

# Oxfam International

## Renewal Audit – Summary Report – 2022/12/16

### 1. General information

#### 1.1 Organisation

Type	Mandates	Verified
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct Assistance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> With partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy
<b>Legal registration</b>	INGO – Legally registered in The Netherlands as a Foundation (Stichting).	
<b>Head Office location</b>	Global	
<b>Total number of organisation staff</b>	Approx 300 staff in OI Secretariat (including GHT) and approx 8,600 staff across the Oxfam confederation (as of May 2022).	

#### 1.2 Audit team

<b>Lead auditor</b>	Sarah Kambarami
<b>Second auditor</b>	Camille Guyot-Bender
<b>Third auditor</b>	Simon Maina (onsite in Zimbabwe)
<b>Observer</b>	Elissa Goucem, HQAI (onsite in Zimbabwe)
<b>Expert</b>	
<b>Witness / other participants</b>	

#### 1.3 Scope of the audit

<b>CHS Verification Scheme</b>	Certification
<b>Audit cycle</b>	Renewal Audit, Second Audit Cycle
<b>Coverage of the audit</b>	The audit covers Oxfam's humanitarian work globally. This includes the work of the Global Humanitarian Team (GHT) as well as all humanitarian responses implemented across the entire Oxfam confederation.

#### 1.4 Sampling\*

<b>Total number of Country Programme sites included in the sampling (number of Oxfam Country Offices with humanitarian responses)</b>	27
<b>Total number of sites for onsite visit</b>	2
<b>Total number of sites for remote assessment</b>	4

Name of Country programme site	Included in final sample (Y/N)	Rationale for sampling and selection / de-selection decision	Onsite or Remote
<b>Random sampling</b>			
Lebanon	Y	Lebanon was randomly sampled and maintained in the final selection as it includes a Category 1 response with a mix of direct implementation and work with partners. It provides geographical representation for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and the country programme has a significant humanitarian response in its portfolio.	Onsite
Zimbabwe	Y	Zimbabwe was randomly sampled and maintained in the final selection as it includes a Category 3 response, which has not previously been sampled for HQAI audits, and predominantly works with partners. It provides geographical representation for the Southern Africa Region (SAF) and is part of the new Southern Africa country cluster structure.	Onsite
El Salvador	Y	El Salvador was randomly sampled and maintained in the final selection as it includes a Regional Category 2 response and provides geographical representation for the Latin America and Caribbean Region (LAC).	Remote
Iraq	N	Iraq was deselected as it had been included in a previous sample for Oxfam's Maintenance Audit in 2019.	
Zambia	N	Zambia was deselected, given that Zimbabwe had already been selected, to enable wider geographical spread.	
Bangladesh	N	Bangladesh was deselected as it had been included as one of the onsite visits for Oxfam's Initial Audit in 2018.	
Guatemala	N	Guatemala was deselected, given that El Salvador had already been selected, to enable wider geographical spread.	
<b>Purposive sampling</b>			
Yemen		Yemen was purposively selected as it has received a high number of Humanitarian Support Personnel (HSP) deployments during the past 12 months, and this was an area highlighted in the previous audit report to focus on.	Remote
Burkina Faso		Burkina Faso was purposively sampled from West Africa to provide geographical spread. The country had a level 4 risk level, so was selected for remote assessment.	Remote
DRC		The DRC was recommended for inclusion in the sample in the previous audit report. The country had a level 4 risk level, so was selected for remote assessment.	Remote
<b>Any other sampling performed for this audit:</b>			
<p>Executing Affiliates (EAs): Currently, there are three main Executing Affiliates including Oxfam GB (OGB), Oxfam Intermon (OES) and Oxfam Novib (ONL). Both OGB and OES were sampled in the previous audit, so ONL was selected for the RA. After cross referencing with the Country Programme sites that were sampled, OGB was also selected as it is the EA for the majority of the Country Programmes sampled.</p> <p>Regional Platforms: The two Regional Platforms selected for the RA correspond to the two Country Programmes which were sampled for the onsite visits – MENA for Lebanon and SAF for Zimbabwe. Neither of these two regional platforms were selected in the previous audit.</p>			
<b>Sampling risks identified:</b>			
One of the projects selected in Lebanon preferred not to bring groups of beneficiaries together for community consultations due to the target beneficiaries being vulnerable urban households with limited mobility (eg elderly, disabled). To mitigate the risk of not hearing the perspectives of these community members, the methodology			

was adapted and six individual interviews with selected beneficiaries in their homes were conducted, instead of holding a community consultation. In addition, the lead auditor was unable to travel to participate in the onsite country visits. This was mitigated by the lead auditor participating remotely in the Lebanon visit and by having a third auditor join the audit team in Zimbabwe. Regular coordination meetings, briefings and check-ins with the audit team ensured that the findings from the onsite visits were fully understood and duly incorporated into the final report. The audit team has a high level of confidence in the findings and conclusions of this audit based on the sampling methodology outlined above.

