

07 December 2011

Dear Barry Coates,

We are writing to you as members of the Independent Review Panel of the INGO Accountability Charter, in order to give you feedback on the Report which you submitted in time for the reporting deadline in September 2011.

We would like first of all to thank you for your participation in this exercise and to recognise the commitment to accountability that this demonstrates.

Our approach to assessing the reports which we have received has been to focus on three dimensions in particular:

- How **complete** is the report in relation to the guidelines used?
- How strong is the **evidence** given for the self-assessment that each organisation has conducted?
- What evidence is there of **institutional commitment** to greater accountability and to using the reporting process to advance it?

On **completeness**, we want to recognise the demanding nature of many of GRI's requirements. Many organisations find it difficult to respond to some of the more detailed requests for information. We attach a note by the Secretariat that goes through the shortfalls against the reporting template in detail. While you may find this of value, we should like to emphasise that we do not consider that, at least at this stage of the exercise, it is essential to meet every element of the template – which we recognise may in some cases be overly demanding, particularly for smaller institutions. We have however noted below areas where we felt that your organisation might wish to invest more attention in your next report.

On **evidence**, we looked in particular for references not only to relevant policy documents, but also to examples where the self-assessment was supported by specific action (for example, drawn from operational activities, whether successful or unsuccessful).

On **institutional commitment**, we looked for evidence of top-level ownership of the report (for example an opening statement signed by the Chief Executive); of using the report as a means of identifying areas of relative strengths and weaknesses in the organisation (as opposed to a box-ticking exercise); and of a systematic concern with accountability, including recognition of areas for further work. We would hope that progress in such areas would be high-lighted in future reports.

Please note that as a Panel we feel that part of our role is to encourage improved reporting. To that end we are enclosing for your information some examples of what seemed to us Good Practice in responding to some individual indicators, based on the GRI framework. This document consists of examples from all reports reviewed in 2011.

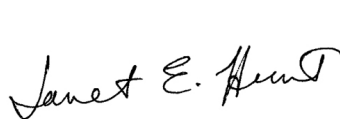
Organisation-specific feedback to Oxfam New Zealand

With regards to **completeness**, we appreciate that you have attempted to provide information on all the recommended indicators. We would however have liked to see a stronger level of **evidence**. This is especially the case in the answers to the indicators under the heading “Program Effectiveness”. We would encourage you to work more on this when preparing your next report. We are also a little worried with regards to **institutional commitment** to accountability, as we do not get the impression that you have made the most out of this exercise. We would encourage organisations using this process to make it an opportunity to reflect on the scope for constructive change in accordance with their objectives, rather than as box-ticking process. If you need support when preparing your next report, please do not hesitate to contact the Charter Secretariat or have a look under “Support for Members” on the Charter website. To give you some further guidance, we also attach the Good Practice examples that we have compiled for some of the GRI indicators.

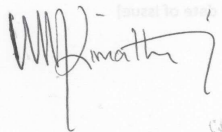
Our intention is that this letter, and any response that you may wish to provide, should be made publicly available on the Charter website, along with your organisation’s report. You can find the reports that were reviewed in the beginning of this year on the Charter website under the section Charter Members/Member Reports. However, should there be errors of fact in the feedback above or in the more detailed Secretariat note below on conformity with the reporting framework, we would of course wish to correct these before publication.

Should you have any comments we would appreciate a response *by 16 January 2012*.

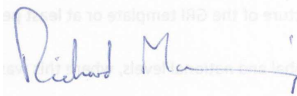
Yours sincerely,



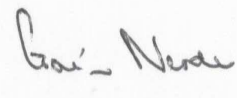
Janet Hunt



Wambui Kimathi



Richard Manning



Gavin Neath

**Note on accountability report, reviewed in October 2011.**

Organisation: Oxfam New Zealand  
Reporting period: Fiscal year ending 30th June (year unclear, please see comment below)

**Reporting framework used**

- GRI Reporting Framework  
 Interim Reporting Framework

**On the GRI Reporting Framework**

What GRI reporting level did the organisation report on?

