

Oxfam Strategic Steer.

2011/12 – 2013/14

The Strategic Steer is designed to inform staff across the organisation about the key priorities for the next three years so that they can shape their work accordingly. It is based on our understanding of how the world is changing for poor people and how we believe we should respond. The priorities are determined by bringing together what is being developed locally, for example through National Change Strategies (now developing to be the Joint Country Analysis and Strategies, JCAS, across OI Affiliates in country), in plans of individual departments and with a perspective from senior levels in the organisation on external changes in our world and how Oxfam needs to develop to remain relevant and effective.

This version replaces the one issued last year. Most of our programmes and activities are continuing, so much of this document will look the same as last year's. There are a few significant changes, and we have highlighted these in this document. We have rewritten the context section, 'Our World', to keep it up to date. You can throw away any earlier strategic steer documents as this one brings together all you need in one place.



Keya and her family spent more than a month living on a small raised platform above water the last time floods hit Char Atra, Bangladesh. Oxfam is now working with them so they can grow vegetables and earn an income during floods. Credit: Dan Chung

Our mission

Oxfam works with others to overcome poverty and suffering

Our beliefs

- All human lives are of equal value.
- Poverty makes people more vulnerable to conflict and natural disasters.
- People's vulnerability to poverty and suffering is increased by unequal power relations, based on, for example, gender, race, class, caste and disability.
- In a world rich in resources, poverty is a morally indefensible injustice which can and must be overcome.
- With the right resources, support and training, people living in poverty can solve their own problems.

The way we work

Empowerment: Everyone involved with Oxfam – whether contributing to our work or benefiting from it – should feel empowered to help end poverty.

Inclusiveness: We listen to and are open to everyone's view.

Accountability: Through our results focused approach, we hold ourselves accountable in everything we do – and we expect the same high standards from others. We recognise that our own empowerment only comes with accountability.

Our approach

All our work is under-pinned by a rights-based approach. We believe that all people have social, economic, political, and civil rights, as well as rights under humanitarian law. To overcome poverty and suffering, we work to ensure that these rights are fulfilled and protected. We believe that given resources and power, people can solve their own problems; so we support self-reliance, not dependency. We also recognise wider, national, regional and global issues that need to be tackled. Our work on the ground informs both our analysis of issues and our campaigning work to secure lasting change. We work in three main areas: saving lives through emergency response; long-term development work; and campaigning. These different approaches are intertwined, mutually-reinforcing and need to be used together to achieve lasting change. We are always seeking to have the greatest impact but this does not usually mean establishing large-scale programmes ourselves, but ensuring our work leverages lasting change at scale through collaborating with others.

Our World

The context of our work to overcome poverty, suffering, and injustice, changes constantly. Oxfam needs to understand these changes and react with agility and effectiveness to maximize our impact with poor people.

Our analysis builds on the work done by the OI Global Team, our own leadership, and trustees, which identifies three dominant themes for our work in the next period: volatility, scarcity, and new political dynamics. Increasing inequality is inherent in all three themes, and remains a core driver of the poverty and suffering we seek to address.

Volatility: In the last five years, many poor and vulnerable people have lived through devastating shocks, a number of which look set to worsen in the coming decade. 2008 saw a food-price spike that left 100 million more people hungry, created primarily by biofuel demand (energy security measures), climate change, and increased meat consumption. FAO is already warning that the conditions are established for a further food shock in the next three to five years, as the struggle over land and water intensifies. Many poor people have also faced a rising number of climate-related shocks that have destroyed their livelihoods, and the number of poor people affected looks set to increase 50 per cent by 2015. The global economic crisis has also brought recession and uncertainty to poor women and men.

In response to this trend we must put poor women's rights at the heart of our work as they are usually the worst affected by all three trends, and especially shocks. We need to bolster resilience and social cohesion through strengthening organisations, especially where poor women play a leadership role. We need to enhance and adapt our humanitarian response with partners. Equally, our drive and investment in adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and social protection must be re-doubled. Volatility can also create opportunities for discontinuous, abrupt change, such as the opportunity now to push for a Financial Transaction Tax to raise up to \$400 billion annually for poverty and climate change, from speculative and casino trading. Extreme events can also galvanise unprecedented social action nationally, and we need to work hard to not lose the moment for change.

