

# **Oxfam Accountability Report 2010**

## Oxfam Accountability

### Our definition

Accountability is the process through which an organisation balances the needs of stakeholders in its decision-making and activities, and delivers against this commitment. Accountability is based on four dimensions: transparency, participation, learning and evaluation, and feedback mechanisms that allow the organisation to give account to, take account of, and be held to account by stakeholders.

### Our principles

We hold ourselves primarily accountable to people living in poverty, but we take our accountability to all stakeholders seriously, and continuously strive to balance their different needs. Increased accountability will be achieved and demonstrated through respectful and responsible attitudes, appropriate systems and strong leadership.

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## Introduction

In our work to overcome global poverty, it is essential that Oxfam is accountable to the people whose lives we seek to improve and to the organisations and individuals whose support makes this possible. We cannot expect either group to take us at our word that Oxfam 'does the right thing' – we need to demonstrate this in every aspect of our work.

Accountability lies at the core of Oxfam's values. In our humanitarian, development and campaigning work, we strive to help people in poverty to know and demand their rights, and to hold to account those in power (including ourselves and other NGOs, as well as employers, landowners, local and national governments, etc). For Oxfam to call for greater accountability from others, we must be accountable ourselves.

Oxfam published our first accountability report in 2007. This set out our definition of accountability, and our targets for becoming more accountable to all our stakeholders over the three years 2007-10. We now report back on the extent to which we have achieved these targets, and set out our objectives for improved accountability for the period 2010-13. As in previous years, we have adopted the standards of both the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO) Accountability Charter.

We use appropriate ways of communicating with women and men living in poverty and responding to the issues they raise. This is outlined in more detail in the section on people affected by our programmes (page 5). This report is primarily about, and intended for, our other key stakeholders. These include our partner organisations and allies, donors and supporters, staff and volunteers, suppliers, and the governments, institutions and organisations that we seek to influence. The report also contains chapters on our efforts to reduce our environmental impact and our accountability in terms of how we govern the organisation.

In producing this report, staff from across Oxfam reviewed performance against objectives on an internal peer review basis. The results were scrutinised by an advisory board external to Oxfam, and the final report was approved by our Trustees. The process took from January to July 2010.

### The scope of this report

This report documents the activities of Oxfam GB (herein referred to as 'Oxfam') and its subsidiaries. We are not reporting on the activities of the other 13 members of Oxfam International, which are NGOs in their own right, or of the International Secretariat of Oxfam International, our umbrella body.<sup>1</sup>

In some cases, and as stated, the data in this report relates only to our activities in the UK. In addition, we have restated some figures because of additional information that has come to light since our previous report. The last financial period, 1 May 2009 to 31 March 2010, is an 11-month period because we have changed our year-end to bring us into line with the majority of members of Oxfam International. In 2010/11 we will therefore restate some figures to allow year-on-year comparison.

The accountability report is in addition to, and should be read alongside, our annual report and accounts, which is published every year in line with statutory reporting requirements. This sets out our mission, our achievements, and how we have used the resources entrusted to us.

We welcome your feedback. Please send your comments and questions to [enquiries@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oxfam.org.uk) or by post to **Chief Executive Officer, Oxfam GB, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY, United Kingdom.**

## Accountability to the people affected by our programmes

Oxfam is primarily accountable to the people whose lives we seek to improve. We believe that by being more accountable to communities, we can have higher quality programmes and more sustainable impact. We strive to promote the participation of people and communities in programme identification, planning and delivery – ensuring that decisions about how we use our resources are shaped by the priorities of women and men living in poverty.

Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) processes allow us to take account of the views and priorities of our partners and the communities with, and for whom, we work. MEL ensures that we are able to give an account of our decisions and actions, and stakeholders are able to hold us accountable for effectively contributing to positive changes in the lives of women and men in poverty with the resources with which we have been entrusted.

While our annual report and accounts and other documents on our website provide information about the impact and effectiveness of our programmes, this report focuses more on our ways of working, and our accountability for how we do our work.

### Objectives 2007-10

**We will ensure all key staff are able to articulate what accountability means to them, and what they are doing to improve their accountability.**

- Throughout 2008/09, programme teams in 22 countries undertook a mapping process to rank themselves and their practices against the four dimensions that Oxfam adopted in our organisational definition of accountability: transparency, participation, learning and evaluation, and feedback mechanisms.
- All staff asked were able to give examples of what they are doing to improve accountability. The exercise highlighted that most teams or individuals rate themselves quite highly on activities that encourage the participation of people affected by our programmes – but considerably lower on providing information, requesting feedback or encouraging complaints. These are the challenges for the future.

**We will ensure the people we work with, and for, are able to tell us whether we are behaving in an accountable way, and whether our programmes are appropriate and helpful.**

- Research was carried out in the Horn, East and Central Africa (HECA) region<sup>2</sup> on how best to routinely involve men and women living in poverty in our monitoring and evaluation activities. Different approaches to bringing community voices into six-monthly monitoring reviews, to give them a greater say in programme decisions, were trialled and reviewed. The findings were shared through a guide for HECA Programme Managers and have since been incorporated into Oxfam's new Programme Framework.
- In the area of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), work has been ongoing to ensure that we communicate clearly with people affected by our programmes about their rights, and about our shared roles and responsibilities. For example, we produced a booklet for WASH professionals, which provides practical guidance about making these programmes as accountable as possible.
- A Complaints Policy is now in place and has been widely communicated. Although implementation remains patchy (see page 6 for details), we can report an increasing number of cases where feedback and complaints mechanisms are working well in our humanitarian response programmes. In the Philippines and Haiti, for example, we are encouraging people in the communities we are working with to give us feedback by ringing freephone numbers. Calls are then logged, analysed and followed up. This information enables us to make improvements to our programmes on an ongoing basis, and the learning gathered in Haiti is being shared widely across the sector.

<sup>1</sup> The International Secretariat is also a signatory to the INGO Charter, and is publishing its own compliance report against that Charter.

<sup>2</sup> Oxfam is organised into seven international regions: Horn, East and Central Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; South Asia; East Asia; Latin America and Caribbean; and Middle East, Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States. We also have a programme in the UK.

**We will adopt a framework for accountability, with additional guidance and tools that support delivery in a humanitarian crisis.**

An accountability framework and matrix have been adopted and are now used to explain and promote accountability in many programmes. The matrix articulates 'bronze', 'silver' and 'gold' standards of accountability in programme implementation, and was the key tool used for the mapping exercise mentioned on page 5. The matrix is now considered useful across both humanitarian and development programmes.

**We will integrate accountability measures into initiatives to improve humanitarian programme management.**

- A staff skills resources pack is now widely available and used to help recruit, induct, train, manage and support staff to work in more accountable ways.
- Sessions on accountability now feature in all training carried out by the Humanitarian Department.
- Measures to increase accountability now feature in all core humanitarian documents and guidelines.

**We will adopt and implement an Open Information Policy that will promote and facilitate the provision of appropriate information to people with, and for whom, we work.**

- As part of our commitment to accountability and transparency, Oxfam shares information with people living in poverty. An important aspect of this is how we respond to requests for information. As stated in our Open Information Policy, which was published on our website in August 2008, we will disclose information, or give reasons for any decision not to disclose (for example, to respect confidentiality or privacy). The Open Information Policy is available at [www.oxfam.org.uk/resources](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources).
- We do not track the number of requests for information that come through our programme offices. We have not received any complaints about any failure to provide information under the Open Information Policy. We have not reviewed the impact of the policy in countries in which we work.
- From peer and self-assessment of our programme practice, it is clear that we are not yet providing adequate information to individuals and communities directly affected by our programmes; this hinders them from becoming adequately

involved. We provide some basic information, but this generally needs to be more systematic, appropriate, and timely.

