1994, in a polling station in a small community in KwaZulu-Natal. Together with David Gallagher, an Oxfam Canada field officer in Southern Africa, we were the sole international election observers in the polling station in which all other governmental and non-governmental observers were excluded. //

MEYER BROWNSTONE (<http://www.oxfam.ca/blogs/at-the-polling-station-with-nelson-mandela>)

Described by Maggie Black in *A Cause for our Times: Oxfam – the first 50 years*, as a 'leading Oxfam Canada radical', Meyer Brownstone was one of the founder members of the group called the Canadian Committee and went on to become chair of Oxfam Canada. The privileged position he comments on above is a testament to the work Oxfam Canada did in support of underground movements such as the ANC.

Oxfam Canada (or the Canadian Committee at this time) joined the Oxfam family in 1963. At this time, the organisation operated out of the United Kingdom only and had begun to reach out to other countries, such as the United States and Canada. Through these relationships, Oxfam (at this time operating as the Oxford Committee on Famine Relief) hoped to extend its reach and increase support for the work being done out of the United Kingdom.

In the early 80s, through their overseas program, the organisation supported liberation movements in Southern Africa. Support ranged from help to displaced people to direct support to the underground movements, even if this was in a clandestine fashion.

Oxfam Canada was first to suggest a presence in Southern Africa at the height of sanctions against the country. This was controversial as some believed it went against the spirit of censure at which sanctions were aimed. However, according to David Gallagher of Oxfam Canada, Thabo Mbeki himself, gave a blessing to this initiative.

// So we had a lot of trouble by suggesting that Oxfam Canada open in SA ... At this time, I was chair of the anti-apartheid movement in Canada and there was a huge rift that Oxfam was doing this. So we went to New York and spoke to Thabo Mbeki who was the representative for the ANC in New York at the UN and also covered Canada ... and he gave this big talk at the university (in Toronto) and said, 'We trust Oxfam Canada; we think they should work inside. //

DAVID GALLAGHER, *Oxfam Canada*

Mbeki advised him to meet the ANC elders in Zambia – which David did – and they reiterated his position. "I used to go into South Africa with money in my shoes and socks," laughs David.

At the height of the political upheaval in South Africa, Oxfam Canada began to directly fund organisations inside the country. These ranged from advice centres to media organisations, paralegal support and initiatives to do with challenging forced removals.

In 1988 Oxfam Canada opened a Southern Africa office in Zimbabwe. This was expedient as it allowed easy access to South Africa, and with a British passport, it was easy to move in and out of the country.

Later, Oxfam Canada was actively involved in support, together with other Oxfams, around monitoring of the first democratic elections in 1994.

Eventually in 1990, Oxfam Canada moved its office from Zimbabwe and opened one in Durban, which is situated in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) the province which at the time was a hotbed of political violence. Here Oxfam shared an office with an organisation intrinsically involved in offering support to those who were 'on the run' or whose families were affected by the violence. Oxfam Canada became a funding partner of this organisation, known as Sinani, the Program for Survivors of Violence.

SINANI, THE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE



Oxfam had a lasting impact on Sinani, the Program for Survivors of Violence. Set up in response to the violence that beset KZN in the period building up to and after the first democratic elections, Sinani continues today to help communities find peaceful means to heal rifts and helps people deal with the trauma of political violence.

One of the ways in which Sinani contributes to society is through the social circus. It was Oxfam Canada who introduced Sinani to the social circus, organising for the famous Cirque du Soleil to train groups of young people



PHOTO © Karl Schoemaker | OXFAM

The Umzi Wethu program supports young people in the Eastern Cape around livelihoods work in the conservation and hospitality sectors.

in a range of activities. Many young people have benefited greatly from this initiative, creating their own businesses and cooperatives as a result of this collaboration. The support of Cirque du Soleil meant that the young people were exposed to some of the best training available.

The circus work continues as a means of involving marginalised and vulnerable children. Once they are part of the project, Sinani is able to find out more about them and assist their families to access services and grants, schooling and health care. The children are helped with their homework and given opportunities to express themselves. Parents and guardians are kept abreast of what is happening and the children are given the chance to put on shows for the community.

Sinani continues to support young people through the circus project, offering an alternative means of recreation as well as employment for many. In recent years, Sinani has been supported by Oxfam Australia.

The unbanning of political parties and the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 meant a reorientation of civil society – at the least a rethinking and discussion of its role. Funding agencies also had to reassess their contributions. This resulted in a move by Oxfam Canada to work around gender.

HONING IN: THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PHASE 1)

In 1992, Oxfam Canada made a commitment to “promote a practical application of the gender and development (GAD) approach within Oxfam Canada and with partners”. The organisation conducted a review and assessment of gender and women’s organisations in South Africa with the aim of developing a framework for a GAD strategy and program.

The program also aimed to provide infrastructural support to organisations focused on basic and strategic needs and those involved in providing gender training. During this time, Oxfam Canada partnered with SPEAK.

SPEAK



SPEAK was a women’s organisation run as a collective from 1982 until around 1994. It offered an alternative to the general media available to women. Not only this, it offered a publication in three languages – English, isiZulu and Sesotho. SPEAK offered a voice for women and focused on issues that affected people personally. It’s simple and powerfully produced content meant that it could be accessed by a range of women, particularly working class women – a group that was often overlooked.

Through a monthly newsletter, radio program and audio cassettes, SPEAK aimed to “inform, educate and challenge around gender inequality in South Africa”. SPEAK ran workshops and forums, produced a video and developed materials around anti-sexism. It also challenged and reflected on developments around women’s issues.

