

## Oxfam GB Effectiveness Review Management Response

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**Name of Project reviewed:** Oxfam Response to the Nepal 2015 Earthquake

**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Participants in the Management Response:** Cily Keizer, Anwar Ali, Binay Dhital, Jordan Lam

### Summary of Key Results

Standard	Rating
1. Rapid appraisal of facts within 24 hours, plans in place and scale-up or start-up commenced within three days	6/6
2. Coverage uses 10% of at-risk population as a planned figure with clear justification for final count.	4/6
3. Technical aspects of programme measured against Oxfam-endorsed standards	2/6
4. MEAL strategy and plan in place and being implemented using appropriate indicators leading to improved assistance through learning from experience and reflection	2/3
5. Feedback/complaints system for affected population in place and functioning and documented evidence of information sharing, consultation and participation leading to a programme relevant to context and needs	2/3
6. Partner relationships defined, capacity assessed and partners fully engaged in all stages of programme cycle	1/3
7. Programme is considered a safe programme: action taken to avoid harm and programme considered conflict sensitive	2/3
8. Programme (including advocacy) addresses gender equity and specific concerns and needs of women, girls, men and boys	2/3
9. Programme (including advocacy) addresses specific concerns and needs of vulnerable groups	1/3

10. Evidence that preparedness measures were in place and effectively actioned	<b>2/3</b>
11. Programme has an advocacy/campaigns strategy and has incorporated advocacy into programme plans based on evidence from the field	<b>2/3</b>
12. Evidence of appropriate staff capacity to ensure quality programming	<b>3/3</b>
13. Country programme has an integrated approach including reducing and managing risk through existing longer-term development programmes and building resilience for the future	<b>1.5/3</b>
14. Programme is coordinated with and complementary to the response of other humanitarian actors	<b>2/3</b>
15. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	<b>2/3</b>
<b>Final rating Equivalent to</b>	<b>34.5/54 64%</b>

**1. What follow-up to the review have you undertaken or planned (if any) e.g. discussion, analysis, workshop?**

Major findings of the report have already been reviewed and discussed during the last Humanitarian Team Meeting (16-18<sup>th</sup> March 2016), however, below further actions will be taken to review and come up with concrete plans to improve further;

- Discussion at the Country Management Team level in March 2016 to come up with an action plan on building on the strengths and improving further on the grey areas
- Findings will be shared at the District level with the team during the planned annual review workshops (March 2016) to devise district specific plans to rectify the issues and share update on the actions already taken
- Findings will also be shared with the technical leads at the national level to incorporate the same in the Year 2 strategy and plans.

2. Overall, do the findings concur with your own expectations or assessment of the project/programme's effectiveness?

Not completely. The rate given to standard 12 Staff Capacity: was relatively high as compared to how it was perceived as the reality on the ground. We had a substantial number of great and professional staff from the start of the response and timely recruitment was good. But in the first 6 months especially in the field of logistics, EFSVL and gender we did not have the right staff in place and the quality of the program suffered from that. Besides that due to a continuous change of staff (few weeks or months of deployment) and a very high number of international staff especially PMs not accompanied with national staff. We lost a lot of valuable time with induction and getting staff up to speed being ready to work in the local context. It is a fact that we should recognise that is hard to get to know the cultural and social context of Nepal and to adjust to the local working reality. Some international managers in the beginning made a lot of mistakes in a political sensitive environment as in Nepal resulting in a negative attitude towards Oxfam in certain district. Now with a lot more national staff in management positions as well this has been resolved.

3. Did the final results of the Effectiveness Review identify areas that were particularly strong in the project (ie large impact)?

Yes, the review identified a number of potential areas that remained very strong. The key area identified in different standards include;

Standard 1 – Timeliness

- The WASH and shelter preparedness plan together with the surge capacity allowed Oxfam to start the response well on time.