**We will provide guidance to all staff on how to implement Oxfam's Complaints Policy.**

- The need to fully implement the policy has been communicated on a number of occasions and in a number of ways; however, only a very small number of complaints have been formally reported to headquarters and only two relate to people directly affected by our programmes.
- We do not yet have the processes in place to obtain accurate information about complaints and feedback in our international programme.

**We will trial further approaches to humanitarian accountability and provide support to country programmes which want to strengthen accountability.**

Work on this ranges widely and is ongoing in many of the 22 countries involved in the mapping process. This includes encouraging communities directly affected by our programmes to decide the criteria upon which the programme can be judged a success; publicly disclosing the amount of money received in-country, and how it is spent; publishing people's free entitlements on posters and ration cards; providing a freephone number with which anybody can give feedback or make a complaint.

**We will ensure that one country programme per region is implementing the full complement of accountability initiatives.**

At least one country in each of our seven regions is implementing programmes that concentrate on all dimensions of our definition of accountability.

**We will participate in the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Relief (SCHR) peer review, and the Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) initiative to improve accountability and impact at field level.**

- We participated fully in the SCHR peer review, and have shared the lessons from this both internally and externally (see page 7).
- Our engagement with the ECB initiative is ongoing (we will be able to report back on this in 2011).

**Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR) peer review**

The SCHR peer review on accountability gave us the opportunity to learn more about our accountability to communities affected by humanitarian crises. Oxfam was peer-reviewed by the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the Lutheran World Federation.

A survey of the attitudes, knowledge, and accountability practices of 119 staff around the world formed the starting point for a self-assessment of our accountability. The self-assessment was also based on analysis of interviews with 43 people, in the UK and six other countries. Review teams conducted extensive interviews in Kenya and Nepal, and at our headquarters in Oxford (the latter included 22 interviews with staff, partners and Trustees). A document outlining lessons learned through the peer review process is available on our website.

The review provided reflection on the policies, procedures, and practices we apply when seeking to be accountable to the communities we work with. It examined in particular our accountability to disaster-affected populations, although the analysis and recommendations can be applied across our development and humanitarian programmes. It showed that we have the ambition to be truly

accountable; we have the policies in place to realise this ambition; and there are pockets of very good practice within our programmes. The review recognised that we carry out important preparatory thinking, and already have many of the tools needed to give practical guidance to field practitioners. It showed that across our programme there is a realisation that increased accountability to disaster-affected populations will lead to increased programme quality.

Although many of the review findings were positive, there are clearly areas in which we need to improve. These include overseeing policy compliance; our complaints-handling mechanisms; our ability to learn as an organisation; working in a participatory way throughout the lifetime of a programme (not just at the beginning); giving staff a clear steer on what is expected of them; and by having fewer priorities.

One of the challenges posed to Oxfam in the final report and recommendations of the peer review was "whether [Oxfam] is prepared to connect some managerial muscle to the accountability bones it has already grown, in order to strengthen the push on its accountability efforts. Accountability is fundamentally about 'handing power over'."

**We will conduct programme monitoring reviews in one-third of our programmes.**

Six-monthly programme monitoring reviews are now mandatory for all Oxfam programme and country teams. In 2008/09, the Horn, Eastern and Central Africa region developed guidelines on how to increase the involvement of beneficiaries in programme monitoring reviews.

**In 2007/08, we will begin the first round of country learning reviews. These will contribute to regional learning reviews in 2008/09.**

The first round of country learning reviews took place as planned in 2007/08, contributing to regional learning reviews in two regions. In 2009/10, all countries were required to hold annual country learning reviews.

**We will work on quantitative global indicators to measure our impact over time.**

This is a challenge we continue to grapple with. We have put in place output indicators across our programme. During 2010/11, we will be developing and testing a range of outcome indicators using learning from existing work (eg from our Partnership Programme Agreement<sup>3</sup> reporting to DFID, and our Enterprise Development programme). This will improve our ability to capture and communicate our effectiveness across the full breadth of our campaigns, long-term development and humanitarian programmes.

<sup>3</sup> DFID's Partnership Programme Arrangement (PPA) funding scheme is aimed at supporting DFID's leading NGO partners. PPAs offer beneficiary agencies 'unrestricted' funding (ie we are not required to report on how funds are spent) in return for our reporting progress towards agreed performance indicators.

## Accountability to our partner organisations and allies

### We will carry out additional learning reviews targeting specific areas of work such as livelihoods, HIV and AIDS, and gender.

- In 2009/10, Strategic Reviews were presented to Trustees on Oxfam's programmes on gender, HIV and AIDS, and 'The Right to be Heard' (an area of work which aims to enable people living in poverty to participate in governance and influence the decisions that affect their lives).
- In September 2009, the first *Oxfam Reflects* event brought together Oxfam staff, partners and external stakeholders to assess the impact of our global work with small-scale agricultural producers, and to contribute to the livelihoods programme strategy.

### We will draft and implement a revised policy on programme evaluation.

- In January 2009, a new Programme Evaluation Policy took effect. It states: "Oxfam undertakes timely, relevant and professional analyses of the performance of our programmes that inform our future programme and policy development and help us to be accountable for the resources with which we have been entrusted." The policy stipulates that partners play a strong role in all evaluations, and that findings are shared with partners, affected populations and donors as appropriate.<sup>4</sup>
- In April 2009, an internal database of our programme evaluations went live, enabling all staff to learn from programme successes and failures.

### What we didn't achieve

- We did not achieve the desired take-up of the tools to support accountability that we prepared during the period of this report. This is thought to be due to heavy workloads and high levels of change in both country and regional staff and programmes.
- As indicated on page 6, we also failed to achieve adequate uptake of the Complaints Policy. As an organisation we have not yet created an environment in which staff feel able to seek feedback from individuals and communities, and see complaints as an opportunity to learn. We acknowledge that this will be a long process.
- Efforts to implement the new Programme Evaluation Policy are taking longer than expected. More work is needed to ensure that programme evaluations are shared beyond country teams and that, as an organisation, we manage this knowledge effectively.
- We plan to make further progress in these areas over the next three years. More information can be found on pages 23 and 24.

Oxfam aims to ensure that our ways of working with others are inclusive, accountable and empowering – and based on openness, trust with respect and equality.

### Objectives 2007-10

#### We will revise minimum standards and good practice guidelines for partnerships.

Oxfam launched our new Partnership Policy, 'Working with Others',<sup>5</sup> in late 2007. The policy is based on five values which we believe should underpin all of our partnerships. Working with Others was informed by a strategic evaluation of our ways of working with partners, which included an online survey of approximately 900 partners (to which 400 responded). All regions and countries continue to embed the new Partnership Policy – to make clear our accountability and specific commitments to partners, and the mechanism by which they can hold us to account.

#### We will hold formal and open dialogue with partners about expectations and commitments, including Oxfam's responsibilities, and how we can be held to account for delivery.

Although we still have much work to do to achieve a consistently high level of partner involvement in programme design, there have been a number of significant achievements. These include:

- All country programmes have designed National Change Strategies, which set out our change objectives for each country for the next three to five years. Involving our partners in these discussions was given high priority; partners will also be involved in the ongoing monitoring and assessment of the National Change Strategies.
- A number of partner organisations played a key role in the design and ongoing delivery of *Raising Her Voice*, a new initiative funded by the UK Department for International Development focusing on increasing the voice of women in national and local governance in 17 countries.
- Representatives of several urban and rural organisations from Honduras, Guatemala and Pakistan – all *Raising Her Voice* partners – participated in the UN Commission on the Status of Women, in March 2010, to influence global policies that affect women's lives.

### We will build opportunities into our programme monitoring for reviewing Oxfam's performance with partners.

- All programme monitoring and evaluations aim to take partners' views into account; this includes the Real Time Evaluations, which are carried out in all major humanitarian responses. This feedback informs the ongoing delivery of humanitarian programmes and also contributes to wider organisational thinking about future strategies and priorities.
- In 2009, we repeated the online survey of partners, which resulted in a response rate of 42 per cent (more than 500 partners) and broadly positive feedback for Oxfam. The majority of partners feel strongly that Oxfam shares their values and beliefs, and our partnerships are based on a solid foundation of respect, honesty, dialogue, flexibility, shared decision-making and common purpose. Almost 50 per cent of all partners were aware of Oxfam's new partnership policy, and of these, 96 per cent found it useful.

