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# TRANSFORMING POWER RELATIONS

Mid-term Synthesis Report for the  
Right to be Heard Outcome Area of the  
Oxfam Strategic Plan 2013-2019

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## ACRONYMS

AGIR	Programa de Acções para uma Governação Inclusiva e Responsável
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CPE	National Political Constitution in Bolivia
CRAFT	Capacity For Research And Advocacy For Fair Taxation
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Coalition Support Program
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoG	Government of Ghana
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFFI	Instituto de Formación Femenina Integral (Women's Training Institute)
IGA	Income generating Activities
LAG	Local Action Group in Albania
LOG	Local Government
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHIA	National Health Insurance Authority (Ghana)
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme (Ghana)
OGB	Oxfam Great Britain
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OSP	Oxfam Strategic Plan
PDO	Public Defender's Office in Georgia
PF	Patriotic Front in Zambia
PMCB	Programme de Mobilisation Citoyenne a la Base
REE-CALL	Resilience through Economic Empowerment, Climate Adaptation, Leadership and Learning in Bangladesh
RHV	Raising Her Voice
RtbH	Right to be Heard
VAW	Violence Against Women
VNGO	Vietnamese Non-Governmental Organisation
WIN	Worldwide Influencing Network
WPPRP	Women's Participation in the Peace and Reconciliation Process in Afghanistan
WSP	Workers' Support Point in Vietnam

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study consists of a systematic review of 26 evaluation reports from programs in 24 countries (across Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America as well as domestic programs in the US and Australia), where 5 Oxfam affiliates engaged in programs in the field of 'Transforming power relations'. Changes in three generic outcome areas of power relations were examined.

Almost all of the programs aiming to achieve **changes in policies, practices and accountability mechanisms of duty-bearers** have *to some extent* proven to be successful in changing formal power relations (outcome area 1). Success has been evidenced related to changes in policies, practices and accountability mechanisms, although changes in the mind-set of duty-bearers were reported less than changes in, for instance, practices and regulations.

In the context of the second outcome area, the projects aimed to **increase citizens' engagement with duty bearers** (the majority in this outcome area); there is evidence of a wide range of positive outcomes, where citizens are becoming increasingly active in decision-making processes, participating in broad-based movements through which their voices can be heard and by gaining access to information to feed their ideas and actions.

In the third outcome area, where a much smaller number of projects aimed primarily to **change the collective power of individual citizens**, the evidence indicated positive change. The evaluations demonstrated the importance of citizens acquiring knowledge, skills and tools for active citizenship, the relevance of a platform to share knowledge and skills, and in one case, the introduction of new ways of operating by CSOs in that specific setting.

Oxfam's overall focus is on the power of citizens' individual or collective contributions and citizen empowerment to make their voices be heard and to claim their rights. This focus is sufficiently observed in the reviewed evaluations, but **there is insufficient evidence to say that Oxfam is achieving its goal of transforming power relations.**

The findings from this review indicate there are several **drivers for successful changes in policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers** (the more formal, institutional changes): (1) the use of inclusive and participatory strategies and methods, (2) evidence-based advocacy, (3) working with meaningful regional or local (implementing) partners, (4) strengthening civil society and broadening alliances and (5) a multi-stakeholder approach for advocacy work.

With regard to **strategies that to some extent have proven to be effective when it comes to realizing changes in the engagement of citizens**, several evaluations mention positive effects of (1) collaboration with a strong partner. Also, the importance of (2) flexibility in the partner relations is evidenced. Various evaluations show that (3) the use of adequate materials, methods and expertise has been important in changes in this outcome area, as well as (4) a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach.

The **strategies that appear to be successful in changing the ability and confidence of citizens** are (1) capacity development regarding leadership, knowledge, skills and tools, (2) enabling citizens to organize themselves and (3) developing innovative approaches to break through traditional barriers of power.

The findings suggest that the following **barriers** exist when programming for transforming power relations: (1) the absence of a strong, regional implementing partner (as noted above), (2) a lack of flexibility by the coordinating partner or donor (Oxfam), (3) vagueness in the structure of a program, (4) uncertainty about the core message of a program, (5) lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities between partners and between donors and partners, (6) the complexity of changing practices of duty-

bearers, caused by (fixed) mind-sets, lack of accountability and transparency mechanisms and other contextual factors such as the political context and (cultural) history.

**Future programming** needs to take a more holistic approach to link interventions taking place at local or national level to influencing processes at regional or global level. Oxfam and partners need to pay attention to the complexity and importance of changing mind-sets to make (individual) duty-bearers more open and responsive to the needs of poor and marginalized people.

The findings from the evaluation reports clearly demonstrate the importance of rigorous evidence and the involvement of experts. Using a participatory and multi-stakeholder approach to advocacy and empowerment is effective; currently engagement with institutional donors and private sector actors seems to be a blind spot in the work on the Right to be Heard, and should be made part of the equation in the future.

Oxfam, as a donor, should work with strong implementing partners and provide a clearer steer on the structure and core message of programs as well as the division of roles and responsibilities and, overall, be more flexible when playing the role of coordinating donor.

It appears that a substantial part of the programming includes a gender-sensitive approach. However, transforming gendered power relations requires increased and more innovative effort, and Oxfam should take up this challenge.

Planning for longer-term change from the beginning is essential. Monitoring exercises need to pay careful attention to unintended, and especially negative, consequences, to ensure that opportunities or demands for course correction are followed up immediately.

# 1 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND OF THE REVIEW

## 1.1 Purpose of the review

The purpose of this review is to provide a mid-term review of evaluation reports of several projects under Oxfam's Right to be Heard change goal, in order to capture the effectiveness of interventions supported by Oxfam to transform power relations. The results will inform judgments on whether Oxfam is contributing to achieve the change goals as defined in the Oxfam Strategic Plan (OSP) 2013-2019 and inform learning for this portfolio of work going forward.

The Oxfam Strategic Plan<sup>1</sup> establishes the priorities for Oxfam for six years, 2013-2019. These priorities are set out in six change goals that will guide Oxfam interventions over this time period to reduce poverty and bring greater justice. The six change goals are: **Goal 1:** Right to be heard: People claiming their right to a better life; **Goal 2:** Advancing gender justice; **Goal 3:** Saving lives, now and in the future; **Goal 4:** Sustainable Food; **Goal 5:** Fair sharing of natural resources and **Goal 6:** Financing for development and universal essential services. In order to assess whether Oxfam is contributing to these goals, Oxfam Senior Leadership identified indicative outcomes areas under each change goal that will be used to demonstrate Oxfam's effectiveness in promoting positive change.

The indicative outcome areas identified are:

External Change Goal	Indicative outcome area
1. Right to be Heard	Transforming power relations
2. Gender Justice	Gender Based Violence
3. Saving Lives	Quality of response judged against sector standards
4. Food	Income and food security
5. Natural Resources	Secure access to & control of natural resources
6. Financing for Development	Financial flows to essential services
7. Cross cutting (change goals 3, 4, 5)	Resilience

Oxfam defines effectiveness as evidence of a positive contribution to change, but will not seek to assess the proportion of observed change which can be attributed solely to the evaluated interventions. Though these indicative outcome areas are not intended to represent the totality of the work being done by Oxfam (under each change goal or outside) they focus on meaningful areas where Oxfam will be able to present a credible summary of its effectiveness promoting positive change.

Oxfam's effectiveness on each Indicative Outcome Area will be measured twice during the OSP lifespan. This first report on 'Transforming power relations' covers the period from January 2013 to October 2015.

## 1.2 Change goal 1 – the Right to be Heard

The Right to be Heard is recognized as a fundamental part of human well-being and therefore explicitly grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, as well as in the relevant Treaties and Covenants. The OSP sets the reinforcement of people's rights, especially women's rights, at the heart of its work and puts a particular focus on empowering citizens, especially poor and marginalized people, to make their voice heard (Oxfam International, 2013).

<sup>1</sup> Oxfam International (2013). The Power of People Against Poverty: the Oxfam Strategic Plan 2013-2019. Available at <https://www.oxfam.org/en/countries/oxfam-strategic-plan-2013-2019-power-people-against-poverty>

To build a movement for change, Oxfam tries to find and support innovative approaches of politically active, organized and accountable people who realize their strength and capacity to challenge the vested interests that maintain the injustice of poverty. The rationale behind this is that real change can take place when people living in poverty claim their rights and make their voices heard, giving them greater power over their own lives (Oxfam International, 2013).

The OSP Right to be Heard change goal has a specific focus on supporting women, youth and the urban poor. Defined strategies to achieve this change goal are (1) organizing civil society, (2) enhance access to information and technology, (3) encourage public decision-making processes and promote policy-making spaces, (4) enhance access to justice and (5) stimulate global citizenship (Oxfam International, 2013).

### 1.3 Indicative outcome area 'Transforming power relations'

In its mission to help create lasting solutions to the injustice of poverty, Oxfam sees the interaction between active citizens and accountable states as fundamental to human development. This interaction is linked to the distribution of power between different actors, which touches on the deepest societal, political and economic structures. Oxfam therefore sees its role in changing the world in enabling transformational and structural change, both as convenor and catalyst (Oxfam International, 2013). Because of this focus, Oxfam specifically pays attention to increased citizens' voice and active citizenship as drivers for transforming power relations.