The GAD program was an important step in involving partners in the development and implementation of the program and the painstaking work and reflection over the three years laid a strong foundation for the collaboration that was to take place between Oxfam NOVIB and Canada in what is called GAD Phase 2, captured in the section about NOVIB.

IN RECENT YEARS – ENGENDERING CHANGE

After the end of the GAD program in 2001, Oxfam Canada embarked on its Engendering Change (EC) Program which ran from 2009 to 2014, under a partnership with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

In South Africa the program focused on capacity building of partner organisations. Over this time, Oxfam Canada worked towards helping partners strengthen organisational capacity ‘to reflect and live’ the values and practices of gender just organisations.’

RAPE CRISIS CAPE TOWN TRUST



Rape Crisis began in 1976 and has been working towards the support and recovery of survivors since then. The organisation’s vision is of a South Africa in which “women are safe in their communities and where the criminal justice system supports and empowers rape survivors in all its interventions”. Rape Crisis runs education projects to raise awareness and prevent rape in schools, and offers counselling and legal support to rape survivors. Changing attitudes through education and dialogue is central to their work. Organisations like Rape Crisis have made a significant impact in the lives of many women, including Tina, whose name has been changed to protect her identity:

Tina lives in Heiderfeld. She is 16. She has seen someone shot in front of her, bloodstains right up to her doorstep. She takes the taxi and someone is shot in the taxi. Her life is surrounded by violence. What are the chances of her leading a normal life? Tina comes to Rape Crisis. Not only because she is committed to change. She comes because she did not get a good enough matric (grade 12) pass to get into a good college or university. If she could, she would have studied social work or teaching or nursing.

She comes to Rape Crisis and here she learns to look within, to ask questions about feeling disrespected, about feeling that she has no choices. She learns about her rights as a woman and the rights of everyone else around her. She is encouraged to ask questions – what can I do about that, how do I build a sense of safety; how do I start to learn to respect my own intuition, my thoughts, myself?

She learns to think about who she has to support her; what resources are available to her; who she can share with. And Tina is trained to be a counsellor so that she can then help and support others. Slowly Tina begins to value herself, she begins to feel she is worthy; she learns skills that she couldn't have imagined she would learn – like how to chair a meeting, and how to take minutes, and how to plan her life and organisational skills; she learns how to facilitate workshops in a manner that respects other people; she learns how to counsel others and how to be a responsible co-worker.

She takes every opportunity Rape Crisis has to offer her and eventually she is trained to be a court supporter so she can support women in crisis. But she doesn't stop there. She begins to question her church – 'why are there no young women; why are there so few young people'. And she uses her skills to lobby and be heard. And thus she becomes a leader and offers an alternative view to the young people who look up to her. She teaches them the things she has learnt at Rape Crisis.

And so the cycle continues and the effects of one organisation are felt across time and place.

Information gathered through a conversation with Kathleen Dey, Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust

Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust continues today to act as a bridge between rape survivors and the community. They continue to work to reduce the stigma of rape, to increase support available to survivors and to prevent future cases of rape.

With the completion of the five-year EC Program, Oxfam Canada and its partners had a sense of accomplishment and appreciation of the opportunity presented and taken to become a more gender just organisation. True to its aim, Canada left a legacy not just of funding, but of organisations with capacity to reflect critically on their work and of organisations that were strong in their commitment to working towards the long term goals of gender justice.



PHOTO © Matthew Willman | OXFAM

Grace Nomsebenzi Bewa, a retired pensioner, farms over 12 sheep and has a vegetable garden that grows mainly corn and cabbages.

OXFAM NOVIB

After the Netherlands suffered severe flooding in 1953 that killed over 1,800 people, other countries – including much poorer countries such as India – rallied to support the Dutch. This display of generosity inspired Father Simon Jelsma to return the favour. He, together with a group of other concerned citizens, founded the Netherlands Organisation for International Assistance (NOVIB), the country's first politically independent and non-religious development organisation. NOVIB became an Oxfam affiliate in 1996.

From the beginning, NOVIB's mission rested on three pillars: political pressure and development education in the North and financial assistance to projects in the South.

NOVIB has been working in South Africa, albeit without an office presence, since the 1970s, believing firmly in a hands-off approach. In the early days its role was as a solidarity organisation with a policy of radical alignment geared against the apartheid system.

A duty report by Herman van der Made, an Oxfam staff member at the time, contains information about a visit to Zambia and Botswana between November 25 and December 13, 1985. The purpose of the visit was to hold meetings with the ANC and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) about future projects.

❧ I confirm that the ANC sees NOVIB as an organisation of solidarity and a valuable partner. Present in the meeting with the ANC was the treasurer general, Thomas Nkobi, and Alfred Nzo, the Secretary General. One of the topics discussed was a possible trip of the Chair of NOVIB (Mr. Wim Meijer) and the director of the Project Department (Mr. Hans Pelgröm) to South Africa.

The meeting with SACTU was with President Steve Dlamini. One of the issues was how to plan an external evaluation as there is a State of Emergency.

I was impressed with the effort people made to come to Botswana in order to meet me as in most areas the State of Emergency had been announced. People were being followed, and some had driven many hours extra to take borders which were deemed to be more safe, especially if coming either from Cape Town (16 hours drive)

or Durban. Most impressive was the journey of two women from the United Women's Organisation. They had just come out of the Pollsmoor prison where they spent 14 days. They had left on Monday afternoon with the train from Cape Town, arrived Tuesday night at 01.00 in Gaborone, slept on the train platform, had the meeting with me on Wednesday and then went back to Cape Town again.