Scarcity: Our programmes are witnessing intense competition for land, water, atmospheric space for carbon (climate change), and energy. In particular, in this era of scarcity, the control by women of their assets is becoming yet more precarious. There is a rising sense that our economic and social development model, North and South, is in dire need of reform or re-conception. It has been based on the false assumption of inexhaustible natural resources, which has driven unsustainable consumption patterns. Population growth will also impact on resource depletion. These trends threaten the security, livelihoods, and food justice of the poor. The global economic crisis has left many governments, South and North, with a major fiscal gap threatening the provision of essential services, and elements of social protection on which some of the poorest depend. Oxfam research

shows the poorest nations face a \$65 billion shortfall in their budgets due to the crisis. Our UK Poverty Programme is now seeing rising distress in poor communities across the UK.

In response, as part of Oxfam International we will be launching a major new global campaign focussing on food justice in a resource constrained world. This will bring together land, water and climate change issues but using food as 'the lens' through which we see the impact on poor people. The campaign will be launched in the first half of 2011.

There has already been a lot of enthusiasm for this campaign from staff who have heard about it, not least because so much of our work in countries relates to food as part of rural livelihoods work and because in so many countries poor people are food insecure.

New Political Dynamics: We are entering a multi-polar world where power is reconfiguring. New actors and voices are also emerging in nations, challenging old ideas. This is creating both great opportunities and challenges to our goals, and our change models. The growing influence of the BRICSAM¹ and G20 countries has enormous potential to bring half the world's population together and define a common destiny. But there is also potential for this to become another closed elite of countries, less concerned with the plight of the poorest.

New actors have also emerged in the development world: global companies, who seek to transform their core business model to marry their drive for profit, with their responsibilities to the people and planet in their supply chain; 'philanthrocapitalists' and social entrepreneurs; charitable foundations in north and south, and new southern-led civil society coalitions using digital technologies for influence. Also, Brazil, China, India and Arab countries have grown rapidly as donors.

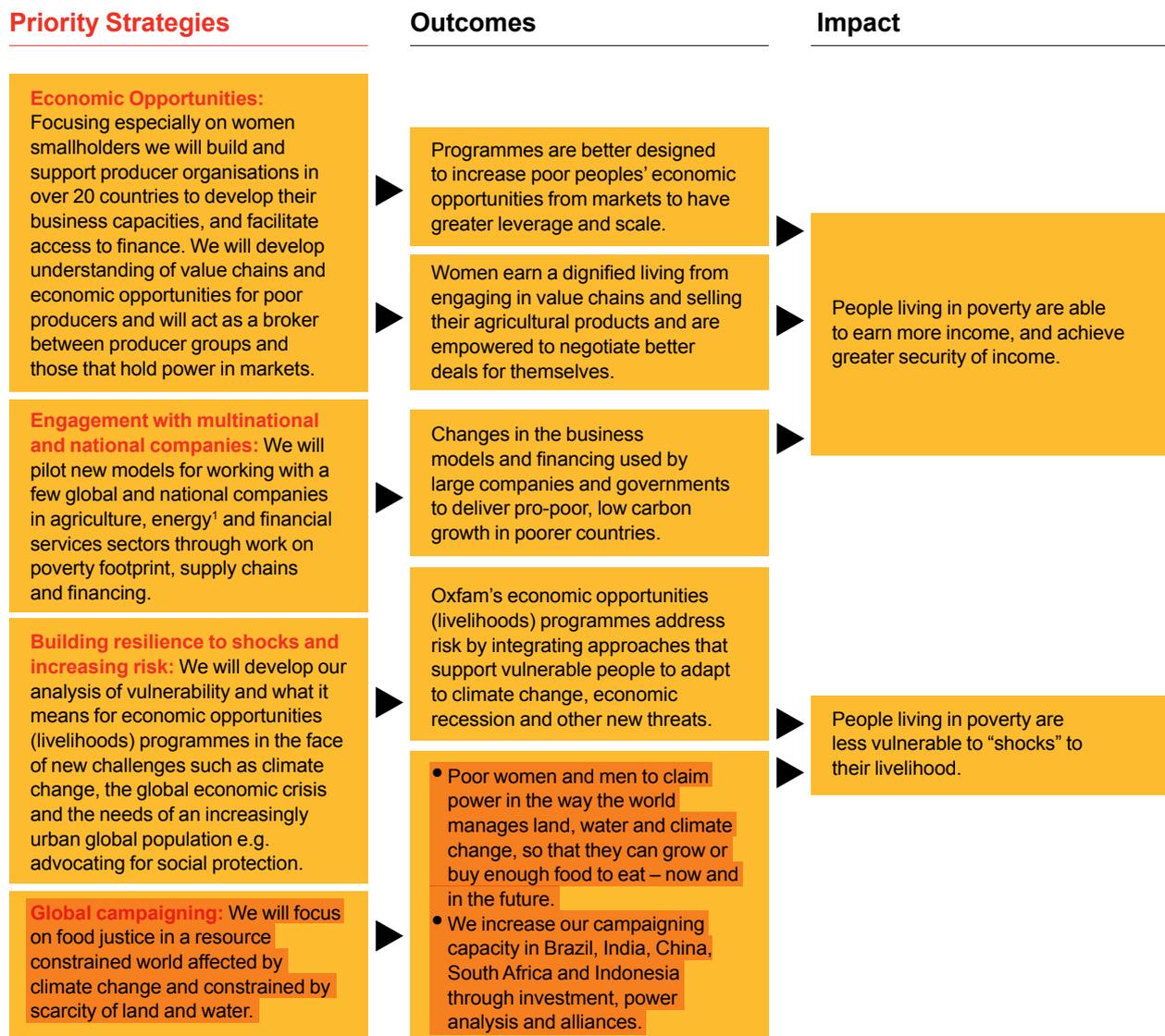
In response, we need to demand effective global and national governance to address the threats from inequality, volatility and scarcity and their impact on poverty and suffering. We need to invest in influencing the G20, but also in the voices and assertiveness of the poorest countries. We can deepen our collaboration with dynamic and new civil society actors. We can become a powerful networker and convenor of diverse, progressive actors including the private sector and social entrepreneurs seeking innovative and effective solutions to poverty and suffering.