Oxfam defines the indicative outcome area 'Transforming power relations' as structurally enhancing the influence of citizens, or in other words, *'ensuring that citizens are actively participating in political and societal decision-making and benefit from the policies and practices of the government and private sector as there is increased responsiveness to their demands and greater accountability of duty-bearers'*. This transformation of power relations is essential for the overall Right to be Heard vision: *'poor and marginalized people can gain control over their own lives by exercising their right to political participation, freedom of expression and information, freedom of assembly and access to justice.'*

An Oxfam inter-affiliate working group consisting of Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning specialists and thematic experts at Oxfam Novib, Oxfam Great Britain, Oxfam Belgium and Oxfam Australia developed, in close collaboration with Oxfam's Knowledge Hub on Governance & Citizenship, the main concepts underlying the 'Transforming power relations' outcome area. A conceptual framework was designed to steer the evaluation process (see Figure 1)<sup>2</sup>. Since the evaluative framework was developed after the project and program evaluations were conducted, the information from the included evaluation reports did not necessarily correspond directly to the conceptual framework and the framework was applied retrospectively to the reports.

The outcome area 'Transforming power relations' is based on two main concepts, namely: 1) Transformation and 2) Power. With regard to transformation, we refer to a 'transformative change': *a change that is fundamental lasting, and which challenges existing structural inequality*. It is part of Oxfam's approach to development and humanitarian response, and it is continuously being refined and developed within the Oxfam confederation. Transformative change requires fundamental shifts in power relationships. Power can be manifested as<sup>3</sup>: 1. *Power over*: the power of the strong over the weak, including the power to exclude others; 2. *Power to*: the capability to decide actions and carry them out; 3. *Power with*: collective power, through organisation, solidarity and joint action; 4. *Power within*: personal self-confidence, often linked to culture, religion or other aspects of identity, which influences the thoughts and actions that appear legitimate or acceptable (Gaventa, 2006; Oxfam, 2014). We assume we can transform power relations – formally and informally – and attempt to

<sup>2</sup> Oxfam (2015). *Conceptual Framework RTBH Evaluation of the OSP. Indicative Outcome Area: 'Transforming Power Relations'*. Internal document, February.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.powercube.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/finding\\_spaces\\_for\\_change.pdf](http://www.powercube.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/finding_spaces_for_change.pdf)



contribute to a structural increase of the influence of citizens. To achieve transformed power relations, Oxfam defined three generic outcome areas as depicted in a conceptual framework (see Figure 1):

- 'Power over'<sup>4</sup> is the cornerstone of *Generic Outcome 1*: Policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers (government / private sector / international institutions) have changed in favor of poor and marginalized people and/or negative change has been averted.
- 'Power to' is addressed in *Generic Outcome 2*: The engagement of poor and marginalized people with duty-bearers (government / private sector / international institutions) has increased and/or decrease has been averted. At times, citizens have institutionalized powers (e.g. approving the performance of their representatives in elections, filing a legal complaint); Oxfam also supports them making use of their 'power over' as effectively as possible.
- 'Power with', 'power within' and 'power to'<sup>5</sup> are addressed in *Generic Outcome 3*: The ability and confidence of poor and marginalized people to claim their rights and state their voice has improved (Gaventa, 2006; Oxfam, 2014).

Oxfam's aim is to create a structural increase of influence and achieve a transformative change. To this end, all three generic outcomes aim to achieve a fundamental change over the long-term, going beyond individual and cosmetic changes, truly altering systems and processes, challenging existing structural inequality. Strategies to achieve these outcomes include strengthening the capacity of citizens to claim their rights and participate in decision-making, mobilizing alliances and public support, engaging with duty-bearers, and undertaking evidence-based influencing.

## 1.4 Research questions

The primary point of this review is to analyse the progress as well as unintended consequences (both positive and negative) in Oxfam's programming regarding 'Transforming power relations'. Based on the conceptual framework, the central research question is:

*Have power relations been transformed in favor of citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, in the contexts in which Oxfam is working? Has Oxfam contributed to transform power relations? If so, how? If not, why not?*

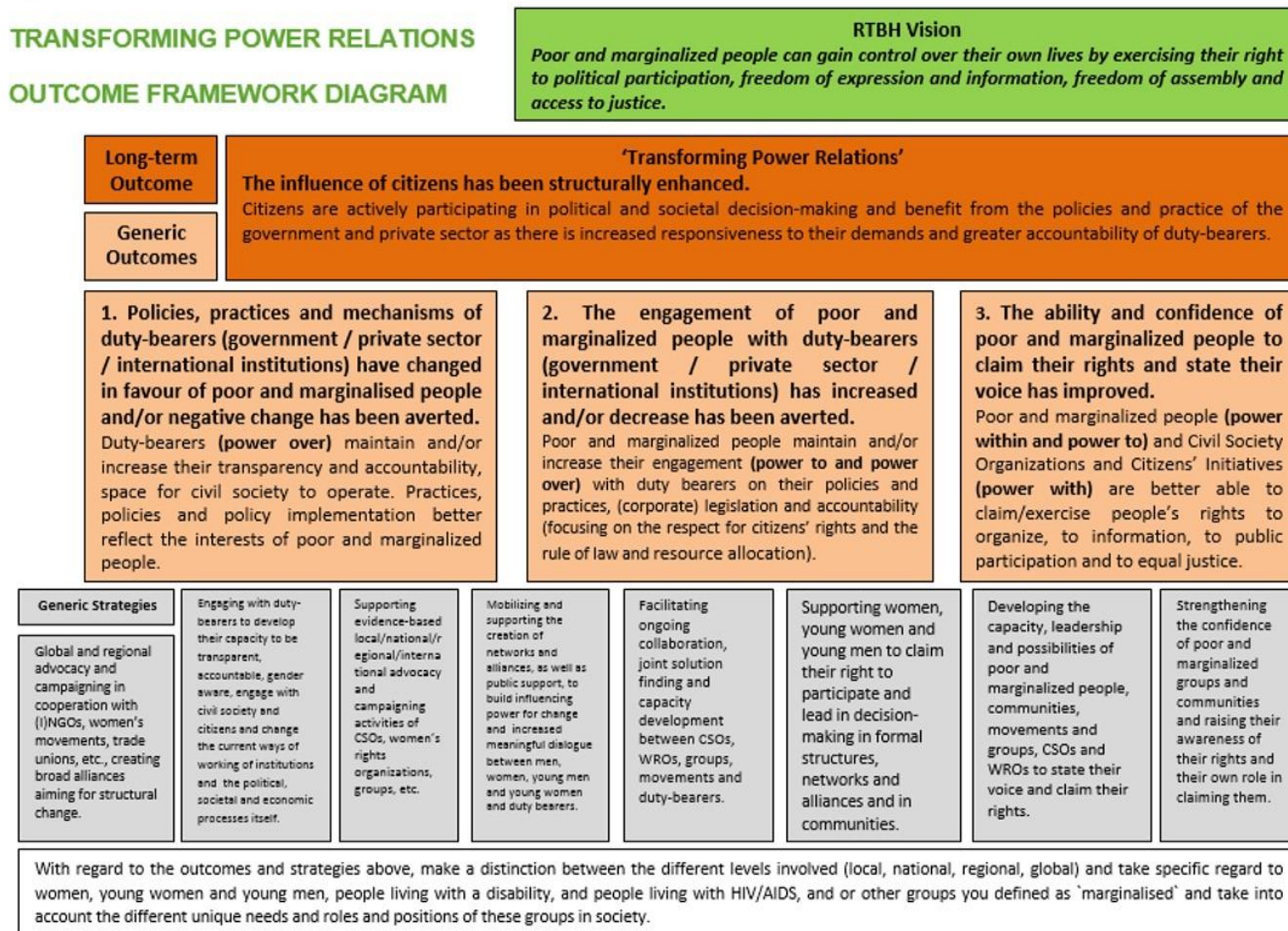
Three outcome-specific research questions have been formulated:

- *To what extent have policies, practices and transparency and accountability mechanisms of duty-bearers changed to better incorporate the interests of citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular? If not, have negative consequences been averted?*
- *To what extent have citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, either individually or collectively, increased their engagement with duty-bearers? If not, have negative consequences been averted?*
- *To what extent has the ability and confidence of citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, to claim their rights and state their voice improved? If not, have negative consequences been averted?*

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.powercube.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/finding\\_spaces\\_for\\_change.pdf](http://www.powercube.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/finding_spaces_for_change.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Figure 1: Outcome Framework Diagram (Source: Conceptual framework: Oxfam 2015)



## 1.5 Intended audience and users for this report

The primary use of this review is to provide Oxfam's Executive Directors with:

- A sense of the extent and ways in which Oxfam is contributing to change in the indicative outcome area 'Transforming power relations' and areas where it can improve.
- An analysis of strategies and good practices, and problematic areas regarding 'Transforming power relations' to provide insight on if and how power has changed with regard to selected power manifestations and areas of power and the effectiveness of this change.
- An understanding of the best 'ways of working' for Oxfam to contribute to 'Transforming power relations', explicitly including Oxfam's specific role in contributing to outcomes, as well as areas where Oxfam can do better.