Overall, in addition to the financial support from Oxfam, the most valued elements of partnering with Oxfam were:

- Joint research, advocacy and campaigning.
- Capacity building, advice, guidance, training and information-sharing.
- Oxfam's role as facilitator, broker and link to global networks (ie beyond our donor role).
- An inclusive way of working (eg joint planning and decision-making).

Partners also used the survey to highlight areas where Oxfam could improve (see page 10).

- A full review of Partnership Policy implementation was carried out in 2010, including an internal audit and a peer review of partnership in four regions, which involved both staff and partners. This review will inform future plans to strengthen our ways of working with others.

<sup>4</sup> Final programme evaluations are available at [www.oxfam.org.uk/publications](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/publications)

<sup>5</sup> Working With Others is available at [www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/accounts/downloads/partnership\\_policy.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/accounts/downloads/partnership_policy.pdf)

## Accountability to our donors and supporters

### We will incorporate partner feedback in annual programme staff appraisals.

Based on a pilot in 2008 in a number of countries, we are now building partner feedback into the annual performance appraisals of programme staff. All regions will now ask partners for feedback on the performance of Oxfam staff, and partner views will regularly be solicited as part of ‘360 degree feedback’<sup>6</sup> for programme staff. For example, in Middle East, Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (MEEECIS) region, all staff were asked to include a partner in their requests for feedback. In East Asia region, most Country Directors championed the process (of obtaining feedback from partners) and found it valuable. While most partners did offer useful feedback, a significant number appeared to find it difficult to give critical feedback about Oxfam staff, preferring to make only positive comments. Next year, therefore, we will give greater priority to raising awareness amongst staff and partners about the process, and endeavour to find ways of enabling partners to feel able to offer critical comments.

### We will adapt and apply Oxfam’s Partnership Policy to campaigning work with partners and allies.

Partnerships and alliances play a prominent role in the new Oxfam campaigning model. Partners and allies were involved in our climate change campaigning throughout the reporting period, and in the external evaluation of this work. We have communicated the results of the evaluation to them. In 2010/11, the Campaigns and Policy Division will be conducting a review of how we work with partners.

### We will systematically put in place sustainable exit policies so that we can be explicit with partners about our plans and enable them to hold us to account.

This has been particularly important in 2009/10 due to budget cuts. When exiting partnerships we have been open with partners and have reduced commitments gradually.

### What we didn’t achieve

- Feedback from Oxfam staff as well as the partner surveys tells us that we have not yet achieved consistent high awareness and use of the Partnership Policy. Approximately one-third of partners consulted in the 2009 survey<sup>7</sup> were unaware of Oxfam’s Partnership Policy, and anecdotal evidence shows that some Oxfam staff are not aware of and/or are not working with the policy.
- While the involvement of partners in providing staff with feedback on their performance is an important step forward, it has not always been easy to convince these partners that we really do want to hear critical feedback. As a result, the feedback was predominantly positive. It will take time for partner organisations to feel sufficient trust to give staff critical comments and to hold both staff, and Oxfam as an organisation, to account.
- Feedback from partners has highlighted a number of areas where Oxfam’s performance and accountability could be improved. These include:
  - Communicating more clearly and consistently the rationale behind changes in Oxfam’s programme priorities.
  - Simplifying our administrative and financial systems, especially for smaller organisations.
  - More timely information-sharing, release of funds, and response to partner concerns.
  - Making greater use of local knowledge and skills.
  - More meaningful joint planning exercises (some of the consultation with partners was felt to be tokenistic).
  - Reconsidering the short-term nature of funding (ie establish longer-term, more strategic partnerships).
- More work is planned over the next three years to put into practice all the elements of the Partnership Policy consistently (see page 24).

Oxfam strives to be accountable to both our institutional donors and our individual supporters in a number of ways. These include: reporting on the way in which funds are raised and used; tracking the views and opinions of our supporters and the UK public about Oxfam’s work; making the best use of the goods donated to our shops; and adhering to good practice in our fundraising.

### Objectives 2007-10

#### We will continue to track the views and opinions of the UK public and our supporters through market research.

- We have continued to evaluate the response of our supporters and the UK public to Oxfam’s brand and reputation, including our communications on climate change, new fundraising products, and innovations to promote Oxfam Unwrapped.
- A panel of supporters continues to guide us on a variety of topics, helping to ensure that our communications with supporters are both relevant and cost-effective.

- Despite a reduction in intended spend due to the recession, marketing activities in 2009/10 helped ensure that Oxfam remained at number one in terms of ‘spontaneous awareness’ (600 members of the public who support charities were asked to name the first charity they could think of). Our research also showed that people were left feeling more engaged with Oxfam as a result of our communications.<sup>8</sup>

#### We will report on complaints received from the Fundraising Standards Board; complaints received via our website; and complaints made to our Shop Support Team.

Since May 2007, we have monitored and reported on all complaints received in the UK (see Tables 1-3, below and on page 12). Previously we reported on Oxfam’s financial year (May to April), but since 2008 have moved to a calendar year to bring our reporting in line with the UK Fundraising Standards Board (FRSB), of which we are a member.

Table 1: Complaints relating to Oxfam fundraising and shops (simplified from previous years)

| Category  | Oxfam year 2007/08 | Calendar year 2008 | Calendar year 2009 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Supporter-related   | 1,138              | 601                | 562                |
| Shop-related  | 571                | 627                | 694*               |
| Other   | 212                | 294                | 343                |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1,921</b>       | <b>1,522</b>       | <b>1,599</b>       |
| Of these, total reportable to the FRSB                          | 72                 | 64                 | 81                 |
| Complaints made directly to the FRSB relating to Oxfam activity | 0                  | 0                  | 0                  |

\* Investigation into possible reasons for the increase in shop-related complaints has not resulted in any major issues being identified.

<sup>6</sup> 360 degree feedback is embedded in Oxfam’s performance management system and enables staff to receive constructive criticism as well as positive feedback from a range of colleagues. <sup>7</sup> In 2009, a total of 552 responses were received out of 1,375 questionnaires sent, ie a return rate of 42 per cent.

<sup>8</sup> Brand Tracking Activity run by Hall & Partners, October 2009 and March 2010.

### Complaints relating to Oxfam fundraising and shops

The 'supporter-related' category on Table 1 covers all complaints relating to our marketing and fundraising communications, including complaints about telephone fundraising and e-marketing; these have decreased significantly, as we have worked with our external agencies and inhouse teams to monitor quality and use our data more effectively. There has been a rise in complaints about door-to-door fundraising activity as this method of recruiting new supporters was scaled up during the reporting period. We continue to monitor this closely with our suppliers; however, the number of complaints about this represents less than 0.05 per cent of all contacts made with Oxfam.

The category also includes complaints about donation and fulfilment errors, as well as one-off cases of general dissatisfaction relating to any contact with Oxfam. There has been a recent increase in this area, mainly due to two particular issues: firstly, as a result of donation errors made when supporters switch from banker's orders to direct debits (this relies on banks making the necessary changes). We have improved our communication to supporters around this. Secondly, there has been a small increase in complaints about mailing selections where we have not taken full account of supporters' mailing preferences. Processes in this area have since been reviewed.

The 'Other' category has shown a significant increase due to fraudsters testing the validity of stolen credit cards by making a donation via our website. We have introduced additional security to our online donations system to deter this activity. It also reflects an increase in complaints made about Oxfam's policies covering a wide range of subjects.

