

Management Response Template

Oxfam Management response to the review of *Resilience in Kenya - Impact evaluation of Building Resilience in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Northern Kenya (Effectiveness Review Series 2016/17)*

Prepared by:	<i>Emmanuel Kivunga, Oxfam Kenya MEAL Advisor</i>		
Contributors:	<i>Oxfam Kenya staff members (MEAL Advisor made a presentation on the findings of the Effectiveness Review during a programme meeting for all programme and programme support staff. The team gave feedback during the meeting which forms part of this management response. The draft management response was shared with all staff for feedback and validation.</i>		
Signed off by:	<i>Sumananjali Mohanty, Country Director</i>		
Date:	<i>7 June 2017</i>	Country/Region/Campaign:	<i>Kenya/HECA</i>

Questions 1–10 will be published externally as a standalone document to accompany the evaluation in question. Please respond in full, without referring people to the detailed action plan (which will not be published).

Please remember that this part of the management response should be written in an accessible way for external audiences!

A: Context, background and findings

1. The context and background of the review, i.e. the purpose and scope of the evaluation.

As part of Oxfam Great Britain's (OGB) Global Performance Framework (GPF), samples of mature projects are randomly selected each year and their effectiveness rigorously assessed. The 'Building Resilience in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Northern Kenya' was selected for review in this way under the thematic area of resilience.

The project under review was implemented in Turkana County, Kenya between July 2012 and April 2015. The project was designed to build the resilience of project participants to a number of different shocks and stresses. Although households in Turkana have increasingly begun to settle in fixed locations, herding of livestock continues to be important for people's livelihoods, and households' livelihoods remain susceptible to droughts – which threaten the area annually – as well as floods and outbreaks of human and animal diseases. Anthropocentric risks, such as fire, livestock theft, and conflict are also common. The project

worked at a number of different levels to try and reduce households' vulnerability to these risks. Within communities, the project adopted a Community-Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) approach to ensure the programme of support was well-suited to each community's needs. The project also sought to integrate community-level plans and committees into the work of the county government.

This Effectiveness Review used a quasi-experimental evaluation design to assess the impact of the project activities. This involved comparing those households that participated in the project to a group of comparison households that were similar to the project participants. This means that this Effectiveness Review can only identify the household- and community-level effects of the project. Activities operating at the district or national level, including the project's advocacy work, are not included in this evaluation.

In the project communities, 280 project households from seven project communities – were sampled using a systematic random sampling procedure. For the comparison, 12 non-project communities were identified, which were similar to the project communities in terms of a number of key characteristics, including the dominant livelihood strategies employed by community members, wealth, and distance from Lake Turkana and major rivers. Within these comparison communities, 540 households were sampled using the same sampling technique as in the project communities.

At the analysis stage, the statistical tools of propensity-score matching and multivariate regression were used to control for demographic and baseline differences between the project and comparison households areas to provide additional confidence when making estimates of the project's impact.

Some qualitative information was also collected during the fieldwork to inform the design of the measurement tools for resilience and help with the interpretation of the quantitative data.

2. Summary main findings and recommendations

Summary results of this Effectiveness Review				
Outcome area		Connected to project logic?	Evidence of positive impact?	Comments
<i>Resilience</i>	Absorptive capacity	See Table 1 in report	Yes	The main evidence of impact was seen in livelihood diversity and awareness of community disaster plan. There was little evidence of any

				impact on dietary diversity or households receiving helpful early-warning information.
	Adaptive capacity		Yes	Project households had better access to credit, but their access to markets had not been improved. There was evidence that project households were more likely to cultivate crops.
	Transformative capacity		Yes	The strongest impacts were around adoption of innovative practices and the capacity of the CDMC. No evidence of impact on the voice of women in the community or evidence of integration of CDMC plans into higher administrative-level plans.
Wealth	Yes	No		No evidence of impact was found for either current wealth or change in wealth levels during the course of the project.
Livestock	Yes	Mixed		Small increase in overall probability of household owning livestock, but no differences in livestock sales or losses. Barriers to market still very clearly an issue.
Crops	Yes	Yes		Project households were more likely to cultivate crops, and in turn a greater proportion of households sold crops. There were no clear effects on increased women's responsibility for crops
Non-farm livelihoods	Yes	Yes		There was an increase among project households in their involvement in income-generating activities (IGAs) – particularly driven by an increase in household-level businesses. Also

			some evidence of an increase of women's involvement in IGAs.
Risk-management strategies	Yes	Yes	Project households were more likely to implement a variety of risk-management and drought responses. Despite this, there is still significant scope for greater adoption among households.

