



HUMANITARIAN

AT OXFAM



OXFAM
Australia



ABOUT OXFAM

Oxfam is a leading non-profit global development and humanitarian organisation with more than 75 years of experience. In 2017–2018, the global Oxfam confederation worked with 3,663 local partners to deliver life-changing development and advocacy programs for more than 22.3 million people in 79 countries around the world. Of that number, Oxfam Australia directly reached more than 1.7 million people in 29 countries. In partnership with our Oxfam affiliates, we reached 13.1 million people affected by disaster or conflict worldwide. Oxfam Australia is a member of Oxfam International, a confederation of 20 organisations that works with partners and local communities to mobilise the power of people against poverty.

OUR VISION

At Oxfam we believe all lives are equal and no-one should live in poverty. We join forces with people who share this belief, to empower communities to build better lives for themselves. That's why we are there on the ground, not only to save lives in times of crisis, but also to develop lasting solutions. Our work spans wide because there are many causes of poverty. That's why we're also in front of decision-makers, governments and corporations, and speak out on the big issues. Together we are tackling poverty by changing minds, systems and lives.

CONTEXT

All communities are susceptible to the harmful impacts of natural disasters and human conflict. But people who live in poverty, especially women, are usually the most affected when tragedy strikes, as survivors experience even greater deprivation.

Worldwide, people in rural and urban areas are facing an increasing number of humanitarian crises, as well as recurring and protracted events, such as droughts. These conflicts and crises, many of which are caused or exacerbated by climate change, are also increasing in severity, impact and duration. The harm caused by these crises will be diminished if governments, businesses and other organisations work together to avert preventable crises; protect people's rights before, during and after crises; and help people recover.

- At the end of 2017, more than 68.5 million people were fleeing conflict, violence, and human rights abuses. (UNHCR, 2017)
- In 2016, 815 million people were chronically undernourished and 53 million people were food insecure, without reliable access to sufficient food, due to natural disasters and conflicts. (FAO, 2017)
- In 2016, more than 377 million people were estimated to be affected by disasters associated with natural hazards. (Oxfam GB, 2016)
- In 2015, the United Nations estimated that an annual global investment of USD \$6 billion could save \$360 billion in economic losses and expenditure on damages over 15 years. (Oxfam GB, 2016)

Cover photo: Nyal, South Sudan: Tabitha and her daughter fled their homeland seeking safety and support when violence broke out. She says, "Most of our animals died on the way. The children and the elderly gave us most problems and those who could not run were left behind, hopefully they will survive. We feed on water lilies, keay, fish and anything we could find in the river." Photo: Bruno BierrenbachFeder/Oxfam.



OUR GOAL

In the event of conflict or natural disaster, we aim to ensure that all affected women, men, girls and boys are protected from violence and receive the humanitarian aid that they need.

OUR APPROACH

Oxfam is distinguished from other organisations in the sector by our global reach, our robust network of partners, the decades of experience we have amassed, and our long-standing reputation as a leading humanitarian organisation.

At Oxfam, we take a rights-based approach, working with our partners, allies and local communities to empower people to defend and uphold their rights during times of humanitarian crisis. We address the underlying causes of poverty and inequality, which are often exacerbated in times of crisis. We also combine locally-led, community-based humanitarian responses with national and international advocacy efforts and policy dialogue to influence change from local to global levels, and ensure that people's rights are upheld.

Oxfam is committed to working with poor and marginalised communities who are most vulnerable to disasters, including women and girls, people with disabilities, and people from sexual and gender minority communities. We empower affected communities to make and implement important decisions about their health and wellbeing. Wherever possible, local stakeholders are invited to identify the most pressing problems and sustainable solutions, so the needs of vulnerable groups and individuals can be addressed.

Oxfam's humanitarian assistance is part of a long-term commitment. We place great importance on building local capacity and long-term resilience to shocks, stresses and uncertainty. We are committed to delivering on the Grand Bargain Commitments agreed at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, including support to local and national first responders to increase and enhance local capacity and leadership.

Beyond giving direct support to people affected by disasters, where possible we also work in partnership with communities, local partners and governments to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of disasters. By partnering with local organisations, we can provide immediate assistance when emergency strikes and also work with survivors to help them recover and rebuild their lives after the crisis has passed.

