

Oxfam Management Response to the review of:
Resilience in Chad: Reinforcing resilience capacity and food security in Bahr el Gazal and Guéra
(Effectiveness Review Series 2014/15)

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Date: 9 December 2015

Country/Region/Campaign: Chad, West Africa

Context and background of review

As part of Oxfam Great Britain's (OGB) Global Performance Framework (GPF), samples of mature projects are randomly selected each year and their effectiveness rigorously assessed. The projects 'reinforcing resilience capacity in Bahr el Gazal' and 'improving the food security information system in Guéra region' were selected for review in this way under the resilience thematic area.

The 'reinforcing resilience capacity in Bahr el Gazal' project was implemented by Oxfam GB in the Bahr el Gazal Region in northern Chad between April 2011 and March 2015. The Effectiveness Review was expanded to include the project 'Improving the Food Security Information System in Guéra Region' (usually known by its French acronym as PASISAT), carried out by Intermón Oxfam and partner organisations Mostagbal and Nagdora between February 2011 and March 2014. The review, carried out in January and February 2015, was aimed at evaluating the success of the community-level activities of these two projects in enabling households to strengthen their livelihoods, minimise risk from shocks and adapt to emerging trends and uncertainty. The Effectiveness Review was carried out in the communities in each region that had received the greatest concentration of activities under each of the projects.

The main activities carried out by the project in Bahr el Gazal included the distribution of seeds and tools, training on agricultural techniques, training of community animal-health workers, restocking of sheep and goats, vaccination of livestock, and training on market gardening. On the other hand, the main objective of the project PASISAT in Guéra was to strengthen the region's Food Security Information System by establishing processes under which data on meteorological conditions and crop production are collected regularly by officials within each canton, and submitted to a central coordinating office. The participants interviewed in Guéra also benefited directly from support in market gardening and training on seed replication techniques, soil conservation and restoration work; and promotion of improved nutritional practices.

This Effectiveness Review used a quasi-experimental evaluation design to assess the impact of the described activities among the households who directly participated in the project activities. In Bahr al Gazal, interviews were conducted in 11 of the communities where the project activities were implemented with a sample of households that were assessed as being 'poor' and 'very poor'. In Guéra, interviews were conducted with a sample of those who had participated directly in the market gardening and seed-replication activities across 12 communities. For comparison purposes, households were also interviewed in communities located in the same area as the project communities, but where none of the project activities had been carried out.

In total, 216 households were interviewed in the project communities and 369 households in the comparison communities in Bahr el Gazal, and 219 in the project communities and 340 in the comparison communities in Guéra. At the analysis stage, the statistical tools of propensity-score matching and multivariate regression were used to control for apparent baseline differences between the households in the project and comparison communities, to increase confidence when making estimates of the projects' impacts.

In interpreting the results for Bahr el Gazal, it should be noted that most of the households interviewed in both project and comparison communities have received humanitarian support from Oxfam in recent years. This Effectiveness Review attempted to assess the additional impact of the 'Reinforcing Resilience Capacity' project, on top of those humanitarian interventions.

Summary: main findings and recommendations

Key results of this Effectiveness Review				
Outcome area	Connected to project logic?	Evidence of positive impact?		Comments
		Bahr el Gazal	Guéra	
Crop production and sales	Yes	Yes	Yes	Evidence in Guéra that the project had an effect on increasing the number of vegetable crops produced, the amount sold of staple and vegetable crops, and thus, revenue from the sale of crops. In Bahr el Gazal, the project was successful in increasing the number of staple crops produced.
Adoption of improved agricultural techniques	Yes	Yes	Yes	Evidence that project participants were more likely to implement improved agricultural techniques such as improved seeds and phytosanitary treatment.
Livestock ownership and health	Yes	Yes	-	Evidence of access to veterinary care in Bahr el Gazal and an increased number of livestock vaccinated.
Food security and dietary diversity	No	Yes	No	Households in project communities in Bahr el Gazal were less likely to present severe food insecurity.
Indicators of material wealth	No	No	No	No evidence that households in project communities increased in terms of indicators of material wealth (ownership of livestock and other assets, and housing conditions) since 2010 relative to households in comparison villages.
Resilience to future shocks and stresses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Evidence that the projects have lead to improvements in various characteristics thought to be associated with resilience, especially in indicators of access to contingency resources and support, and integrity of the natural and built environment. In Bahr el Gazal, the project also lead to improvements in terms of livelihood viability, and social and institutional capability.
Recommendations				
Exploring the lack of effect on innovation potential and social cohesion				
<p>The report has found no effect on the project's ability to modify attitudes towards climate change, change and innovation, and adoption of new practices. Such attitudes are believed to improve a household's ability to positively adjust to change. Training activities could include an awareness component on these topics that could lead to better results on the subject. Innovation potential focuses on a household's ability to positively adjust to change, whether anticipated or not. We can hypothesise that such potential is dependent on factors such as the knowledge and attitudes of relevant household members themselves, their ability to take risks, and their access to weather prediction, market information and relevant technology and resources.</p> <p>Moreover, the results on social cohesion, suggest that projects should take into account this element from the project design stage. Building social capacity, through the establishment of farmer and producer organisations and through improving linkages to extension services and other service providers, for</p>				