*\*It is important to note that the audit findings are based on a sample of an organisation's activities, programmes, and documentation as well as direct observation. Findings are analysed to determine an organisation's systematic approach and application of all aspects of the CHS across different contexts and ways of working.*

## 2. Activities undertaken by the audit team

### 2.1 Locations Assessed

Locations	Dates	Onsite or remote
Head Office - OI, GHT, OGB, ONL, MENA & SAF Regional Platforms	05/09/2022 to 20/09/2022	Remote
Lebanon Country Office	19/09/2022 to 23/09/2022	Onsite
Zimbabwe Country Office	26/09/2022 to 30/09/2022	Onsite
Yemen, DRC, El Salvador and Burkina Faso Country Offices	03/10/2022 to 06/10/2022	Remote

### 2.2 Interviews

Level / Position of interviewees	Number of interviewees		Onsite/ Remote
	Female	Male	
<b>Head Office</b>			
OI Secretariat, including Global Humanitarian Team (GHT)	12	6	Remote
Executing Affiliates, including OGB and ONL	2	2	Remote
Regional Platforms, including MENA and SAF	3	1	Remote
<b>Country Programmes</b>			
Staff	8	22	Onsite & Remote
Partner staff	3	4	Onsite
Others (local government officials)	1	2	Onsite
<b>Total number of interviewees</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>66</b>

### 2.3 Consultations with communities

Type of group and location	Number of participants		Onsite or remote
	Female	Male	
Group discussion #1 – female beneficiaries, Danida Refugee Project, Utopia Partner, Beddawi Camp Site 1, Tripoli, Lebanon	16	0	Onsite
Group discussion #2 – female volunteers, Danida Refugee Project, Beddawi Camp Site 2, Tripoli, Lebanon	13	0	Onsite
Group discussion #3 – youth beneficiaries, Danida Refugee Project, Beddawi Camp Site 1, Tripoli, Lebanon	8	5	Onsite

Group discussion #4 – male beneficiaries, Cyclone Idai Response, Chipenge Ward 5, Zimbabwe	0	16	Onsite
Group discussion #5 – female beneficiaries, Cyclone Idai Response, Chipenge Ward 5, Zimbabwe	20	0	Onsite
Group discussion #6 - female beneficiaries, Cyclone Idai Response, Chipenge Ward 6, Zimbabwe	14	0	Onsite
Group discussion #7 - male beneficiaries, Cash Project, Gutu, Zimbabwe	0	12	Onsite
Group discussion #8 - female beneficiaries, Cash Project, Gutu, Zimbabwe	27	0	Onsite
Individual Interview #1 – special needs male beneficiary, Beirut Explosion Cash Plus Programme, Bourj el Brahneh, Lebanon	0	1	Onsite
Individual Family Interview #2 – special needs beneficiary family, Beirut Explosion Cash Plus Programme, Bourj el Brahneh, Lebanon	2	1	Onsite
Individual Interview #3 – woman beneficiary, Beirut Cash Plus Programme, Bourj Hammoud, Lebanon	1	0	Onsite
Individual Interview #4 – special needs beneficiary couple, Beirut Cash Plus Programme, Bourj Hammoud, Lebanon	1	1	Onsite
Individual Interview #5 – woman beneficiary, Beirut Cash Plus Programme, Bourj Hammoud, Lebanon	1	0	Onsite
Individual Interview #6 – elderly male beneficiary, Beirut Cash Plus Programme, Bourj Hammoud, Lebanon	0	1	Onsite
<b>Total number of participants</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>140</b>

## 2.4 Opening meeting

<b>Date</b>	2022/09/05
<b>Location</b>	Online
<b>Number of participants</b>	58 (30 Female, 28 Male)
<b>Any substantive issues arising</b>	None

## 2.5 Closing meeting

<b>Date</b>	2022/10/21
<b>Location</b>	Online
<b>Number of participants</b>	68 (38 Female, 30 Male)
<b>Any substantive issues arising</b>	None

## 3. Background information on the organisation

### 3.1 General information

Oxfam International is registered as a not-for-profit foundation in The Netherlands and is governed by a written constitution. The Oxfam International Secretariat (OIS) is also registered with Companies House in the UK and in 2017, OIS entered a Host Country Agreement with the Kenyan government, allowing for the establishment of the Oxfam International headquarters in Nairobi.

Oxfam International (Oxfam) was formed in 1995 by a group of non-governmental organisations that came together to share knowledge and resources to maximise efficiency, impact, and reach. Oxfam is now a confederation of 21 member organisations (Affiliates) that work in 70 countries with the collective aim of saving and protecting lives in emergencies, helping people rebuild their livelihoods and campaigning for genuine, lasting change. Oxfam's global strategy centres around fighting inequality to end poverty and injustice and is built on feminist principles and a belief in people's power.

Oxfam is in the process of implementing its Global Strategic Framework (GSF) 2020–2030, which was approved by the Oxfam International Board in March 2020. The Framework sets out how Oxfam will work to achieve its vision of a just and sustainable world, and focuses on four strategic areas: Just Economies, Gender Justice, Climate Justice, and Accountable Governance.

The GSF 2020-2030 is supported by a package of internal decisions related to Oxfam’s global structure. The aim is for the Oxfam 2030 Model to have a single Executing Affiliate function with a more focused global presence in support of a diversified network and commitments to global balance. The decisions which came out of the Country Presence Review, which had just started at the time of the previous audit, have largely been implemented. This led to Oxfam focusing on a smaller number of countries, retaining a full country presence in 8 countries and 10 being designated as Fragile Country Offices. Others have transitioned to become new Oxfam affiliates, influencing offices regional clusters or phasing out completely.

In July 2021, the Executing Affiliate (EA) Unification process transitioned to a new process called Transforming Business Support (TBS). TBS seeks to improve and enhance Oxfam’s operating model through implementing efficient and effective systems (people, process and platform ‘technologies’) and embedding simplicity, while building sustainably for the future. The focus has shifted from simply unifying the EA function, to focus more on the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and simplicity throughout Oxfam’s operational model.

