



OXFAM

GB

**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting  
8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
Oxfam House, Oxford OX4 2JY**

As part of Oxfam GB's commitment to accountability and transparency of decision making, we are making public the minutes of each Board meeting - excluding only those parts of the meeting which have to be kept confidential for one of the reasons outlined in Oxfam's Open Information Policy (for example, for legal, commercial or contractual reasons, or because its premature disclosure would jeopardise action that Oxfam is planning to take).

We have tried to keep the minutes as full and clear as possible but no doubt it will be possible to improve them and so we encourage feedback. If you have any comments or questions, please initially address these to our Governance Team: [cmtable@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:cmtable@oxfam.org.uk)

**PRESENT**

Charles Gurassa (Chair)

Angela Cluff (Deputy Chair)

Les Campbell (Treasurer)

Ken Caldwell (except items 21/65, 21/66, 21/67 & 21/68 )

Andrew Hind

**PRESENT BY ZOOM**

Nana Afadzinu

Hellen Akwii

Nic Cheeseman

Annie Hudson (except items 21/68,  
21/69 & 21/70

Lois Jacobs

Tunde Olanrewaju (except part item  
21/56 & 21/57)

**APOLOGIES:** Trustees for some items as noted above

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Strategic Leadership Team (SLT):

Danny Sriskandarajah, Chief Executive Officer

Jane Cunliffe, Chief Financial Officer

Alison Court, Chief Transformation Officer (by  
Zoom)

Jan Oldfield, Chief Supporter Officer

John Plastow, Chief Impact Officer

Tina Proudlock, Chief Operating Officer

Alan Smith, Representative Independent Oxfam  
Union, acting as staff representative<sup>1</sup> (by Zoom)

Joss Saunders, Company Secretary<sup>2</sup>

Sarah O'Grady, Interim Head of Governance  
(minutes)

Mairead Herlihy, Governance Administrator (part)

Phil Walsh (external IT support)

Other executive for particular items as named in  
Minutes

Jennie Richmond (for item 21/67) by Zoom

The Board held a private session on the morning of 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**21/53 WELCOME AND DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Chair**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no conflicts of interest except the standing potential conflict with regard to OI (Joss Saunders is an OI officer) and Les Campbell as a Director of Oxfam Activities Limited

**21/54 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS and ACTIONS ARISING: Chair (papers 1 & 2)**

Following a discussion, a correction was made to the draft Minutes of the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> October and were approved for signature by the Chair.

The Board reviewed the status update on Actions Arising and subject to comments made, NOTED the report.

**21/55 CORE INFORMATION PACK: CEO Report (Paper 3)**

The paper was taken as read. The CEO reported that he and the Chair had recently undertaken a visit to Jordan. The CEO felt that it was a particular privilege to be able to travel and connect with the work in this way. This was the CEO's first country visit for 2 years and the Chair's first since his appointment due to Covid-19. The Chair reported that they felt inspired and better informed about the challenges and complexities of the work being carried out by the Oxfam teams and partners and thanked those who had organised and hosted the visit.

Reflecting on the past 4 years, the CEO said he hoped that the coming 2 years would be a time of rebuilding. On behalf of the SLT he thanked the Trustees for their support and challenge.

The Board congratulated the CEO and Staff for all that had been achieved, thanked the CEO and NOTED the CEO Report.

**21/56 CFO REPORT (Papers 4, 4a, 4b, 4c) (Annual Report & Accounts and CFO update)**

The CFO's papers were taken as read.

The draft Annual Report and Accounts had been audited by Crowe and were recommended for approval by the Audit and Risk Committee.

The CFO reported that, while income was down due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the financial results to the end of October showed a continued improving trend eg income from Oxfam shops was £3.4m ahead of budget. Reserves had reached £35m, at the lower end of the range set by Trustees. The statement of going concern had included a pessimistic scenario. There had been some changes made to accounting policies. As well as a formal reporting requirement, the Annual Report and Accounts is used as a way to inform and engage the public and donors in Oxfam's work.

Due to the conflict of interest, LC did not participate in the decision-making regarding the approval of the letter of financial support to Oxfam Activities Limited.