### Online shop complaints

In our 2008 accountability report, we committed to reporting complaints about our new online shop. In future, this will be incorporated into overall reporting of shop and fundraising complaints. 75 per cent of online shop complaints related to orders which had yet to arrive. Half the orders placed online were for Oxfam Unwrapped items; the majority of these were placed in the run-up to Christmas, when there were significant delays due to Royal Mail strikes. All other orders were from the second-hand store/ethical collection. Because these are sent from individual Oxfam shops there can sometimes be a delay between order and despatch. Given that approximately 140,000 online orders were made during the reporting period, complaints were made by just over one per cent of all customers.

Table 2: Online shop complaints

| Category                               | 2009         |
|--|--------------|
| Enquiry to chase order                 | 1,119        |
| Website problem                        | 120          |
| Damaged/faulty/incorrect item received | 55           |
| Other                                  | 182          |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>1,476</b> |

### Complaints reported by UK regulatory bodies

The number of complaints in this section remains very low, given the levels of fundraising activity undertaken. Where members of the public have contacted the Mailing or Telephone Preference Service directly as a result of receiving communication from Oxfam, we are required to justify our action to the relevant authority. In each case we were able to demonstrate our compliance with the regulations.

In November 2009, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) notified us that they had received four complaints about our advertising relating to our climate change campaign. We met informally with the ASA to resolve the issue, and new internal guidelines on communications around climate change were formulated as a result.

Table 3: Complaints reported by UK regulatory bodies

| Complaints source               | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| UK Telephone Preference Service | 4    | 11   | 2    | 5    |
| Mail Preference Service         | 1    | 2    | 1    | 1    |
| Information Commission          | 1    | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Advertising Standards Authority | 0    | 0    | 0    | 1*   |

\* Four complaints were made; the ASA counted these as one because they related to the same subject.

### Fraud

Losses of £479,815 (0.15 per cent of turnover) were reported during 2009/10, of which £54,720 has been recovered. This compares to £401,116 (0.13 per cent of turnover) in 2008/09. The 2008/09 figure disclosed in that year's annual report is slightly lower (£397,116), but as a result of better information subsequently coming to light, the figure was revised upwards. We provide revised figures for each year in the subsequent year's report, as fully accurate figures are not available until investigations into incidents have been completed, and these can run over the financial year-end date. The figures are also likely to need adjustment to take into account the sums which are either found on further inspection not to be as high as initially feared, or sums which are recovered.

## Accountability to our staff and volunteers

Oxfam seeks to be a fair and decent employer of staff and volunteers, meeting the standards which we would expect of other organisations that we might partner, seek to influence, or use as a supplier. Below, as well as reporting back on the objectives we set ourselves in 2007, we review our approach and progress on health and safety, staff welfare, and our handling of allegations of fraud and of sexual exploitation and abuse.

### Objectives 2007-10

**We will place greater emphasis on the development of our staff (in particular, enabling staff from developing countries to move into leadership positions).**

Internal staff recruitment remains a strong foundation to all recruitment activity within the organisation. Around 50 per cent of level C and D posts and 58 per cent of level A and B (senior management) posts have been filled by internal applicants over the last three years. Continued investment in staff development, particularly in areas of project and programme management, is a high priority.

**We will strive to increase the diversity of our workforce in the UK.**

Each Division has continued to work to clear, effective diversity plans that are relevant for their part of the business. Our Positive Action policy and guidelines have been incorporated into these plans. The Trading Division has undertaken diversity training across its shop and office network.

**We will improve international data, including for the first time being able to measure sickness absence internationally.**

The GOLD HR database system was implemented successfully across the world by December 2008. The primary goals are to:

- Enable International Division regions to use solely GOLD pay data to prepare country monthly payrolls.
- Develop the pensions salary sacrifice scheme.
- Develop a more e-learning based approach to GOLD-user skills training.

**We will review the final salary pension scheme with the aim of reducing deficit and future risks.**

Changes implemented in 2008 to our final salary pension scheme, reduced the cost and risk of the scheme, and decreased the scheme deficit by £2.6m. However, as anticipated at the time of the pensions review, further changes to actuarial assumptions concerning longer life expectancy increased pension liabilities by £2.3m in 2008. Oxfam increased deficit contributions from 2009 to pay off the increased deficit over the next ten years.

Table 1: Diversity of Oxfam workforce

| Category   | 2006/7   | 2007/8 | 2008/9  | 2009/10 |
|--|----------|--------|---------|---------|
| Women as percentage of our UK-based workforce                                  | 67%      | 66%    | 67%     | 66%     |
| Percentage of our UK-based workforce registered as disabled                    | 2.9%     | 3.2%   | 3%      | 2.7%    |
| Percentage of our international workforce from non-OECD <sup>9</sup> countries | Over 90% | 96.7%* | 87.5%** | 93%     |

\* The 6.7 per cent increase is primarily related to more accurate reporting mechanisms.

\*\* The 9.2 per cent reduction from the 2007/8 figure is due to the closure of the Sudan programme in March 2009, and to the closure of some programmes in Indonesia and elsewhere in East Asia.

<sup>9</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

### What we didn't achieve

- International Division regions have been unable to fully use the GOLD system to record absence; changes to ways of working are needed to capture data from across the workforce, in a range of geographically remote locations.
- Whilst we still want to maximise the benefits of the GOLD system, we do not propose to include this point in our accountability priorities going forward.

### Further information on staff and volunteers

#### Health and safety, and security

We seek to manage and reduce the risk of injury or ill health to our staff, volunteers or any other people who could be directly affected by our activities.

Internationally, we continue to work in very challenging circumstances in relation to security, and health and safety. We place great emphasis on the effective management of these issues.

During the three-year period we have strengthened our health and safety structure and approach. Internationally, the main focus was to improve safety when driving. In the shops, improvements included increased awareness of risks to reduce slips, trips and falls. We also reviewed support and processes where we have vulnerable workers or absence due to stress. Our 2009/10 plan was ambitious for all divisions and functions. While improvements were made, some of the action points – in particular those relating to training – were only partially complete at year-end.

An internal audit of the management of health and safety was undertaken during the year and found that a reasonable risk-management framework is in place. The Governance structure has remained stable and robust in most areas, and was enhanced through the appointment of a lead Trustee for health and safety, and greater Union involvement.

### Accidents and incidents

Fatalities have increased significantly in 2009/10. This is partly a result of including, for the first time, information from partner organisations (to which three fatalities were attributable). Road traffic accidents remained the main cause of death. Two Oxfam employees died in the Haiti earthquake.<sup>10</sup>

We have placed greater emphasis on cascading learning to prevent injury and fatalities. For example, following an accident in Uganda, staff were trained in defensive driving skills. This training has since been extended to all regular Oxfam drivers in the region. Two serious incident reports advised that awareness of the need to wear seatbelts had avoided fatalities.

Table 2: Fatalities

| Year                   | Fatalities | Details   |
|------------------------|------------|---|
| 2007/08                | 3          | Two adults in a single road traffic accident and one shooting with robbery  |
| 2008/09                | 5          | Three road traffic accidents that killed three cyclists and one pedestrian. Also a death involving a contractor partner who fell down a well under construction |
| 2009/10<br>(11 months) | 10         | Seven road traffic accidents resulting in nine deaths. One drowning in an open ditch in a camp for internally-displaced people                                  |

In the UK, 12 RIDDOR<sup>11</sup> incidents were reported to the Health and Safety Executive. Of these, nine were slips, trips and falls, two were manual handling incidents and one was a sharps incident.

Table 3: Staff statistics

| Category  | 2006/07                           | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| UK-based staff turnover (12-month rolling average for staff on open-ended contracts)                    | 17%                               | 16%     | 15.6%   | 12.6%   |
| Completion of performance reviews   | UK-based staff                    | 100%    | 100%    | 96.8%   |
|   | International staff               | 87%     | 84%     | 86%     |
| Pension scheme membership – % of UK-based staff as at 30 April** (final salary and stakeholder schemes) | 43%                               | 47%     | 49%     | 54%     |
| Number of UK employment tribunal cases (papers received)  | 3                                 | 1       | 4       | 1       |
| UK-based staff sickness absence (% days lost)   | Statistics as previously reported | 2.1%    | 2.0%    | 2.7%    |
|   | Revised statistics***             | 2.5%    | 2.5%    | 3.8%    |

\* As at 16 August 2010.