Australian Humanitarian Partnership

The Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) is a five-year (2017–2022) partnership between the Australian Government and Australian NGOs, which aims to save lives, alleviate suffering and enhance human dignity during and in the aftermath of conflict, disasters and other humanitarian crises. The AHP also provides a new strategic initiative (Disaster READY) to strengthen disaster preparedness and management across the Pacific and Timor-Leste. Oxfam Australia leads one of the six Australian NGO consortiums that comprise the AHP. We have also partnered with ABC International Development, CBM Australia and Habitat for Humanity Australia.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Gender and protection

Oxfam puts gender at the heart of everything we do. In a humanitarian crisis, the experiences of women, men, girls and boys can vary widely. Such crises can change power dynamics within homes and communities, exacerbate gender-based violence and make it even harder for women to make a living. Oxfam makes sure that every humanitarian response addresses these issues. Our programs are planned, monitored and evaluated with gender considerations embedded in the design. We support women, men, girls and boys when tragedy strikes, and we create lasting, transformational change in their lives.

Our protection work aims to ensure the safety of civilians threatened with violence, coercion or deliberate deprivation. Such threats often occur after a disaster, so we take steps to prevent and reduce risk, and restore wellbeing and dignity. We support people affected by crises to access assistance without exposing them to further danger. Our “do no harm” approach aims to deliver humanitarian activities that don’t inadvertently exacerbate conflict or create greater risks for those in need of support.

Project: Rohingya response in Bangladesh

Project date: 2017–2019

Project value: AUD \$3 million

Funded by: Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP)



Bangladesh: Rohingya residents at Ukhia mega-camp go about their daily lives during the first monsoon rains. Photo: Dylan Quinell/OxfamAUS.

Based on evidence from our February 2018 baseline survey, we launched a protection program to distribute multipurpose textiles to Rohingya women and men. Our monitoring revealed that while most families in the refugee settlements could afford tailoring costs for most garments, many could not afford to have women’s traditional abayas made. Families that could afford abayas reported increased mobility for women. As a result, Oxfam is supporting families with tailoring vouchers to cover the shortfall. The initiative helps fuel the local economy, as vouchers can be redeemed with local vendors from the host community. Since launching the program, we have seen positive results. Our June 2018 survey showed that 95% of women respondents now feel safe and comfortable going outside their homes.



Suva, Fiji: Kata Duaibe from Oxfam in the Pacific leads a workshop activity with community members and representatives from Save The Children and International Planned Parenthood Federation. Photo: Emily Dwyer.

Down by the River: addressing the rights, needs and strengths of Fijian sexual and gender minorities in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response

In 2017, we partnered with Edge Effect and Rainbow Pride Foundation in Fiji to undertake research and hear stories of lived experiences both before and after Tropical Cyclone Winston devastated parts of Fiji in February 2016. The stories highlight how discrimination in daily life creates vulnerability before disasters; the unique challenges that people from sexual and gender minority communities faced in surviving and recovering from Winston; and also the strength that these individuals give each other. The 30 stories shared in the Down by the River sessions join a small but growing literature charting experiences of sexual and gender minorities in disaster contexts. The stories in this report are Fijian and specific. But the themes resonate with the experiences of sexual and gender minority communities affected by disasters in Indonesia, India, Haiti, Samoa, the Philippines, Pakistan and elsewhere: themes of violence, trauma, isolation, insecurity, exclusion and solidarity.

Tiger worm toilet system

This innovative sanitation solution houses composting worms in a small concrete chamber — known as a “bio-digester” — with a filtration system and bedding material to host the worms. Liquid waste filters through layers of sand and gravel, while the worms break down faecal waste into vermi-compost that can be used as fertiliser. Research has shown that approximately 2kg of worms can break down the faecal waste and urine from 10 users in a household. The toilets are inexpensive, easy to maintain and practical for crowded areas where space is limited and desludging is difficult due to narrow physical access.

After testing this ingenious solution at household level and trialing an adapted system for communal toilets in camp contexts, we’ve now installed more than 640 Oxfam tiger worm toilets in urban Liberia and Sierra Leone, and at least 120 in humanitarian camps in Ethiopia and Myanmar, including 17 communal toilet blocks with two drop holes each. Continuous learning since 2013 has enabled us to modify the designs and identify several varieties



Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh: Camp resident stands next to Biofil latrine, which uses worms to decompose fecal waste. Photo: Maruf Hasan/OxfamAUS.

of worm that can digest faeces. Research shows that these toilets last for more than eight years. Units that have been in place for more than four years show minimal amounts of sludge, indicating they are among the most sustainable toilets in existence.

Clean water, sanitation, hygiene and public health

During humanitarian responses, Oxfam addresses public health challenges, providing clean water, sanitation services and hygiene training to contain the spread of waterborne diseases, such as cholera. Clean, safe water and sanitation are critical for maintaining the dignity of displaced people, particularly women and girls, who need secure bathing spaces, private toilets and menstrual hygiene supplies. We focus on empowering communities to promote safe hygiene practices in a way that is most appropriate to their context and circumstances.