The Oxfam affiliates will use the results to further inform and build their work around the Right to be Heard and to address accountabilities for commitments regarding the OSP. More specifically, findings of this review as well as the conceptual framework of 'Transforming power relations' can be used by program directors and program staff to feed into the design of new programs, to adjust Theories of Change and to improve overall program quality. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning staff can use the information to enhance the quality of future program evaluations and the Knowledge Hubs (particularly on Governance & Citizenship) can use the findings to share within the Oxfam confederation to influence programming.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Quality and selection of evaluations

At the start of the review 28 evaluation reports (finalized in 2013 – 2015) were available from programs in 24 countries (across Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America as well as domestic programs in the US and Australia) from 5 Oxfam affiliates.

A quality assessment was conducted based on the following 4 criteria<sup>6</sup>:

- Significant overall weakness in the evaluation due to difficult (usually, excessively broad) questions, coupled with insufficient budget, resulting in inadequate methodologies.
- Lack of explanation of the methodology used, which impedes a general understanding of whether or not the methodology is appropriate and/or sound.
- Insufficient independent verification of the evidence, or spotty evidence in general.
- Lack of clarity about how the analysis was undertaken and how the conclusions were derived.

Most evaluation reports scored well or 'neither positive nor negative'<sup>7</sup> on the 4 indicators. The fourth indicator, lack of clarity, showed the largest number of 'neither positive nor negative' or negative

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<sup>6</sup> Using the qualitative data analysis package ATLAS.ti for coding and Cohen's kappa to ensure inter-coder reliability

<sup>7</sup> Meaning that the evaluation report shows evidence that the evaluation is not suffering from the condition, but that there are relevant remarks to be made. The information about the condition may be incomplete, the information may not be completely convincing, the information may not be provided in a way that is easily accessible etc.

scores (7 and 2 respectively). In the end, two evaluation reports were excluded and the analysis was based on the remaining 26 (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Evaluations per affiliate and targeted regions**

Oxfam affiliate	Program name (Region)
Oxfam America	FY13 appropriations advocacy (America)
Oxfam Australia	Free Prior and Informed Consent (Global), Governance, Leadership & Accountability (Vanuatu), Straight Talk (Australia)
Oxfam Belgium	Final program evaluation (Vietnam), Programme de mobilisation citoyenne a la base (Mali)
Oxfam Great Britain	REE-CALL (Bangladesh), Advocacy Coalition Support Program (Vietnam), Paridad es ahora (Bolivia), Chukua Hatua (Tanzania), Raising Her Voice (Pan Africa), Local Partnership for Rural Development (Albania), Health for all (Ghana), Increasing women's political participation (Chile / South America), Rights in Crisis Campaign (Afghanistan), Citizen Voice (Bolivia), Citizen Voice (Zambia), Beyond the Horizon (Scotland), Advocacy and campaigning on climate change (Russia), Participatory poverty monitoring (Vietnam), My Rights, My Voice (Georgia/Tanzania)
Oxfam Novib	AGIR (Mozambique), CRAFT (Uganda), Citizens First (Afghanistan / Pakistan), World Citizens Panel Impact Report on Country Program (Cambodia), World Citizens Panel Impact Report on Country Program (Somalia)

## 2.2 Synthesis of findings

After conducting the quality assessment, the actual synthesis of findings across evaluations took place to answer the research questions using a highly structured content analysis of the included evaluation reports in order to identify and report patterns related to good practices or problematic areas. The research questions were translated into key words and sentences to enable content analysis of the program evaluations. The qualitative data analysis package ATLAS.ti was used for the coding of the documents to ensure a structured way of working. Two researchers analyzed and compared the documents, focusing on results against the research questions, good practices and possible barriers for the three generic outcomes in the area of 'Transforming power relations'. The inter-coder reliability was measured using Cohen's kappa, which was found to be sufficient (range .61-.80).

## 2.3 Limitations of the methodology

The evaluation reports showed a large variety, especially regarding structure of reporting and type of evaluation (e.g. mid-term review, final outcome evaluation, effectiveness review) which affected comparability of evaluation reports.

Although we made an effort to include as many evaluations as possible, the set of included reports is probably not representative of the large amount of work that is taking place within the Oxfam confederation on the Right to be Heard. For this reason, the findings in this report should be taken as indicative.

Though evaluations available for this review were conducted from January 2013 to October 2015, in most cases they include work designed before the start of this OSP. These projects and programs and their evaluations therefore do not necessarily reflect the Right to be Heard strategy as indicated in the OSP.

Since the evaluation framework was developed after the project and program evaluations were conducted, the information from the included evaluation reports did not necessarily correspond directly to the conceptual framework and the framework was applied retrospectively to the reports.

Transformational change is complex and multi-layered in nature. It is therefore difficult to observe and it takes time to materialize. With only three years into the current OSP it cannot yet be expected to observe whether these systemic changes (and expected impact) at scale are indeed materializing.

### 3 KEY FINDINGS

As indicated before, the conceptual framework of ‘Transforming power relations’ consists of 3 outcome areas:

- *Generic Outcome 1:* Policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers (government / private sector / international institutions) have changed in favor of poor and marginalized people and/or negative change has been averted.
- *Generic Outcome 2:* The engagement of poor and marginalized people with duty-bearers (government / private sector / international institutions) has increased and/or decrease has been averted. At times, citizens have institutionalized powers (e.g. approving the performance of their representatives in elections, filing a legal complaint); Oxfam also supports them making use of their ‘power over’ as effectively as possible.
- *Generic Outcome 3:* The ability and confidence of poor and marginalized people to claim their rights and state their voice has improved.

The review of the 26 included evaluation reports showed that a significant number of the programs in this study aimed to promote changes on the institutional level and the majority of the programs addressed increased engagement of citizens, either collectively or individually, with duty-bearers. Only a small number of initiatives undertook activities for improved ability and confidence of citizens to claim their rights and state their voice. According to the reports reviewed, only one of all 26 initiatives approached their work by considering all three outcomes as a coherent approach.

**Table 2: Generic Outcomes addressed**

Generic outcome	# addressed
Generic Outcome 1: Changes in policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers	16
Generic Outcome 2: Increased engagement of citizens with duty-bearers	22
Generic Outcome 3: Improved ability and confidence of citizens	4
Total	42

### 3.1 Changes in policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers

Oxfam's programs focusing on Generic Outcome 1, changes in policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers, try to achieve change in the 'power over' realm.

The research question that aligns with this outcome is formulated as:

*“To what extent have policies, practices and transparency and accountability mechanisms of duty-bearers changed to better incorporate the interests of citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular? If not, have negative consequences been averted?”*

A small majority of the evaluation reports focus on this outcome area: 17 evaluations included aims and goals related to Generic Outcome 1 and 18 evaluations address changes in 'power over'.

The evaluations show that the included programs mainly focus on **1) making practices more responsive to the needs of poor and marginalized citizens by targeting (individual) duty-bearers' mind-sets, 2) achieving transparent practices (including enhanced accountability of duty-bearers), 3) influencing and changing the political agenda or debate, and 4) on changing actual laws and policies.** All dimensions of institutional power relations are addressed in the interventions and several evaluations show that programs address multiple goals within the aim to change 'power over' structures. **Success has been evidenced in all four categories**, although a change in mind-set of duty-bearers has been reported less than for instance changes in practices and regulations.<sup>8</sup> See Annex A for a detailed overview of a selection of evidence for these changes.

Although most evaluations in this outcome area signal a positive change at the institutional level, a number of evaluations also reveal negative changes or a lack of evidence for change (see Table 3). Over half of the evaluations show evidence of both positive and negative results on changes in policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers. Besides the evaluations of programs aiming to address this outcome, changes related to 'power over' were found as an unexpected effect in 5 evaluations of programs that were not aiming to promote change in this area. Overall, it seems that almost all programs (15 out of 17) have to some extent proven to be successful in changing policies, practices and transparency and accountability mechanisms of duty-bearers.

**Table 3: Evidence for change in evaluations addressing Generic Outcome 1**

	# evaluations	Direction of change	# evaluations
Power over	17	Positive change	14
		Negative/non-existing change	12
		Both	9

Based on the successful interventions, drivers for change in this area are:

**1) The use of inclusive and participatory strategies and methods**, to ensure the active and meaningful participation of rights-holders, both as an end in itself and to enhance the legitimacy of the

<sup>8</sup> A reason for this might be that changes in mind-sets are often considered to be an intermediate outcome (in the pathway towards policy change), and may therefore not have been included in evaluation reports.

CSOs (e.g. AGIR program), by using for example community dialogues (CRAFT program), farmers' groups (Oxfam Belgium's Country Program in Vietnam), and women's groups (Citizen Voice in Bolivia).

**2) Evidence-based advocacy.** It seems that providing adequate and convincing information (e.g. research, briefing papers) to duty-bearers enhances the effectiveness of advocacy and promotes pro-poor practices among duty-bearers (e.g. CRAFT program and Rights in Crisis campaign).

**3) Working with meaningful regional or local partners,** who speak the languages of the involved communities, have expertise on the topic and in the area, can use local examples to illustrate their work (e.g. CRAFT program) and who are aware of specific sensitive issues in the region (e.g. Health Campaign in Ghana).

**4) Strengthening civil society and broadening alliances,** for example combining the efforts of partners working with different groups at different levels, contributing meaningfully to the strength, collaboration and organization of CSOs (e.g. Raising Her Voice), creating space and a network by campaigning and involving female political leaders (e.g. Increasing women's political participation in Chile and Citizen Voice in Bolivia).

**5) A multi-stakeholder approach for advocacy work,** especially when implemented in the form of coalitions of stakeholders from different sectors (e.g. government, CSOs, private sector, universities and media).