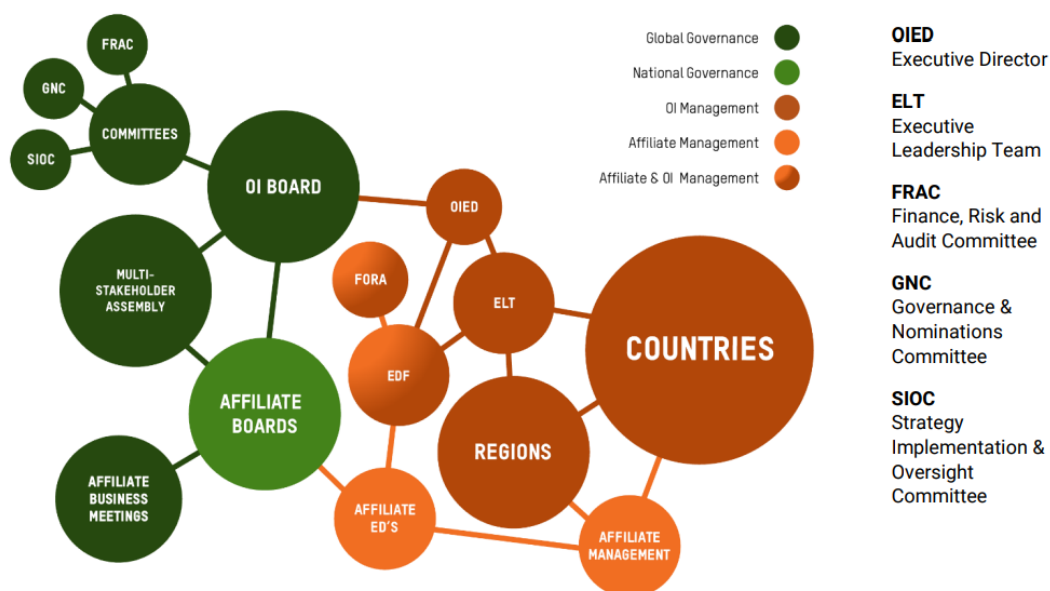
The consolidated income across the Oxfam Confederation for the year 2020-2021 was EUR912 million. Total expenditure for the same period on Global Programmes was approximately EUR637 million (70% of total expenditure), of which approximately EUR255 million was allocated to life saving humanitarian work (Source: Oxfam International Annual Report 2020-2021).

**3.2 Governance and management structure**

Since the last audit, Oxfam has restructured its global governance model. It is now made up of:

- An international Board composed of nine independent and non-independent members, meeting quarterly; and
- A global multi-stakeholder assembly composed of affiliates and prospective affiliates, as well as stakeholder representatives from the countries and regions in which Oxfam works, meeting every second year.

Affiliate Business Meetings (ABM) offer a space in which Oxfam affiliates can take decisions that directly impact their own legal and fiduciary obligations. Meetings are convened by the OI Board at least once a year, or on the request of Affiliates. Each Oxfam affiliate can send one participant to an ABM, selected by the respective affiliate boards. An Executive Directors Forum (EDF) is the management forum to support the work of Oxfam’s global governance bodies and is composed of the Affiliate Executive Directors (ED) from all current and prospective affiliates, the OI Executive Director (OIED), and the OI Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Key structures for humanitarian work include the Humanitarian Assembly, the Humanitarian Programme Coordination Call and the Humanitarian Working Group, which sits under the Programme and Nexus Forum at the global level.



The Oxfam International Secretariat (OIS) leads, facilitates and supports collaboration between Oxfam's affiliates to increase their impact on poverty and injustice. The Global Humanitarian Team (GHT) sits within OIS. The management responsibility for all of Oxfam's humanitarian work runs from the OI Programme Director through the OI Regional Director (RD) and then the OI Country Director (CD). They are responsible for a "One Programme" approach which links long term, resilience building programmes with campaigning and emergency response. The OI Humanitarian Director is managed by the Programme Director and is Oxfam's most senior humanitarian role. The Humanitarian Director leads the delivery, effective management, monitoring, evaluation and learning of Oxfam's overall Humanitarian Agenda, and manages the GHT. The GHT exists to support Regional and Country teams respond to crises that are too large or complex for them to manage alone.

Countries are the key unit for the design and delivery of Oxfam's programmes and as such, play the primary role in humanitarian responses. They are required to be resourced adequately to prepare for and respond to local emergencies (Category 3 crises) in addition to running their ongoing programmes. Surge capacity is available to support Category 1 and Category 2 responses. Country Teams maintain levels of humanitarian capacity appropriate to the likelihood of disasters occurring, as part of their preparedness plans.

### **3.3 Internal quality assurance mechanisms and risk management**

Oxfam continues to move towards full harmonisation of its internal quality assurance mechanisms across the confederation. Internal Audit Standards, an Internal Audit Charter, and Internal Auditors Code of Ethics are in place. Control Self Assessments (CSAs) take place annually for the whole of the confederation and Annual Reports and Financial Statements are externally audited, both for affiliates and for Oxfam International. Oxfam's confederation wide Whistleblowing Policy, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy remain in place as do the OI Misconduct Reporting SOPs. Systematic financial management processes are in place globally, including regular monitoring of budget versus actuals, segregation of duties and transparent procurement processes. Oxfam's global case management system ensures complaints related to fraud and corruption, as well as safeguarding, are managed appropriately.