In my talks with the people from the organisations, time and time again the stories of torture, murder and looting came up ... the torture and murdering of collaborators, UDF-activists, peaceful demonstrators and children. //

HERMAN VAN DER MADE, *an Oxfam staff member*

NOVIB's focus was on consciousness-raising and mobilising in a situation where freedom of expression was virtually non-existent. The largest part of NOVIB funding in 1988 went to legal and paralegal aid.

The Oxfam NOVIB policy towards South Africa in the eighties was based on the assumption that South Africa did not find itself in a Third World situation, but was potentially a rich country. The central problem facing the country was defined as an unjust distribution of political and economic power. Within this context, NOVIB's focus was on social power relations and aimed at the 'victims' of racism and oppression.

With the changes in the country – the release of political prisoners and the unbanning of political organisations – NOVIB redefined its policy for South Africa in 1992, formulating a framework for the transition period which involved a year-long consultation with partners as well as input from research. The unwritten understanding was that prior to 1994 the focus was on civic education and research and after 1994 it would be 'going into development'.

NOVIB embarked on a Twin-Track policy for South Africa: Track One focused on support to democratisation processes which centred on voter education and training, human rights monitoring and conflict resolution; while Track Two focused mainly on land and rural development.

The elections in 1994 marked a victory for civil society organisations in South Africa and there was a sense that the future promised a better life for all. It also meant a shift in dynamics and NOVIB felt it necessary to reorient itself in relation to government. In 1995 NOVIB made a decision to discontinue one aspect of its work and focus on structural development, supporting initiatives that organised the poor to stand up for their rights and claim their share from the government and other development actors.

THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT FUND (SEE OXFAM CANADA FOR GAD PHASE 1) FROM 1992 TO 2001

In 1995/1996 NOVIB decided to increase its support to women's organisations and community-based organisations (CBOs) working in the field of women and violence. Both NOVIB and Oxfam Canada had always had a strong leaning towards gender and women's programs. From 1992 to 1995, Canada had been running the GAD program which would later be referred to as GAD Phase 1.

One of the overall aims was to strengthen local development, skills and capacity of small women's organisations. The GAD fund was also in some ways a pilot to see if a harmonised joint Oxfam program could work.

From 1996, NOVIB and Canada entered an agreement to co-fund GAD Phase 2, with Canada running the program within the country. Originally designed as a small fund for non-governmental organisation (NGO) and CBO gender initiatives, the GAD Fund was able to provide ongoing institutional and project support to a small core of gender and women's empowerment projects and organisations. One of these was Masimanyane:

MASIMANYANE



Masimanyane Women's Support Centre was established in 1995 by current executive director Dr Lesley Ann Foster, who invited woman activists and survivors to assist in developing a support programme for women and girls who experience sexual violence.

Initially Masimanyane provided counselling support to mostly black women and girls from marginalised communities. Central to this work was the philosophy that women from these marginalised communities could themselves be trained to provide support to survivors.

The problem of gender-based violence proved to be so immense, and the responses from the criminal justice system so weak, that Masimanyane soon found itself drawn into providing paralegal support and engaging in a broad range of advocacy and public education initiatives.

Building women's leadership capacity is essential in ensuring accountability and improved government responses. Women have to know the law and be acquainted with the human rights instruments at their disposal to be able to bring about change. To this end, Masimanyane has developed a leadership training institute which brings women together and takes them through various training programmes. Not only do these programmes build their skills and knowledge base, but they also prepare them for government office. Five women trained by Masimanyane were taken up into local government following the elections in 2006.

Working with women alone proved to have limited impact as these women still had to confront men in their daily interactions. It therefore became necessary to also work with men to address the power relations between men and women. Consequently, a 'men's program' was established, aiming to build allies among non-violent men who, in turn, can challenge perpetrators of violence.²

WOMEN ON FARMS PROJECT (WFP)

Women on Farms is well known to the Oxfams working in South Africa having, over the years, received support from NOVIB, Canada, Belgium, Australia and Great Britain. This organisation has been instrumental in championing the rights of women farm workers under very difficult circumstances. Growing out of a 1992 Lawyers for Human Rights initiative aimed at meeting the specialised needs of women who live and work on farms, the organisation was formally registered as an NGO in 1996.

With a growing awareness of the vulnerability of donor-funded NGOs, the organisation started an initiative to establish a membership-based farmwomen's movement. Sikhula Sonke was officially formed on National Women's Day, August 9 in 2004.

Women on Farms takes a rights-based approach to its work, for instance in responding to health needs it will not look only at the issue presented but help women to understand their health rights, covering legislation, available resources and information about how their rights are being abused so that women are able to address those issues. The organisation encourages collective action.

Of particular importance for the organisation has been the capacity building support provided through the GAD program, captured in more detail later in this publication. This funding was unique and enabled partners to engage with feminist theory, political education and individual skills – skills to help them give more depth to their work – the type of capacity building which is often seen as a luxury.

// In an NGO there is very little time to read on feminism and to have discussions, so to actually have the support to every quarter or six months to have feminism training for a week was absolutely invaluable. I don't know of any other funders that provide such training. That was a major highlight with the GAD grant and remains unique as a funder – funding that very blue sky thinking. //

COLETTE SOLOMONS, *director of Women on Farms*

² Information taken from Masimanyane website, www.masimanyane.org.za.



Margaret Plaitjies outside her home in Hammad's Square township outside Rawsonville, Western Cape.

PHOTO © Matthew Willman | OXFAM

The GAD fund enabled the organisation to host mid and end year reflections. They would invite women to discuss the lessons learnt, the highlights of work and practicalities affecting their daily existence.

The GAD Fund supported several initiatives, bringing together a variety of stakeholders to formulate policy and/or research agendas. Seed funding meant that organisations could ensure they were running properly with the basic infrastructures in place to help ensure success.

