

Oxfam Australia – Notes of Board Meeting 2 June 2017

The Oxfam Australia (OAU) board met in Melbourne on 2 June 2017. The meeting commenced with receipt and discussion of the Chief Executive's (CE) Report. The challenging financial and operating environment was discussed at length as was the agency's performance and budgeting against that backdrop. The CE is making strong financial planning and preparedness a major focus for her team, including scenario analysis in the event of 'black swan' events that could present major risks to Oxfam. The CE continues to implement more robust risk management systems.

The Trading operation was another focal point, with discussion of a significant review of Trading that will take place over the course of 2017. A new study of the broader value of Trading as a contributor to program objectives – particularly support for emerging producers in the countries Oxfam supports - provides a more granular and informative picture of Trading's contribution and has identified a series of KPIs that establish baseline data to enable continuous improvement.

A briefing was provided on Oxfam's relationship with DFAT, referencing the current re-accreditation process and negotiations in relation to Australian Humanitarian Partnership contracts.

The subject of Oxfam in our region was discussed, OAU now concentrating more on the Asia Pacific, with a number of program initiatives and strengthening of our regional governance through the realisation of two Regional Governance Groups in which Australia has a leadership role.

An update was given on the agency's advocacy efforts, including a newly released Report on Indigenous Rights and the agency's stand on aid and development funding pointing out that cutbacks continue to hinder efforts to bring people out of poverty. The CE's continuing public activities will be supported by a June visit to Australia of Oxfam's global leader, Winnie Byanyima.

The board received reports on progress on the Operational Plan, Finance, Risk and the Oxfam 2020 project to create One Oxfam, which is pleasingly going to plan in a world of challenge and change.

Oxfam's draft Reconciliation Action Plan which is up for renewal, was discussed and approved.

With a view to ensuring the board remains open to the external environment and stimuli, it was resolved to advertise in mid-year one new board position specifically encouraging supporters to consider applying, and canvassed the optimal format for the round of annual forums scheduled for late 2017, the agency's means of connecting with and briefing supporters and those interested in Oxfam's work.

The meeting concluded with a preliminary discussion on the CE's appraisal for the period gone by.

Dennis Goldner, Chair
June 2017