The launch of the GSF 2020-2030 was accompanied by two other related resources which together provide the backdrop for a global direction and mechanisms to ensure progress is made: the OIS Horizon Plan and the Knowledge and Learning Framework. The OIS Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and OIS Senior Leadership Team (SLT) regularly review the outcomes and indicators allowing for ongoing learning and adapting. Oxfam management has also developed a Humanitarian Improvement Plan (HIP), where priorities and focal points are nominated to focus on specific areas for improvement and must report on and be accountable for progress. The results from the previous CHS Audit fed into that plan.

Global programme level policies and standards also exist for monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL), including an Evaluation Policy, MEAL Strategy and Minimum Standards, and a commitment to undertake Real Time Reviews (RTRs). In 2022, humanitarian evaluation guidance was developed in close collaboration with country, regional, and response staff to ensure its practicality and usefulness. Increased visibility of humanitarian evaluations has allowed for more support on strengthening the quality of those evaluations and incorporating learning into Oxfam's annual Humanitarian Meta-Analysis. The Meta-Analysis is another accountability mechanism which analyses programme progress, consolidates data from RTRs and evaluations, and includes information about how the organisation is upholding humanitarian principles as well as an analysis of the implementation of Oxfam's humanitarian approach.

In December 2021, Oxfam revised its integrated risk management framework and developed a Risk Management and Appetite Framework. The framework covers the following categories of risk: Strategy, Governance, Programme, Humanitarian, People & Culture, Finance and Income, Cyber, Compliance, Misconduct, Security and Reputational risks. Risks are formally monitored on a quarterly basis at country level in the Country Quarterly Management Report (CQMR) and communicated up to regional level and global level representatives of OI and Affiliates through the quarterly Global Risk Report. Risks are discussed during quarterly meetings between regions and countries, and at global level, and shared with the EDF, the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee, and the full Oxfam Board.

### **3.4 Work with partner organisations**

Working in partnership with national and local organisations in humanitarian response is a key part of Oxfam's Humanitarian Commitments and Expectations. Oxfam aspires to build partnerships that are inclusive, accountable, empowering, and based on relationships of openness and trust. Oxfam has short and long term global, regional, and in-country partnerships with various humanitarian actors.

Oxfam commits to conducting its humanitarian work in a way that supports the capacity of local organisations and is committed to building relationships with local partners and strengthening their capacity to take on leadership in effective and efficient humanitarian preparedness and response. Oxfam partnerships are therefore guided by its Humanitarian Approach, where the Partnership Road Map (with specific sections on humanitarian partnerships) is embedded within Oxfam's global framework of strengthening Local Humanitarian Leadership (LHL).

In 2021, Oxfam revised its Collaborative Approach to Partnership Assessments (CAPAS). CAPAS is a One Oxfam approach, currently being piloted in a number of countries, in line with its values, partnership principles, and partnership ambitions, which establishes minimum partnership and LHL requirements for partnerships and for due diligence assessments across the confederation. Work with implementing partners is governed by partnership agreements and capacity support is based on the findings of partnership assessment processes and ongoing dialogue between Oxfam and partner teams.

To further support its locally led partnership approach, Oxfam has put Regional Partner Funds in place for MENA, HECA and ASIA regions. Oxfam has also put in place a Women's Rights Organisation (WRO) Fund specifically for women's rights organisations. These partner funds are informing Oxfam's understanding and practice of making available flexible funding to local NGOs in ways that are quick and respond to partners' needs. Future Emergency Funds for local partners will build on these experiences.

## 4. Overall performance of the organisation

### 4.1 Effectiveness of the governance, internal quality assurance and risk management of the organisation

In the past two years, Oxfam has moved from a two-tier global board structure to a more diverse and inclusive model that invites independent voices and perspectives into the global governance of Oxfam. The governance level of Oxfam's structures has effective engagement and oversight of the CHS Certification process. The decision to move into a second CHS audit cycle was taken by Oxfam's Executive Board Humanitarian Committee (EBHC) which was a subset of the Executive Board of Affiliate Directors under the previous governance model. The EBHC took the decision based on a recommendation by, and in consultation with, Oxfam's Humanitarian Platform. In line with the recent governance level changes and Oxfam's new humanitarian architecture, it is now the role of the Humanitarian Working Group and ultimately the Programme and Nexus Forum (PNF), to have oversight of the CHS Certification process and to receive the audit reports. The Executive Directors Forum (EDF), the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FRAC) and the full board also receive Oxfam's global risk reports which includes a section on Oxfam's progress with respect to CHS.

Oxfam continues to have a robust control environment in place with harmonised policies and procedures across the confederation that are known by staff and implemented consistently. This includes annual Control Self Assessments (CSAs), internal and external audits as well as preventive measures such as separation of duties and dual signatories. Budget holders are provided with regular financial reports and procurement processes are in place with competitive bidding processes, comparative bid analysis and tendering committees.

At the programme level, Oxfam ensures effective implementation of global policies and standards for monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL). MEAL and technical staff monitor activities and outputs to track indicators and results. Periodic reporting mechanisms are also utilised to produce monthly, quarterly, bi-annual, and annual reviews and analyses for project, country, regional, global levels. Partners participate in regular monitoring activities with Oxfam staff which consistently enables the responses to effectively address poor performance and adapt to changing contexts as needed.

Oxfam's global approach to risk management is in place, with staff demonstrating strong understanding of their role in risk identification and risk management at all levels of the organisation. Staff confirm that risks are formally monitored on a quarterly basis at the country level using the Country Quarterly Management Report (CQMR). This information is then discussed systematically by relevant staff at the regional and global levels on a quarterly basis. Country risks are aggregated at a global level and a Global Risk Report is shared with Senior Leadership and Oxfam's Board. Staff engagement with these processes confirm they are in place and functioning effectively.