NOVIB was known as an NGO willing to take risks and embark on politically sensitive projects. It did not want to address only the symptoms, but also the root causes of problems affecting people in South Africa. Through the GAD Fund, it was able to leave a lasting legacy of strong organisations that were smoothly run, had staff who reflected, engaged and discussed issues; and had firmly entrenched values around the role of women and the ultimate goal of gender justice.

THE TRUST FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION



The Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE) is an old-school organisation that draws strongly on its black consciousness heritage, having links to black liberation theology of the early 1970s. Initially constituted as the Trust for Christian Outreach and Education, partly because the apartheid government would only allow money into ecumenical agencies, the organisation focused on education of all kinds with a strong leaning towards popular education influenced by Paulo Freire and Training for Transformation.

Early on, TCOE focused on providing support to rural communities to access education that was denied them by the apartheid government. In the early 1990s TCOE broadened its scope to include combating illiteracy and initiating projects to increase women's ability to be self-reliant, enterprising and skilled.

As the political context in the country changed, so too did TCOE, questioning its way of working and moving away from a project delivery approach to one which focused on empowerment of community to determine its own path.

TCOE has had relationships with a number of the Oxfams in South Africa and director, Mercia Andrews, says that the partnership extends beyond and before the financial one, "with them always attempting to integrate us in different ways".

TCOE is concerned with the rights of people to land and with tackling poverty as the root cause of many social problems.

OXFAM GREAT BRITAIN

// As the original Oxfam, Oxfam Great Britain (OGB) has a rich history of working in development. In the days of the struggle when liberation movements had been banned, the organisation played a supportive role through links in Zambia. The organisation itself was underground as much of its support to the ANC, for example, had to be 'off the books'. The organisation had a regional office in Lesotho which was concerned with issues of all the southern African countries. Eventually a South African field officer was employed and supported through six monthly meetings.

In the mid-90s, the organisation played a significant role in the HIV struggle – supporting a range of organisations – from a local level to involvement in campaigns and advocacy at a national level.

Oxfam's role has been at multiple levels - working with community organisations as well as supporting and strengthening national movements.

Within Oxfam, South Africa has played a key role in helping shape and influence global campaigns, through being part of various structures to push what we felt was important from a South perspective. We have played a key role in influencing the Oxfam agenda, through formal structures as well as informally.

Research is a strong component of our work and Oxfam globally is known for thinking and contributing to thought leadership.

We value coalitions and movements, and beyond liberation and HIV – over the last five or so years – we have worked towards a more cohesive South African civil society, supporting coalitions around BRICS³, movements in Africa and globally, working with trade unions and involving ourselves around tax and fiscal justice.

A fundamental principle is about social justice – and ultimately ensuring that is what happens. We may approach it in different ways, but that is the underlying issue. //

POOVEN MOODLEY, *Oxfam Great Britain*

³ BRICS is an association of five major emerging economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

OXFAM AUSTRALIA

// Our focus was always on small but strong community-based organisations.

There were exceptions however, and these were pragmatic choices we made. For instance, when the CHoiCe Trust began responding to the needs of a range of small organisations mushrooming in the area, we chose to support CHoiCe in their support of these smaller home-based care organisations. This made sense in every way.

We learnt a lot through our partners. Sophakama in the Eastern Cape is an example of a partner who successfully transitioned from being a small organisation responding to issues as they arose to an organisation that has huge significance in the area and has made significant strides in bringing real and meaningful change to communities.

We found them as a small organisation, but first connected with them at a personal level. We saw the potential and applied all our capacity building knowledge to supporting them – everything we had ever learnt. They have had remarkable success.

This thought brings me back to the way we work as an office. We have various approaches and we all have strong opinions on things. What makes us navigate those successfully is that we talk all the time. We share our ideas and debate and discuss possible options. I believe we are an organisation that has learnt from doing things differently at different times and allowing ourselves the chance to make mistakes.

For us the idea of partnership is so important. We focus on the humanness of the organisation. We work with people, not structures, and this has been validated in the visits we did to explain to people that we would be phasing into an indigenous Oxfam South Africa – every partner said that their relationship with Oxfam was not about the money. What was more important was the real relationship created between the organisations.

Respect is an important principle we work by. We have instilled a sense of integrity in the organisation. If you say you are going to do something, do it!

I believe managers are protectors of their staff and take responsibility and defend and protect their teams. You never burden them unnecessarily with things that will make them anxious. You have to play a buffering role – being careful about relieving pressure and stress. //

PUMLA MABIZELA, *Oxfam Australia*



Hilaria Simon works as a team leader for the HIV/ AIDS Preventative Group in the Masakane location, outside of Bela Bela in the Limpopo province.

PHOTO © Matthew Willman | OXFAM



Oxfam Australia was born out of a merger between two Australian international development agencies, Community Aid Abroad and the Australian Freedom from Hunger Campaign. Oxfam Australia's work in South Africa dates back to the days of apartheid, when human rights for black people were at a minimum and liberation movements were struggling underground to overthrow the apartheid regime.

Oxfam Australia has always believed strongly in partnerships and in approaching these partnerships with respect. Oxfam's objective from the beginning has been to support community development approaches that were of a high quality and responsive to community needs while all of the time remaining strategic and focused on long-term gains.

Like David Gallagher and Meyer Brownstone of Oxfam Canada, Graham Romanes was one of the stalwarts who supported underground movements in South Africa.

Graham recalls his relationship with the now premier of the Free State, Ace Magashule, who used to take him around and tell him about the plans the ANC had for the area. He also recalls being taken to meet Nelson Mandela, a fond memory for him.

