



# Evaluation of Khartoum Urban Poor Programme, Sudan

Executive Summary

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## **Executive Summary**

### **General**

1. This report is primarily based on literature review (Oxfam project reports and literature on IDPs) and primary data collected from the project target areas during the May-June 2008. Areas visited include Mayo and Soba south of Khartoum, Jebel Aulia, Dar ElSalam and Gamair in Omdurman and Haj Yousif in Khartoum North.

2. The objectives was to assess Oxfam's Khartoum Urban Poor Programme (KUP) performance, impact and the appropriateness of methods and approaches used and to educate the programme future strategies by drawing lessons from past and providing contextual analysis and forecasting possible changes in the immediate future which can ensure relevance of Oxfam response and the sustainability of its strategic intervention.

3. The methods used were primarily participatory with primary and secondary stakeholders and they included (a) review relevant literature (mainly academic literature on IDPs and poverty, UN and INGO's reports and Oxfam KUP project documents), (b) Interviews were conducted with Oxfam project staff, Catholic church leaders, School headmasters, CBO leaders and some government officials at locality level, ome leaders of parent-teachers associations. Some individual women were also interviewed to draw their personal/household biography, as human interest stories (Annex I); (c) Eleven group discussions were with representatives of institutions, organizations and networks dealing with Microfinance, with women and CBO groups (KUP partners), school teachers and parents associations and school friends, (d) Observation methods were also used during the field visits to complement other methods and generate debate, and (e) some numerical data was collected from some schools to assess the academic performance of pupils in Oxfam supported schools.

4. The main constraints were related to the secondary data available. (a) Scarcity and inconsistency of official data and absence of desegregation that directly suits the evaluation purpose, (b) Oxfam reports also suffer the problem of inconsistency and progress reports are not dated and a clear contradiction was depicted in CBO budget allocation figures between the reports and figures of previous evaluation reports. And (c) Some CBOs keep no regular records and most of the figures given were dependent on memory and/or estimates.

### **Interventions**

1. The KUP targeted conflict affected IDPs and urban poor groups in camps and/or squatter settlements in the outskirts of Khartoum. Its main objectives was to improve target groups quality of life through increasing access to education for children, helping households build a sustainable livelihood base and raising community members awareness and capacity to campaign for their rights and entitlements. The two main interventions to realize those objectives were supporting basic education and livelihood with a third campaign component to serve the main interventions.

2. In education, the KUP supported the construction and/or rehabilitation of 18 schools, provided chairs and benches for children seating, boards, tables and chairs for teachers, supplied school books and provided training for teachers and PTAs. The project also succeeded in forming a loose coalition of INGOs, UN agencies and

government institutions that, since 2004, annually celebrated the Education For All (EFA) week with high level participation from government, including the State President.

3. The impact of the intervention:

- improved school environment, particularly in areas where the school was totally reconstructed and supplied with water and toilet facilities
- increased capacity for enrollment, increased number of intake and reduced drop out rates
- stability of staff and improvement of their teaching and professional skills
- stronger linkage of school with surrounding environment and greater engagement of community and support to local schools, as a result of the PTAs and Friends of School committees and their linkage to state institutions and authorities
- children academic achievements has improved (number joining secondary schools) though still lower than children of Khartoum urban proper schools

4. However, the drop out rates are still relatively high mainly for economic and social reasons to do with the economic inability and/or need of the children parents and/or their level of awareness which has particularly and negatively impacted on girls education. This calls for linking the livelihood and education interventions both to increase community awareness and the families' financial capacity to support their children education.

5. In the livelihood support, interventions included formation and/or support of women CBOs in the target areas through capacity building and institutional support and exposing and linking them to other institutions and organizations, providing grants to CBOs as a revolving fund to run a micro-finance programme, skill training for CBO members, especially in small business management and awareness raising on HIV/AIDS.

6. The impacts of the livelihood programme:

- Organization of the marginalized communities created a voice that could be made more effective if the campaign component is further developed
- improved women capacity for business management and emergence of some women leaders
- increased household income and living standard and growth in household assets and diversification of income sources, thus reducing economic vulnerability
- Family stability as migrants of direct beneficiary families returned, children went back to school and less family break downs were recorded
- Development of institutional relationships within community as opposed to tribal and social relationships
- Linkage to other institutions and organizations through exchange visits and membership of networks

7. The livelihood however suffer some problems, including

- a. The diminishing value of the loan fund (grant) due to (a) lack of replenishment as Oxfam stopped supporting it for a number of years, (b) low repayment rates

by borrowers caused by mobility of clients as a result of voluntary return and/or squatter settlement re-planning policies implemented by the state and (c) market demands and skills gained by clients which makes the size of loans constitute a check and limit to beneficiaries ambitions and capacities, and (d) Minimum level of accountability regarding repayment among several of the CBOs. At least in part, this can be attributed to the early disengagement of Oxfam as well as lack of the legal and/or social means of control by CBO leadership resulting from the absence of the state authorities.