Programme learning considerations:

Some important lessons that can be applied to other projects of this type in Turkana, Kenya, and elsewhere have emerged from this evaluation. The Kenya country team and the programme team in particular, are encouraged to consider the following:

Take a more holistic approach to evaluation design, including discussions around suitable indicators and the possible establishment of a comparison group, at the start of future projects.

The quasi-experimental methodology deployed in this Effectiveness Review was successful due to the extensive inputs of project and partner staff during the fieldwork. The discussions around suitable comparison communities and the selection of good indicators of resilience were particularly rigorous and inclusive. However, it would have been better to have had these discussions before the project activities began. As a minimum, this would have helped create a more comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning plan with a wide range of resilience indicators. Going further, it would also have been possible to implement a more robust evaluation design if the comparison group had been established before the project started and baseline data had been collected in project and non-project communities. To support this process in the future, the impact evaluation team should provide tools and resources to help project and programme staff with quasi-experimental evaluation designs, especially on the subject of setting up a comparison group. In addition, advice should be provided on opportunities to take advantage of planned programme design – e.g. use of phased implementation approach – in order to better utilise quasi-experimental evaluation methods. Therefore, this learning point applies not only for programme staff, but also those working on monitoring and evaluation.

Continue to work on efforts to improve access to livestock markets in and around the project communities.

The results from the Effectiveness Review indicate that there is a need to assess how best to strengthen the work on livestock, in what remains a dominant pastoralist economy. While there was some evidence to suggest an increased probability of project households owning livestock, there was no evidence of reduced losses of livestock or greater herd sizes generally. Of those households who reported trying to sell their livestock in the previous 12 months, more than three-quarters cited distance to market being a serious barrier to making sales. It is clearly a cross-cutting issue, but the results here warrant further analysis of options to improve pastoralists' access to markets, as well as strengthen the wellbeing of their livestock.

Encourage further household implementation of risk-management strategies.

One of the clear successes of the initiative has been in the greater take-up of risk management strategies by households in the project communities. While the difference in take up between project and comparison households is striking, there is clearly room to encourage greater adoption of these strategies. It is also worth mentioning the small, but significant difference achieved in the proportion of project households cultivating and then selling crops. While further on-the-ground sensitisation may be out of the scope for the next stage of development, there may be an option for Oxfam to be a convener and influencer in advocating for district-level take up by government agricultural extension workers.

Being an intermediate step in the project's theory of change, it would also be interesting to carry out a subsequent review to assess whether this further implementation of various coping strategies does indeed generate greater impact for 'higher-level' outcomes, such as food security, wealth status and resilience.

Review the success or otherwise of the Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) proposals, and especially whether or not CDMC plans have been integrated into county-wide development plans.

One of the major successes of the project has been in the implementation and support of the community disaster-management committees. There was evidence that communities supported by the project had greater engagement in community-level disaster planning and were more aware of the contents of any disaster management plan. They also had greater confidence in the capacity of the CDMC to help the community in difficult times. But there are two areas that warrant further research – both of which were key aspects of the project, but did not feature in the focus of this Effectiveness Review. Firstly, it would be interesting to review a selection of the CDMC proposals for community-based initiatives – both in terms of the quality of the proposal and the success or otherwise of the subsequent intervention. Due to the nature of this review, such fine-grained and small-scale analysis was not possible, but we would recommend follow-up research on one of the key aspects of the project. In addition, it was made explicit from the outset that one of the objectives was that the

local-level CDMC plans would be integrated into county-level disaster management plans. Again, detailed analysis was outside the scope of this review, but there appears to be an opportunity to build on the apparent success of the local CDMCs to gain learning and to leverage change at a higher administrative level, thereby potentially effecting greater change.

B: Oxfam's response to the validity and relevance of the review findings, conclusions and recommendations.

3. Overall do the findings of the review concur with you own expectations or assessment of the project's effectiveness?

We find this report a good quality based on a solid and sound methodology. The involvement of the project team was equally good.

In terms of the general findings, we do agree with most of the findings as they reflect our expectations and observations on the ground including findings from other evaluations undertaken in the subsequent phases of the project such as the 2015 Evaluation conducted by ODI. These include increased participation in community meetings, adoption of community level risk management through Community Disaster Management Committees and diversification of livelihoods among the communities in intervention areas.

The findings depict that the project was overall effective in delivering its intervention with positive impact in the three main resilience characteristics/measures as per Oxfam's resilience framework; absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity and transformative capacity. In addition, other characteristics such as crop farming and non-farming livelihoods indicated a positive impact. Though in terms of wealth there was no significant evidence of positive impact, we do recognise that changes in wealth levels are long term changes and thus may not be realized within a short to medium term since so many other factors and actors contribute to these changes.