// They took me to see Mandela when I came into South Africa. And he was there with Winnie and Nadine Gordimer and it was moving for me that he thanked CAA for the support and was very well briefed about what we had done internationally and through Oxfam. //

GRAHAM ROMANES, *Oxfam Australia*

For Graham an important principle that Oxfam Australia upheld in those days was that it was prepared to say that the key issues in South Africa (and elsewhere) were political ones. This translated into support for the ANC. They had a firm conviction that they had to be directly involved through the ANC and its affiliates in supporting political change as much as they could.

The focus on land was important because many people, particularly in rural areas, were being displaced. The relationship with Black Sash dates back to these days of forced removals and evictions.

THE BLACK SASH



The Black Sash is a well-known institution in South Africa and its roots lie in its opposition to apartheid laws which aimed at disenfranchising 'coloured' people in 1955. The organisation was known for the black sashes that members wore, and which they draped around a copy of the constitution – alluding to the abuse of people's rights and the constitution.

The organisation was responsible for organising marches, petitions, vigils, and protests against all manner of injustice, particularly against women. It was one of the organisations centrally involved in the march against the pass laws which took place on the day that is now celebrated as National Women's Day. On this day, August 9, 1956, women from all over the country converged on the government Union Buildings to protest against the pass laws. According to reports, there were between 10,000 and 20,000 women present.

Black Sash was given a special mention by Nelson Mandela when he made his first speech after being released from prison and the organisation was awarded the Danish Peace Foundation's Peace Prize in 1995 in honour of its 40 years of service.

Today, the organisation works in three areas of social protection with an emphasis on the rights of women and children: rights-based information, education and training; community monitoring; and advocacy in partnership.



PHOTO © Max Bastard | OXFAM

Woza Moya manager Jane Nxasane holding a young child on a site visit.

THE JOINT OXFAM HIV AND AIDS PROGRAM (JOHAP): OXFAM'S FLAGSHIP PROGRAM FOR COLLABORATIVE WORK – HARMONISATION IN PRACTICE.

One of the realities of HIV in South Africa is that it began to be severely felt just as the country was transitioning into a new democracy. Sadly, there were many opinions about where HIV came from, including conspiracy theories of it being deliberately imported to Africa.

At the same time, South Africa was beset by violence on an unprecedented scale in numerous townships. While many celebrated the new South Africa, people continued to die simply because of the support of one political party over another. Perhaps these issues, together with the efforts to build a new government, meant that the efforts against HIV were scattered. Just as South Africans were beginning to look forward to a nation based on democratic values, people were being killed in significant numbers by an enemy that was largely unknown.

By 1998, when JOHAP was established, a series of missteps had taken place, with dire consequences for the people of South Africa. Among them was the commissioning of a play by well-known South African playwright, Mbongeni Ngema. Huge amounts of money were spent on this, while many NGOs were attempting to combat the epidemic in very real and meaningful ways.

"I was recruited as the coordinator, employed by Community Aid Abroad for JOHAP and it was their first attempt to work collectively on HIV and AIDS in a more coherent way – thinking more strategically on how to pool resources and where to invest them. And I was the first person, playing the role of guinea pig.

This involved starting from scratch outside of having an HIV program to having a strong gender perspective – and we had to think through what that meant in practice.

A key value was to listen to local activists and hear what they felt their needs were and how best to support them. We were sensitive and tried to be responsive to what those leading on HIV and gender were saying. We prioritised participation. The Gender AIDS Forum emerged out of this. That became the flavour, the scent of the JOHAP work."

DAWN CAVANAGH, COMMUNITY AID ABROAD, WHICH SUBSEQUENTLY BECAME OXFAM AUSTRALIA

Parallel to the development of the HIV and AIDS work, the Oxfams had been talking about harmonisation – the coming together of Oxfams to work collaboratively on projects towards better coordination, impact and cost-efficiency.

JOHAP was set up in 1998 by a group of Oxfam agencies as a three-year pilot. It was led by a program committee and guided by an advisory board of South African experts. CAA was the managing agent and Oxfams NOVIB, Germany, Hong Kong and Ireland were additional contributors.

JOHAP's purpose was to contribute to the development of the Southern Africa region by reducing the impact of HIV and AIDS and by promoting a culture of human rights with and for those people who are living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. It did this by supporting the civil society response through CBOs and NGOs.

GENDER ISSUES

The irony of the epidemic was that it helped bring the issue of women's rights to the fore. It was impossible not to see how acutely women were being affected by HIV. Deliberately, then, the JOHAP program had a strong focus on the rights of women, as a backdrop to challenging the HIV epidemic.

THE AGENDA JOURNAL AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE GENDER AIDS FORUM

Agenda Feminist Media is a feminist media organisation that published a quarterly academic journal. A major event was the build up to and launch of Agenda's 39th issue, AIDS: Counting the Cost. This issue was in many ways ground-breaking and was one of the most popular journals Agenda produced. It appealed to a wide range of women and men and addressed the issues of gender and HIV at the core.

At the launch of the Agenda journal, the Gender AIDS Forum was born with the aim of interrogating and bringing to the fore the links between gender and HIV.

JOHAP supported the Gender AIDS Forum which produced a number of important publications related to gender and HIV and provided support to organisations struggling with responding to the HIV epidemic in a gendered manner. The organisation was also responsible for designing manuals on gender mainstreaming and HIV and AIDS mainstreaming and skills building processes and was an invaluable resource to other organisations struggling to understand and put into practice these issues.

JOHAP was the first program of its kind and scale to be run by Oxfam. It allowed for the 'working together' that was often spoken about but not always managed by Oxfam affiliates in the country.