\*\* 31 March in 2009/10.

\*\*\* All years' numbers have been revised to reflect a more accurate review of system data.

### Staff welfare

In previous years we have reported on staff turnover, completion of performance reviews, pension scheme membership, the number of UK employment tribunal cases, and staff sickness absence. The comparative figures are shown in Table 3, above.

### Staff survey results

1,700 staff responded to the 2010 staff survey, which was conducted in February. Response rates were higher than in 2007 and the overall results are positive and encouraging, with the majority of staff feeling confident in Oxfam's ability to fulfil its core purpose. 68 per cent of staff believe that we are doing well in our objective of working with others to overcome poverty and suffering whilst the majority of staff, 96 per cent, believe strongly in what Oxfam is trying to achieve.

There has been a slight decline in the overall level of satisfaction from the last survey in 2007, when the feedback was extremely positive. This is to be expected considering the difficult external circumstances and the subsequent pay freeze and redundancies that were made over the last period between surveys.

As a result of the staff survey it has been agreed that the organisation will focus on three areas of improvement: the effectiveness of performance management for individuals, work-life balance and cross-divisional working. Further clarity and

suggestions for improvements will be gathered through a series of staff focus groups being held during 2010, and divisional action plans which have been developed in response to the survey findings.

### Volunteer survey results

Every two years, since 2005, Oxfam has undertaken a survey of its 20,000 volunteers to determine their views and experiences of volunteering with Oxfam. In 2009, approximately 2,600 volunteers responded to the survey. This is slightly more than 14 per cent of our volunteer population, showing a big increase on responses to the earlier surveys.

Overall, the results were very positive. Volunteers are very committed to, and engaged with, Oxfam's purpose; they have high levels of concern for climate change and its impact on people in developing countries, and they support Oxfam's involvement in tackling this issue. They also feel Oxfam is keeping the promises that are set out in the Volunteer Policy.

In terms of specific results, 98.5 per cent said they enjoyed volunteering with Oxfam; 95.3 per cent felt their time and skills were well used; over 90 per cent felt they were able to contribute according to their culture, background and experience; and 83 per cent felt they were encouraged to learn new skills – an improvement of 19 per cent compared to 2007.

<sup>10</sup> The deaths in Haiti were not as a result of Oxfam's activities, and therefore not recorded on the table.

<sup>11</sup> Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.

## Accountability for our supply chain (ethical purchasing)

### Sexual exploitation and abuse

The prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse is a major concern for Oxfam and the development sector as a whole. As it is clear that sexual exploitation and abuse persists in many communities, we have taken staff training on this issue very seriously. However, the fact that the number of investigations has decreased (see Table 4) suggests that we need to re-emphasise the importance of this issue and do more to combat it.

Before 2008/09, sexual exploitation in the UK was investigated, but not as part of our Code of Conduct. UK cases are now logged in the same way as international cases. We have not restated the figures for the previous two years to include those UK investigations.

We run training courses for our international staff on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and a version of this course has been published. In our Trading Division in the UK, we are integrating training on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse into other training courses. In March 2009, the Trading Division introduced a more stringent recruitment process for open-ended Shop Manager contracts to include Criminal Records Bureau checks. In July 2009, the Child Protection Policy was rewritten to be more robust and comprehensive, and was widely publicised.

During 2009/10, Oxfam was part of a UN-sponsored inter-agency review of how sexual exploitation and abuse prevention policies have been implemented in NGOs and UN entities. Nepal and the Democratic Republic of Congo were selected for fieldwork to research this. We completed a UN questionnaire on policy, requirements and tools at head office. Regional focal points were alerted that the UN review was taking place, and reminded of their reporting responsibilities. We received the confidential Oxfam-specific report in June 2010. Oxfam ranked in the top half of the 14 agencies that took part and rated highly in some areas. However, UN requirements in this area are expected to rise, so we will be rated against higher standards in future.

Table 4: Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 2006/07 | 12 allegations were made against Oxfam  |
| 2007/08 | Two allegations were made against Oxfam   |
| 2008/09 | Two allegations were made against Oxfam staff in the International Division. Both staff were dismissed, one following an appeal.<br>In the UK, there were seven allegations of sexual misconduct in the Trading Division: two against staff, four against volunteers, and one against a customer. Six of these were substantiated and dealt with, two via resignations, three via termination of the person's role in Oxfam and (in the case concerning a customer) through a shop ban. One allegation against a staff member was not substantiated |
| 2009/10 | One allegation was made in the International Division which, following investigation, was found to be unsubstantiated.<br>In the UK, two allegations were made in the Trading Division. Following a formal investigation, an allegation by a volunteer against a staff member was not substantiated. In the second case, a volunteer was dismissed following sexual misconduct with another volunteer. More stringent supervisory arrangements are now in place   |

In our purchasing of goods and services, we have to balance cost-effectiveness with our responsibility to promote sustainable livelihoods and to minimise any negative impacts in our supply chain. This involves influencing companies to source their products ethically, promoting Fair Trade, and campaigning on labour rights and climate change.

Our Ethical Purchasing Policy, introduced in 1997, sets out minimum labour, environmental and human rights standards for goods produced both for Oxfam's use and for sale in our shops. Oxfam was a founding member of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), an alliance of companies, NGOs and trade union organisations. The ETI formed in 1998 to promote and improve the implementation of corporate codes of practice, and to ensure that the labour conditions of workers producing goods for the UK market meet or exceed international labour standards.

### Objectives 2007-2010

**By 2010, 95 per cent of ethically high-risk goods and services will be managed according to our in-depth programme.**

The 'high-risk programme' includes all goods and service suppliers from industries which are known to have poor working conditions, as well as all suppliers of retail and promotional items. In 2007, we introduced a framework to address labour standards, based on the ETI's management indicators. This includes the following two categories:

#### 1. Commitment and training

- The Corporate Management Team participated in an ethical purchasing training session.
- All purchasing leads of high-risk goods and services have an ethical purchasing objective and have committed five per cent of their time to managing the issue.
- The promotional items and publications purchasing team underwent training in 2007, with a refresher course in 2009. Two of the purchasers have taken part in a three-day audit course. The retail purchasing team participated in ethical training sessions in 2009; in 2010, three purchasers attended an ETI induction day, and two new buying managers attended a labour rights workshop led by Oxfam's Ethical Trade Manager and The Body

Shop Sustainability Manager. 50 Oxfam staff, including key budget holders and purchasing teams, attended a presentation by Impactt Limited on ethical trade.

- An intranet site with all the labour-standards assessment steps and tools was launched in March 2010, to ensure consistent communication and application.
- #### 2. Monitoring and evaluation of suppliers
- In 2007, Oxfam joined Sedex<sup>12</sup> in order to manage suppliers' ethical data. We are members of the working groups which review assessment processes. Budget has been allocated to develop an internal supplier database in 2010/11. This will enable more effective management of internal ethical purchasing documentation, and visibility of the supply base.
  - In 2009/10, Oxfam's retail buying team sourced from 193 commercial factories.<sup>13</sup> More than 90 per cent of core promotional and print suppliers were assessed for labour standards.
  - An in-depth ethical assessment of Oxfam's facilities/cleaning supplier was conducted with Impactt Limited.
  - Our main IT supplier is currently undergoing a full assessment of its ethical processes.