Standard 4 - MEAL

- There is much that worked well with the MEAL capacity and systems; learning from previous response, pre-existing capacity to build upon, greater move towards use of tool boxes/SOPs which were adapted for the Nepal context, generous budgetary provision, deployment of international capacity and quite rapid recruitment of district staff, and feedback loops built up

Standard 5 – Feedback, Consultation and Participation

- Oxfam has established a robust complaints mechanism that listens to feedback and takes action where it deems appropriate. SOPs and guidance is available for complaints. Strong feedback mechanisms appear to be in place

Standard 7 – Safe Programming

- The Nepal programme has well resourced protection expertise at all levels in the programme, with dedicated advisor, district focal points and a specialist partner who brings further capacity and expertise.

Standard 8 - Gender

- The Nepal country programme uses the Oxfam gender in emergency min standards and has done so from the beginning of the response.

Gender officers, who are based in all district offices, as well as in the capital and they are trained on and monitor programme against these. These standards have been shared with staff and partners as part of training courses and subsequently when the ToT course for gender was run in Sep by the gender advisor. Oxfam produced a poster on gender and emergency as another way to inform and promote standards.

#### Standard 10 – Preparedness

- There was much very good work undertaken on preparedness planning by Oxfam and the RTE notes that preparedness work was one of the 3 key factors that enabled Oxfam to respond in a very rapid way

#### Standard 11 – Advocacy Strategy

- Advocacy strategy in place and evidence that it was written with input from programmes and field endorsed by OI RiC Campaign Management
- Oxfam was well placed to have impact in its MAC work and this potential was broadly speaking realised. Oxfam led in key areas on reconstruction winterisation and the fuel crisis. Overall positive and sensitive work was undertaken

#### Standard 12 – Staff Capacity

- Oxfam has met all the requirements under staff capacity, exceeding quantitative measures where stipulated and it is considered they also did for other measures too taking account the context

#### Standard 14 – Coordination

- An overall picture emerges of Oxfam being active and present in the district level forums, as noted in the RTE and well connected with local Government, which is the most important operational level coordination. Oxfam has been fairly active at national level forums, where some national policy is shaped, and engaged reasonably well.

#### Standard 15 – Resource Management

- Overall the operation is very significant in terms of material procurement and distribution, and this is undertaken over a wide geographical area.

4. Did the final results of the Effectiveness Review identify areas that were weak or very weak (ie no or very little impact)?

Yes, the review identified a number of potential areas that remained either weak or were very weak. The key area identified in different standards include;

Standard 1 – Timeliness:

- Preparedness plan for the CTPs were not considered in the Contingency Planning exercise. There was a lack of clarity initially on the EFSVL targets which also lead to the delayed EFSVL response.

Standard 2 - Coverage:

- Lack of clarity on; who will decide on the targets and by when it should be agreed and revised.
- Risk analysis was considered in the programme design but was not properly managed during the implementation of the programme.
- Data management remained a key weakness during the implementation of the response

Standard 3 – Technical aspects and Standards

- The indicators and outcomes set were mostly qualitative and there was no reference to the standards. In addition there was a lack of clarity or understanding on the standards

Standard 4 - MEAL

- The log frame indicators were not SMART
- Outcome/ impact monitoring was weak
- Weak data and information management

Standard 5 – Feedback, Consultation and Participation

- There is no documentation that shows how communities were consulted during the design of the programme

Standard 6 - Partnership

- There is no mechanism for systematically capturing feedback from partners and none of the district workshop documents reviewed included anything on partner feedback
- Inconsistency on building/enhancing partner capacity

Standard 7 – Safe Programming

- Protection is not clearly highlighted in the key documents. In addition; the programme areas of EFSVL, WASH and shelter were relatively quiet on the protection related issues and good examples of what is confronted were not forthcoming.

#### Standard 8 - Gender

- There is a great deal of work and attention that the Oxfam country programme has given to gender. It has not always had the right amount of leadership from gender focal points at critical times and as a result there has been some variability of attention devoted to ensure it is mainstreamed to the extent that Oxfam would always wish to see.