At the programme level, the Safe Programming approach continues to be embedded as regular practice, and updated guidance and training materials continue to be used to ensure

that programme staff understand the approach and consistently use the Safe Programming Risk Matrix. This helps to ensure that potential risks in relation to gender context, power dynamics, community sensitivities, and protection risks are identified and managed appropriately. However, risks related to the environment, and to the impact on the local economy, are not consistently assessed at the programme level.

#### 4.2 Level of implementation of the CHS and progress on compliance

Overall, Oxfam continues to demonstrate significant commitment to quality and accountability in its humanitarian work across the confederation. CHS Commitments are embedded into confederation-wide policies, processes and practices, and are communicated effectively to partners. Oxfam has invested significantly in strategic change processes over the last few years which have resulted in a more harmonised and consistent approach to implementing the CHS globally in its humanitarian responses.

Oxfam uses the Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) as an effective way to follow up on its implementation of actions to address previous CHS audit findings. Since the last audit, Oxfam has been diligent in addressing the two open CARs. To address the lack of consultation and contextualisation when designing community complaints mechanisms, Oxfam developed a new Policy on Community Feedback Mechanisms which includes a 'context-specific' principle and a 'context driven and collaborative design' minimum standard. To address the lack of global policies governing how Oxfam uses its resources in an environmentally responsible way, Oxfam International signed the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations. Oxfam has produced a draft Action Plan, however, a number of the global initiatives to put these commitments into practice are not yet embedded throughout the confederation.

At this audit, Oxfam demonstrates strengths in ensuring its responses are coordinated and complementary. Oxfam works effectively with national and local authorities as well as other humanitarian organisations to ensure coherence and relevance in its programmes. Responses are increasingly implemented with partners who are strategically selected according to criteria outlined in Oxfam's partnership assessments. Another area of strength is Oxfam's commitment to learning and improvement at all levels of the organisation. Oxfam invests in research, shares results openly with the sector, and actively engages in global conferences and learning events. At the programme level, resources are allocated for learning, and systematic monitoring and evaluation processes ensure that learning is used in real time to improve implementation. Oxfam also continues to demonstrate particular strengths in ensuring that humanitarian responses are appropriate, relevant, effective, timely and that they strengthen local capacities.

A key area of improvement for Oxfam is ensuring that the amount of work required to deliver programmes effectively does not exceed the staff capacity in place, particularly at the Country level. Many staff indicate that workload is too high, and this is having a detrimental impact on wellbeing and is also reducing the time available for staff to prioritise personal development. This audit has also highlighted the need for Oxfam to strengthen its work to systematically consider the impact of its operations and programmes on the environment across the confederation. Currently there is little global guidance available to ensure that Oxfam's operations have a limited impact on the environment. Risk assessments at the programme level do not consistently consider potential risks of Oxfam's programmes to the local or global environment.

Oxfam performs well in the area of PSEAH. Policies and processes are in place and known by all staff, including the Code of Conduct, PSEAH Policy, Speak Up channels for reporting misconduct, an active network of safeguarding focal points and mandatory safeguarding training for all staff. Oxfam continues to invest in establishing a global Oxfam culture that lives up to its safeguarding commitments, and Oxfam's Safe Programming approach continues to be embedded throughout its humanitarian work at the Country level. However, not all communities are aware of Oxfam's PSEAH commitments and Oxfam does not always ensure, particularly when working through partners, that communities are informed about expected behaviour of staff.

Oxfam addresses the issue of diversity across its work, with a particular emphasis on gender. Oxfam's commitment to Feminist Principles, Gender Justice and women's rights are prominent drivers across the Oxfam Confederation, including in humanitarian responses. Staff are motivated to consider how humanitarian action can be inclusive and address power imbalances across local structures. A number of Oxfam global policies and guidelines commit to taking the diversity of communities into account, as well as to collecting disaggregated data. However, in practice, consideration of vulnerabilities does not always extend to other



diversity criteria beyond gender, and the subsequent analysis does not always disaggregate the data to enable better understanding of the information provided from different groups.

Oxfam performs well in the area of localisation. Oxfam's Local Humanitarian Leadership (LHL) Strategy, Feminist Principles and its commitments to the Grand Bargain and Charter for Change, are integrated into Oxfam's Humanitarian Approach. Response strategies and plans show evidence of how these have influenced responses to increasingly allocate resources to local actors and to empower local communities to participate in local decision-making structures and take an active role in disaster preparedness planning and response.