We do concur with the indicating a significant differences (positive impact) between intervention and comparison groups on a number of key indicators which normally contribute to increased household income these include training on livestock health, livestock selling and marketing, training on financial management, growing and sell of crops , engaging in income generating activities, running household business, engaging in fishing or fish processing and received support from other relatives. All these indicators do signify that households in the intervention area do well compared to comparison area which has been our expectations.

4. Did the review identify areas that were particularly strong in the project?

The effectiveness review results reveal that Oxfam resilience project logic aimed to contribute to 16 out of the 25 resilience characteristics which the project logic was in line with the characteristics. In return the review indicated positive impact on 11 of the 25 characteristics. The project under review was the third phase of the resilience project which was born out of an emergency response after the 2011 drought in Kenya. Based on this there is strong evidence that the project has significantly contributed to positive changes in the lives of the people.

Notable areas which the project made tremendous changes and realized positive impact include; livelihood diversity, awareness on contingency plans, access to credit, growth of vegetables/fruits, awareness on community contingency plans, adoption of innovative practises, involvement in community-level disaster management, capacity building of CDMCs and amplifying the voices of the disabled in the community.

5. Did the review identify areas that were particularly weak in the project?

The review findings reveal that communities in the intervention areas did not practise as much savings compared to the comparison group, further the intervention group was reported to have less dietary diversity compared to the comparison group.

A number of other areas did not indicate positive results which include 8 characteristics which connected to the project logic. These include; savings, access to early warning information, dietary diversity, education of household members, participation in community meetings, voice of women, county/national integration of community plans and ability to make complaints.

The project team however recognises that building community resilience is a long-term effort and thus such changes could be visible/observed in the future.

6. Summary of review quality assessment, i.e. quality of the review is strong/mixed/poor and short assessment of the process

The quality of the effectiveness review was strong and the process assured quality of the data collected. The team leading the effectiveness review ensured that the process was participatory involving project staffs and communities. The data collection tools were well thought of and collected only relevant data, the selection of comparison sites was equally participatory through the engagement of staffs who understand the livelihood characteristics of the different parts of the county. As much as possible the process mapped out what other

	<p>resources, the ER could be done internally or source for external consultants to undertake the reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to the reliance on external aid/support in the ASAL where Oxfam works, establishing an appropriate comparison groups pat the start of the project may not be feasible since Oxfam will have no control over other actors willing to implement other activities in the comparison areas. As such suitable comparison groups will be identified at the time of undertaking the effectiveness reviews. There is however need for further discussion with the Global Impact Evaluation team on the use of comparison groups in an influencing program since the strategies used could have a more wider reach to other areas which may make it impossible to isolate a specific area as a suitable comparison. 		
<p>Continue to work on efforts to improve access to livestock markets in and around the project communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oxfam Kenya conducted a fish and livestock market analysis on 2015. The report was shared with relevant stakeholders as Oxfam Kenya opted to focus on the fish value chain. Oxfam Kenya is the brain child on livestock marketing in the northern part of Kenya. In the new Oxfam's Kenya Country strategy 2015-2020, Oxfam is taking a more influencing approach. In response to this recommendation therefore, Oxfam Kenya will share this recommendation with the relevant government line ministry on improving access to livestock markets. - Oxfam in its current strategy does not have livestock as a thematic area. However, within women's economic empowerment if information and access to markets and financial services for livestock would come up as a priority then 	<p>July 2017</p>	<p>Program Coordinators – Wajir and Turkana</p>

	Oxfam will work with Private sector and the government to ensure that this is responded to. The research on barriers to women's economic empowerment will be conducted and based the finding the strategy would be developed	March 2018	Women's Rights Strategist
Encourage further household implementation of risk-management strategies.	- The resilience project supported both household and community level risk management strategies. For the household level these include participating in savings and lending and growing of aloe vera among others. Moving forward as part of Oxfam's influencing work, Oxfam will strengthen linkages between communities and other stakeholders and further advocate for the increased adoption of household specific risk management strategies. This would also be strengthened through the tax justice programme when Oxfam will be able to influence County governments to allocate and utilize revenues for basic essential services.	Continuous	Director Humanitarian/ Resilience Programme Strategist
Review the success or otherwise of the Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) proposals, and especially whether or not CDMC plans have been integrated into county-wide development plans.	- The project linked the CDMCs to the county government department and other stakeholders. Further the project conducted advocacy training for the CDMCs. For instance, Of the 12 CDMCs supported by Oxfam and the 6 CDMCs supported by VSF, 14 have secured additional support in form of funding support for actions prioritized in their plans. The support was from government departments or credit schemes including; Community Development Fund, Youth and Women Enterprise Funds. Among some of these activities include; Lokore Community wrote a proposal to CDF and were allocated Kes 300,000 to improve water management. Through similar initiatives/linking Kapua CDMC received a grant from UWEZO fund, and	Continuous	Director Humanitarian /Resilience Program Strategist