**We will ensure suppliers of all retail products, where spend is above £25,000 per annum, have an ethical audit as a condition of business (except Fair Trade suppliers, whose standards are vetted within the accreditation process).**

- We adjusted this target to apply to final points of manufacture (FPM) where spend is higher than £25,000. As audits take place at the FPM or further down the supply chain, we found that we did not have sufficient leverage to effect change through the audit process, unless the minimum spend was applied to the factory rather than the supplier.
- During 2009/10, our retail buying team sourced from 11 factories with spend over £25,000 per annum. Eight factories provided audit reports and nine completed the self-assessment on Sedex.

<sup>12</sup> Sedex, the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange, is a membership organisation for businesses committed to continuous improvement of the ethical performance of their supply chains.

<sup>13</sup> This figure does not include Fair Trade suppliers, which are managed separately.

- The retail buying team doubled its ethical purchasing resource to ensure there is sufficient capacity to reach this target and to strengthen the labour standards checking process.

**From 2008/09, we will use the more robust environmental assessment tools and procedures developed during 2007/08 with Sedex and environmental NGOs, and better integrate them with our framework for managing labour standards.**

- We made good progress in the sourcing of responsible forest products. In 2008, we adopted the World Wildlife Fund tool for checking the environmental standards of all Oxfam products for retail.
- We revised our Ethical Purchasing Policy in September 2009, with additional clauses specifying our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in our supply chains and to source recycled or sustainably-sourced wood and paper.
- Through a comprehensive research project, we mapped the carbon footprint of almost all products and services purchased from the UK during 2008/09, and our supplier questionnaire was updated with specific questions about reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- We implemented robust systems to confirm sources for all paper and wood/paper retail products purchased by head office.
- In 2009, we became the first charity to comply with the Royal Mail's intermediate Sustainable Mail credentials, and have been audited to ensure compliance.
- Oxfam continues to support the development of the Sedex environmental module. This is still in piloting stages and therefore has not yet been integrated into Oxfam's purchasing systems.

**We will continue to set, and report against, targets to improve the sustainability of wood-based products that we sell.**

Oxfam's annual report for the World Wildlife Fund World Forest and Trade Network included a number of significant improvements:

- We exceeded our 2009 target, which stated that 90 per cent of Oxfam-branded products for retail must be FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) marked or recycled.
- We increased our reporting scope to include paper purchased by head office for non-retail use. This includes publications, catalogues, papers, correspondence to supporters, etc.

### What we didn't achieve

- With such diverse spend across many categories, we have not effectively identified all the categories of suppliers which are likely to have labour/environmental standards issues. Unlike a retailer, Oxfam's buying systems are not centralised and therefore not all purchases are visible. The new supplier database should increase visibility and enable our team to identify suppliers that could be considered high-risk.
- We plan to continue to work in this area but, as noted on page 27, this will not be included in our core accountability reporting.

## Accountability for our advocacy and campaigning

In seeking to overcome poverty, Oxfam campaigns to influence the policies and practices of other organisations that have a powerful impact on the lives of people in poverty. These organisations include governments, multilateral organisations such as the UN and World Bank, or large multinational companies.

### Objectives 2007-10

**We will continue to adapt and apply Oxfam's approach to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) to campaigns.**

- There has been continued improvement in MEL, where better planning has led to clearer strategies and more systematic monitoring.
- By the end of 2009/10, all campaigning Programme Implementation Plans were required to include outcome indicators, plans for data collection and use, and evidence-based progress reporting three times a year. Training was carried out in several regions on how to evaluate advocacy and campaigns.
- An external evaluation of the climate change campaign was undertaken in spring 2010, to look at the effectiveness of Oxfam's global campaign and its influence on national and international policy and practice. The views of 72 partners, government bodies and institutions were surveyed.<sup>14</sup>

**By April 2008, all our campaign plans will include an 'impact chain' to help monitor and evaluate the difference our campaigning has made to the lives of poor people.**

All of our campaigning work in the UK, and our global campaigns on climate change and essential services, now have clear impact chains and MEL plans.

**We will pursue initiatives to better support southern campaigning.**

- Over the three years the number of campaigns staff in the seven Oxfam regions has increased overall.
- There has been a £100,000 investment to enable UK-based campaigns staff to provide support to national staff and partners. A 'support matrix' has been adopted to pair regional and country staff with UK-based 'buddies'.
- A campaigning toolkit has been produced as planned, and is available to all staff.
- A number of UK staff have been seconded to international regions, and regional staff seconded to campaigns positions in the UK.

### What we didn't achieve

Due to changes in leadership in Oxfam International, the development of an overarching humanitarian campaign strategy and MEL plan has not been finalised.

<sup>14</sup> To read the evaluation, visit [www.oxfam.org.uk/climateevaluation](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/climateevaluation)

## Reducing our impact on the environment

### Objectives 2007-10

**We will reduce our UK carbon emissions by 4,555 tonnes (27 per cent).**

- During the third year of the three-year programme, we continued to make progress in many areas and achieved a 6,729 tonne reduction in our UK carbon footprint (49 per cent) from the 2006/07 baseline (see Table 1).
- Commuter travel, whilst showing an increase, may actually reflect a better response to our staff survey, which captured information about staff travel to and from work.
- Oxfam's international regions have each produced Carbon Reduction Plans, and are now in the process of taking the actions identified in these plans (see page 21).

**100 per cent of the electricity used in Oxfam House, and 28 per cent of that used in our shops network, will be from renewable sources.**

- Our electricity supply contract with Ecotricity guarantees that 100 per cent of the electricity used in Oxfam House is from renewable sources.
- More than 37 per cent of the supply to the shop network is now from renewable sources.
- In Oxfam House, electricity consumption has been reduced by 7 per cent.
- Investment in energy-efficient lighting and heating has been incorporated into the fitting and refurbishment of new and existing shops.

Table 1: Oxfam's carbon footprint in the UK (in tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>)

|                                       | 2006/07       | 2007/08       | 2008/09      | 2009/10      |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Car fleet                             | 354           | 254           | 290          | 260          |
| Road freight                          | 233           | 307           | 283          | 472          |
| Work-related own car use              | 76            | 182           | 127          | 135          |
| Work-related public transport         | 179           | 201           | 173          | 206          |
| Commuter travel                       | 1,597         | 1,641         | 1,439        | 1,670        |
| Paper use                             | 2,648         | 1,729         | 1,352        | 832          |
| Electricity – shops and warehouses    | 6,738         | 5,683         | 3,506        | 2,922        |
| Electricity – offices                 | 1,107         | 517           | 0            | 0            |
| Gas – shops and warehouses            | 523           | 487           | 418          | 326          |
| Gas – offices                         | 232           | 241           | 204          | 130          |
| Waste to landfill – Oxfam House       | 36            | 36            | 47           | 41           |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>13,723</b> | <b>11,278</b> | <b>7,839</b> | <b>6,994</b> |
| <b>Percentage reduction on 2006/7</b> |               | <b>-18%</b>   | <b>-43%</b>  | <b>-49%</b>  |

**The Information Systems (IS) Department will replace old equipment with more carbon-efficient alternatives.**

The IS department's 'virtualisation' project has resulted in a 20 per cent reduction in server-energy consumption in Oxfam House.

**We will improve the fuel economy of Trading's vehicle fleet.**

The Trading Division vehicle fleet now consists solely of compact, diesel vehicles with significantly lower than average carbon emissions.

**We will reduce paper use by 15 per cent over three years.**

We have reduced paper use by 69 per cent.

**We will increase the rate of recycling of waste from Oxfam House to 50 per cent.**

The level of recycling from Oxfam House had risen to 64 per cent by April 2010 from a base of 30 per cent. During 2010, we introduced facilities to compost food waste.

**We will further improve the recycling of unsaleable goods donated to Oxfam shops.**

Every Oxfam shop now has arrangements with contractors for the reuse or recycling of goods that are not of sufficient quality to sell. This has led to a significant reduction of the quantity of waste we send to landfill.