“ They [the JOHAP team] have always been a fantastic role model for the confederation and I hope that the current program which is well organised with all mechanisms in place, will be taken forward in the new affiliate. They had a big influence on me when I started in Germany. I always felt the benefit of working together in the confederation; and was always influenced by the role model. ”

REINHILD SCHUMACHER, *Oxfam Germany*

“ In Oxfam Australia we found a very good ally in many senses. Their whole philosophy about how they work with partners is very much along the same lines as us. We have always been about working with partners – seeing ourselves as the facilitators of what they are doing as opposed to having our own ideas and then having those implemented. And interestingly, as a confederation, we have moved now in that direction. ”

ENIDA FRIEL, *Oxfam Ireland*

“ Before (JOHAP) every Oxfam worked independently. JOHAP was one of the flagships for the Oxfams to work together. So in many ways, as far as I understand, JOHAP led the way in getting the Oxfams to interact together beyond all the JOHAP issues. ”

NAVIN VASUDEV, *Oxfam Hong Kong*

“ The South Africa staff and partners really informed the work being done in countries, especially around mainstreaming HIV and AIDS and work around gender and HIV. JOHAP was a model for how that collective work could happen in Oxfam – so it was fairly groundbreaking. It meant there were a whole lot of challenges especially given the new way of working for some of us, but everyone was really committed to the focus on HIV and working together and trying to make it work. Many Oxfams around the world work far closer now. ”

JOSEF GARDINER, *Oxfam Australia*

// Both Germany and Ireland saw huge benefit in being able to put a relatively small amount of money into a larger program. So they were getting bang for their buck as it were. They were getting all the program gains – all the learning, material, documents and strong partnerships by pooling their money. And I think that was a massive lesson for the confederation. We definitely showed that good relationships between NOVIB, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland and Australia and cooperation across affiliates was really viable. It was built on strong personal relationships which always focused on improving the program. The supporting affiliates were always interested but they trusted and allowed the local team to manage the partnerships while they engaged at a strategic level. //

ALLAN MOOLMAN, *Oxfam Australia*

Established by a group of Oxfam affiliates as a pilot program in 1998, JOHAP was based on a three-year strategic plan. Mission: To strengthen the civil society response to HIV and AIDS, especially through CBOs and NGOs, so that it is cohesive, responsive and effective.

PHASE ONE

- Focused on service delivery, capacity building and advocacy, working through CBO/NGO partners in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo provinces, targeting young women, vulnerable children, young men, policy makers, CBOs and NGOs, and people living with HIV and AIDS.
- Worked in partnership with civil society organisations to support innovative work in HIV prevention and care, as well as legal services and advocacy for people infected and affected with HIV and AIDS.
- Supported capacity building in program management skills and HIV and AIDS mainstreaming and developed a model for capacity building in behaviour change interventions.

PHASE TWO

- Built on achievements of Phase One, increased its impact on the civil society response by focusing more specifically on strengthening the quality and cohesion of that response. It did this by supporting partners in the development, documentation and dissemination of promising practice in HIV and AIDS work, and in the creation of an enabling environment for the civil society response to HIV and AIDS.

PHASE THREE

- Focused on reducing the vulnerability of communities to HIV and AIDS and improving peoples' lives by supporting programs that enhanced the quality and cohesion of the response to HIV and AIDS in South Africa.

Oxfam Australia's mandate grew and extended beyond the collaborative work of JOHAP as it responded to the needs of partners and the communities they served. Oxfam Australia's Durban office went on to establish various programs including the Australian Partnerships with African Communities (APAC), the uMkhanyakude Food Security Program, the Child Social Protection Program, as well as more recently the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) focused on water, sanitation and hygiene for South Africa. Recent additions include the Disaster Risk Reduction, and the BuZA Program focusing on Promoting and Protecting Human Rights of Sexual Minorities in Pakistan, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Oxfam Australia also began working with gender partners during Oxfam Canada's exit from South Africa. This work on transformative women's leadership, gender identity and sexual orientation has been a strong area of focus over the last few years.

Oxfam Australia boasts a number of firsts in South Africa. One of these was the introduction of a workplace HIV policy for the office. This policy acknowledged that HIV and AIDS affected staff at a very real level. It was not just a partner problem, an outsider issue. With this in mind, and with the understanding and insight gained from relationships with partners, the office set about creating a workplace policy founded on the principles of trust, support and respect. The policy was implemented with sensitivity and care and was an example of how the personal could be taken into account in the workspace.

// It was a special moment in my time, particularly how we were able to implement it sensitively which allowed for people not to compromise themselves. We were even able to keep family members alive when access to antiretroviral (ARV) therapy was almost impossible at the time. And the way the policy and audits allowed for extreme protection of identity. Many will not recognise it as a key moment but its role was particularly important. //

COLIN COLLETT VAN ROOYEN, *Oxfam Australia*

In 2012, Oxfam Australia's Durban office launched the No Longer Vulnerable program which promoted and supported an approach that was strongly integrated and aimed to ensure people had access to the broadest range of services and support at the shortest possible distance from where they live and work.

AUSTRALIAN PARTNERSHIPS WITH AFRICAN COMMUNITIES

The Australian Partnerships with African Communities (APAC) was designed as a five-year partnership between the Australian Agency for International Development and Australian NGOs, including Oxfam Australia. The program was extended to a sixth year of funding, and concluded in 2010.

APAC's aim was to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development in targeted countries in southern and eastern Africa. The program involved three sectors: food security, communicable diseases (including HIV and AIDS), and water and sanitation.

The issue of food security was intrinsically linked with HIV and AIDs and it was impossible to ignore. The office also began talking about working with children and when Oxfam Australia was bequeathed money for working with children, this component was added to the work of the office.

