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📍 Central African Republic

Theory of Change

Oxfam's community-based protection approach in the Central African Republic (CAR)¹

By Oxfam's protection-gender team, November 2017

The key theory underpinning the programme is as follows:

If... motivated individuals are provided with the space for organising, in the form of Community Protection Committees, that knowledge of their rights and skills in advocacy and awareness-raising are strengthened, they will be able to conduct an analysis of protection threats and carry out local actions to target these threats.

Through these actions, the CPCs, with support from local leaders, will generate dialogue with the people perpetrating threats, the authorities, humanitarian actors and service providers on people's rights, actions that can be taken to mitigate protection threats, and how to access support.

Together, this dialogue and targeted advocacy actions will reduce men's, women's, girls' and boys' exposure to threats of violence, coercion and extortion. They will mitigate protection-related risks and ensure people can access support when required.

A diagram summarising the Theory of Change and the programme approach can be found in [Annex 1](#). Central to this approach is **the establishment of a Community Protection Committee in each village or neighbourhood**. This is common to many community-based protection approaches globally. Following an initial presentation of the project to local leaders and wider community members in a meeting (open to all residents), Oxfam then carries out a series of five or six FGDs with different groups in order to conduct **an analysis of local protection risks**. A restitution meeting is then organised.

A selection committee is established in order to define criteria for the selection of members of the CPC. Although this is context specific, common criteria are outlined in the text box on the right. For each CPC it is mandated that there are **5 female and 5 male members**. The selection committee then proceeds to **pre-select individuals** who meet these criteria and who are interested, and a

¹ This document comes from a 2017 internal evaluation of Oxfam's community-based protection programme in CAR. A short version of the evaluation report was published in 2018 – see Lindley-Jones, Helen. "Now it is for us to continue: Summary of the study into the effectiveness and sustainability of the community-based approach of Oxfam's protection-gender programme in the Central African Republic", June 2018. <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/now-it-is-for-us-to-continue-evaluation-of-oxfams-community-gender-and-protecti-620504>.

community vote is held to elect the final members. Once established, each member is assigned a role, including the roles of President, Vice President, Secretary, Mobiliser, and they are presented to the different local authorities.

Common CPC member selection criteria

- Good morality
- Participates in community meetings
- Lives in the neighbourhood
- Is available for the activities
- Accepts to work as a volunteer
- Has a basic level of literacy

CPC members are then trained on Community Protection principles and approaches before participating in a workshop facilitated by Oxfam to **develop local Action Plans**. The first day of the workshop focuses on **identifying and analysing the different protection risks** in the neighbourhood from the past three months and listing these by order of priority. For each threat, the perpetrator, the different victims, the impact and different adaptation mechanisms are identified. During the second day, the CPC develops **a concrete plan for actions for the three priority protection threats**, especially outlining the activities planned, and the budget required. In most sites, this is updated every three months in a half-day meeting, however in Batangafo it is updated monthly due to the changing security situation.

In addition to the financial support provided for awareness-raising actions, Oxfam provided material to build a basic office/meeting space for each CPC. Oxfam also provided basic materials such as pens and notebooks, benches, tables and chairs, several phones to share between the committee, 2,000 CFA per month in credit, and a megaphone.

Over the course of the project CPC members participate in **additional training sessions** on GBV, referral, and advocacy (mandatory training sessions), and if time and funds are available, Child Protection, Conflict Management, and Women's Rights. The CPCs are provided with financial support from Oxfam to hold community-wide awareness-raising events, as detailed in the action plans. They use several awareness-raising channels such as theatre, debates, football matches, radio programmes, local meetings with family groups, and community meals. The CPCs also organise more regular door-to-door awareness-raising.

Community leaders are also trained on Community Protection, GBV and Conflict Management. This varies according to the project; however, it would normally include the *chef de quartier* – neighbourhood leader – (and their representatives), Christian and Muslim religious leaders, and sometimes leaders of local associations. In Bria, community leaders were also trained on national laws, and their role in upholding the law, via a collaboration with the *procureur* (prosecutor) of the zone.