### 3.2 Increased engagement of citizens with duty-bearers

Generic Outcome 2 has been specified as 'the engagement of poor and marginalized people with duty-bearers has increased and/or decrease has been averted'. In this generic outcome, power mainly manifests itself as 'power to': the capability to decide actions and carry them out'.

The research question that aligns with this outcome is formulated as: "*To what extent have citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, either individually or collectively, increased their engagement with duty-bearers? If not, have negative consequences been averted?*"

Programs under this generic outcome aim to have citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, **(1) increasingly active in decision-making processes, (2) participating in coalitions, alliances and movements through which their voices can be heard and (3) having access to accurate, relevant and timely information to feed their ideas and actions.**

Increasingly, active citizens can be perceived as the result of increased participation in coalitions and movements and improved access to information. The two concepts are linked in that improved and better accessible information may strengthen adequate participation in movements and increasing citizens' participation gives increased capacity for CSOs to collect and distribute relevant and evidence-based information.

24 programs aimed to increase engagement of citizens with duty-bearers and **almost all evaluations show evidence of actual positive change.** In addition, 14 evaluations mention negative results or a lack of evidence for engagement changes and also 14 evaluations provide evidence for positive changes but at the same time include indications that (other) change outcomes were *not* achieved, or that change had not been sufficiently evidenced or measured (see Table 4). However, in most evaluations negative results were, within the same intervention, counterbalanced by positive results. In one evaluation, there were no goals related to Generic Outcome 2 or 'power to' but both positive and negative results in this outcome were found as unexpected results.

**Table 4: Evidence for change in evaluations addressing Generic Outcome 2**

	# evaluations	Direction of change	# evaluations
Power to	24	Positive change	23
		Negative/non-existing change	14
		Both	14

Some programs focus more on empowerment of citizens and CSOs and capacity-building by means of information, while others use information more as a side product or have no (intermediate) outcome about information at all. There are a few programs that have a dominant focus on access to information. Some programs provide information to citizens' organizations or movements, while others promote awareness of certain issues or rights by providing information directly to (individual) citizens. There are also a few programs that did not aim for change in the accessibility of adequate information, but do have a program component that is related to accessible information.

The findings show substantive evidence for changes achieved in the 'power to' dimension. This is partially due to the fact that the selected programs often aim for changes in this dimension. Considering that just 14 out of 23 evaluations counterbalance these achievements with unrealized outcomes, the evidence in this generic outcome is positive. See Annex B for a detailed overview of a selection of evidence for these changes.

Several patterns can be distinguished in the findings. Firstly, even though it may seem easier to work with citizens through civil society organizations, several evaluations provide evidence of **changing citizens, poor and marginalized people, themselves**. Individual people have been empowered, often through and in the *personal sphere such as their community or household*. This implies that outcomes under Generic Outcome 2 can be closely related to outcomes under Generic Outcome 3. Secondly, the information in the evaluations addresses the importance of targeting CSOs, and especially **stimulating collaboration between (national) civil society organisations** and movements and improving the internal structure of existing CSOs. The third pattern in the outcomes is that even though several evaluations report achievements in the field of empowering citizens directly or through civil society organisations, it appears that in some programs the intervention **left the process (partially) unfinished** and monitoring and especially follow up is needed to ensure the sustainability of the changes (see Annex B).

Regarding successful strategies, several evaluations mention positive effects of **collaboration with a strong partner**, preferably an organization or movement that has already gained experience in a specific issue. The partnership will enable a strong partner to build on its existing work, and enables Oxfam to build on the partners' expertise, reach and members or supporters. Several evaluations reveal the importance of **flexibility** in the partner relations. Flexibility can further strengthen the work of the (implementing) partner. Additionally, a funding structure that includes a certain degree of flexibility allows for the partner organization to react to emerging opportunities. Various evaluations show that the **use of adequate materials, methods and expertise** has been important in changes in the 'power to' dimension. Finally, mention must be made of the positive effects of a **participatory, multi-stakeholder approach** in several programs and projects (see Annex B).



### 3.3 Improved ability and confidence of citizens

Generic Outcome 3 focuses on the ability and confidence of poor and marginalized people to claim their rights and state their voice. Power manifests itself in this generic outcome as 'power within' and 'power to': the capability of poor and marginalized people to better be able to claim and exercise their rights to organize, to information, to public participation and to equal justice. Oxfam also aims to support civil society organizations and citizens' initiatives 'power with' to state their voice and claim their rights.

Since the 'power to' dimension is extensively discussed in the previous section, this section focuses on changes in the 'power with' and 'power within' dimensions. It is important to note that the 'power with' dimension appears to be overlapping to some extent with the 'power to' dimension. With regard to the 'power with' dimension, this section focuses specifically on those interventions that (from the evaluations) appear to aim *mainly* for change in the collective power of (individual) citizens (and less to increase citizens' engagement with duty bearers).

The research question that aligns with the third generic outcome is: *"To what extent has the ability and confidence of citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, to claim their rights and state their voice improved? If not, have negative consequences been averted?"*

The number of evaluations in this section is small compared to the 'power over' and 'power to' sections. Most evaluations show that interventions combine multiple strategies and thus work on different dimensions of power to create change. **The majority of the reports indicated positive change in this area of work.**

Although only 4 evaluations mention evidence for a change in ability and confidence at the citizens' level, 3 out of 4 show evidence for a positive change (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Evidence for change in evaluations addressing Generic Outcome 3: Ability and confidence of poor and marginalized people to claim their rights and state their voice (power within) area**

	# evaluations	Direction of change	# evaluations
Power within	4	Positive change	3
		Negative/non-existing change	1
		Both	0

Reviewing evaluations that also include elements related to the 'power with' dimension (in addition to other dimensions reviewed earlier), there are 7 evaluations that provide evidence for a change in **ability and confidence of groups of poor and marginalized people**<sup>9</sup>. 5 out of 7 show a positive change in this area, 2 evaluations show a negative (or non-existing) change and 1 evaluation shows both negative and positive changes in this power relation area (see Table 6).

**Table 6: Evidence for change in evaluations addressing Generic Outcome 3: Ability and confidence of poor and marginalized people to claim their rights and state their voice (power with)**

	# evaluations	Direction of change	# evaluations
Power with	7	Positive change	5

<sup>9</sup> These are FY13 appropriations advocacy (America), REE-CALL (Bangladesh), Raising Her Voice (Pan Africa), World Citizens Panel (Cambodia and Somalia), Final Program Evaluation (Vietnam) and My Rights My Voice (Georgia/Tanzania).

	# evaluations	Direction of change	# evaluations
		Negative/non-existing change	2
		Both	1

Two of the evaluations contribute to changes to both the 'power with' and 'power within' area.<sup>10</sup>

As mentioned before, the aim under Generic Outcome 3 is to develop the ability and increase the confidence of citizens, poor and marginalised people in particular, to claim their rights and state their voice. This can be achieved by empowering both citizens and CSOs.

The evaluations demonstrate the importance of **citizens acquiring knowledge, skills and tools for active citizenship, the relevance of a platform to share knowledge and skills, the introduction of new ways of operating by CSOs in a specific setting or region and enabling specific groups to directly participate in the process of learning and advocacy (e.g. youth)**. See Annex C for a selection of evidence for these changes.

Based on these findings, strategies that seem to be successful in changing the ability and confidence of citizens are (1) capacity development regarding leadership, knowledge, skills and tools, (2) enabling citizens to organize themselves and (3) developing innovative approaches to break through traditional barriers of power.

### 3.4 Barriers

In almost all evaluation reports evidence was found for barriers to successful change. One of the most apparent barriers across the evaluations is the complexity to change practices of (individual) duty-bearers. This can be caused by (fixed) mind-sets, lack of accountability and transparency mechanisms and other contextual factors such as the political context and (cultural) history. Other factors that were found to hinder the desired change were the programs' identification with certain political parties, certain vagueness in the structure of the program, lack of clarity in the guidance from the Oxfam affiliate (e.g. uncertainty about roles and responsibilities) and ill-defined messages from the program. In various evaluations, it is mentioned that specific weaknesses of (one of the) implementing partners may have hindered the impact of the program. Also, one evaluation addresses the negative consequence of significant staff changes. Furthermore, evidence was found of the importance of CSOs and partners being an example in the issue that they strive to change (e.g. gender equality, accountability). Finally, it was found that a lack of flexibility by the coordinating partner (or sometimes the donor) can be a constraint for achieving program outcomes. See Annex D for evidence of these barriers.

### 3.5 Gender

The findings suggest that, based on the evaluations, the majority of interventions address women's rights to a certain extent. A substantial number of programs exclusively target women's rights and voice or are directly aimed at changes for (individual) women, while in others women's issues are part of a broader range of issues, or women are seen as one of the target groups alongside other target groups. Very few programs do not specifically involve women or women's issues in any of their

<sup>10</sup> These are Raising Her Voice (Pan Africa) and My Rights My Voice (Georgia/Tanzania).

outcomes and activities. The evaluations also mention strategies when it comes to women's rights, such as the inclusion of men in the strategy at the household or at the national (authorities') level.

In the evaluation report of AGIR in Mozambique, the author mentions the doubts that certain stakeholders have about progress in the field of gender issues: "(...) *some serious concerns about the progress of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Two years have passed, so is the glass half empty or half full when it comes to promoting gender equality? A programme that aims to challenge non-participatory and non-transparent development processes and to hold people in power accountable should also be able to challenge discriminatory social norms. The call for gender perspective in interventions driven by the civil society is nothing new*" (Holmberg et al., 2014).

