



OXFAM INTERNATIONAL

CHS Certification

Maintenance Audit Report

OXI-MA-2019

Date: 2019-09-17

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# 1. General information

## 1.2 Organisation

Organisation	Oxfam International		
Type	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federated (Confederation)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct assistance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Through partners	
Mandate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy
Verified Mandate(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian	<input type="checkbox"/> Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy
Size (Total number of programme sites/ members/partners – Number of staff at HO level)	40 Country Programmes with humanitarian responses as of date of sampling for maintenance audit.		
Lead auditor	Claire Goudsmit	Auditor	
		Others	(Observers, ... )
	Interviews		
Locations	Interviews (Skype/phone): OI, GHT, ONL, OES, Iraq, Dominican Republic, Mozambique Document review: Afghanistan, Sudan		
Dates	01 – 12 / 07 / 2019		

## 1.2 Indicators verified at the Maintenance Audit

CHS Commitment	Organisational Responsibilities	Key Actions
2		2.6
3		3.6
5	5.4   5.5   5.6   5.7	5.1   5.3
7		7.1
8	8.4   8.5   8.6   8.7   8.8   8.9	
9	9.6	

The MA reviewed Oxfam's continued compliance with the CHS, key developments against the 2020 strategy and Oxfam 'One Programme' approach, and the actions taken by Oxfam to address the Corrective Actions Requests (CARs) from the Initial Audit. The Observations made in the initial audit are also considered in the assessment.

Based on Oxfam's list of 40 countries where Oxfam had an active humanitarian response and activities, a sample of 5 country programmes to be remotely assessed were selected as part of the Maintenance Audit. The following countries were selected: Iraq, Afghanistan, Dominican Republic, Sudan, Mozambique.

The sampled countries were selected based on the following rationale:

- 4 of these countries were selected randomly and 1 was a targeted sample to include a Cat 1 response (Mozambique Cyclones Idai and Kenneth response) in order to check progress made in resolving the non-conformities identified at initial audit;
- The full selection of programmes represents countries from the range of OI's Regional Platforms - SAF, LAC, MENA, Asia and HECA;
- A range of Executive Affiliates and Partner Affiliates - OGB, OES, OUS and ONL and additional Partner Affiliates - OIT, OCA, OAU;
- They include programmes from all OI's response categorisations: one CAT1, two CAT2, two CAT3 responses;
- The countries also offer examples of OIs different responses - emergency response, longer-term humanitarian assistance, direct implementation and working through partners;
- Staff selected for interview based on their engagement with the components of the CHS; from OI secretariat, the GHT, Regional Platforms and Affiliates; and staff from 3 countries/responses selected, which included Dominican Republic, Iraq and Mozambique;
- Afghanistan and Sudan countries/responses were the subject of a document review only.

## 2. Schedule summary

### 2.1 Opening and closing meetings at Head Office

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date		11/07/2019
Location		Zoom
Number of participants		8 (connected online)
Any substantive issue arising		No

## 2.2 Interviews

Position of interviewees	Number of interviewees
<b>Head Office and Regional Managers</b>	
Management and staff	9
<b>Country programmes</b>	
Management and staff	8
<b>Total number of interviews</b>	17

## 3. Recommendation

In our opinion, Oxfam International is implementing the necessary actions to address the minor CARs identified in the previous audit, although the CARs remain open at this stage. Oxfam International continues to conform with the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard. We recommend maintenance of certification.

Detailed findings are laid out in the rest of this report and its confidential annex.