To make the changes we want to see in the world we need many people to be engaged, to 'Be Humankind'. We want to draw on peoples' concern for others, and their sense of wanting to be part of a wider global community. Our communications will continue to express our 'provocative optimism' for a fairer world.

* BRICSAM: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and Mexico – key emerging economies.

Aim 1: Right to Economic Justice

Our goal: To ensure the rights of people to have food and income security that is sustainable for their future, and for the environment. We want to see the proportion of people living in extreme poverty (on less than \$1/day) halved, by 2015, in all countries of sub-Saharan Africa, South and East Asia, and Latin America; and a marked reduction in the extreme disparities in wealth within and between countries.



Why have we made these strategic choices?

Scarcity: Poor people are witnessing intense competition for land, water, atmospheric space for carbon (climate change), and energy

Climate change: Poor people are being hit first and worst by climate change. We expect major financial flows to become available over the next 10 years.

New approaches to respond to the effects of climate change, resource scarcity and global economic recession (e.g. on social protection): Only the richest three per cent of people in the world are covered by insurance.

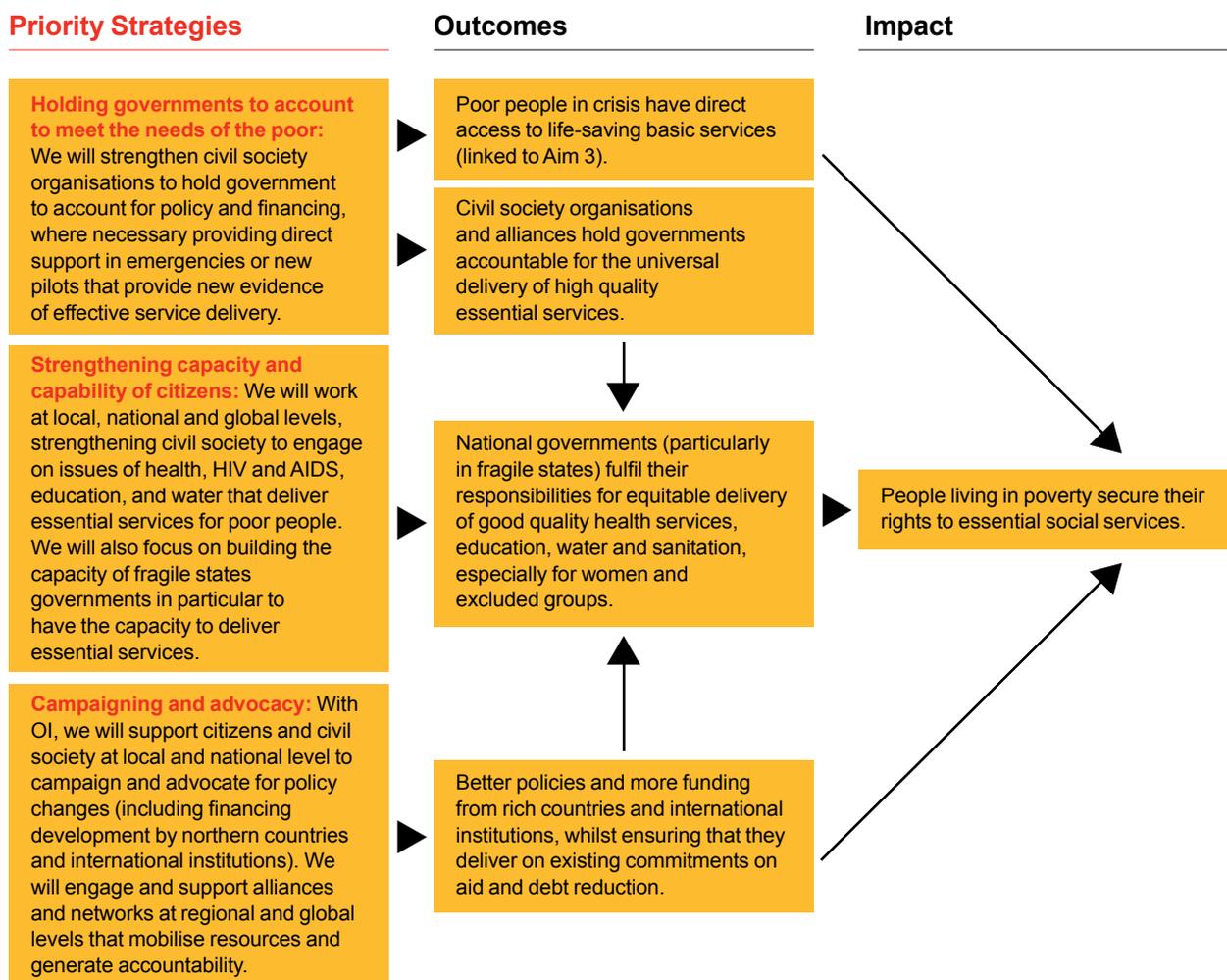
Focus on women: The majority of the people living in poverty globally are women.

Private sector engagement: Nine out of ten jobs in the developing world are in the private sector.

¹The intent in working with renewables is to develop ground rules so that poor people can take advantage of this sector for both income as well as energy. The intent is not to start a new programme on access to energy for poor people.

Aim 2 – Right to Essential Services

Our goal: To ensure people’s right to equitable access to quality essential services, particularly education, health care and water, through our work on meeting needs in crises, strengthening capacity, and campaigning for the provision of essential services and its financing and to strengthen people’s ability to hold their governments to account.



Why have we made these strategic choices?

Development Finance: The global economic crisis, more vocal aid scepticism, and broken promises from donors, requires greater assertiveness on aid effectiveness and innovative financing.

Free Public Services: Around half a million women die in pregnancy and childbirth, one billion people have no access to clean water, 30 million people in developing countries live with HIV/AIDS, and 770 million people are illiterate, 65% of whom are women.

Fragile states: The poorest billion people live in fragile states where access to essential services is so very limited and yet critical for security and the stability of those states.

Aim 3 – Right to Life and Security

Our goal: All women and men in humanitarian crises will be assured of both the protection and the assistance they require, regardless of who or where they are or how they are affected.