One of the principles Oxfam Australia prides itself on is the relationships it has created with partners. Over the years, the organisation has worked hard to create alternative relationships with partners – based on trust, commitment, respect and mutual learning. Many of Oxfam Australia's partners have challenged the organisation and supported it in its growth, just as it has worked together with them.

One such organisation is the HIV/AIDS Prevention Group (HAPG) fondly referred to as Bela Bela (which is the town in which HAPG is based).

HAPG

When most other systems were failing the people of South Africa, HAPG showed that there were simple and effective ways of managing the HIV epidemic and therefore saving many lives in the process.

- \\ HIV/AIDS Prevention Group (HAPG) is the embodiment of the possibility of providing appropriate HIV and AIDS services in difficult conditions. It has proved that, even in a context of poverty and social exclusion, community residents can access a well-administered health and ARV program, staffed and run successfully by a cohort of laypeople. It has led the way in Limpopo in pioneering layperson-managed clinics supervised by an HIV and AIDS specialist administering ARV treatment, and all this in a province where the government is still struggling to provide an effective primary health care system.

Through the commitment and will of an accountant from Belgium, a doctor from the DRC, and nurses and lay-people from Bela Bela, this organisation gave hope to the people near and far from the clinic established in the township in Bela Bela.

Bela Bela is an organisation that did simple things – such as offering ARVs, for people who needed them, when the South African government wouldn't. The organisation created support groups to help those with HIV speak to each other and share. It persistently worked to break down the stigma surrounding HIV – through education and support, but also by giving people a sense of hope that there was life after HIV. It became a flagship program for Oxfam Australia and its work has been documented extensively. Many have learnt from this organisation. //

SCOTT DRIMIE, *researcher*

The funding relationship is by its nature power imbalanced. It is important to acknowledge this and try to create balance in whatever way possible. Oxfam Australia in South Africa has prided itself on creating partnerships with funding partners, not just on paper but in the way they work daily with people.

Over the life of the program Oxfam has provided support to partners in various ways from program funding, strengthening partners through capacity building, research and networking as well as documenting and sharing learning across the partnership. These activities have strengthened the capacity of partner and communities to champion their own development and build their voice around issues that affect themselves and the communities in which they live.



Cecile Manhaeve is the director of HAPG in Bela Bela in Limpopo.



PHOTO © Gcina Ndwalane | OXFAM

OXFAM ITALIA

Oxfam Italia, named UCODEP until 2010, has been operating in developing countries for many years. In the last decade Italia led many important projects in urban and rural environments, using a specific approach in tackling local issues such as urban poverty, social inclusion, social conflict and the lack of essential public services.

Italia's strategy is based mainly on the assumption that the role of local government is vital in addressing local issues and the belief that local institutions should work alongside civil society to undertake policy processes with the aim of solving those local issues. Italia believes in a bottom-up approach and a participatory process which involves key stakeholders and civil society.

WORKING IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa Oxfam Italia has been concerned with the interface between local authorities and active citizens and believes that the involvement of both is key to producing the change required regardless of the issues involved.

Oxfam Italia's relationship with projects in South Africa is based on providing technical support and acting as an implementing partner. What this amounts to is Italia being an equal partner in implementation – it has an implementing function just as do its partners. With government, Italia provides technical assistance; and with civil society organisations, Italia works in a joint collaboration.

Italia has been working in South Africa since 2006. It is committed to the theory of change that holds that citizens need to hold governments accountable; and governments need to provide services. Civil society has to be active in fighting for their rights and in calling for government accountability. This means that they have to be aware of their rights and of the instruments available to claim those rights. On the other hand, states must be effective and accountable to citizens as well as able to guarantee their rights.

WASTE COOPERATIVES IN EKURHULENI AREAS OF WATTVILLE AND ACTONVILLE



The project is a part of NETSAFRICA, an Italian-South African program which aims to promote decentralisation through strengthening local governments. It is co-funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Regional Government of Tuscany.

With the overall aim of assisting the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM) to formulate policies and implement initiatives to fight poverty and ensure access to services, the project specifically focussed on

- Improving waste management services in the areas of Wattville and Actonville, both within the EMM
- Creating job opportunities for disadvantaged communities
- Strengthening the capacity of the EMM to do participatory planning

IN CONTEXT

Ekurhuleni suffers from poor waste management services, particularly in informal settlements and very poor areas. The reasons for this include a lack of political power on the part of community members; and a lack of technical skills and financial resources on the part of local government.

Here, the municipality runs waste collection for 50% of the communities with the remaining half being outsourced to private companies. Prior to the project there was no waste recycling strategy and the separation of waste had been managed by informal collectors and pickers, who were more often than not exploited by the buyers of raw material.

ITALIA IN THE PROJECT

Italia's approach is to provide support to creating policy through a bottom-up approach. This involves consultation and participation. In this project, one of the first steps was to change the legal framework to allow for the municipality to outsource waste collection to cooperatives. This involved providing support with drafting and redrafting bylaws – a painstaking and difficult process.

An important part of the project was to establish a training unit, which will continue beyond Italia's intervention and probably have far reaching consequences for capacity building within the municipality.

Other aspects of setting up included creating public awareness; providing information and education to promote a sense of responsibility; and clarifying roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. Stakeholders analysis and partner selection were also important, as was an eventual baseline survey.



PHOTO © Matthew Willman | OXFAM

A view of the the Ufafa Valley, where Woza Moya is based.