Lead Auditor's Name and Signature

Date and Place:

UK, 18 August 2019



## 4. Quality Control

Follow up	
First Draft	2019-08-22
Second Draft	2019-09-17
Final Draft	2019-10-11

## 5. Background information on the organisation

### 5.1 Organisational structure and management system

Oxfam International is currently in the final years of its global strategic change process towards a One Oxfam approach, and the final years of the Operational Phase of its global strategic implementation plan. Oxfam has also had to manage the impact and respond to the issues raised from the safeguarding “crisis” at the beginning of 2018. Based on the findings from a number of internal reflections and analyses processes (e.g. staff culture survey, meta-evaluation of humanitarian responses, safe programming review) and from the external International Commission independent safeguarding report, Charity Commission Report (Oxfam GB) and the Initial HQAI CHS Audit findings, Oxfam has made some significant changes within the organisation. Key organisational changes aim to address the identified weaknesses e.g. in OI’s leadership, power-sharing ability, accountability practice, and to better ensure that people are safeguarded throughout the organisation and its operations. Oxfam has significantly challenged its leadership style, management structure and power dynamics. A series of workshops have taken place across teams, departments, and programmes across the confederation to engage and facilitate all staff in open dialogue on these issues and to actively promote a cultural-change process.

In consideration of the above, and while the governance of Oxfam International remains unchanged since the initial audit, OI is also in the penultimate phase of a 3-year Governance Review process. The review is working in parallel with other key review processes that are ongoing e.g. on safeguarding, GOAL learning review, global strategy, partnership, One Oxfam. The Governance Review is in the phase of developing a proposal of the Models of governance that will best enhance Oxfam’s effectiveness, performance areas (e.g. mutual accountability, transparency, knowledge) and best facilitate who Oxfam strives to be, how it works and what it wants to achieve. A new structure is due to be developed by the end of 2019, and a transition period will start in January 2020.

Since the initial audit, significant changes to the structure of the Global Humanitarian Team (GHT) and Oxfam International’s (OI) humanitarian approach have been made. These are based on the findings from the various reports and reviews mentioned above, and from several meta-analyses of Real Time Reviews (RTRs) of Oxfam’s humanitarian responses. Oxfam identified weaknesses in how it systematically engaged with communities, worked in partnership with local actors, and addressed gender issues in its programmes. As a result, Oxfam has reduced the management team within the GHT, established two humanitarian

regional groupings with distinct regional coverage, including technical advisors. New roles have been put in place, including: 2 safeguarding and 2 Partnership and Local Humanitarian Leadership (LHL) (supporting partnership in emergencies) humanitarian support personnel (HSPs); Monitoring Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Lead supervising an accountability and knowledge management advisor; increased number of roles in protection, gender and MEAL. The global response model has been restructured to address weaknesses and re-balance the previous weighting towards technical expertise for emergency responses e.g. Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), logistics, emergency food security and vulnerable livelihoods (EFSVL). Roles with a specific focus on MEAL, gender and protection have increased and are in place in the GHT and Humanitarian Support Personnel (HSP) functions. All roles are included in the *suggested* initial response team for large-scale emergency response and *can* be deployed from the start of the response. The deployment of HSPs is based on the needs and capacity of, and upon request by, country offices. HSPs often play a key role in first phase emergency response teams, especially for large-scale emergencies, and provide ongoing capacity throughout a response, especially on key technical and complex programme areas. Building capacity in these areas aims to ensure that key stakeholder engagement, accountability and safeguarding components are fully integrated into the design and implementation of Oxfam's humanitarian response work.

Although it will take time for Oxfam's cultural and structural changes to take full effect, staff interviewed were generally positive about the strategy that Oxfam has taken to address its shortcomings and are energised by the process for change. For instance, Oxfam's Cyclone Idai response followed the new emergency response model and interviews with staff for the maintenance audit confirmed that the new structure resulted in: better coordination between the regional teams, the GHT, Affiliates and the response management team; a more balanced team on the ground with good support from MEAL advisors; security, risk and accountability strategies established, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) implemented from the beginning of the response e.g. on complaint handling and feedback mechanisms. The staff interviewed during the maintenance audit demonstrated commitment to the change process and the motivation to support Oxfam to move firmly in the right direction.