example, may lead to a greater improvement in a recipient's resilience.

Determining the mechanisms by which change is achieved

A different set of activities was carried out in each community, particularly in Bahr el Gazal. Therefore, it was not possible to isolate the effects of each specific activity and determine which actions are most cost-effective. This is important to being able to target resources effectively in future interventions. It is advisable to consider few combinations of project activities and test them in different project communities to be able to compare the effect of each intervention.

Considering capacity building activities for state services

Some of the project activities, such as the ones related to veterinary care, were firstly implemented by Oxfam operators and then passed over to state services. In such partnerships, it is advisable to invest in capacity building of state authorities and in follow-up visits, in order to ensure the durability of the interventions.

Main Oxfam follow-up actions

Weaknesses	Zone	Proposed improvements
Programmes are not addressing resilience dimensions.	Bahr el Gazal and Guéra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revisiting the DSPs (Programme Strategic Documents) to confirm that they are addressing the five resilience dimensions. ➤ Making sure that future resilience-building activities are theoretically well-defined and well-coordinated ➤ Identifying focus zones in order to carry out a series of activities that meet the resilience dimensions.
Lack of resilience indicators	Bahr el Gazal and Guéra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define relevant resilience indicators for each component/dimension ➤ Involve programme teams in the drawing up of resilience indicators, after having organised resiliency training beforehand
Lack of monitoring for resilience indicators	Bahr el Gazal and Guéra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct a baseline study for resilience indicators in the programme's area of intervention as well as in the control zones. Conduct yearly data collection with regards to the selected indicators from households to be identified for the purpose at district level. ➤ Conduct an annual review, as required by CAMSA, which will be based partly on the results from the yearly survey. This annual review will be an opportunity to look at resilience dimensions that have not been covered (in terms of finance projects) and funding opportunities that can be taken. ➤ Adapting our funding strategy based on the results from the annual reviews.
Non-definition of control zones	Bahr el Gazal and Guéra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identification of control zones per programme/zone
Insufficient capacity-building for governmental services and monitoring visits to ensure the sustainability of interventions.	Bahr el Gazal and Guéra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clearly identify the role that state authorities should play in the implementation and monitoring of our programmes, as well as in advocacy. ➤ Identify their capacity-building needs. ➤ Conduct required training as well as encourage actual involvement in our programme activities. ➤ Monitor and evaluate these needs on a regular basis and adapt the involvement and capacity reinforcement of the state authorities. ➤ Draw up a joint monitoring plan along with the state's technical services.
Insufficient impact production for our programmes.	Bahr el Gazal and Guéra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify focus zones (with control zone) in order to carry out a suite of activities that address the resilience dimensions. ➤ Leading an ad hoc study to uncover evidence

		<p>largely in so-called focus areas where implemented activities address the five resilience dimensions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define a clear scaling strategy with involvement from all actors. This scaling strategy must determine the basis on which the decision whether or not to scale should be taken.
Lack of effect on potential for innovation and social cohesion (climate change, change and innovation and adopting new practises)	Bahr el Gazal and Guéra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Change in behaviour (raising awareness on climate change, change and innovation and adopting new practises). ➤ Will be taken into account from the inception of projects