### 4.3 Performance against each CHS Commitment

Commitment	Strong points and areas for improvement	Feedback from communities	Average score*
<p><b>Commitment 1:</b> Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant</p>	<p>Country programmes systematically place emphasis on conducting ongoing analyses of the needs and stakeholders to make sure its approach is rooted in the local context. Relevance is also ensured through government involvement, partners or secondary data collection, context analyses, regular needs assessments, or informal conversations directly with communities. Policies, tools, and processes are in place to help standardise Oxfam's commitment to impartiality and taking into account the diversity of communities and to collecting disaggregated data. However, the understanding of vulnerabilities and capacities of different groups does not always extend beyond men and women, girls and boys.</p> <p>Oxfam works closely with national response and coordination structures, as well as other humanitarian actors to ensure they are informed on an ongoing basis of any relevant changes in context. Sampled projects consistently demonstrate adaptation based on changing needs, capacities, and contexts.</p> <p>Consistent use of the safe programming approach and an integrated approach to risk management continue to strengthen risk identification at the programme level.</p>	<p>Communities are satisfied with support provided by Oxfam, stating that the services are relevant to the context and meet their needs.</p> <p>Communities also confirmed having some influence on the type of activity being delivered and being consulted on whether needs are being met with changing contexts.</p>	2.8
<p><b>Commitment 2:</b> Humanitarian response is effective and timely</p>	<p>Oxfam's strategic focus on its areas of sectoral expertise, a consistent approach to localisation, and implementing a feminist approach help ensure that programme commitments are in line with organisational capacity. Oxfam designs its programming with the input from Technical Advisors and specialists who are carefully recruited based on competencies. Oxfam also develops technical papers, minimum standards, and guidance notes to inform programme assessments and plans. Technical Advisors help ensure that technical standards are employed across the sector.</p> <p>Processes are in place to enable timely decision making when emergencies take place where Oxfam is already operational, with systems well established to ensure that resources are also allocated accordingly. However, decision-</p>	<p>Communities state that their input is listened to and considered. When Oxfam does not have the services to support certain needs, communities confirmed that they are referred to the local ministry or other organisations depending on the specific need.</p> <p>All communities expressed satisfaction with the timing of response activities, as well as the timeliness of decision making.</p> <p>Communities also indicate that they are consulted on</p>	2.9

	<p>making on humanitarian response when more than one affiliate is involved, and there is minimal or no Oxfam presence at country level, is not always timely.</p> <p>Oxfam continues to strengthen the implementation of its Safe Programming Approach which helps to ensure that potential constraints in relation to gender context, power dynamics, community sensitivities, and protection risks are highlighted.</p> <p>Oxfam is also well connected and active in a number of global coordination structures which help determine who is best placed to respond to situations according to capacity and added value and makes referrals where necessary.</p> <p>Monitoring is systematic where risk assessments, gender assessments, real-time-reviews and other in-depth analyses are routinely conducted to examine the extent to which each programme meets specific vulnerabilities and needs. This helps ensure that plans can be adapted accordingly if required. Periodic reporting mechanisms are also in place (monthly, quarterly, bi-annual and annual) with review and analysis conducted at regional and global levels as well as at the country and project level.</p>	<p>how the project is going (ie. door to door assessments etc)</p>	
<p><b>Commitment 3:</b> Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects</p>	<p>Oxfam has a systematic risk identification and mitigation approach in place to guide staff to consider potential unintended negative effects and ensure that humanitarian action is safe for communities. Gender mainstreaming, safe programming, protection, and safeguarding tools as well as Oxfam’s operational and reporting procedures include guidance on avoiding negative effects such as exploitation, abuse, or discrimination. Its risk management framework outlines Oxfam’s commitment to engaging in programmes where there is real need. Programmes and strategies also include exit plans at the design stage to ensure forethought on how to leave an area. However, not all responses systematically consider potential negative effects of the response on the local economy, and the environment.</p> <p>Oxfam has a consistent approach and methodology to ensure that all humanitarian responses strengthen and develop local humanitarian actors and leadership. Programmes are designed to promote early recovery and to ensure disadvantaged groups are represented. A range of approaches are applied to projects to promote ownership, sustainability and self-reliance. Capacity building plans are developed where communities’ gaps in skills have been identified.</p> <p>Staff share being informed and trained on data privacy and confidentiality as part of safe programming, especially with regards to personal information collected from communities. There are annual and ad-hoc</p>	<p>Communities stated that they are appreciative of the decision-making roles and leadership opportunities made available. Several community members stated that they are grateful for the opportunity to develop leadership skills because they will be able to use these beyond their engagement with Oxfam.</p> <p>Communities are aware of the timeframe of project activities and what they could expect from Oxfam or partners.</p>	<p>2.9</p>

	<p>trainings offered and cover topics such as sharing data and data processing agreements.</p>		
<p><b>Commitment 4:</b> Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback</p>	<p>Oxfam places a strong emphasis on open dialogue, transparency and information sharing throughout the organisation at all levels. Oxfam and partners communicate transparently with communities through inception meetings, community engagement events and their ongoing presence at the community level. However, when working with partners, Oxfam does not always ensure that information is communicated to communities about how it expects staff to behave. In addition, not all visual communication materials (such as posters) are translated into local languages.</p> <p>Programme and partner staff follow relevant Oxfam policies and procedures to ensure that programmes are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated with the active participation and engagement of communities and people affected by crisis. Efforts are systematically made to ensure that participation is inclusive of marginalised groups.</p> <p>Oxfam consistently facilitates community members to provide feedback during a response through a range of methods. Information relating to the gender, age and/or other diversity criteria is routinely collected, however, Oxfam does not always disaggregate the data when analysing the feedback.</p> <p>Oxfam's external communications are accurate, ethical and respectful and present individuals with dignity. Procedures are in place to gain informed consent from communities when gathering communication materials.</p>	<p>Communities state that they are informed at the start of projects, as well as throughout implementation, about project activities, and about Oxfam and the partner (where relevant). However, not all communities are systematically informed by Oxfam or Partners about expected staff behaviour.</p> <p>Communities confirm being involved throughout the project cycle, participating in assessment, implementation and monitoring processes.</p> <p>Communities also describe different ways they are encouraged to provide feedback to Oxfam and can give concrete examples of how their feedback results in improvements to project activities.</p>	2.6
<p><b>Commitment 5:</b> Complaints are welcomed and addressed</p>	<p>Oxfam has established a confederation wide approach to safeguarding and has invested significant resources in building a strong culture in which all complaints are welcomed and taken seriously. Complaints handling processes are consistently documented and in place at the community level and complaints that do not fall within the scope of Oxfam's systems are referred to relevant parties.</p> <p>In general, complaints are managed effectively with due consideration to the safety of the complainant. However, in some cases responses to programmatic complaints is not timely.</p> <p>Policies and processes are in place to ensure that communities participate in the design of community feedback mechanisms, although they are not always engaged in the implementation or monitoring of how effective they are.</p> <p>In addition, Oxfam does not systematically monitor the effectiveness of community feedback mechanisms when implemented by their partners.</p>	<p>Communities are aware of Oxfam's (or their partner's) complaints and feedback mechanisms and confirm often being involved in their design. Communities are also generally aware of what behaviour to expect from staff, even in cases where this was not explicitly communicated to them by Oxfam or the partner.</p> <p>Concerns are expressed by some communities about the lack of timeliness in receiving responses to their project-related complaints/feedback.</p>	2.6