Italia acted as the operational arm of the Region of Tuscany. It was present both at planning and implementation of the project. The organisation was responsible for the financial management of the project but beyond that worked daily 'side by side' on it, involving itself in all aspects of the operations. This involved a long and drawn out process but the results of it is that stakeholders are invested and have ownership of the project.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PROJECT

Two cooperatives were selected after interviews and discussions. After a short period of testing, a longer term agreement was entered into. This agreement gave the right to the cooperatives to be responsible for collecting waste in specific areas and they were recognised as the only groups with the authority to do so.

The cooperatives were offered training based on their needs. Other partners were invited to assist with this and certified training on waste management and business entrepreneurship was provided.

Italia's contribution to the training was to provide input on management of the recyclables; organisation of work and spaces in the recycling stations, and the role of the cooperatives within the agreement. Study visits were organised to other areas.

The cooperatives were provided with a range of resources to ensure their success including a prefabricated building within a fenced off area; a paved outdoor area; covered outdoor area to store materials; vehicles including trucks and tricycles; manual forklifts; and office furniture.

Essentially, they were provided with all the necessary fixed and movable resources they would need for a successful project.

Today, the cooperatives are active and relatively independent. They have systems in place to manage their operations effectively and have the resources to make daily work easier.

The success of this project led Italia to seek further funding to scale it up and replicate it in other areas.

Italia's belief in engaging government and community in the issues that affect them means that the legacy they leave is of a working model for cooperation between the people who have a vested interest in the success of any undertaking. The fact that they work as implementers too, means that they are able to experience the challenges and adjust in response to them.



CONCLUDING REMARKS:

REFLECTING ON WHAT WAS AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



AN INTERVIEW WITH ALLAN MOOLMAN

OUTGOING COUNTRY DIRECTOR - MARCH 2015

Q - CAN YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR ROLE AS COUNTRY DIRECTOR AND WHAT THAT MEANT?

A - "I inherited a mature program - one where systems were working, partnerships were strong, and most of the hard work had been done already. So this allowed me to be more creative and innovative, especially driving this idea of integration, working in an integrated way which was more appropriate to what we were seeing in the local context.

We were able to innovate - take a few more risks, focus on staff development in that phase - because we had the solid backing of affiliates; relationships between team members worked; and most importantly partners trusted us.

By integration we refer to the efforts to cross thematic boundaries and follow where the program needs to go - development organisation focused on supporting and strengthening civil society in South Africa."

Q - TELL US ABOUT THE DIFFERENT AFFILIATES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS. WHAT WAS SPECIAL ABOUT EACH OF THEM?

A - "Belgium's unique strength was strong solidarity with organisations that were involved in very grassroots issues and they stuck with that post-1994 agenda of a transformational society.

Canada was always strong on gender analysis - a highly political one, not from a needs basis but always strategic. They were always pushing the rest of the affiliates to look at strategic, long-term gender issues.

NOVIB brought a strong partnership model - they emphasised partnership; they emphasised working with partners and helped interrogate what that means and how do you live it out - how do you practice partnership in a real sense.

Great Britain brought a strong focus on advocacy and the thinking about how to scale up and use work in the public domain.

Australia was focused on partners and developing strong relationships with partners, and their approach was very partner oriented in that it focused a lot on making sure relationships worked well and through that were able to manage the program more strategically.

Ireland helped us deal with technical issues around monitoring and evaluation and forced us to think about how we were measuring and monitoring our work. They were strong as a technical partner for interrogating reports and making sure we monitored and reported correctly.

America was very involved in HIV and AIDS work and supported strategic HIV and AIDS partners, which in turn supported the in-country program indirectly; and it was a very strong partnership model because they were very intent on working closely with civil society.

Germany was a very highly valued partner for JOHAP and they were also able to leverage other support to partners. They focused on strengthening partnerships and leveraging funding for particular partners wherever they could.

Hong Kong played a strategic role providing strategic funding around particular areas of interest, mainly prevention and support for LGBTI work; and they were strong partners in JOHAP, offering strategic input around HIV and LGBTI issues.

It was always special when all the Oxfams came together for a field trip because these experiences showed how we could work together and engage partners. We had a common goal but used different lenses to interrogate our work.

I think this was common across the Oxfams – that there was always a strong partnership approach. It played out slightly differently in different settings but we were all about supporting local civil society in a very real way.

Each affiliate offered something and the best place was when we looked at the work together. We had different perspectives but the same goal in mind.”



PHOTO © Matthew Willman | OXFAM

Allan Moolman, former Country
Director from the Oxfam Durban office.

Q - WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS OVER THE YEARS?

A - "The process of creating the country strategy where the team as a whole wrote that strategy was another victory for Oxfam Australia, in my view as Country Director. It wasn't handed down from the top; it was actually delivered through our program teams. All we provided from the management team was the conceptual framework but the actual creation of it was an all staff effort.

Another special moment was the Voices conference which included all partners from all affiliates in the country. The focus was on advocacy and campaigns and we managed to get everyone together in one place to talk about their work and partners. It was very successful. We had visitors from other Oxfams and talked about how Oxfam would work within the notion of WIN – worldwide the influencing network, which was the Oxfam policy for scaling up our work through influencing."

Q - WHAT HAS MADE OXFAM IN SOUTH AFRICA SPECIAL?

A - "The people. It is a people-centred development program built out of strong relationships with partners, staff and the affiliates. And it's been successful because it invests in strong relationships."

Q - WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE OF OXFAM SOUTH AFRICA?

A - "I hope it becomes a significant player in the development landscape and known for using its size and influence to support the development of a stronger, diverse and active civil society in South Africa."



PHOTO © Matthew Willman | OXFAM

A resident walks along a rural dirt road in the Umzinto district where Save the Children KZN is working with the local community.



OXFAM