Oxfam provides access to safe water by water trucking, on-site water collection, treatment and distribution, and also by teaching people — at household and community levels — how to treat and store water. We promote sanitation and hygiene by building latrines and bathing spaces and distributing essential items, like soap and water containers. Our trained volunteers also deliver vital public health and hygiene messages to local communities. And we administer waste management systems and vector control to eradicate disease-carrying rodents and pests.

Disaster risk reduction

In contexts where climate change and disasters are significant drivers of poverty and hardship, we are committed to integrating climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and food security strategies into our programs. Disaster risk reduction is a strategy that spans Oxfam’s humanitarian and development programs. We support women, men, girls and boys to realise their rights and improve their wellbeing, despite shocks, stresses and uncertainty. Our programming empowers people — at household, national and global levels — to better respond to environmental or socioeconomic change and disruption.

access loans and mobile banking services. The digital platform offers a viable alternative to the costly, restricted services currently used by the business sector. It gives vulnerable women and men the means to save money and transfer cash safely, swiftly and cheaply with an electronic pre-paid card.

Project: I-AFFORD in the Philippines

Project date: 2017–2018

Project value: AUD \$500,000

Funded by: Australian Aid

Oxfam has partnered with Visa and PayMaya to develop I-AFFORD, a digital financial inclusion project for vulnerable communities in the Philippines. Oxfam’s I-AFFORD project makes secure financial services available to marginalised Filipinos, who can’t otherwise



Tacloban City, Philippines: Nelia deposits about AUD 2.50 each week and stores it in her pre-paid I-AFFORD card. Photo: Jennina Lanza/Oxfam

Food security, livelihoods and economic recovery

Oxfam responds swiftly in humanitarian crises, providing access to food and resources to rebuild people's livelihoods so as to ensure their future wellbeing, while working within market structures. Food security exists when everyone has access to enough nutritious food to live a healthy, active life. So beyond providing immediate access to food, our humanitarian responses also focus on rebuilding and strengthening livelihoods to ensure lasting food security.

Market analysis is a critical part of each Oxfam emergency response. Knowing the key constraints (environmental, legal, and logistical) and opportunities helps us decide which activities will strengthen market systems for the future. Wherever possible, we deliver immediate aid through market structures. At the same time, we aim to support and strengthen markets more broadly by supporting the development of enterprise and financial services, or rehabilitating infrastructure. This can include giving cash grants; in-kind distributions, such as food aid; supporting small-scale agriculture; and social protection. We work closely with traders and other market actors to help strengthen local economies and ensure sustainable recovery.

Project: Lel-Haya in Jordan

Project date: 2018–2020

Project value: AUD \$2 million

Funded by: Australian Aid and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Oxfam supports Syrian refugees in Za'atari camp with livelihood opportunities. Our Lel-Haya project has created a women-friendly workspace, hiring Syrian women as seamstresses to transform old UNHCR tents into fashionable tote bags.



“When I joined the project, I was very excited ... the idea of turning tents into bags is very creative ... I would love to teach other people how to create art from trash and old material.”

— Fatima, Jordan

Za'atari camp, Jordan: When war broke out in Syria, Fatima fled to Jordan, leaving everything behind. Since she learnt how to make upcycled tote bags, she has a renewed sense of purpose and optimism. Photo: Nesma Alnsour/Oxfam.

After the project generated interest from UNHCR and the ILO, the Za'atari Office for Employment coordinated with a local garment factory in Irbid to host a job fair at Za'atari camp to recruit refugee women, including project participants, into formal jobs at the factory. To date, about 280 Syrian refugee women have been trained to sew and make the tote bags, which are designed by a Jordanian fashion designer. So far, more than 3,000 bags have sold in local and European markets, with 80% of profits from bag sales going back to the Za'atari tailors. The project has given the women a sense of purpose, boosted their earning capability and, in turn, increased household income for refugee families.

INNOVATION AT OXFAM

Poverty is a complex challenge that demands creative solutions and outside-the-box thinking. If we want to change the world around us, we need truly game-changing ideas — ideas that raise the bar on best practice. That's why we constantly search for better, more effective ways of working, and we refuse to settle for the status quo. Year after year, we continue to push boundaries, collaborating with engineers, designers and businesses to find the most practical, efficient and sustainable ways to empower poor and marginalised communities and help people overcome poverty.