It is also important to note that some evaluations also describe a program's struggle when it comes to gender issues. An informative example is provided by the evaluation of Oxfam Belgium's Country Program in Vietnam, which mentions that '*strategic gender mainstreaming into normal development processes for both target groups (farmers and workers) as a cross cutting issue faced difficulties*' (Dung & Hai, 2013).

Addressing women's rights and women's issues to a certain extent doesn't seem adequate nor does it reflect the type of transformational programs that Oxfam is seeking. Paraphrasing from above, *an organization that aims to ... hold people in power accountable should also be able to challenge discriminatory social norms* more systemically, in particular as part of its 'Transforming power relations' outcome area.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this review was to evaluate how Oxfam is measuring up against change goal 1, the Right to be Heard, regarding its indicative outcome area 'Transforming power relations', as the organization goes into the third year of the Oxfam Strategic Plan 2013-2019. Overall, the findings show that Oxfam's focus on the power of citizens' individual or collective contributions and citizen empowerment to make their voices be heard and to claim their rights is sufficiently observed in the reviewed evaluations. At this stage, however, there is insufficient evidence to say that Oxfam is achieving its goal of transforming power relations.

In response to the first research question, "*To what extent have policies, practices and transparency and accountability mechanisms of duty-bearers changed to better incorporate the interests of citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular? If not, have negative consequences been averted?*", **the evaluations show that almost all of the programs aiming to achieve changes in policies, practices and accountability mechanisms of duty-bearers have to some extent proven to be successful.** However, changes in the mind-set of duty-bearers were reported less than changes in, for instance, practices and regulations.

Regarding the second research question, "*To what extent have citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, either individually or collectively, increased their engagement with duty-bearers? If not, have negative consequences been averted?*", **the evaluation reports show a range of positive outcomes**, where citizens' are becoming **increasingly active in decision-making processes, participating in broad-based movements** through which their voices can be heard and by **gaining access to information** to feed their ideas and actions.

Although a limited number of programs addressed the topic of the third research question, "*To what extent has the ability and confidence of citizens, poor and marginalized people in particular, to claim*

*their rights and state their voice improved? If not, have negative consequences been averted?"*, the **available evidence indicates positive change regarding the collective power of individual citizens**. The findings demonstrated the importance of **citizens acquiring knowledge, skills and tools for active citizenship**, the relevance of a **platform to share knowledge and skills**, and in one case, the introduction of **new ways of operating by CSOs** in that specific setting or region or for that specific target group.

The overall research question of this mid-term review was formulated as follows: *"Have power relations been transformed in the contexts in which Oxfam is working? Has Oxfam contributed to transform these power relations? If so, how? If not, why not?"* Although the current review provides **insufficient evidence for transformed power relations**, it is not surprising that only three years into the current OSP, transformational change, with its complex and multi-layered nature, is **not yet materializing**. Considering that evidence was found for positive change in the three generic outcome areas leading to the long-term outcome of 'Transforming power relations', it seems that the early and intermediate steps have been properly addressed.

The findings from this review indicate there are several **drivers** for successful changes in policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers (the more formal, institutional changes): (1) the use of **inclusive and participatory strategies and methods**, (2) **evidence-based advocacy**, (3) working with **meaningful regional or local (implementing) partners**, (4) **strengthening civil society and broadening alliances** and (5) a **multi-stakeholder approach for advocacy work**.

With regard to strategies that to some extent have proven to be effective when it comes to realizing changes in the engagement of citizens, several evaluations mention positive effects of collaboration with a **strong partner**. Also, the importance of **flexibility** in the partner relations is evidenced. Various evaluations show that the use of **adequate materials, methods and expertise** has been important in changes in the 'power to' dimension, as well as a **participatory, multi-stakeholder approach**.

The strategies that appear to be successful in changing the ability and confidence of citizens are (1) **capacity development regarding leadership, knowledge, skills and tools**, (2) **enabling citizens to organize themselves** and (3) developing **innovative approaches to break through traditional barriers of power**.

The findings suggest that the following **barriers** exist when programming for transforming power relations: (1) the absence of a **strong, regional implementing partner** (as noted above), (2) a **lack of flexibility by the coordinating partner or donor** (Oxfam), (3) **vagueness in the structure** of a program, (4) **uncertainty about the core message** of a program, (5) **lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities** between partners and between donors and partners, (6) the **complexity of changing practices of duty-bearers**, caused by **(fixed) mind-sets, lack of accountability and transparency mechanisms** and other contextual factors such as the **political context** and **(cultural) history**.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The interventions reviewed in the report take place at local or national levels, with **little apparent link to regional or global processes**. On one hand, this is not surprising (evaluations do have to be limited) and within Oxfam, there has been a shift of attention and resources towards national level change. However, the ambition to become a Worldwide Influencing Network (WIN) does foresee these linkages as part of a holistic influencing model. The question is to what extent this ambition is

becoming a reality. The **need for such a more holistic approach** is clear, considering the worldwide trend where space for citizens is shifting and, in many places, closing-down.

The work to challenge power relations is not to be underestimated. While difficult, Oxfam and partners need to pay attention to the complexity and importance of **changing mind-sets** to make (individual) duty-bearers more open and responsive to the needs of poor and marginalized people. Fixed mind-sets may hinder further change as well as the sustainability of achieved changes. This review also suggests the importance of **social norms** affecting duty-bearers, and mentions the need to assess the **institutional culture** that influences them, when making efforts to change mindsets.

The findings from the evaluation reports clearly demonstrate the importance of **rigorous evidence (adequate and correct materials) and the involvement of experts** in the work on change. Key information – or access to it – can inform social movements, strengthen arguments in advocacy and campaigns, and open doors to new opportunities.

Using a **participatory and multi-stakeholder approach** to advocacy and empowerment is effective, though it requires work. Across all the evaluations, there is little evidence of any **engagement with international institutions** and even less with **private sector actors**; the focus seems to be on public institutions and governments. While this is understandable, it must be acknowledged that in some contexts companies are directly responsible for the repression or exclusion of citizens and their organizations (e.g., no recognition of labor organizations, direct violence); more frequently, they pressure governments to deny these rights (e.g., to create a favorable investment climate). The possibly more favorable role the private sector could play seems to be a blind spot in the current work on the Right to be Heard and should be made part of the equation in the future.

Based on the indicated barriers, it seems that Oxfam, as a donor, should start by seeking a **strong implementing partner**. Together, Oxfam and partners can develop innovative approaches to break through traditional barriers of power, and to adjust to different and changing contexts. Afterwards, the essential way to enhance programming appears to be by providing a **clearer steer on the structure and core message** of programs as well as the **division of roles and responsibilities** and, overall, **being more flexible as a coordinating donor**.

It appears that a substantial part of the programming includes a gender-sensitive approach. However, as noted, partners themselves raise questions about the effectiveness of this work, pointing to results that **only address women's rights 'to a certain extent'**. If Oxfam is to achieve transformational programming, it seems evident that we should start at the intersection of some of the most complex power relations that need to be transformed. This merits renewed and significant investment in innovative program design, and monitoring and evaluation for course correction.

In some programs, while the evaluation report did show concrete outcomes, the sustainability of the changes achieved was questionable. **Planning for longer-term change from the beginning is essential**. Monitoring exercises need to pay careful attention to unintended, and especially negative, consequences, to **ensure that opportunities or demands for course correction are followed up immediately**.

Since this is a mid-term assessment, there is still time to see more significant results for 2019. It is important to remember that most interventions were actually carried out during the time frame of the previous strategic plan. Nonetheless, the transformational change that Oxfam is seeking will not happen by accident and the issues outlined deserve close examination.

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## ANNEX A

**Table A.1: Evidence for 'Changes in policies, practices and mechanisms of duty-bearers'<sup>11</sup>**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
CRAFT program on fair taxation in Uganda	<i>"(...) the participation of policy makers in CRAFT meetings was associated with: Positive change of mind-sets among policy makers on unfair taxation"</i>
Oxfam Belgium's Country Program in Vietnam	<i>"Increased awareness of, sensitivity to workers' rights and realization of increasing numbers of workers' recommendations by employers. Thanks to this, a few employers understand better than before "win-win" strategy (instead of "win-loss") vis-à-vis their employees"</i>
Raising Her Voice project in Chile	<i>"(...) [the campaign] was found to be a significant contribution to engaging a number of political parties' representatives from the Concertación alliance into advocating increasing the number of women candidates participating in electoral processes at local and national level. (...)"</i>

<sup>11</sup> Evaluations generally provide more than one text fragment that evidences a focus for changes in the 'power over' indicator. The following quotes are a selection of examples of such evidence from the 17 evaluations.