After discussion, the Board thanked the CFO and:

- 1) APPROVED the Annual Report and Accounts for 2020/21 for publication, as recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee, subject to further minor revisions.
- 2) NOTED the external audit findings, control recommendations and management response
- 3) AUTHORISED the Chair to
  - a. agree any final minor revisions to the Annual Report and Accounts before publication
  - b. sign the letter of representation to the external auditors and to
  - c. sign the letter of financial support to OAL

- 4) NOTED the latest financial results to the end of October 2021
- 5) NOTED the update on the financial triggers agreed previously by the Board.

**21/57 Quarterly Assurance: CEO Dashboard (Paper 3) COO on behalf of SLT (paper 6)**

The paper was taken as read. The COO gave a presentation of the key points. The Dashboard is continuing to evolve, with further development being informed by the outcome of the 2022/23 corporate planning process.

After discussion, the Board thanked the COO and NOTED the Report.

**21/58 Staff survey (Management response and actions)**

The COO gave a presentation on the steps taken and being taken in response to the Oxfam GB Staff’s responses to the Global Oxfam Survey. These including carrying out additional analysis, exploring further with Staff the issues arising, the underlying reasons and identifying actions. These are being developed into an action plan. The main key themes were reward, well-being, leadership and connection to the organisation. These are being explored separately with Divisions. Due to the time of year, staff working in Retail had not yet been engaged in the discussions. There would be a communication to Staff the following week (with a ‘you said, we did’ approach), standing items on the Operational Performance Group and SLT’s agendas and regular updates to Staff.

After discussion, the Board thanked the COO and NOTED the steps being taken.

<b>Action:</b>	
<b>Presentation slides to be circulated</b>	<b>COO</b>

**21/59 Engagement: CSO Report**

The CSO delivered a presentation entitled ‘Engagement Progress Report’ updating the Board on a variety of matters including progress against the strategy ‘Power of People’ and brand and reputation.

**21/60 Restricted funding, current position and strategic considerations (Paper 6)**

The paper was taken as read. Dave Hillyard gave a presentation on Institutional donor trends and implications. Currently some £70m of Affiliate funding is still shown in Oxfam GB’s accounts. If changes to the Confederation model proceed, this income would feature in other Affiliates’ or Oxfam International’s accounts rather than Oxfam GB’s.

After discussion, the Board thanked the Executive for the Reports and NOTED the Reports

**21/61 Fundraising compliance and governance (Paper 6A)**

The Paper was taken as read. Following the external Governance Review’s recommendation that the Public Engagement Committee be closed and the Board have direct oversight of fundraising, measures were proposed for its governance.

After discussion, the Board APPROVED the proposed measures.

**21/62 Safe Programming Update – Emily Tomkys Valteri, Safe Programming & Accountability Lead & John Plastow, Chief Impact Officer (Paper 7)**

The Paper was taken as read. ETV gave a presentation highlighting key aspects. The Board noted the links to safeguarding, that it is critical to Oxfam's mandate and building trust to have safe programming and that influencing and learning from others delivering on the ground is key. The Board noted that it was important to work with and to share its expertise with partners to ensure that programming is safe. The Board also noted the importance of using language consistent with Oxfam's Values and policies.

After discussion, the Board congratulated the Executive for the work and subject to its comments, NOTED and supported the direction of travel in the Report.

**21/63 Safeguarding Strategy – Clifford Isabelle, Global Safeguarding Director (Paper 8)**

The Paper and draft Strategy were taken as read. The draft Strategy has been developed with input from internal and stakeholders and the Safeguarding and Ethics Committee (SEC), which recommends its adoption. The Strategy aligns with and integrates with other policies and takes on the learning from Oxfam as well as the sector. The implementation plan will be reviewed and overseen by SEC. The Board noted the importance of stakeholders and the media and public understanding the complexities of safeguarding within the sector.

After discussion, the Board thanked CI for the work and APPROVED the Strategy.

**21/64 6 Monthly Safeguarding Report, Clifford Isabelle, Global Safeguarding Director (Paper 9)**

The Paper was taken as read. CI reported that Country visits had started again. There is on-going work regarding the DRC investigation, overseen by SEC. Whilst the case data shows an increase in the number of reports, this is to be expected as the proactive safeguarding work increases in countries.

The Board thanked the Executive for the work and CI and Annie Hudson in particular. for their time and expertise.

After discussion, the Board NOTED the Report.

**21/65 Transforming for a Radically Better World: Danny Sriskandarajah, CEO and Fenella Porter, Head of Equalities (Paper 10)**

The Paper was taken as read. The Executive made presentations on the work to date, including the engagement of the Governance Committee, to produce the strategy on anti-racism, feminism and shifting power. A draft action plan which is being developed was also presented and will be brought to the April Board meeting. It will clarify how Oxfam ensures that it protects freedom of speech internally and externally, whilst at the same time protecting the rights of marginalised and under-represented groups.