Project: Blockchain pilot in Vanuatu

Project date: 2018–2020

Project value: AUD \$150,000

Funded by: Australian Government through Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Oxfam's new OxLab innovation hub brought together a team of Oxfam staff with different expertise, including technology, design, humanitarian programming and banking, to determine how Oxfam might best use blockchain technology. As a result, Oxfam is piloting blockchain in Vanuatu, one of the world's most disaster-prone nations. Blockchain has the potential to deliver emergency cash transfers in times of crisis in a faster, cheaper and more transparent fashion than existing cash transfer models. The pilot will use blockchain-linked IDs to deliver credit to up to 1,000 families displaced by recent volcanic activity. Oxfam is one of the first humanitarian organisations to use blockchain technology for cash transfer programming, proudly pioneering pathways out of poverty.

HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP

Oxfam sits on various international bodies that oversee and support humanitarian work globally, including InterAction, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and Sphere. We often co-lead sector clusters for humanitarian responses in areas where we have strong expertise, such as WASH. We also partner with networks, such as ACFID's Humanitarian Reference Group and numerous social enterprises, think tanks, private companies and universities, including the Monash Sustainable Development Institute and Deakin University's Centre for Humanitarian Leadership.

The Cash and Learning Partnership

Oxfam is a founding member of the Cash and Learning Partnership (CaLP), a dynamic and collaborative global network of humanitarian stakeholders engaged in cash transfer programming. Our shared vision is that humanitarian assistance creates the greatest value, choice and dignity for people in crisis and our mission is to radically increase the scale and quality of cash transfer programming as a tool for humanitarian assistance. Cash programming remains one of our central ways to support food security and livelihoods in humanitarian contexts, and we will continue to use a cash-first approach where appropriate.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Oxfam's programs are designed and implemented in collaboration with communities and civil society partners. Oxfam Australia partners with various donors to implement our programs, including the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), European Union, World Bank, UN agencies, philanthropic trusts and foundations, and the Australian public. We are efficient and accountable stewards of donor resources. In 2017-18, we spent \$57.3 million on development, advocacy and humanitarian programs. Of this, 67% was spent on direct programming, 23% on promotion and fundraising, and 10% on administration. All Oxfam programs are delivered in line with our Program Management Procedure. Oxfam Australia is a member of the Australian Council for International Development and is a DFAT-Accredited Australian non-government organisation.

Technical expertise

Oxfam Australia is a member of Oxfam International, a global confederation of 20 organisations working with partners and local communities to mobilise the power of people against poverty. We are one of the world's leading providers of humanitarian aid in emergencies, with well-recognised technical expertise and thought leadership in several areas, including:

- gender and protection;
- clean water, sanitation and hygiene, and public health;
- food security, livelihoods and economic recovery; and
- disaster risk reduction.

The unpredictable nature of many disasters makes it cost-effective for Oxfam to maintain a global cadre of emergency response expertise. This team — known as the Global Humanitarian Team — supports Oxfam's extensive network of country-based teams, which are engaged in longer term development work. When disasters strike, anywhere in the world, this team can boost existing local capacity with technical staff, logistical support and expert advice. In Australia, Oxfam's Humanitarian Support Unit works with country offices to provide technical, management and monitoring support.

On the global stage, Oxfam is often at the forefront of efforts to improve the speed, quality and effectiveness of humanitarian response. From early warning systems to the pre-positioning of essential supplies, we train and equip emergency response teams across offices in more than 80 countries. We also have emergency supplies ready to mobilise at a moment's notice in our regional warehouses in Brisbane, Australia (through the HK Logistics DFAT Partnership); Dubai, United Arab Emirates; and Bicester, United Kingdom.

Learning from our work

Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning are crucial for the continued success and improvement of our programs and projects. By weighing up what worked well — or not so well — and sharing those insights within the sector, we stay on the path to real progress and sustainable development. Our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) frameworks are underpinned by Oxfam's Common Approach to MEL and Social Accountability (CAMSA).

Our humanitarian work not only helps vulnerable people and communities, but also keeps improving the ways we serve them. At Oxfam, we are committed to transparency in our work and accountability to our key stakeholders — especially people living in poverty. We share information with people living in poverty, partner organisations, and the general public, and we are accountable to our staff, volunteers, supporters, donors, suppliers and partner governments. We are committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment in our workplaces and programs, always striving to "do no harm" and working to prevent or limit any unintended negative impacts of our programs.

Oxfam is committed to meeting international standards when we respond to humanitarian crises, including Sphere Standards and the Core Humanitarian Standards on quality and accountability. We work to ensure that, where possible, communities participate in assessments, planning, implementing and evaluating our responses. We complete evaluations within weeks of setting up each response to help understand its effectiveness and identify any necessary changes or adaptations.



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