#### Standard 9 – Needs of Vulnerable Groups

- Lack of documented evidence on addressing the specific concerns and needs of vulnerable groups

#### Standard 10 – Preparedness

- A contingency plan was in place but shelter was not mentioned. Furthermore, though EFSVL was included in the plan, there was no evidence of any early tangible earthquake response results reported (CfW in the flood response) that showed this sector got going as well as the WASH response did.

#### Standard 11 – Advocacy Strategy

- The team were fully staffed, well-resourced and active in their media, advocacy and communication work; however, there was no proper MEAL plan to monitor the indicators. In addition; lack of documentation was noticed again when reviewing this standard.

#### Standard 13 – Integration

- Delays in strategy development for the recovery phase which articulates how the transition should occur so documentation remains in draft due to frequent changes of Humanitarian Directors role.
- There is some analysis of the potential negative effects of the earthquake and to a lesser extent of the intervention itself; though the latter has not thought through the concern of do no harm. It appears as if environment is not dealt with at all.
- For the first three or four months, local capacity was almost not taken into consideration.

#### Standard 14 - Coordination

- There was not much evidence of systematic mapping of other actor's roles and presence in assessment reports.

#### Standard 15 – Resource Management

- Weak controls emerged from the resource management

5. Is the reviewed project continuing? If yes, what actions are being taken in response to the weak areas identified in question 4?

Yes, the reviewed project will be continued for 3 more years in Nepal. Below are the list of actions already taken/will be taken to improve on the weak areas;

- Contingency planning has been planned in April 2016 to ensure; stock piling in each district based on the recommendations of the RTE and this report, developing and rolling out of the CTP guidelines to ensure timely cash disbursement to the beneficiaries, standardization of RNA's tools, identification of new potential contingency partners and inclusion of both urban and rural areas scenario building exercise.
- A comprehensive risk/power analysis has already been undertaken at the district level however, more emphasis will be put on in year two of the responses for its effective management.
- Dedicated Data and information management Officer have been recruited at the district level with clear role and responsibilities and are working under management of the MEAL coordinator. They have come up with harmonised data collection and reporting tools (March 2016) which will help in improving and maintaining consistent data related to the response.
- A series of workshop were held in the past and more have been planned in year two (e.g. 20<sup>th</sup> to 21 March 2016, to review and develop EFSVL strategy and speed up the CTPs interventions focusing more on bringing innovation and expertise in transfer modalities.
- Sector specific LFA/indicators have been reviewed in consultation with the sectoral leads so as to include quality standards and similar exercises have been rolled out at the district level. Main focus is to make it more G-SMART and same will be reflected in the PIP (P00977)
- Capacity building of Oxfam and partners' staff is an integral part of Oxfam's response strategy. Capacity building plans will be review and developed to enhance both Oxfam's and Partners' staff understanding on the different technical areas including the relevant national/international, Oxfam Standards and Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS)
- A baseline survey will be under taken in early April 2016 which is expected to double up as end line for first phase of response work.
- MEAL frameworks are in place for the OPAL Projects and PIP but will be reviewed/updated in April/May 2016 based on the finding from the baseline line survey.
- OPAL usage has been identified by the country team as one of the grey areas and training is planned for end of March 2016.
- Following the Humanitarian team meeting, 16th to 18th March 2016, PMEAL was identified as an area where more action oriented planning is required. In this regards, a meeting on 30th March 2016 has been planned to come up with an action plan to rectify the outstanding issues for instance, DNA for year two planning, base line survey, and harmonisation of reporting, and monitoring tools.
- District Annual review planned for Kathmandu and Sindhupalchowk have been completed and for Gorkha, Dhading and Nuwakot have been schedule before end of March 2016
- "Documented evidences" was a key gap in the implementation of the year one of the response strategy which was discussed in details during the last humanitarian team meeting to improve further to ensure documentation related to information sharing, beneficiaries/partners'/other stake holders, consultation and participation. Such evidences/documents will be made available and attached to all Projects on OPAL.