	<p>extended their saving and loaning activities to non-targeted members to help them in mining of gypsum which is the major economic activity aside livestock keeping. As a result, women have diversified livelihood activities from selling goats, to running small businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In response to this recommendation, Oxfam Kenya has been monitoring the implementation of the community disaster management plans and whether they have been funded by other stakeholders and also incorporated in the county development integrated plan. Oxfam will still continue to monitor this and further link the CDMCs with external funding 		
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8. Any conclusions/recommendations Oxfam does not agree with or will not act upon - and why (this reflection should consider the results of the review quality assessment)

The poverty levels in Turkana County are very high at 94% of the population living under the poverty line. The county has been marginalized historically and the weather patterns quite unpredictable. As such there are numerous organisations (local, national and international) supporting communities in the county and thus it is unlikely to get a community that does not get external support/aid. **Based on this it may be there is need to adopt appropriate evaluation approaches that may not necessarily require Oxfam to define and/or identify comparison groups at the start of a project.** This is in response to the first recommendation that encourages Oxfam Kenya to try establishing comparison group at the project inception. Importantly, due to the massive shift in the way Oxfam delivers its programs in Kenya from service delivery to influencing, as such the strategies Oxfam will be implementing as per the new country strategy will aim to have impact at scale reaching a wide number of people, for instance influencing change in policy will benefit the entire community within the county. Other examples include the use of radio and social media which has a wider coverage thus it could be difficult to map areas which haven't been reached through the radio which form a suitable comparison group. Further through the new approach, Oxfam seeks to use change agents and champions who have the potential to reach a larger group.

Therefore, there is need to have more discussions with the Global Impact Evaluation team around a holistic evaluation design on the use of intervention and comparison groups in line with advocacy and influencing programmes.

Response from the Impact Evaluation team:

We recognise that Oxfam is working in a context where many other organisations are working. Selecting a good comparison group does not mean define a set of communities which do not receive *any* external support (but rather a set of communities as likely as the project ones to receive external support from organisations others than Oxfam).

The IE team is committed to employing the most suitable evaluation design depending on the characteristics of the project and the evaluation questions. We agree that for influencing projects different evaluation designs should be used. For large-scale projects implemented at individual, household and community level, we consider quasi-experimental impact evaluation design to provide robust evidence on the project impact. Such evaluation designs are significantly strengthened when baseline data are collected both in project and comparison communities.

9. What learning from the review will you apply to relevant or new projects in the future? How can the regional centre/Oxford support these plans? Please be as specific as possible and provide context where relevant, naming projects in full where learning from the review will be applied.

The project draws significant learning from the review, these include:

- As much as possible support uptake of household contingency strategies in addition to community wide strategies. This may include advocating for increased household savings. Moving forward Oxfam Kenya's resilience programs will explore ways of engaging communities to identify opportunities for increasing household resilience against shocks as compared to community wide.
- Adoption of other channels/strategies for sharing early warning information. The results of the review indicate low access to early warning information among communities in the intervention areas. In all new projects on resilience will set aside resources for using both mass and social media to reach communities on early warning early action information. Oxfam will continue to support and encourage NDMA to produce IEC materials on early warning and work with NDMA to ensure reliable systems are built to support communities access easily comprehensible and actionable information on early warning early action. However, it is important to note that there are areas within the intervention areas where communication coverage is poor thus need to explore prevailing context and adopt context specific methods for sharing early warning information.
- While it has been generally observed that men engage in most community level activities, there is need to ensure women equally participate in these processes. Oxfam aspires to 'put women at the heart of everything we do', moving forward Oxfam Kenya will continue to support grassroots women to unify and amplify their voices and receive recognition from duty bearers and men at the community level. This will be through ensuring that women are represented in the various community structures such as CDMCs among others. This will lead to appreciation and recognition of women and girl's contribution to the household and community.

10. Additional reflections that have emerged from the review process but were not the subject of the evaluation.

Most of the findings are subject to the purpose of the evaluation and the review findings speak the intended objectives. In order to establish whether respondents tend to be positive about Oxfam's impact, the survey adopted an approach where the enumerators would introduce the organisation conducting the survey in some households and in some households, they were asked not to introduce the organisation unless the respondent asked.

Oxfam Kenya would appreciate if this is analysed and either be part of a report or a piece of research which can be used to inform future studies and surveys not just within Oxfam but also by actors/research bodies.

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