## 5.2 Organisational quality assurance

As well as in regard to the points raised above, in-line with the One Oxfam strategy and to address weaknesses identified in the CHS Initial Audit, a number of existing OI policies and procedures have been revised and updated, and a number of new policies have been developed, in order to improve the quality assurance of Oxfam's humanitarian and development work. Some of these are applied across the confederation and Oxfam's programmes. Some of the key points highlighted through the maintenance audit include:

- A One Oxfam Programme reporting format for all country offices to consistently report to OI;
- Control Self-Assessments (CSAs) are monitored by OI Chief Operating Officers to ensure that all country programmes are meeting the set requirements;
- A revised OI humanitarian Sit-Rep formats are in place for humanitarian response which reflect the new Humanitarian Approach and to assure accountability mechanisms are implemented consistently from the onset of a response;
- The OI Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (being finalised at time of the maintenance audit) and the OI Child Safeguarding Policy are to be applied across the confederation - all Affiliates and programmes;

- An EA Working Group including all Operation Directors convenes regularly to support shared expectations of country programmes, to agree EA minimum requirements, set priorities and to ensure the business support systems are meeting the needs of countries.

### 5.3 Work with Partners

Driven by recent events and learning reviews, Oxfam has recognised that it needs to make improvements to respond to humanitarian crises with partners in a consistent and adequate manner to ensure timeliness and quality responses. This was identified as a weakness across the confederation and country offices and a number of developments have taken place to structurally address this and to mainstream OI's partnership approaches in emergency response:

- As part of the GHT restructuring, a new Partnerships and Local Humanitarian Leadership unit has been established to implement Oxfam's localisation approach and Local Humanitarian Leadership strategy. This unit includes: Charter 4 Change Manager and HSP; Partnership and Local Humanitarian Leadership Lead and three HSPs.
- The Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors (ELNHA) project continues to be an important project in two countries (Bangladesh and Uganda) and has a global reach within Oxfam's LHL strategy.
- Oxfam's One Programme Approach at the country level is supporting a more consistent approach to working with partners. Although certain partnership methodologies and styles vary across Executing Affiliates (EAs), partners are required to have a CoC in line with Oxfam's, and if not, the OI CoC can be used. This is a requirement in partnership agreements and contracts, along with the inclusion of Oxfam's Child Safeguarding policy (part of OI's Global Safeguarding 10-Point plan).
- Oxfam is further developing its guidance and tools to support country offices to apply Oxfam's overarching Partnership Principles, its New Humanitarian Approach on working with local partners, and the Partner Integrity Assessment and Code of Conduct (CoC). OI's new Humanitarian Dossier outlines its partnership approaches and requirements.
- It is expected that all country offices integrate OI's partnership ways of working into their country strategic planning process and apply them to all Oxfam's global humanitarian work.
- The OI Partnership Policy Implementation Support Kit (PPSIK) (August 2018) draws together Oxfam's broad knowledge and experience of working in partnership and contains a suite of guidance and tools targeted at country offices to utilise. Further guidance is being developed to reflect OI's current ways of working and to present a Common Approach to Partnership within the confederation. A Partnership Roadmap is being developed which will contain tools and guidance for specific partners, relationships and contexts.

The development and implementation of OI's partnership approach, application of its revised tools and guidance, and implementation of the specific contractual obligations of a sample of EAs will be reviewed at the mid-term audit.

## 6. Report

### 6.1 Overall organisational performance

Oxfam has integrated the HQAI CHS audit findings, Corrective Action Requests (CARs) and weaknesses into a number of change processes that are being implemented across the OI confederation and its humanitarian programme work. The results of the Initial Audit are being taken seriously and addressed at the highest level of the organisation. A comprehensive progress plan is in place with clear actions for resolution of the CARs. These are being managed and followed-up in a structured manner. Resources have been invested to ensure that identified weaknesses are structurally addressed and are in line with Oxfam's strategic direction and safeguarding review outcomes. Ensuring a consistent approach to meeting the CHS commitments across all EAs, country offices and humanitarian work continues to be a work in progress. Oxfam has invested significantly to deeply review and structurally adapt its ways of working during the past year. This has come as OI nears the end of its 2020 strategic change process to the One Oxfam Programme Approach. Therefore, understandably, time is needed to fully evidence the changes and demonstrate that OI's new policies, protocols, minimum requirements, and humanitarian programme approach is systematically applied and that the CHS commitments are fully integrated into these. These factors are acknowledged and are represented in the findings at this MA stage. The CARs identified in the Initial Audit remain open or have been extended for one year to the Mid Term Audit, which will review the extent to which OI has fully addressed the CARs.