**Table A.2: Evidence for 'Achieving transparent practices' (including enhanced accountability of duty-bearers)**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
AGIR in Mozambique	<p><i>“The changes include diverse areas such as human rights in the penitentiary system, education, electoral registration and policy dialogue. In some cases, this has become part of the regulations – for example, accreditation of the electoral observers and the possibilities for them to vote outside their home districts is part of the electoral regulations. (...) There are also examples of a procedural change in a governance process, as were the decisions of the government to accommodate civil society proposals, to revise the guidelines of participation in the development observatories, and to focus the discussion in these forums to a specific policy area to benefit from more substantial inputs of the rights-holders.”</i></p>
Coalition Support Program in Vietnam	<p><i>“The case studies (...) show how the programme is contributing to a sustained institutional change as regards the way that policy gets discussed and drafted. (...) It has also worked at the ‘enabling’ environment level by tackling laws and policies that presently constrain the funding and associational rights of civil society.”</i></p>
Citizens First in Afghanistan and Pakistan	<p><i>“The contribution of the provincial advocacy committee in resolving problems in the province was recognized at the highest levels of provincial government. The provincial governor invited the committee to represent civil society at the inter-departmental meetings he chaired.”</i></p>
Chukua Hatua in Tanzania	<p><i>“The capacity and opportunity of local elected leaders to engage with communities and negotiate upwards was increased by the project to the realization of an increase in the number of positive accountability responses from duty bearers, including the leaders themselves”</i></p>
Raising her Voice	<p><i>“There are many examples of local government systems becoming more accessible, notably in Indonesia where women’s participation and project activities have resulted in participatory budgeting taking place for the first time in villages in the project areas. An important result of this greater participation in budgeting and planning has been the closer scrutiny and accountability of local government for the delivery of their promises and plans.”</i></p>
Health for all in Ghana	<p><i>“Changes to how the NHIA calculated NHIS coverage was shown to be flawed by the Campaign. The NHIA changed its methodology for calculating NHIS coverage because of pressure from the Campaign.”</i></p>
Raising Her Voice project in Chile	<p><i>“Part of the RHV project in Chile (the Más Mujeres al Poder campaign) was found to be a significant contribution to engaging a number of political parties’ representatives from the Concertación alliance into advocating increasing the number of women candidates participating in electoral processes at local and national level. (...) The campaign has also been effective in building bridges between women in the political parties and women’s organisations, which is unanimously perceived as an important step forward by all stakeholders.”</i></p>
Oxfam Belgium’s Country Program in Vietnam	<p><i>“Improved conditions in work places, and esp. due to better respects of workers’ rights by employers as provided for in labor law and related documents”</i>  <i>“Increased awareness of, sensitivity to workers’ rights and realization of increasing numbers of workers’ recommendations by employers. Thanks to this, a few employers understand better than before “win-win” strategy (instead of “win-loss”) vis-à-vis their employees”</i></p>
PMCB in Mali	<p><i>“les succès enregistrés par les espaces par leur implication dans le processus d’élaboration des plans et budgets et les actions de développement réalisées, ont contribué à asseoir leur légitimité et leur crédibilité envers les autorités villageoises, communales et de l’Etat”</i></p>

**Table A.3: Evidence for results in 'Changing the political agenda and debate'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Rights in Crisis Campaign in Afghanistan	<p><i>"Women's Participation in the Peace and Reconciliation Process (WPPRP) is maintained on the agenda of Afghan decision makers"</i></p> <p><i>"The outcome statement has materialised in full as key stakeholders in the International Community have spoken out in favour of WPPRP and have pushed Afghan decision makers quite strongly to keep WPPRP on the agenda. As a result, Afghan decision makers from ministries, Parliament and the High Peace Council have spoken out publicly on the importance of WPPRP."</i></p> <p><i>"The role of the Afghan civil society organisations has contributed to maintaining gender issues on the agenda."</i></p> <p><i>"In addition to Oxfam's interventions, national CSOs had some effect, especially because they were influencing the government directly, but international opinion leaders were the most effective actors putting the topic on the international and Afghan agenda."</i></p>
Citizen Voice in Bolivia	<p><i>"Outcome 2: Proposals by the Women's Platform have been incorporated into the political agenda of the municipality of Cercado."</i></p>

**Table A.4: Evidence for results in 'Changing laws and regulations'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
AGIR in Mozambique	<p><i>"The changes include diverse areas such as human rights in the penitentiary system, education, electoral registration and policy dialogue. In some cases, this has become part of the regulations – for example, accreditation of the electoral observers and the possibilities for them to vote outside their home districts is part of the electoral regulations. (...) There are also examples of a procedural change in a governance process, as were the decisions of the government to accommodate civil society proposals, to revise the guidelines of participation in the development observatories, and to focus the discussion in these forums to a specific policy area to benefit from more substantial inputs of the rights-holders."</i></p>
Coalition Support Program in Vietnam	<p><i>"The case studies (...) show how the programme is contributing to a sustained institutional change as regards the way that policy gets discussed and drafted. (...) It has also worked at the 'enabling' environment level by tackling laws and policies that presently constrain the funding and associational rights of civil society."</i></p>
Raising Her Voice	<p><i>"There are many examples of local government systems becoming more accessible, notably in Indonesia where women's participation and project activities have resulted in participatory budgeting taking place for the first time in villages in the project areas. An important result of this greater participation in budgeting and planning has been the closer scrutiny and accountability of local government for the delivery of their promises and plans."</i></p>
Citizen Voice in Bolivia	<p><i>"On the basis of the information gathered for this evaluation, it can be concluded that the approval of the National Political Constitution (CPE) was indeed an extremely important and necessary condition that facilitated the work done by the women's organisations in other regulatory development processes, such as the drafting of the Departmental Statute of Cochabamba."</i></p>
Citizen Voice in Zambia	<p><i>"The main influencing factor to achieving the outcome is increased allocation to the health budget, followed by the PF manifesto, which was targeted to improving access of quality services. Commitment to increased funding to health was partly influenced by the 'Vote Health for All' campaign, although there is evidence that the campaign itself had a direct influence on abolition of user fees"</i></p>
World Citizen Panel in Cambodia	<p><i>"The positive developments are being attributed to awareness raising and (to a lesser extent) to advocacy work of civil society organizations, but also to increased space and possibilities created by the government. (...) One could conclude that advocacy work and campaigning has led to positive results in terms of changed laws and regulations and more empowered citizens."</i></p>
My Rights My Voice in Georgia	<p><i>"Lessons learned: Thanks to the results of survey, the Health Rights Monitoring Strategy for the PDO, and other documents prepared in the framework of the project, the partners</i></p>

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
	<i>were able to advocate various issues to the Parliament and the Government. As a result of the advocacy campaign (not only of this concrete project), several very important changes were made in the activities of the Government. School doctors, the number of emergency vehicles, the MOU – all these are the results of the advocacy campaign of the partners”</i>

## ANNEX B

**Table B.1: Evidence for 'Making accurate information available'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Free, Prior and Informed Consent Program for the Asia Pacific Region	<i>"The program's overall intention was to build national and regional civil society understanding of FPIC rights in the Asia Pacific region. This increased understanding was intended to strengthen civil society organisations' (CSOs) ability to use FPIC and related human rights instruments to support Indigenous Peoples and other project affected peoples hold private sector companies and their own governments accountable to FPIC rights."</i>
Beyond the Horizon	<i>"A debate is commenced around alternative performance measures to GDP that better reflect the full spectrum of society, including the flourishing of the poorest in Scottish society, in terms of social, environmental, as well as economic well-being."</i>
Advocacy and campaigning in climate change in the Russian Federation	<i>"Outcome 3: Increased input from civic organisations and activists into developing governmental policies on climate change and food security issues through promotion of scientific reports, policy recommendations to the government, and participation of experts in the official meetings at national and international levels, specifically G20 and G8."</i>

**Table B.2: Evidence for 'Making accurate information available combined with other capacity building'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
REE-CALL in Bangladesh	<i>"In the process of accommodating various components, REE-CALL (...), emphasizes on organization of individuals to understand and exercise rights, connects with local service providing authorities to ensure entitlements to resources and services, and raise individual, family and community awareness to uphold and practice gender equality. This is how, REE-CALL has been progressing towards a holistic approach that provides for the overarching framework for achieving resilience at community level."</i>
Citizens First in Pakistan and Afghanistan	<i>"(...) By 2016, a number of 36 (informal) civil society organizations will have increased capacity for evidence-based advocacy with district, provincial and national level (...). People are educated and mobilized for basic human rights, peace, tolerance and social services (...)."</i>
Citizen Voice in Bolivia	<i>"(...) Organised women in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz are trained in socio-political participation, public accountability and advocacy. (...) Up-to-date information and knowledge is available to women's organisations, socio-political actors and public opinion on gender policies, gender violence and discrimination."</i>
Straight Talk in Australia	<i>"Immediate outcomes: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women increase understanding of the political system and ability to work with politicians. Female politicians increase awareness of issues relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their communities. Women connect and learn from each other. Building on existing skills and learning tools for change."</i>

**Table B.3: Evidence for 'Other capacity building related to accessibility of adequate information'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Networks Support approach in Vanuatu	<i>"The overall goal was to improve collaboration between civil society actors so that they could then advocate more effectively to decision makers and contribute to greater change for their constituents."</i>
Coalition Support Program in Vietnam	<i>"The theory is that by funding multiple, small and carefully targeted advocacy processes, the programme will contribute towards a shift towards an inclusive and multi-stakeholder political society."</i>
'Health for All: Towards Free Universal Health Care in Ghana'	<i>"Civil society organisations work together to hold the GoG to account for commitments made on the provision of health care and engage 25,000 individuals to take a campaign action towards securing free universal health care with the first year of the Campaign (2011–2012)."</i>