- b. Although the targeting of women is justified in both economic and social terms, the focus of the skill training on women has limited the programme capacity to offer more marketable and income earning skills.

8. The campaign component, though poorly funded and limited to programme direct activities, has proved extremely effective particularly in supporting the livelihood interventions where it had a much greater multiplier effect, most important of which was creating a momentum within communities and some state institutions (Social Development Fund, Bank of Sudan) to address poverty and problems of the poor, the results of which was the new pro-poor financial credit policies undertaken by the Bank of Sudan and the establishment of micro-finance windows within several commercial banks. Another major achievement by KUP was the formation of the Micro-finance Network that brought most of the stakeholders together in which the programme played a major and leading role. In education, the impact of the campaign was hampered, other than the limited budget, by the seasonality of its activities and the absence of a common vision and clear commitments shared by coalition members.

### **Overall Assessment**

1. The programme has been both in targeting of both interventions and its services are still needed and demanded by community and are welcomed by state authorities, particularly at locality level. Thus the targeting of areas and social groups has been an appropriate response

2. Both the livelihood and education programmes have succeeded in achieving their immediate results direct although the multiplier effect on a significant scale is yet to be seen.

3. Compared to the budget, the achievements has been really great, thanks to the efforts by the staff and the successful utilization of the campaign

4. The campaign has successfully supported both interventions, yet it has been bit weak in community empowerment as it avoided the political aspects relating to governance rights etc... This was in part dictated by the socio-political environment that existed when the programme was designed, but partly also by the small budgets and the seasonality in the case of education.

5. Education and the livelihood interventions are geographically scattered and functionally isolated. This one the one hand raises administrative costs, technically weakens programme capacity to monitor progress, particularly with the small number of staff, and reduce the likelihood of addressing both poverty and limited access to education of the target groups at the same time, although all documents stress their interrelationship.

6. In the absence of a proper M&E system, the reports remain the main tool of assessment and follow up. Therefore the reporting system of the programme activities needs to be improved as most of the reports suffer the problems of repetition, change of objectives, being undated and inconsistent in figures and leaning more to narrating in each report

### **The Future**

The local context and changes in which the programme will work in the near future is expected be one

1. IDPs return on any significant scale is unlikely, particularly outside official IDP camps as many families now own their housing plots and are in a way or another integrated in economic and social environment
2. Poverty will continue to rise
3. Education will be more privatized and commercialized and good quality education, without external support, will be beyond the reach of most families
4. New opportunities are expected to open as a result of
  - a. Democratic transformation which will create a space for local community voice
  - b. More devolution of power to localities and local councils in line with the CPA and the Transitional Constitution requirements
  - c. Economic growth and investment in Khartoum is likely to increase, although it is expected to be basically in real estate, commercial and service sectors
  - d. State commitment to funding the poor as indicated by the new Bank of Sudan Micro-Finance policies and the establishment of Al Usra Bank for funding the poor and the condition of allocating 30% of its fund to women
  - e. Improvement in electricity supply with Hamdab dam completion is expected to allow for the re-operation of a numerous number of factories in the manufacturing sector and attract new ones to open.
  - f. The improved capacity of the target communities emanating from the interventions made including the organized community, improved technical skills and the engagement in networks and partnerships built

### **Recommendations**

1. The continuity of IDPs, rising poverty and rising costs of good quality education, warrants the continuity of the programme to consolidate what has been done as part of Oxfam exit strategy
2. To remedy the weaknesses in the two components and maximize their impact it is important that the livelihood support be combined with education to ensure that economic factors do not hamper access to education when schools and facilities are available
3. To enable the communities utilize the emerging opportunities, it is important that
  - a. The competitive position of the target groups in the market be enhanced through large scale and high quality skill training and/or upgrading programme that should target both women and men
  - b. New market space and sources of funding are open through skill training, exposure and expanded linkages

- c. The democratic space, election campaign and the devolution of power to local councils are used by the community to raise their needs and lobby for their rights. This can be attained by strengthening and further building the capacities of existing organizations and through intensive civic education programmes
4. New objectives need to be set and new approach needs to be adopted to transform the current campaign component into a civic education programme, widen its target groups (not to be focused on the beneficiaries of the education and livelihood programmes) and to engage more national civil society organizations in the delivery of the programme. That should not however, be at the expense of the present functions performed by the campaign since the forum, networking and the media work are critical for the success of all interventions
5. The overall objective of the programme needs to be modified to target greater integration of the target groups into the market and the mainstream society
6. The next programme cycle should be considered a transitional phase, in line with the development of the country, and also as a phasing out preparatory phase. This requires enhancing the institutional and management capacity of CBO partners, building new partnerships with some national NGOs/CSOs to undertake the ground work, continue supporting of networks formation and expanding the campaign component of the programme

The above tasks needs to be backed by adequate funding to ensure their satisfactory implementation and effectiveness

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