After discussion, the Board thanked the Executive and APPROVED the Strategy.

**21/66 New Campaigns, Policy and Influencing Strategy: Sam Dick, Co-Head of Programming and Influencing Enablers, Impact Division (Paper 11)**

The Paper was taken as read.

The Board thanked the Executive and APPROVED the Strategy.

## **61/67 Speaking Out Strategy 2021: Katy Chakrabortty, Head of Advocacy (Paper 12)**

The Paper was taken as read. The Executive gave a presentation on the work to develop the Strategy and of key points. The Paper had been discussed in the Programme Committee, which gave its support for the Strategy with next steps to include the development of a plan. This would include working with different parts of the executive to develop a wider influencing agenda across the Oxfam Confederation and with partners, acting in partnership to make change happen.

After discussion, the Board thanked the Executive for their work and APPROVED the Strategy.

## **61/68 Impact and external view: external speaker**

Jennie Richmond, Director of Impact Works Associates, gave a talk about the work and role of the RINGO (*Re-imagining the INGO*) project, which she and two of the Trustees are working on. This is a systems change initiative that seeks to transform global civil society to respond to today's challenges, with particular focus on the role of the international non-governmental organisation (INGO).

The Board thanked JR for her inspiring talk and expressed support for RINGO's work.

## **61/69 Learning and Accountability Framework: Sarah Rose and Katrina Barnes (Co-Heads of Evidence and Strategic Learning) and John Plastow, Chief Impact Officer (Paper 13)**

The Paper was taken as read. The executive gave a presentation drawing out the key points of the new Framework and the key drivers behind it. The Framework had been discussed by the Programme Committee, which supported its adoption. The next steps focus on the detailed integration of strategies, methodical detail and roles and responsibilities.

After discussion, the Board thanked the Executive and APPROVED the Framework.

## **61/70 Reports from Board Committees**

### **Programme Committee, December 2021**

The Committee had discussed some of the Board's agenda items and their views shared in the Board discussions. There had been a presentation on Valuing Women's Work, an issue which will be brought to the April Board meeting. It reviewed its own effectiveness and reflected on areas where it thought it could most contribute.

### **Governance Committee, November 2021**

The Committee had discussed the winding up of the Public Engagement Committee. It had decided not to recommend any Trustee recruitment before the 2022 cycle. DS and CG will review the skills survey to identify priority skills for that recruitment. It is reviewing the Trustee and Non -Trustee Committee member recruitment and checking processes. There was a discussion on stakeholder engagement. Recognising that there is work to be done, this will be brought back to a future meeting. There was also a discussion regarding complaints handling and responses.

## **21/71 OI Assembly: Angela Cluff**

AC had attended the on-line Assembly as Oxfam GB's Assembly Delegate. She reported that it had been very well-organised, including holding introductory sessions. It was inspiring and created a feeling of being connected to a global movement. Work included approving a global strategy. The OI Chair had announced her resignation at the end, so there would be a process to recruit a new Chair. The presence of external stakeholders could be strengthened.

**21/72 AOB**

None

**21/73 Brief review of meeting effectiveness**

The impact of the meeting being held as a hybrid meeting was discussed.

CG thanked everyone and wished everyone safe and well for the festive season

**21/74 MATTERS APPROVED BY CONSENT and INFORMATION PAPERS**

**Matters approved by consent:**

Committee and subsidiary Boards – Trustee memberships 2021/22 (Paper 14)

Oxfam GB in Kenya Branch National Board (Paper 16)

Paper 15 wasn't tabled.

**Information items**

The Board NOTED the following papers

- Oxfam GB Risk Register
- Oxfam International Board Communiqué
- Board Forward Planner
- ARC Annual Report
- Minutes of the Governance Committee meeting on 13 September 2021

**Next Meetings:**

10<sup>th</sup> March

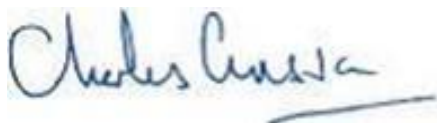
27/28 April

27/28 July

28/29 September (Strategy)

23/24 November

Submitted and approved at a meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022.



.....Charles Gurassa, Chair