### 6.2 Status of the Corrective Action Requests

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUESTS	TYPE (MINOR/ MAJOR)	ORIGINAL DEADLINE FOR RESOLUTION	STATUS OF CAR AT MA	TIME FOR RESOLUTION
<b>2018 - 2.6.</b> OI does not ensure that capacities are in place to consistently and effectively meet its programme commitments in emergency response.	Minor	2 years	Open	03.07.2020
<b>2018 - 3.6.</b> OI does not have a consistent approach to identifying and acting upon potential or actual unintended negative effects in a timely and systematic manner across all EAs, Country Offices and humanitarian programmes.	Minor	2 years	Open	03.07.2020
<b>2018 – 5.1.</b> OI does not ensure that programmes have systems in place to consistently consult with communities and people affected by crisis on the design, implementation and monitoring of complaints-handling processes.	Minor	2 years	Open	03.07.2020
<b>2018 - 5.3.</b> OI does not ensure that complaint mechanisms are consistently established in a timely manner, and that complaints are consistently and	Minor	2 years	Open	03.07.2020

appropriately managed in line with its global guidelines.				
<b>2018 - 5.6.</b> OI does not ensure that communities are aware of its commitments on PSEA and the expected behaviour of Oxfam and partner staff.	Minor	1 year	Open	Extended 03.07.2020
<b>2018 - 7.1.</b> OI does not ensure that humanitarian programmes are systematically designed based on the learning and experiences from previous work.	Minor	1 year	Open	Extended 03.07.2020
<b>2018 - 8.4.</b> OI does not ensure that it has the management and staff capacity and capability to deliver its programmes consistently.	Minor	2 years	Open	03.07.2020
<b>2018 - 9.6.</b> OI does not ensure consistent policies and processes governing the use and management of resources are in place across all EAs.	Minor	2 years	Open	03.07.2020
<b>Total</b>			8	

### 6.3 Updated average scores per commitment

CHS Commitment		Score
<b>Commitment 1:</b>	Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Commitment 2:</b>	Humanitarian response is effective and timely	<b>2.4</b>
<b>Commitment 3:</b>	Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	<b>2.3</b>
<b>Commitment 4:</b>	Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Commitment 5:</b>	Complaints are welcomed and addressed	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Commitment 6:</b>	Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	<b>2.8</b>
<b>Commitment 7:</b>	Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	<b>2</b>

<b>Commitment 8:</b>	Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	<b>2.2</b>
<b>Commitment 9:</b>	Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	<b>1.8</b>

## 6.4 Recommended Organisational Responsibilities to check for the mid-term audit

In addition to the CARs, it is recommended that the Organisational Responsibilities under commitments 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7 be checked at the mid-term audit. Additionally, Organisational Responsibilities Commitment 5 and 8.7 should be included, to check progress on the pertinent safeguarding action points and to test application across the Oxfam confederation.

## 6.5 Recommendations for sampling at next audit

It is recommended to include at least two Executing Affiliates (EA) (not including OGB, ONL as these were covered in the Initial Audit) and the Humanitarian Regional Platforms in the selection of interviews to test the application of OI policies and procedures. Ensure interviews with the new safeguarding HSP roles, MEAL Lead and learning advisors from the GHT are included. Where feasible, a country office that is supporting an active CAT 1 and CAT 2 emergency response, both direct implementation and in partnership with local actors, should be prioritised for the country programme visit. The MTA should review the development and implementation of OI's partnership approach, application of its revised tools and guidance, and implementation of the specific contractual obligations of a sample of EAs.