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
campaign	

**Table B.4: Evidence for 'Changing citizens, poor and marginalized people themselves'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Chukua Hatua in Tanzania	<i>"In this context the project increased citizen's awareness and capacity and assisted them to overcome their fear, and take actions in the interest of their livelihoods. Citizens actions in Loliondo against expansion of the Serengeti wildlife corridor and those reported from all the sites against misappropriation of funds and improved service delivery do confirm this. Citizens have increased pressure demanding better delivery of public services which has led to local institutions being increasingly compelled to respond in line with the theory of change"</i>
Raising Her Voice	<i>"A significant result of the increased confidence and solidarity of women and awareness of their rights has been their increased ability and will to speak out on rights abuses and access justice on their own or their peers' behalf. There are several reported cases from the case studies and evaluations of women accessing property rights, stopping harmful and discriminatory traditional practices and reporting cases of violence against women."</i>
Oxfam Belgium's Country Program for Vietnam	<i>"Workers have increased role in monitoring working conditions (e.g. OHS committees) and in labour law enforcement mechanisms; (iii) Migrants workers, female workers in particular, are substantially better equipped with improved mechanisms and facilities (e.g. kiosks, WSPs, mobile legal consultancies, access to network of service providers such as LUs, legal professionals, etc.) to access to and exchange needs-based information and legal advices; (...) Workers' groups got increased capacity and confidence in organizing their members to participate in social dialogues with employers discussing collective labor agreements, labor policies, social insurance and social security issues, etc."</i>

**Table B.5: Evidence for 'Stimulating collaboration between (national) civil society organisations and movements and improving the internal structure of existing CSOs'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Supported Networks in Vanuatu	<i>"The review found that, despite the early stage of the networks, they are working well to improve collaboration and joint action between members. Some tangible changes for network members include: new technical and administrative skills to strengthen their work and leadership abilities greater understanding of each other's work, as well as external stakeholders' activities and requirements collaboration on joint activities and strategies to address common issues improved relationships with each other and external bodies such as government and donors collective contribution to government policies and plans."</i>
Campaign '50-50 Paridad es Ahora' in Bolivia	<i>"Finalmente, la Campaña ha suscitado también un cambio en las prácticas y creencias del propio movimiento de mujeres que la implementa, reafirmando el peso de las alianzas intra-género, de la movilización y del trabajo en red como herramientas de transformación, así como del valor de la articulación colectiva para plantear y avanzar hacia una meta común."</i>
AGIR in Mozambique	<i>"The Mid-Term Review and Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys have confirmed AGIR's contribution to the institutional development of many of the partner organisations, resulting in a more vocal and active civil society acting as a defender of human rights and claimant of accountability and rule of law."</i>

**Table B.6: Evidence for 'Intervention left the process (partially) unfinished and follow up is needed'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
World Citizens Panel in Cambodia	<i>"Little follow up action has been observed from the government" (...) 'more emphasis should be put on facilitating networking among communities and organisations to increase the chance that people get their rights indeed'.</i>
Local Partnership for Rural Development (Albania)	<i>"Advocacy training was also delivered, however its impact appears marginal in terms of sustainability and there was no measurable evidence of success in promoting this gendered LAG model to key stakeholders and policy makers at the national level."</i>
Citizen Voice in Bolivia	<i>"The effort at capacity building and training made by the IFFI and Women's Platform has improved the network advocacy capacity and resulted in greater self-esteem and sense of empowerment of women activists. Despite this, various actors agree that there is a significant outstanding need for technical training and capacity building of both women in elected positions and women in management positions."</i>

**Table B.7: Evidence for successful strategies regarding 'Increased engagement of citizens with duty-bearers'**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Increasing Women's Political Participation in Chile and South America	Collaboration with a strong partner: <i>"With reference to Oxfam GB's decision to support projects that build on existing work and local processes, interviews to members of Corporación Humanas direction reveal that the work done has been very well aligned and embedded into the partner's work and mandate. Women's political participation was already a strong area of work of Humanas and Raising her Voice came to critically support some activities that were either difficult to fund or needed extra funding."</i>
Raising Her Voice	Flexibility in partner relations: <i>"This has added value to the work of the implementing partner who recognises that the flexibility of OGB and the donor has allowed the organisation to adapt to emerging needs and windows of opportunity, such as the local elections process and to strengthen their campaigning work and expertise. The RHV framework had not really permeated and was insufficiently owned by the implementing partner."</i>
Health for all in Ghana	Flexibility in partner relations: <i>"During the Campaign's second phase CSO coordination did improve with the number of joint advocacy activities increasing markedly, particularly in the lead up to the presidential and parliamentary elections. The appointment of a fulltime coordinator and Oxfam's decision to take a less prominent role are plausible reasons associated with improved joint planning and working. Given key informants' version of events, it is reasonable that the Campaign made a contribution towards greater joint planning and working of member CSOs as advocates for free universal health care."</i>
AGIR in Mozambique	Flexibility in partner relations: <i>"A large number of the AGIR partner organisations are supported through core funding and also have access to flexible funds available for short-term and more adhoc advocacy activities. This enables them to focus on their own strategies and the political processes they have found most relevant. From a civil society perspective this creates conditions for more focused and strategic accountability work, including the possibility to build and strengthen alliances with domestic and international partners. The combination of a higher degree of institutional financial stability and the access to flexible funds for advocacy activities has enabled the key partner organisations to respond rapidly when opportunities to influence and voice claims have presented themselves."</i>
CRAFT in Uganda	Use of adequate materials, methods and expertise: <i>"Use of campaigners. The use of tax justice campaigners was a good innovation and should be continued in future tax justice work. (...) Use of IEC materials for communicating key messages. Use of professionals to undertake research and preparation of materials for tax justice dialogues."</i>

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
<i>My rights, My voice</i> in Georgia	Use of adequate materials, methods and expertise: <i>"The regional CSOs have benefited a lot from the project. They attended trainings on different aspects of child and youth health rights, established useful links with their peers and family doctors, and learned a lot about project management and fundraising, which will help them in future activities. (...) These trainings were undoubtedly a very good opportunity for local organizations to acquire new skills and to become more independent and active. They were able to choose the priority topic for the next training (via a post-training evaluation form)."</i>
<i>Free Universal Health Care Campaign</i> in Ghana	Use of adequate materials, methods and expertise: <i>"A key success of the Campaign was its ability to mobilise civil society organisations in the health arena around the common goal of free universal health care. The evaluation has shown that civil society was equipped with powerful data to endorse what was already recognised at the community level; that access to health care under the insurance scheme was inequitable and did not favour the most vulnerable members of society. (...) The dissemination of the report's findings enabled civil society actors to better understand the technical nature of the universal health care discourse, supporting wider campaigning efforts."</i>
Advocacy Coalition Support Program in Vietnam	A participatory, multi-stakeholder approach: <i>"The programme has shaped policy advocacy with the participation and cooperation of multiple stakeholders - rather than just networks of NGOs as before. (...) The Programme operates by identifying, fostering and supporting issue-based coalitions for effective advocacy within the policy making process. 'Coalitions' in this context means multi-stakeholder cooperation among Vietnamese NGOs (VNGOs), state agencies at different levels, media, universities and research institutes, and the private sector."</i>
REE-CALL in Bangladesh	A participatory, multi-stakeholder approach: <i>"The women in the target villages/CBOs are greatly facilitated towards not only to earn income for the family, but also to earn respect following their economic and social progression. Women are certainly not seen as a passive member confined in a household, they have emerged as pro-active members of the society who can contribute to their immediate family and the neighbourhood in their own rights. Collectively, they have formed pressure groups to at least claim entitlements &amp; rights, goods and services, if not manage to ensure services from the local level service providers and duty bearers."</i>

## ANNEX C

**Table C.1: Evidence for 'Improved ability and confidence of citizens'<sup>12</sup>**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
My Rights, My Voice in Georgia	Citizens acquiring knowledge, skills and tools for active citizenship: <i>“The clubs established in the framework of the project form a strong network. The children are empowered with skills and knowledge, and they are eager to study and disseminate their knowledge to others. They understand the importance of information sharing. They have expressed the desire to continue this tradition and be active (instead of closing of the project). In general, the youth club leaders’ skills and the activities these children have implemented are the strength of the project and may be considered as its main achievement.”</i>
Straight Talk in Australia	Platform to share knowledge and skills: <i>“At both events, which are held over four days, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are given a platform to share stories and solutions and strengthen one another so they can shape the decisions that affect their lives and their peoples. Women learn how the political system works, the tools and strategies for creating change, and meet politicians to talk about the issues they face in the community.”</i>
Oxfam Belgium’s Country Program for Vietnam	Introducing new ways of operating by CSOs in a specific setting or region: <i>“The program brings into Vietnam new and relatively creative ways of gathering and organizing farmers and workers into groups based on their own choice, needs, interest and self-governance. Thus, the program enriches national policy menu by bringing to the table more choices for policy and decisions makers to consider as ultimately, external support should not and cannot replace domestic initiatives and efforts.”</i>
REE-CALL in Bangladesh	Introducing new ways of operating by CSOs in a specific setting or region: <i>“The best part of the IGA trainings and subsequent financial supports is that, the project has successfully introduced the micro-producers with the market. Based on field observations and candidly talking to women it appears that women have become economically selfreliant, since many of them have now started to earn more than their respective husbands.”</i>
My Rights, My Voice in Georgia	Enabling specific groups to directly participate in the process of learning and advocacy: <i>“The project promoted children and youth as agents of change by fully involving them in campaigning and awareness raising and by establishing youth clubs through which children and youth can organize events and discuss issues of health rights that affect them.”</i>

<sup>12</sup> Evaluations generally provide more than one text fragment that evidences a focus for changes in the ‘power over’ indicator. In the following quotes we’ve selected examples of such evidence from the 17 evaluations.