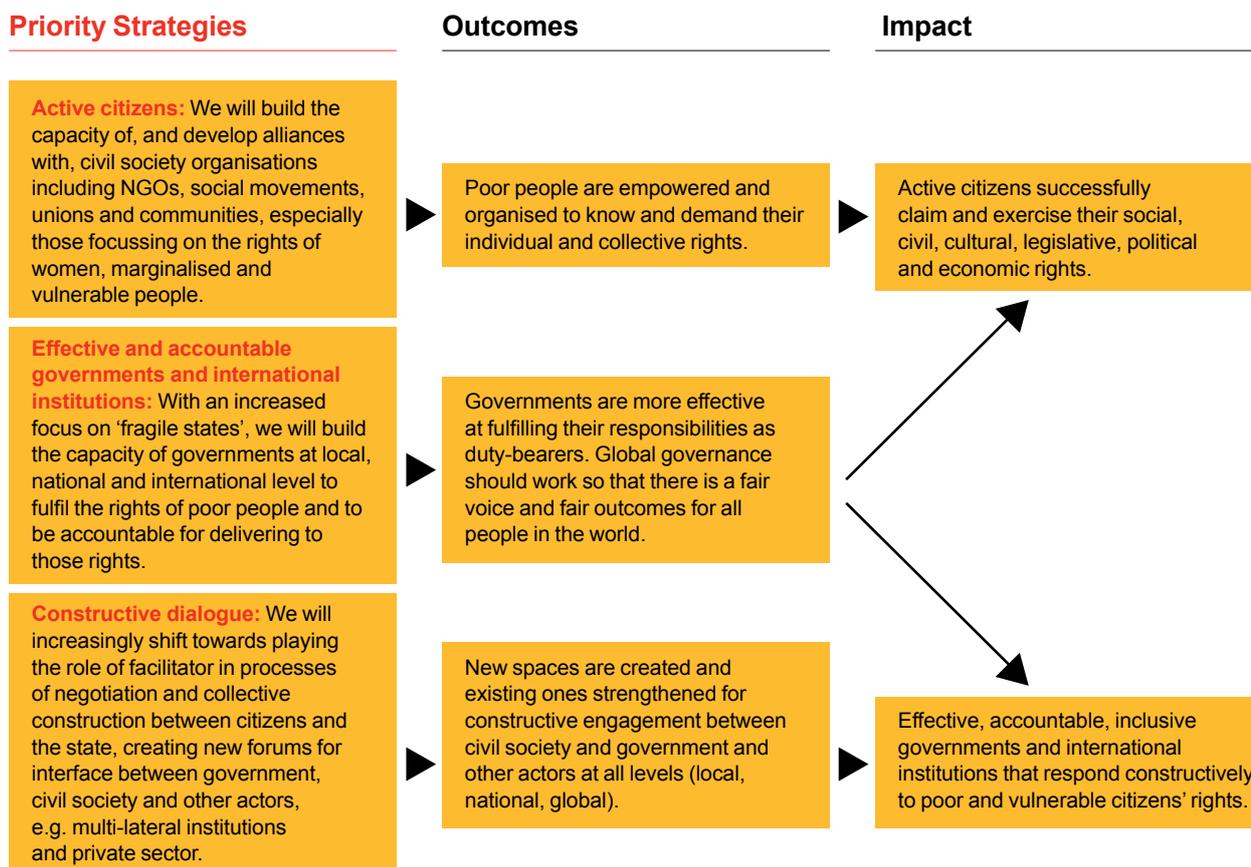
Why have we made these strategic choices?

Climate Change: Whilst conflict continues to affect poor people, climate change will also increasingly affect the most vulnerable. Disaster Risk Reduction becomes more important in this context as does the need to build local capacity in addition to improving global leadership.

Operational Response: Whilst we seek to enable national governments and local partners to respond in emergencies, Oxfam will continue to respond directly where appropriate and necessary to ensure all people exercise their right to life and security

Aim 4 – Right To Be Heard

Our goal: Our aim is that poor and marginalised people are able to influence decisions affecting their lives, including using their civil and political rights to achieve social and economic rights and to challenge inequality. As a rights-based organisation, Oxfam seeks to ground all of its work in strengthening the ability of people living in poverty to demand and defend their rights, and ensuring that governments and institutions fulfil their obligations to respect and protect the rights of poor people. All of our work should increase the ability of poor and marginalised women and men to be heard, and we are committed to improving our own accountability to them.



Why have we made these strategic choices?