## 7. Organisation's report approval

### Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings

For Organisation representative – please cross where appropriate

I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit

I accept the findings of the audit

I do not accept some/all of the findings of the audit

Please list the requirements whose findings you do not accept

Name and Signature

Date and Place

NIGEL TIMMINS

24/10/19



London.

## 8. HQAI's decision

<b>Certification Decision</b>	
Certificate:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certificate maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate reinstated
<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate suspended	<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate withdrawn
<b>Next audits</b>	
MTA	
Pierre Hauselmann Executive Director Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative	 Date: 11 October, 2019

### 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 in writing HQAI 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

0	<p><b>A score of 0 denotes a weakness that is so significant that it indicates that the organisation is unable to meet the required commitment. This is a major weakness to be corrected immediately.</b></p>
	<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <p>Operational activities and actions contradict the intent of a CHS commitment.</p> <p>Policies and procedures contradict the intent of the CHS commitment.</p> <p>Absence of processes or policies necessary to ensure compliance at the level of the commitment.</p> <p>Recurrent failure to implement the necessary actions at operational level make it impossible for the organisation to ensure compliance at the level of the commitment.</p> <p>Failure to implement corrective actions to resolve minor non-conformities in the adequate timeframes (for certification only)</p> <p>More than half of the indicators of one commitment receive a score of 1 (minor non-conformity), making it impossible for the organisation to ensure compliance at the level of the commitment. (for independent verification or certification only)</p>
1	<p><b>A score of 1 denotes 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 the commitment.</b></p>
	<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <p>There are a significant number of cases where the design and management of programmes and activities do not reflect the CHS requirement.</p> <p>Actions at the operational level are not systematically implemented in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.</p> <p>Relevant policies exist but are incomplete or do not cover all areas of the requirement/commitment.</p> <p>Existing policies are not accompanied with sufficient guidance to support a systematic and robust implementation by staff. A significant number of relevant staff at Head Office and/or field levels are not familiar with the policies and procedures.</p> <p>Absence of mechanisms to monitor the systematic application of relevant policies and procedures at the level of the requirement/commitment.</p>
2	<p><b>A score of 2 denotes an issue that deserve attention but does not <u>currently</u> compromise the conformity with the requirement. This is worth an observation and, if not addressed may turn into a significant weakness (score 1).</b></p>
	<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <p>Implementation of the requirement varies from programme to programme and is driven by people rather than organisational culture.</p> <p>There are instances of actions at operational level where the design or management of programmes does not fully reflect relevant policies.</p> <p>Relevant policies exist but are incomplete or do not cover all areas of the requirement/commitment.</p>
3	<p><b>The organisation conforms with this requirement, and organisational systems ensure that it is met throughout the organisation and over time.</b></p>
	<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <p>Relevant policies and procedures exist and are accompanied with guidance to support implementation by staff.</p> <p>Staff are familiar with relevant policies. They can provide several examples of consistent application in different activities, projects and programmes.</p> <p>The organisation monitors the implementation of its policies and supports the staff in doing so at operational level.</p>

	Policy and practice are aligned.
4	<p><b>The organisation demonstrates innovation in the application of this requirement/commitment. It is applied in an exemplary way across the organisation and organisational systems ensure high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.</b></p> <p>EXAMPLES:</p> <p>Field and programme staff act frequently in a way that goes beyond CHS requirement to which they are clearly committed.</p> <p>Relevant staff can explain in which way their activities are in line with the requirement and can provide several examples of implementation in different sites. They can relate the examples to improved quality of the projects and their deliveries.</p> <p>Communities and other external stakeholders are particularly satisfied with the work of the organisation in relation to the requirement.</p> <p>Policies and procedures go beyond the intent of the CHS requirement, are innovative and systematically implemented across the organisation.</p>