Table 2: International flights and freight transport (in tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>)

|   | 2006/07      | 2007/08      | 2008/09      | 2009/10      |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Air travel booked in UK – short haul    | 53           | 37           | 28           | 28           |
| Air travel booked in UK – med/long haul | 2,349        | 2,391        | 2,289        | 2,409        |
| Humanitarian air freight                | 762          | 825          | 496          | 1,545        |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>3,164</b> | <b>3,253</b> | <b>2,813</b> | <b>3,962</b> |

**We will reduce carbon emissions from UK-booked air travel by 21 per cent, and promote train travel to UK and European destinations.**

- Investment in technology, policy changes and awareness-raising had resulted in a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from UK-booked passenger air travel of 3.5 per cent in 2008/09. However, during 2009/10 the downward trend changed and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from UK-booked passenger air travel went up by 1.5 per cent compared with 2006/07. This may be the result of increased bookings through our UK agent by international staff, and the additional activity following the Haiti earthquake (see Table 2).
- We have implemented a policy stipulating that staff travel by train within the UK and to Eurostar destinations in Europe. This has reduced short-haul flights by 47 per cent.

**We will invest in technology to reduce the need for travel.**

- All regional offices now have dedicated video-conferencing facilities that have been used to reduce international and national travel.
- 'E-learning' tools, including online training modules, are increasingly being used in order to reduce the need for travel.

Table 3: Oxfam air travel in the international programme 2007-10

|                                      | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  | 2010  |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Air travel (£'000)                   | 4,569 | 4,245 | 4,185 | 3,324 |
| Percentage decrease vs 2007          |       | 7%    | 8%    | 27%   |
| Air travel as % of total expenditure | 2.7%  | 2.2%  | 2.0%  | 1.6%  |

To monitor flight travel in the international programme, we use expenditure as a proxy indicator (see Table 3). This shows that since 2007 we have reduced overall flight expenditure by 27 per cent. We have not seen significant reductions in prices, as costs (such as fuel surcharges) have increased over the last few years. The reduction has been driven primarily through promoting reduced travel, and by reducing the need for travel by investing in technology (as described above).

### What we didn't achieve

In 2007, we committed to putting measures in place both to record and to reduce the carbon footprint of our operations outside the UK. Due to the challenges encountered in obtaining consistent data from the many countries we operate in, the decision was made during the year not to pursue the objective of having a global Oxfam carbon footprint. Instead, the international regions have each produced Carbon Reduction Plans, which describe what they are doing on areas including energy consumption, fuel use (eg monitoring vehicle mileage and speed to improve fuel efficiency), flights (eg targeted reductions in air travel), video-conferencing, printing and recycling.

## Governance

Oxfam's Governance arrangements are set out on our website and in our annual report and accounts. We have 12 Trustees, who are expected to cover a wide range of skills between them. They are unpaid volunteers who receive expenses only, and who are all non-executive. Trustees have a Code of Conduct and are required to report all potential conflicts of interest. This is monitored and reviewed annually. Trustees conduct an annual review of their own performance.

### Objectives 2007-10

**We will review our constitution in the light of the UK Companies Act 2006 and the UK Charities Act 2006. We will complete the process of registration in Scotland.**

- We updated Oxfam's constitution to take account of the Charities Act 2006, and added new charitable purposes to our existing poverty mandate: human rights, sustainable development and diversity. In each case we added a poverty focus. This change took effect in April 2009.
- We revised our constitution to take account of the UK Companies Act 2006 at our Annual General Meeting in December 2009.
- Oxfam was registered in Scotland with the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulation in December 2007.

**We will adopt an Oxfam-wide Open Information Policy, and contribute to an Open Information Policy for the Disasters Emergency Committee. We will review our whistle-blowing arrangements and ensure that these extend to people affected by our programmes and partner organisations, as well as staff.**

- Our Open Information Policy was published on our website in August 2008 (see page 6).
- We contributed to the Disasters Emergency Committee Open Information Policy, which is now available at [www.dec.org.uk](http://www.dec.org.uk).
- A KPMG review identified some areas where improvements to whistle-blowing arrangements could be made. The Counter-Fraud manager (appointed January 2009) produced an action plan and worked with Human Resources to implement this during 2009/10.

- Whilst we have reviewed the Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace policy, this did not extend to benchmarking with other organisations. There are a number of ways in which staff, partner organisations or third parties can raise concerns. However, we have not completed a comprehensive review to determine that our practices are comparable to good practice models elsewhere. This will be completed in 2010/11.

**We will contribute to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Not-For-Profit Sector Supplement which is being prepared to develop sustainability reporting, and we will review our own accountability report against this.**

Oxfam's Company Secretary participated in all the meetings of the GRI working group on the development of a not-for-profit sector supplement. The full reporting standard was launched in May 2010.<sup>15</sup> While the new supplement was finalised too late for us to report against it in the three-year period 2007-10, we plan to use it for the next three-year period 2010-13. For 2009/10, our full report against the GRI reporting framework is available at [www.oxfam.org.uk/resources](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources).

### What we didn't achieve

We work hard to maintain a culture of openness, where people feel they can raise concerns. However, we do not consider that we have yet got a policy or procedures that go far enough in encouraging whistle-blowing. The numbers of issues being raised through that channel remains low.

## Objectives 2010-13

### Governance

We will become an increasingly effective and accountable organisation.

**Transparency:** We will use the Open Information Policy to become increasingly transparent to all our stakeholders. In our programme work, we will move towards the implementation of Oxfam International Programme Standards and Programme Management Standards.

**Feedback:** We will use the Complaints Policy to learn from stakeholders in order to improve our impact.

**Participation:** We will increasingly involve key stakeholders in our decision-making, planning, and judgements of our effectiveness.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** We will improve our ability to measure and demonstrate that we create positive change in people's lives.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- We will review our Open Information Policy and explore ways in which we can more proactively make information available. We will publish our Policy and our conclusions on our website.
- We will use the Global Reporting Initiative NGO sector supplement (issued May 2009) to produce a Global Reporting Initiative report for 2010/11 on our website. We will work with other international and British NGOs to publicise ways in which the GRI reporting framework can be more widely used.
- We will create global indicators to monitor the effectiveness of our work.

### People and communities

We will make demonstrable improvements in our ability to give account to, take account of, and be held to account by, our primary stakeholders – the people affected by our programmes.

**Transparency:** People affected by our programmes will have access to relevant information in order that they can hold us to account.

**Feedback:** Appropriate, accessible feedback channels will be in place.

**Participation:** People will be involved in decision-making and implementation throughout the lifetime of a programme.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** We will seek out and document people's judgement on our performance.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- We will provide support for mapping levels of accountability within 30 per cent of country programmes. This will use a three-step process centred around the OGB Matrix for Accountability to People and Communities.
- With other Oxfam affiliates, we will create the 'OI Measure of Success' that will indicate if we are meeting the following commitment: "Communities, partners and allies experience a more effective relationship with Oxfam, characterised by greater levels of mutual accountability, openness and transparency." A draft document will be available by November 2010.
- We will ensure that accountability (in our processes and for what we deliver) is included in the new programme planning and information processes, the Better Quality Programming initiative (that supports the new processes), the Programme Performance and Accountability Framework, and all work that underpins these initiatives.
- We will promote the use of the Good Enough Guide communications materials and the WASH Cluster Accountability Booklet; research and prepare to pilot methodology (in 2011) that will survey people directly affected by our programme; and agree and promote a set of minimum accountability standards across all Oxfam affiliates.

<sup>15</sup> The supplement is available at [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)

## Women in the communities we work with and women's rights organisations<sup>16</sup>

We will put women's rights at the heart of everything we do.

**Transparency:** We will have mechanisms and processes in place to make information available on how we are putting women's rights at the heart of everything we do.

**Feedback:** We will enable women in communities and in women's rights organisations and networks to provide their feedback in an open, constructive manner.