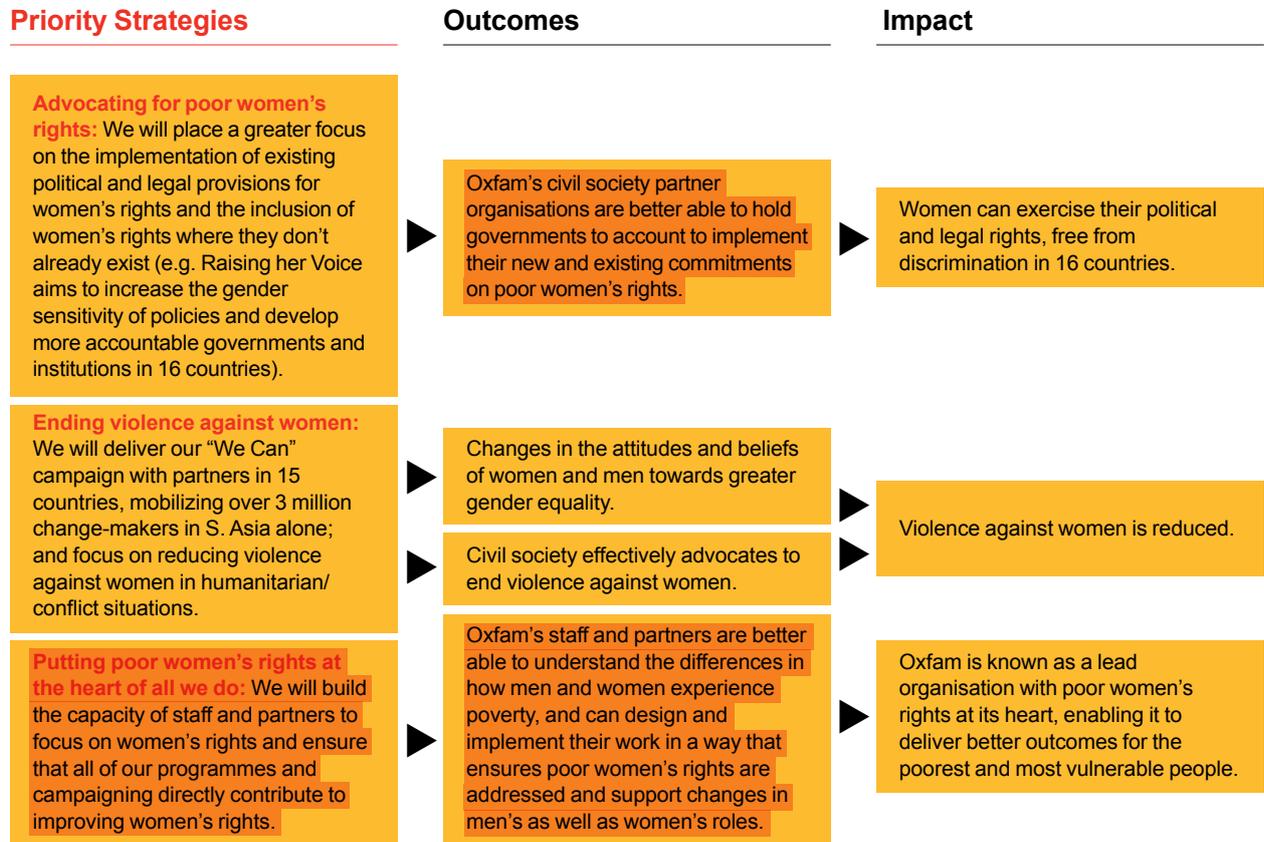
Right to be heard across all our work: In order for change to be sustainable, active citizens including poor and marginalised women and men, need to have voice in their own society. We need to ensure all our work, whatever the aim, amplifies and adds value to poor peoples voices. In this way, Oxfam's work on the right to be heard is a means to an end, as well as an end in itself. People power can be harnessed to achieve the goals that Oxfam as a whole is working towards - such as holding governments to account to

deliver education for all. However, in this section we highlight in more detail the work we do on supporting civil society as an end in itself. Essentially, this means that we work to assist people in their own struggles for justice, greater equality and better governance. The specific goals, informed by a set of principles and a shared framework of values, may be very different in different countries such as rights for indigenous peoples or for small-scale fisher folk, monitoring how local government units spend their budgets etc.

Effective states: are critical to tackling poverty and inequality. It is often more effective to work with willing governments to build their capacity to deliver quality services rather than only holding them to account.

Aim 5 – Right to Gender Justice

Our goal: Many more women will gain power over their lives and live free from violence through changes in attitudes, ideas and beliefs about gender relations, and through increased levels of women’s active engagement and critical leadership in institutions, decision-making and change processes.



Why have we made these strategic choices?

Violence against women: Gender-based violence is a fundamental barrier to women achieving their rights, and causes more deaths and disability among women aged 15 to 44 than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents, and war.

Women’s economic, legal and political rights: Many countries have great policies on women’s rights, they’re just not implemented, more work is needed to ensure women’s economic rights are built into policies on assets and entitlements.