<p><b>Commitment 6:</b> Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary</p>	<p>Oxfam strategies and activities demonstrate a thorough understanding of the roles, responsibilities, capacities, and interests of a range of different stakeholders, which are identified through comprehensive context, stakeholder, and power analyses. Due diligence processes outline the criteria used for the partnership selection process where roles and capacities of partners and stakeholders are identified to ensure responses complement local and humanitarian efforts.</p> <p>Country teams work closely with national and local authorities as well as other humanitarian organisations to ensure coherence and collaboration in their responses and services provided. Staff are involved in Inter-Agency Working Groups, regional level humanitarian platforms as well as relevant sector specific regional networks.</p> <p>Oxfam staff are both encouraged and resourced to share information appropriately and regularly through agreed channels within country and local coordination structures, including INGO forums, consortia, the UN Cluster system, and local government structures.</p>	<p>Communities consistently state that they observe no duplication between Oxfam's activities and those of other organisations active in the area.</p> <p>Communities shared that they sense the positive relationship between Oxfam and partners.</p>	3
<p><b>Commitment 7:</b> Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve</p>	<p>Oxfam has invested significantly in its digital workspace to record learning and knowledge. It has been rolled out across the confederation and staff are now able to systematically access learning documents and information from all operating regions. Learning and innovation are also shared internally through regular technical meetings, learning forums, communities of practice, or through information mechanisms such as reports and documents.</p> <p>Resources are allocated for learning and innovation in programme budgets which include line items for MEAL-specific staff, real-time-reviews, M&amp;E components, action learning workshops etc. Project proposal documents demonstrate that learning from previous experience is consistently incorporated into the design of new projects.</p> <p>Oxfam's consistent participation in relevant coordination and learning networks at global, regional, and country levels enables staff to contribute learning formally and informally with peers. Oxfam also invests in research and shares the results openly with the sector, both as published reports and by actively engaging in global conferences and learning events.</p>	<p>Communities expressed being satisfied with Oxfam and partners' work and could share instances when they contributed learning or recommendations to Oxfam, and these were incorporated into projects.</p>	3
<p><b>Commitment 8:</b> Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably</p>	<p>Oxfam has a number of HR policies and procedures in place which ensure that staff are supported to do their job effectively. Recruitment, induction and performance review systems help ensure that Oxfam's mandate, values and policies are well known by staff and embedded in Oxfam's culture. A Code of Conduct is in place for staff, non-staff and suppliers which includes the obligation not to exploit, abuse or discriminate against people.</p>	<p>Communities consistently state that Oxfam and Partner staff are trustworthy, motivated and committed to their work. They value the positive way that staff interact with them and are satisfied with their behaviour. Communities also consistently perceive Oxfam</p>	2.4

	<p>Staff handbooks are in place across the confederation and contextualised to comply with local employment laws. However, some staff handbooks and/or HR Manuals have not been recently updated at the Country Office level.</p> <p>Policies and procedures are consistently in place for the security of staff, and staff wellbeing is increasingly a focus of attention for the organisation. However, staff from all levels of the organisation, and particularly at Country Office level, indicate that workload is too high which is having a detrimental impact on staff wellbeing, as well as limiting time available for staff to undertake professional development.</p>	<p>and Partner staff to be technically competent.</p>	
<p><b>Commitment 9:</b> Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose</p>	<p>Oxfam has several policies and procedures in place across the confederation, ensuring an increasingly consistent and harmonised approach to managing resources. The 'Transforming Business Support' (TBS) process continues to work towards the unification of the Executing Affiliate (EA) function, however, some inefficiencies are still noted due to different systems and platforms being used by different EAs to manage their resources.</p> <p>Oxfam continues to have a robust control environment in place with consistent policies and procedures across the confederation that ensure that resources are managed and used to achieve their intended purpose. Procurement processes, systematic monitoring of budget vs actual expenditure, and a consistent approach to assessing value for money, ensures efficient and effective use of financial resources. External and internal audits, together with annual Control Self Assessments, are conducted regularly and Oxfam publishes Annual Reports and Audited Financial Statements transparently on its website.</p> <p>Processes for assessing and managing risk are in place across all levels of the organisation and the risk of corruption is managed through systematic controls that address prevention, detection and correction. Integrity Reports regularly report on consolidated global case data related to fraud and corruption cases, including reporting on the disciplinary actions taken.</p> <p>Oxfam is introducing a number of global initiatives to mainstream consideration of the environment across Oxfam's work. This includes signing onto the Climate and Environment Charter, developing a Responsible Flying Policy and introducing mandatory global reporting on carbon emissions. However, many of these initiatives are not yet embedded in practice and staff confirm that Oxfam does not yet systematically take action to limit the environmental impact of its operations or programmes on the environment.</p>	<p>Communities consistently state that Oxfam and the partners use the resources well and that there is no waste. They also know how to raise a complaint using the relevant feedback mechanism if they suspect any fraudulent activities.</p> <p>Some communities are aware of actions they can take to protect the environment, but this is not always attributed to the work of Oxfam or their partners.</p>	<p>2.5</p>