## ANNEX D

Table D.1: Evidence for 'Barriers to success'

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
AGIR in Mozambique	<p><i>"It is however difficult to discern major shifts towards sustainable changes in the behaviour of the duty-bearers. This is partly due to the difficulty to follow intended behaviour changes of duty-bearers throughout the reporting during the evaluated period. But is also a reflection of the dependency of changes in single actors' behaviour rather than the behaviour of institutions. This was an issue raised by many of the respondents and is a situation that needs to be addressed with long-term and multiple advocacy strategies."</i></p> <p><i>"The HRBA is a visionary and demanding approach. It is not surprising that it is only partly put into practice within the sub-programmes and the partners' work. One could however expect that HRBA and its principles of accountability, transparency, (active and meaningful) participation and (active) non-discrimination would have played a more articulated and salient role in the partner dialogue and capacity building initiatives. It seems to have been treated as one of many cross-cutting issues instead of being the point of departure of AGIR. In a programme where the partner organisations claim accountability of duty-bearers it is essential to also look inwards at the own organisations and the civil society community. Discriminatory structures and insufficient participation of rights-holders need to be actively counteracted. The efforts to increase accountability and transparency towards members, communities and rightsholder groups should be high on the organisations' agenda for organisational development. To increase the legitimacy of the CSOs it is important that they use inclusive and participatory methods, securing that the groups whose rights they claim to defend are able to have an influence over the organisations and that they have access to relevant information on how the work is progressing. The evaluators conclude that there is much room for improvement and that AGIR II needs to step up both the "talk" and the "walk" of a human rights-based approach."</i></p>
Rights in Crisis Campaign Afghanistan	<p><i>"Outcome Statement 1 has been materialised in part as there was a steep increase in the number of women who have reported incidents of VAW and the number of police officers that have recorded their cases, especially in Kabul and Herat provinces. (...) However, the increase in the number of court cases and convictions has remained very low compared to the increase in reported incidents. This means that, although there is a significant movement around the issue, the improvements on the level of law enforcement are limited."</i></p>
Oxfam's Country Program in Cambodia (World Citizens Panel Impact Report)	<p><i>"Awareness on land rights has grown, people have more frequently been able to file their complaints, but little follow up action (such as compensation) has been observed from the government. Awareness raising and community mobilization are crucial steps in ensuring participants get/keep the rights to their land. More emphasis should be put on facilitating networking among communities and among organizations to increase the chance that people get their rights indeed."</i></p>
Coalition Support Programme in Vietnam	<p><i>"A key constraint in the overall story of policy advocacy in Vietnam centres on policy implementation and the challenges involved in contributing to 'change on the ground' in a political context where the 'implementation gap' is widened by a lack of responsiveness and accountability."</i></p> <p><i>"The perceived usefulness of the programme's coaching role varies coalition by coalition. The general pattern within the programme is that those coalitions that have more experienced and/or established core members, notably the Mining Coalition, are less reliant on and less appreciative of the kinds of capacity building approach and cyclical project reporting demands that come with the programme. The Mining Coalition coordinator, for instance, appears to be mildly irritated by the reporting disbursement demands of the programme and less appreciative of the capacity building support on offer"</i></p>
CRAFT in Uganda	<p><i>"Mind-sets of government officials. While the project pursued a good approach to involve government officials in tax justice dialogues and meetings, the mind-sets of government officials especially those involved in tax policy matters remained a challenge. During interviews with government officials it was noted that the matters raised in tax justice dialogues were not easily taken up by policy makers higher up in the government system. Future tax justice advocacy work should widen its scope to cover key government officials in taxation policy matters."</i></p>

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Increasing Women's Political Participation in Chile and South America	<p><i>“One of the key issues in Chile is the lack of success in approving affirmative action measures that correct the worrying under-representation of women in political institutions. Since 1997 a number of legislative initiatives have been blocked in the Parliament, finding strong resistance among parliamentarians, particularly from the conservative parties. Although the situation seems to be changing and Humanas' monitoring reports show that the level of support to approve a quota system is growing, there is no real advance in terms of policy reform as yet. Here, again, a number of factors play an important role, including the social change provoked by having had a woman president in the social imagination of Chile.”</i></p> <p><i>“However, the challenge of expanding the outreach still remains and the risk of political identification with certain parties is an issue to be addressed in future initiatives. It is therefore recommended that coalition building takes this learning into consideration and that the net of alliances is broadened in future initiatives. This may be done by including more independent women candidates, other key stakeholders (such as student leaders or trade unions) and experts or opinion leaders in future initiatives.”</i></p>
Oxfam America's FY13 appropriations advocacy	<p><i>“More generally assessing the contribution of Oxfam in appropriations debates is challenging as Oxfam's FY13 appropriations objectives are somewhat ambiguous, championing a generic ‘don't cut aid’ message alongside a specific focus on aid effectiveness.”</i></p>
Raising Her Voice in Pan Africa	<p><i>“Raising her Voice has meant a great opportunity for Humanas to continue working on the inclusion of women as participant subjects in the political sphere. Moreover, informants from the organisation confirmed that the participation of some of its staff members in the global inception meeting in Oxford inspired the communicational and campaigning aspects of their work. But the lack of a clearer link to the broader programme, and the insufficient spaces for shared learning and exchange, may have not provided the right environment to fully capitalise the potentials of both the programme and the partnership.”</i></p>
My Rights My Voice in Georgia	<p><i>“The main idea was that professional, adequately trained staff, together with the PDO Center for Children's Rights, should work on health rights in general and youth health rights in particular. Regrettably, significant changes in the PDO staff somehow undermined the success of the PDO component of the project. From 2011 to the end of the project, the Health Rights Officer was changed twice, whereas all the staff of the Center for Children's Rights were renewed completely. Naturally, newcomers needed some time to familiarize themselves with the project objectives and to get involved in the process. This point was stressed by the representatives of Oxfam and the Welfare Foundation, and was also observed by the evaluators themselves.”</i></p>

## ANNEX E

**Table E.1: Evidence for improving participation and raising the voice of women**

Evaluation	Citation / evidence (partial)
Straight Talk in Australia	<p><i>“Oxfam has established selection criteria to ensure a diversity of women participants including: remote, regional and city based women; women of different ages; and women from different sectoral backgrounds. (...) The program’s selection process does not actively seek to target and engage other women – including women who are not literate and people with disability.”</i></p>
Chakua Hatua in Tanzania	<p><i>“The project specifically aimed at mobilizing citizens, particularly women, to take action to monitor public resources and delivery of quality services.”</i></p>
CRAFT in Uganda	<p><i>“Key informant interviews with women participants in Pader affirmed that the project helped to stimulate their interest in the areas of advocacy for fair taxation, good governance and accountability in their respective communities. They further added that the project went so far as to provide them with training manuals and publicity materials such as fliers, t-shirts, caps and magazines for fair taxation and good governance.” (...) The final evaluation team noted that the project did not exclusively target actions that were gender specific. It was however learnt that in Pader meetings targeting women groups were organized in the afternoon hours to allow the women have time to handle their morning activities and the meeting would be for a shorter time to allow them time to do their evening work at home.”</i></p>
Citizen Voice in Bolivia	<p><i>“In this respect, the men assembly members interviewed confirmed that their relationship with the women representatives of the Women’s Platform was continuous and that beyond facilitating their parliamentary work, on a personal level it had also helped them to learn and gain greater insight into gender issues. ‘Something positive that the Platform has done is to make the leadership of the assembly, which is normally always run by men, more sensitive to these issues.’ (...) This suggests the need to push forward along these lines and include men in the different activities and advocacy work in a more strategic and systematic way.”</i></p>
REE-CALL in Bangladesh	<p><i>“The result #4 mostly deals with active participation women. The results have been better than before. However, to achieve the result #4, one should not keep their male counterparts away. Rather a ‘couple-based’ conversation regarding domestic violence and violence against women could have been more productive towards bringing positive change.”</i></p>
Oxfam Belgium's Country Program in Vietnam	<p><i>‘Strategic gender mainstreaming into normal development processes for both target groups (farmers and workers) as a cross cutting issue faced difficulties’.</i>  <i>“For future programming: to make available a practical and very user-friendly gender mainstreaming toolkit including a simple check-list for program developers and implementers to effectively ensure a pro-active and systematic integration of gender perspectives into the entire program cycle.”</i></p>
AGIR in Mozambique	<p><i>“(…) some serious concerns about the progress of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in AGIR. Two years have passed, so is the glass half empty or half full when it comes to promoting gender equality? A programme that aims to challenge non-participatory and non-transparent development processes and to hold people in power accountable should also be able to challenge discriminatory social norms. The call for gender perspective in interventions driven by the civil society is nothing new in Mozambique. Some of the recent achievements of collective action in the country also stem from organisations fighting for women’s rights”.</i></p>
World Citizen Panel in Cambodia	<p><i>“Women are seen as the most critical actors in realizing these changes. In the day-to-day reality of Cambodian life they do not enjoy the same rights as men do, neither in the private nor in the public space. They lag behind in political, social and economic (leadership) positions and violence against women is a frequently occurring phenomenon which hinders them from living a decent life.”</i></p>

# Bibliographic Information

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