**Participation:** We will enable women in communities and in women's rights organisations and networks to be increasingly influential in decisions about our programme.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) work will include ways to measure progress in gender equality and to record the feedback of women in communities and in women's organisations and networks.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- We will ensure that Oxfam's MEL work enables and promotes the disaggregation of data from women and men.
- Monitoring reviews will begin to incorporate, explicitly, the feedback from women.
- We will be able to measure the extent to which we put women's rights at the heart of what we do. And we will make this information available to women and men in the communities in which we work, and to our partners and allies with relevant expertise.

## Partners

We will make demonstrable progress in consistently putting into practice the values and principles embodied in our Partnership Policy.

**Transparency:** Our partners will have better access to relevant information in order that they can hold us to account.

**Feedback:** We will actively seek out feedback from partners and use this to influence our policy and practice.

**Participation:** We will encourage shared decision-making in the design and implementation of our programmes.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** Our MEL systems will increasingly incorporate partner opinions, which will be used to shape programme design.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- We will test our Partnership Policy with key campaign allies.
- We will consider the implications of the recent Review of Partnership and agree how the recommendations will be implemented over the next two years.
- We will review the feedback given in the partner surveys (see page 10), and will assess which improvements can be taken forward and how best to do this. Clear objectives will then be outlined in the annual update to be published in 2011/12.

## Supporters

We will remain committed to ensuring that we communicate with our supporters in a clear and transparent way and seek their feedback.

**Transparency:** We will ensure our supporters are clear about what they can do, and how their support makes a difference.

**Feedback:** We will enable our supporters to give us their views on what we do and how we do it.

**Participation:** We will encourage our supporters to get involved in our communications, for example through the Supporter Panel, *Oxfam Live* events, the work of the activist team and through community fundraising and events.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** We will use our supporters' feedback and complaints to inform and improve our communications. Supporter research projects will help us understand supporters' perceptions about our use of funds and our impact.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- An online hub will be launched so that our regular givers can see the difference their support makes through videos, blogs and other digital communications.
- A more detailed breakdown of feedback on marketing and fundraising activity will be developed and reviewed quarterly with senior management.
- Our investment in community fundraising and events will be scaled-up to provide supporters with more opportunities for active involvement.

## Staff and volunteers

We will remain committed to seeking feedback from staff, volunteers, Trustees and members of the Association about our effectiveness in achieving Oxfam's mission and reflecting its values.

**Transparency:** We will enable honest conversations with staff and volunteers about areas of concern, ways to address these, and potential barriers to success. Managers will be equipped to give and receive feedback openly.

**Feedback:** We will actively encourage staff to give feedback through existing mechanisms (eg our staff survey), and in new ways.

**Participation:** Staff will take part in developing approaches to improving our effectiveness. Team members will be able to give feedback openly.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** Learning from the 2009 volunteer and 2010 staff surveys will inform the focus and design of the 2012 survey.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

#### Staff engagement

We will improve accountability to staff by improving the effectiveness of performance management by:

- Increasing regular and upwards feedback through the performance management process.
- Encouraging 360 feedback in performance reviews, which is given openly rather than anonymously.
- Increasing the use of feedback to inform personal development planning.

#### Volunteers

We will hold four *Voices Shop* Team conferences by October 2010 and six Volunteer Working Group meetings by March 2011. Through these we will continue to seek feedback from volunteers about decisions that impact on how they support Oxfam.

#### Health and safety / reducing fatalities

- We will continue to ensure that health and safety, in particular the prevention of fatalities, is of utmost concern.
- We will continue to improve our reporting, learning and training.
- We will ensure that staff and hired drivers understand their responsibilities and receive defensive driving training where appropriate.
- We will seek to understand the causes of accidents through feedback from staff and, in some countries, through the installation of new technology.

<sup>16</sup> Organisations which have as their main aim the promotion of women's rights and the achievement of gender equality, especially organisations which are partners or allies in the South and globally in our gender equality or other work.

## Governments and regulators (and, through them, the public)

We will be accountable for our activities in the countries where we have programmes. We will have constructive engagement with host governments and our UK regulators.

**Transparency:** We will publish information about our dealings with governments and regulators, including instances of non-compliance.

**Feedback:** We will seek feedback from our regulators about good practice, and ensure that senior management responds.

**Participation:** We will inform the public about their right to information about Oxfam. We will engage with the UK Charity Commission as our principal regulator.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** We will learn from incidents of non-compliance and improve our processes accordingly.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- We will establish a new framework for reporting all serious incidents to the UK Charity Commission, in discussion with the Commission. This will include information about how we learn from serious incidents.

## The targets of our advocacy

Our advocacy and campaigns work will follow the core principles of our global campaigning and advocacy model.

**Transparency:** We will publish all our policy positions. These will be evidence-based and rooted in our fundamental values. We will seek the views of partners in developing policy analysis and designing campaigns.

**Feedback:** We will invite comment on our policy research, analysis and campaigning, and will respond to all serious and reasonable complaints. We will engage in a constructive and critical dialogue with our partners.

**Participation:** We will work in partnership with allies and partners in the north. In the south, we will continue to work with and through partners, allies, and the beneficiaries of our campaigns and advocacy.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** We will continue to strengthen our MEL system across all our campaigns and policy work, with regular strategic reviews and independent evaluations of major campaigns. We will review our global campaign model.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- We will seek feedback and comments on our policy positions, by trialling the publication of draft policy papers on appropriate sections of our website and inviting comments from advocacy targets, allies and the development policy community.
- As part of constructive engagement with our private sector advocacy targets, we will ensure that Oxfam publications concerning particular companies are sent to these companies for their comments on factual accuracy. We will maintain communication with such companies, even though we may disagree on particular issues.
- By September 2010, we will increase our transparency to advocacy targets by publishing online the overall objectives of our campaigning work. By March 2011, we will conduct a review of key elements of one of our campaigns, using independent evaluators to seek the views of advocacy targets. We will publish the results of this evaluation on our website.
- We will test Oxfam's Partnership Policy with key campaign allies (Global Call to Action Against Poverty and Global Campaign for Climate Action).

## The environment

We will develop appropriate, challenging targets that reflect the 35 per cent reduction in our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions achieved during 2007-10.

Our programme and advocacy work will increase the adaptive capacity and resilience of poverty-affected, vulnerable and marginalised women and men who are at risk from climate change and climate-related disasters.

**Transparency:** We will measure and report publicly against our targets, and will be open about our decision-making.

**Feedback:** We will enable our staff, volunteers, beneficiaries and other stakeholders to give feedback on our adaptation and risk-reduction work, and on our campaigning and advocacy work.

**Participation:** We will engage with staff, partners, the people affected by our programmes and other stakeholders on adaptation and risk-reduction programming and advocacy at all levels.

**Monitoring effectiveness:** All aspects of MEL work will increasingly include ways to measure adaptation and risk-reduction, and evaluate progress in achieving change in the lives of people affected by climate change and climate-related disasters.

### Key priorities for 2010-11

- The 'Oxfam Green' steering group and Council Management Team will develop appropriate targets following a review of results from 2007-10.
- We will have a dedicated presence on WeADAPT, an online, knowledge-sharing platform on climate change adaptation policy and practice. This will enable Oxfam programme practitioners to learn from, and share experience with, a multi-stakeholder global community of practice, including partners, policy-makers, researchers and scientists.
- We will investigate why the carbon footprint relating to travel in the UK is not getting smaller and will take steps to reduce this if, and as, appropriate.

**Note:** While objectives on ethical purchasing have not been prioritised under our simplified reporting scheme, we will continue to move forward with this programme. The environmental work is being merged with Oxfam's overall environmental commitments. The labour standards commitments are currently being reviewed, and will be included in the Global Reporting Index (GRI) table published in September 2010. We will not reduce the amount of work we do on labour, but we are reviewing the targets to make sure they are appropriate and current.

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

Oxfam is a registered charity in England and Wales (no 202918) and Scotland (SC039042) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England No 612172 at Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY. Oxfam GB is a member of Oxfam International.

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