\* *Note: Average scores are a sum of the scores per commitment divided by the number of indicators in each Commitment, except when one of the indicators of a commitment scores 0 or if several scores 1 on the indicators of a Commitment lead to the issuance of a major non-conformity at the level of the Commitment. In these two cases the overall score for the Commitment is 0.*


## 5. Summary of open non-conformities

Corrective Action Request (CAR)	Type	Resolution due date	Status	Date closed out
2021-5.1: OI does not ensure that complaints-handling processes are contextualised through consultations with communities and people affected by crisis.	Minor	2023/05/24	Closed	2022/11/16
2022-8.4: Oxfam does not ensure it has sufficient staff capacity to deliver programmes	Minor	2025/11/16	New	
2022-9.4: Oxfam does not systematically consider the impact of its operations and programmes on the environment.	Minor	2025/11/16	New	
2021-9.6: OI does not ensure consistent policies and processes are in place across the confederation governing how Oxfam uses its resources in an environmentally responsible way.	Minor	2023/05/24	Closed	2022/11/16
<b>Total Number of open CARs</b>	<b>2</b>			


## 6. Recommendations for next audit cycle

<b>Specific recommendation for sampling or selection of sites or any other specificities to be considered</b>	It is recommended that the next audit cycle includes responses from all response categories (Cat 1, 2, 3) and for the samples to come from a range of geographic locations to assess the application of CHS requirements for each type of response and in varying contexts. On-site visits should ensure a focus on responses implemented with partners. Oxfam Intermon should be included as one of the EAs sampled because, out of the three main EAs, it was the only one not sampled at this audit.
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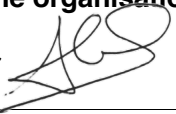
## 7. Lead auditor recommendation

<p>In our opinion, Oxfam International has demonstrated that it continues to conform with the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.</p> <p>We recommend maintenance of certification.</p>	
<p><b>Name and signature of lead auditor:</b></p>  <p>Sarah Kambarami</p>	<p><b>Date and place:</b></p> <p>16 November 2022</p> <p>Bonn, Germany</p>

## 8. HQAI decision

<b>Certificate renewed:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Issued <input type="checkbox"/> Preconditioned (Major CARs)
Next audit: before 2023/12/16	
<b>Name and signature of HQAI Executive Director</b>  Joost Monks	<b>Date and place:</b> 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2022

## 9. Acknowledgement of the report by the organisation

<b>Space reserved for the organisation</b>	
Any reservations regarding the audit findings and/or any remarks regarding the behaviour of the HQAI audit team: <i>If yes, please give details:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings:</b> I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit I accept the findings of the audit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Name and signature of the organisation's representative:</b> Marta Valdés Oxfam Humanitarian Director 	<b>Date and place:</b> 2nd January 2023 Barcelona, Spain

## Appeal

In case of disagreement with the decision on certification, the organisation can appeal to HQAI within 14 days after being informed of the decision. HQAI will investigate the content of the appeal and propose a solution within 10 days after receiving the appeal.

If the solution is deemed not to be satisfactory, the organisation can inform HQAI in writing within 30 days after being informed of the proposed solution, of their intention to maintain the appeal.

HQAI will transmit the case to the Chair of the Advisory and Complaint Board who will constitute a panel made of at least two experts who have no conflict of interest in the case in question. These will strive to come to a decision within 30 days.

*The details of the Appeals Procedure can be found in document PRO049 – Appeal Procedure.*

## Annex 1: Explanation of the scoring scale\*

Scores	Meaning: for all verification scheme options	Technical meaning for all independent verification and certification audits
0	Your organisation does not work towards applying the CHS commitment.	<p><b>Score 0:</b> indicates a weakness that is so significant that the organisation is unable to meet the commitment. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification:</b> major weakness.</li> <li>• <b>Certification:</b> major non-conformity, leading to a major corrective action request (CAR) – No certificate can be issue or immediate suspension of certificate.</li> </ul>
1	Your organisation is making efforts towards applying this requirement, but these are not systematic.	<p><b>Score 1:</b> indicates a weakness that does not immediately compromise the integrity of the commitment but requires to be corrected to ensure the organisation can continuously deliver against it. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification:</b> minor weakness</li> <li>• <b>Certification:</b> minor non-conformity, leading to a minor corrective action request (CAR).</li> </ul>
2	Your organisation is making systematic efforts towards applying this requirement, but certain key points are still not addressed.	<p><b>Score 2:</b> indicates an issue that deserves attention but does not currently compromise the conformity with the requirement. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification and certification:</b> observation.</li> </ul>
3	Your organisation conforms to this requirement, and organisational systems ensure that it is met throughout the organisation and over time – the requirement is fulfilled.	<p><b>Score 3:</b> indicates full conformity with the requirement. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification and certification:</b> conformity.</li> </ul>
4	Your organisation's work goes beyond the intent of this requirement and demonstrates innovation. It is applied in an exemplary way across the organisation and organisational systems ensure high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.	<p><b>Score 4:</b> indicates an exemplary performance in the application of the requirement.</p>

\* Scoring Scale from the CHSA Verification Scheme 2020