- The report has indicated Feedback and complaint mechanism as one of the strength of the Nepal Country programme, in this regards, the programme will seek to build on this strength to improve on future programme in the areas of accountability to beneficiaries' and partners.
- It worth to note that as early as December 2015, it was decided to review Oxfam's existing partners in the districts except Gorkha where an EOI process meant to invite both the new and existing partners to a potential partnership with Oxfam. The objective was to reassess Oxfam's exiting partnership which was assessed in a rush during the relief phase and to identify new potential partners for year two. This process currently ongoing as planned and will hopefully be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
- A comprehensive partnership strategy will be developed (May-June 2016) focusing on; ways of working with the partners, engagement of partners in the PCM and relationship management, harmonised and structured ways of assessing partners capacity (project and institutional) which will be followed by the development and implementation of the capacity building plan in a timely fashion.
- A protection advisor was deployed to the Nepal Earthquake Response Programme who has recently (March 2016) shared her findings related to protection mainstreaming/integration. The findings have already been incorporated in all sectors of the Earthquake Response Strategy for Year 2 Programming which will be closely followed on during implementation by the Gender and Protection Officers in each district.
- Gender Analysis has already been done and has been incorporated in the Year 2 programming but will further be enhanced during the implementation of Year 2 programme in each district.
- Harmonised disaggregated data collection tools, reviewed by the gender and protection advisors, have been developed which will be used in Year 2 to ensure the collection of required data.
- Vulnerability criteria, focusing on the needs and vulnerabilities of the poor, marginalised and extremely vulnerable, is now in place and shared with all the sector leads and District Programme Managers which will be used by the Programme team to ensure the targeting approach. The same will also be used for the monthly reporting purposes too.
- Linkages with the DRR/CCA team have already been developed to enhance the preparedness element in the Response Strategy. An OHK funded project will be implemented in Year 2 in all EQ affected districts to increase the knowledge and understanding of Oxfam and partners staff on preparedness and to enhance the capacity of the Government Departments and Community on Preparedness.
- Talent management plan and roster for the national staff will be reviewed and updated in Year 2; this will allow the country team to focus more on national capacity to be better prepared for future emergencies.
- Advocacy plans, based on power and gender analysis, have already been developed at the District level which will further be followed on by the district team in Year 2 to ensure its robust implementation
- Media work has been started both at the District and national level which will further be strengthen during the implementation of year 2 strategy.
- Linkages with the Sustainable Development Programme are an integral part of the Earthquake Response strategy. Different areas have already been explored for; joint programming and developing linkages to ensure phase out in the short period and sustainability in the

longer run. For instance; a joint project related to DRR/CCA will be implemented (April 2016 onwards) while livelihoods recovery project lead by the Food and Economic Justice (FEJ) in the EQ affected areas has already been launched. Further opportunities will be explored in Year 2, especially in the areas of Gender Justice (GJ) to build on Oxfam's experience in this area.

- Discussion with Oxfam America on reviewing the Response Strategy from a Resilience Perspective has already been initiated and it is likely that the strategy will be reviewed in May 2016 to ensure that there is an element of Resilience building.
- VDC level exit indicators have been reviewed during the last PM's meeting (March 2016) which will further be used to decide on the District level exit planning in Year 2.
- Stakeholder analysis at the district level has already been undertaken while mapping out of all the coordination forums at the national will further be strengthen to ensure Oxfam's engagement.
- Control mechanisms will further be reviewed during March-April 2016 to improve on the weak areas identified in this review

6. If the project/humanitarian response is ending or has already ended, what learning from the review will you apply to relevant new projects in the future?

The project is not ending at this stage; however, learning from this review will be incorporated in the design and implementation of Year 2 strategy.

The reports will be published by Oxfam. If you have objections to this, please say so and explain why.

None