Putting poor women’s rights at the heart of all our work: Women work two-thirds of the world’s working hours, and produce half of the world’s food, yet earn only ten per cent of the world’s income, and own less than one per cent of the world’s property. Putting poor women’s rights at the heart of our programme will require clear programme focus and design choices to ensure impact on poor women’s rights.

We want to be a highly effective organisation. To achieve this we need to: look for ideas and solutions inside and outside our sector; challenge ourselves about what is working and what is not; work collaboratively with each other to deliver and ensure our processes are simple and robust.

The current global economic crisis means we have to continue to focus on reducing costs. It also requires us to be agile and innovative in those areas we think will bring the greatest change and impact for poor people. This means:

Investing in our people

- We will continue to develop our skills and approaches in management.
- We will have a particular focus over the next 3 years on developing our skills e.g. in project management.
- We will enhance our ability to work collaboratively within and across teams, and outside in other sectors.
- We will remain committed to achieving greater impact in our work through valuing and leveraging the diversity of our staff and our supporters.

Developing our programme

- All country programmes are now creating joint OI country analyses and strategies (including power and vulnerability analyses) as a critical first step in making Single Management Structure a reality. The challenge of delivering on our current National Change Strategies remains with skills development and advocacy, collaborating with others and developing programmes that leverage change at scale.
- We need to continue to improve the way we learn and share what works and what does not.
- We need to capture our effectiveness by using appropriate measurement tools including global indicators and external evaluations that help tell the story of change.
- We need to further improve our business systems to be simpler and more agile, both to improve our programme effectiveness and to deliver an increase in restricted funding.

Improving our communications

The world of communications is changing and we need to be able to communicate with all our stakeholders in ways that are appropriate to them. This means:

- We need to clarify how we can operate in the new digital world – from our interaction with financial supporters through to engaging with digital communities about poverty.
- We need to work harder on enabling our supporters to feel more emotionally connected to Oxfam and its cause.

- We need to engage with the business and financial sectors, philanthropists and other 'new influentials' in ways that convince them of our effectiveness. We need to convince them of the importance of sustainable development and this will require us to be able to demonstrate our results and accountability more clearly to them.

Developing within Oxfam International

In the next 3 years there will be significant changes in the way we work with Oxfam International:

- Beginning in April 2010, but continuing over a 3-5 year period, we will implement a single management structure for all Oxfams operating in one country. This will entail a significant change management process.
- We will support more southern NGOs, or Oxfam teams developing into Oxfam affiliates (aim is 20-25 Oxfams by 2020).
- We will work to improve the ways of working within Oxfam International, encouraging our staff to demonstrate the behaviours of delivery, accountability, realism, honesty and trust.
- In June 2010 we started a Global Identity Project to develop the Oxfam brand across the confederation. The project will develop a brand asset management tool available to all affiliates and SMS countries.

Securing our resources

We will maintain and if possible grow our income over the next three years. We expect there to be an increase in the proportion of restricted funding (from institutions and from individuals) which means making sure our internal systems work well to meet the demands of restricted funding. To grow our resources we need:

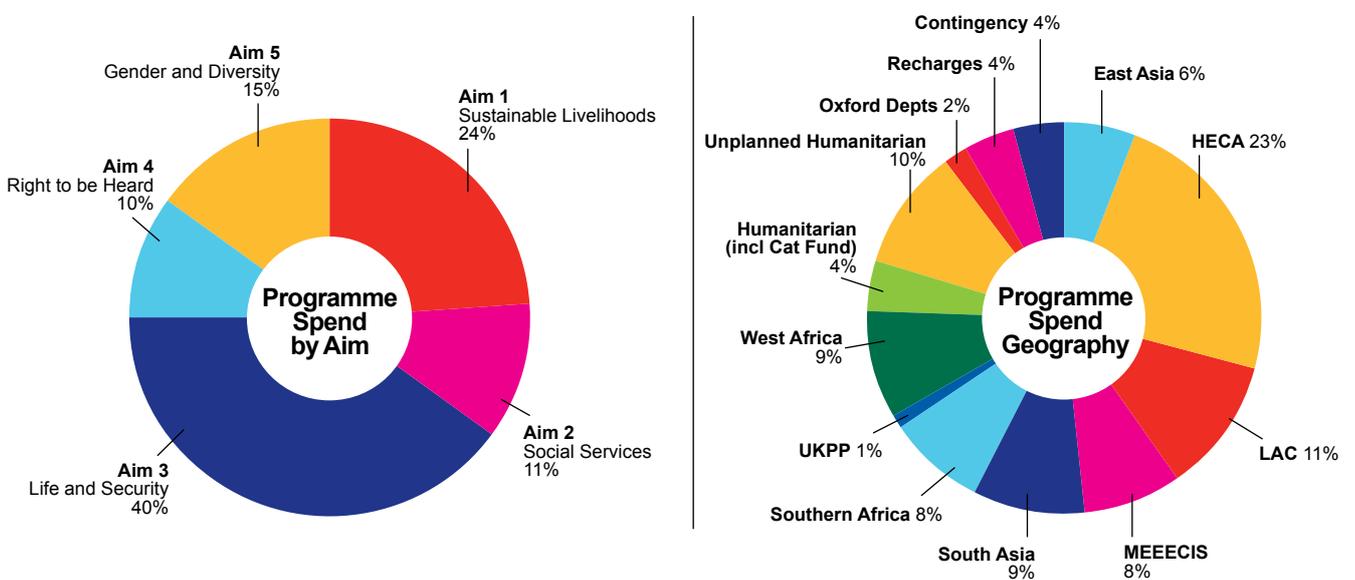
- To reverse the decline in our base of committed givers, using new routes to recruit them and better-tailored engagement.
- To develop our community fundraising, establishing supporter groups across the country.
- Working with the newly established Development Board to fundraise from high net-worth individuals and corporates.
- To continue to diversify our institutional funders, both governments and foundations.
- To continue to keep our shops network innovative and dynamic, meeting customers' needs while enabling them to recognise Oxfam's purpose at the heart of the shops.

Reducing our carbon footprint

We know that climate change is affecting poor people earliest and worst. If we are to challenge others on carbon emissions and on global policies to reverse climate change then we have to practise what we preach.

- Each year we will continue to set and deliver targets for reductions in our carbon footprint.

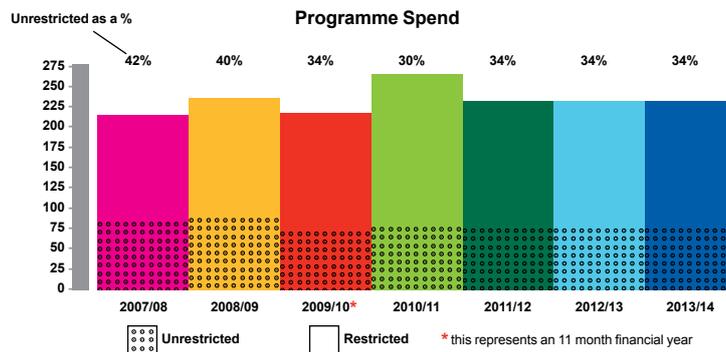
The facts



Programme Spend

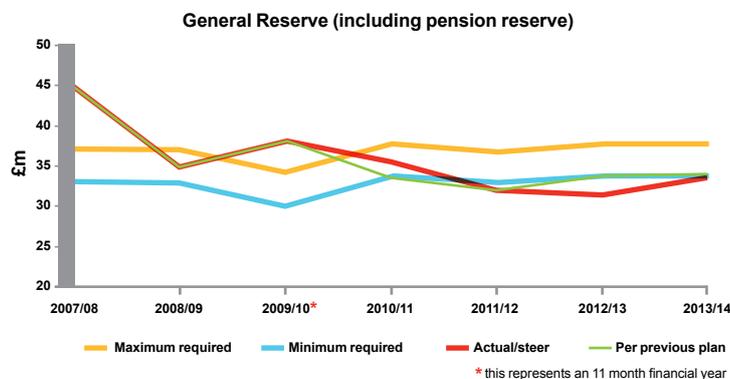
During the period of the steer programme spend (including Gifts in Kind) remains flat at around £230m, from a peak of £262m in 2010/11.

Unrestricted programme spend as a proportion of total programme spend decreases by 4% to 30% from 2009/10 to 2010/11 and then returns to 34% over the steer period.



General Reserve (incl. pension reserve)

General reserves are forecast to be within the £34m - £38m range in April 2011. In 2011/12, reserves fall below the reserve range and remain just below through the steer period, but do stay above £30m throughout.



Chair: John Gaventa
Vice chair: Vanessa Godfrey
Honorary Treasurer: Gareth Davies
Chief Executive: Barbara Stocking DBE

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Be Humankind



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