No regular meetings are held between the CPC and local leaders; however, the CPC often requests **support from different leaders in awareness-raising and advocacy**. In planning advocacy actions to address the protection threats identified, the CPC is supported by Oxfam to carry out a **risk analysis** and actively seek support from different leaders and authorities. The CPC may also carry out more reactive advocacy actions according to individual cases that may arise (such as a kidnapping or accusation of witchcraft).

Referral to services is ongoing. CPC members take turns to spend periods of time over the period of a week (normally half a day) in the CPC office (a *hangar* – warehouse – built for each CPC by Oxfam), in order to refer individuals requesting support to the appropriate services. For each referral, the CPC’s secretary completes a *fiche de référencement* (referral sheet) that the person brings to the service, which is then meant to complete a *fiche de contre-référencement* (counter-referral sheet). Protection incidents recorded in this way are then compiled and analysed by Oxfam to monitor over trends in protection incidents on a monthly basis.

Annex 1: Theory of Change

Impact	Civilian populations in neighbourhoods where Oxfam intervenes in Bangui, Bria, Paoua, Batangafo and Bangassou in CAR are protected from violence, coercion and deprivation of rights, and access services when required		
Outcomes	Women, men and children have increased knowledge of local protection threats, self-protection strategies and their rights	Locally identified protection threats are removed or mitigated through advocacy and activism by CPCs and local leaders	Individuals have information on how to access locally available support services and are provided with support to access these when required
Intermediate Outcomes	CPCs lead local awareness-raising and advocacy actions on identified protection threats and services available with the support of local leaders		Women members of CPCs increasingly participate in CPC activities through increased knowledge of their rights, skills and self-confidence
Outputs	CPCs have the knowledge and capacity to identify local protection threats and the legal and rights-based framework surrounding them, and to lead local advocacy and awareness-raising actions	Local government administrative, religious and civil society leaders have knowledge of the legal and rights-based framework surrounding protection-related threats and provide support to CPCs in local actions	CPCs have access to updated information on local support services, conditions of access, and the skills and knowledge required to provide confidential referrals

Activities – Programme set-up

Establishment of equal CPC (5 women, 5 men):

- Rapid protection assessment in the neighbourhood led by Oxfam & restitution of results
- Criteria for CPC membership established by *comités de sélection* (selection committees)
- Pre-selection of members
- General community vote
- Assignment of specific roles and definition of the work framework defining roles and responsibilities, ToR on operations, creation of executive committee
- Presentation of CPC members to local authorities by Oxfam

Development of Action Plans

- 2-day workshop with CPC members to analyse protection threats & develop plans
- Monthly or quarterly update of the plan

Training for CPC members: (According to length of project).

- 3 obligatory training sessions (Community Protection, GBV, Referral and Advocacy)
- Additional training sessions (Conflict Management, Child Protection and Women's Rights)

Organisation of activities:

- Weekly meeting of CPC members
- Ad-hoc meetings with the *chef de quartier* and other leaders

Activities-Facilitating local action

Awareness-raising actions:

As outlined in Action Plans. Risk analysis carried out before each action

- Large community events (theatre, community meals, debates)
- Door to door and small group discussions
- Standard materials and communications tools, such as leaflets, Image Boxes, plays, games, sketches, etc., are adapted to each context to support the awareness-raising.

Training of local leaders:

Government administrative, local religious leaders and members of associations, on Community Protection, GBV and Conflict Management.

Local advocacy actions:

According to protection threats identified, with support from local leaders. Risk analysis conducted for each action.

Activities-Access to services

Service Mapping:

- Oxfam facilitates FGDs to identify local services.
- Oxfam carries out first verification, the CPC carries out second verification.
- Information on various services offered and conditions of access documented.
- CPC exchanges contact details with service providers to keep up to date on the services.

Referral:

- CPC members take turns to be present in the CPC office.
- For each referral a *fiche de référencement* is completed.
- Messages on access to services integrated into awareness-raising actions.

Collaboration with support services, including for the transport of survivors to support services facilities

Support for the referral of survivors