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Working with others

OXFAM GB PARTNERSHIP POLICY

Five principles of partnership

“Oxfam GB works with and through others to take action to achieve common goals for overcoming poverty and injustice. These five principles underpin our programme and partnership decisions in development, humanitarian, and campaigns work at every level of activity.”

Complementary purpose and added value

Any partnership between Oxfam GB and other organisations is based on shared objectives to empower and/or otherwise benefit poor, suffering, and marginalised people. The added value of working together is clear and recognised by all partners. Each partner brings different capacities and resources to an interdependent relationship, and the diversity and value of all contributions is acknowledged. Each partner is clear about what each brings to the partnership, as well as being open about limitations.

Mutual respect for values and beliefs

Whilst recognising and respecting differences, sufficient common ground in terms of shared values and beliefs must be found for our partnerships with others to be viable. We must share a desire to work towards a common position on important issues, including a commitment to gender-equality and respect for diverse identities, and a belief that poor and marginalised people should enjoy their fundamental rights and are agents of their own development.

Clarity about roles, responsibilities, and decision-making

Credibility and trust in partner relationships comes from good communication, competence, reliability, and delivery. When the rights and obligations of each partner are negotiated, the expected contribution of each party, including Oxfam GB, is clearly stated. All partners are able to do what they say they will do or to describe the process and time frame needed to develop the required capacity. The process for making decisions is also discussed and agreed. While the aim is to work towards shared decision making as the work and relationship progress, this will not always be possible nor desirable. As we each take responsibility for fulfilling our agreed roles, so we take an equal share in celebrating success and learning together from failure.

Transparency and accountability

All parties involved in the partnership recognise the need to be accountable to people experiencing poverty or affected by disaster and to other stakeholders including donors and governments. As part of the process of developing partnerships, we explicitly discuss how Oxfam GB is accountable to partners and how we and our partners are accountable to the people and communities with and for whom we work.

Commitment and flexibility

Whilst short-term interventions can be appropriate, our humanitarian, development, and campaigns programmes are more sustainable and effective when based on long-term partnerships. Where Oxfam GB is a donor, we are open about our plans to fund or to stop funding and our reasons for doing so; we build partners' capacity for fundraising, linking them to alternative sources of funding where possible.

For more information:
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