- A  
 B  
 C

Did the Secretariat contact the organisation for further information before forwarding the report to the panel?

- Yes  
 No

*Comment: The Secretariat contacted the organisation since it is not clear what year the report covers. The organisation did not get back to the Secretariat on this.*

**COMMENTS ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE REPORT**

**Profile (recommended 28)**

Number of Profile components the organisation reports on in total: **28**

Number of the recommended Profile components the organisation reports on: **28**

Number of additional Profile components the organisation reports on: **none**

Number of Profile components commented on: **5**

**“1.1 Strategy and Analysis/ Statement from the most senior decision-maker of the organization.”**

*Comment: The statement does not include information on the relevance of sustainability to the organisation; or on priorities/ key topics/ trends with regard to sustainability.*

**“2.8 Organizational Profile/ Scale of the reporting organization.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on the organisation’s scope/ scale of activities.*

**“2.10 Organizational Profile/ Awards received in the reporting period.”**

*Comment: The report states that the organisation has received “Environmental awards” but no further information on these awards.*

**“3.5 Report Parameters/ Process for defining report content.”**

*Comment:* The report does not include information on the process for defining report content.

**“4.2. Governance, Commitments, and Engagement/ Indicate whether the Chair of the highest governance body is also an executive officer (and, if so, their function within the organization's management and the reasons for this arrangement). Describe the division of responsibility between the highest governance body and the management and/or executives.”**

*Comment:* The report does not include information on the division of power/ responsibility between the highest governance body and the management.

**Indicators (recommended 18)**

Number of indicators the organisation reports on in total: **18**

Number of the 18 recommended indicators the organisation reports on: **18**

Number of additional indicators the organisation reports on: **none**

Number of indicators commented on: **14**

**“NGO1: Processes for involvement of affected stakeholder groups in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs.”**

*Comment:* The report does not include information on how decisions are communicated to stakeholders; on how stakeholders participate in each stage of the process; or on how feedback from stakeholders has affected the decision-making process.

**“NGO2: Mechanisms for feedback and complaints in relation to programs and policies and for determining actions to take in response to breaches of policies.”**

*Comment:* The report does not include information on mechanisms for assessing complaints or for determining actions required in response.

**“NGO3: System for program monitoring, evaluation and learning, (including measuring program effectiveness and impact) resulting changes to programs, and how they are communicated.”**

*Comment:* The report does not include information on how the results from the systems in place contribute to internal learning; on adjustments to policy/ programmes as a result of monitoring, evaluation and learning; or on how these adjustments are communicated externally and internally.

**“NGO4: Measures to integrate gender and diversity into programme design, implementation, and the monitoring, evaluation, and learning cycle.”**

*Comment:* The report does not include information on measures related to other diversity types than gender.

**“NGO5: Processes to formulate, communicate, implement, and change advocacy positions and public awareness campaigns.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on how the organisation works in order to make sure that consistency is maintained during implementation; on how the organisation ensures that its public criticisms are fair/ accurate; on whether processes for taking corrective actions on advocacy positions are in place; on corrective actions taken; or on where advocacy positions are published.*

**“NGO6: Processes to take into account and coordinate with the activities of other actors.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on the processes for identifying potential for duplication; promoting learning from others; or identifying opportunities for partnerships with other organisations.*

**“EN16: Total direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on the standards used when green gas emissions are calculated; or on the organisation’s indirect greenhouse gas emissions.*

**“EN18: Initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reductions achieved.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on initiatives taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; or on the reductions on emissions achieved so far.*

**“LA1: Total workforce, including volunteers, by type, contract, and region.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on categories/ contract type for volunteers.*

**“LA10: Average hours of training per year per employee by employee category.”**

*Comment: The organisation states that it does not record the number of training hours per employee.*

**“LA13: Composition of governance bodies and breakdown of employees per category according to gender, age group, minority group membership, and other indicators of diversity.”**

*Comment: The organisation states that it cannot give exact number on this. Estimated numbers are given for gender and minority groups but no information is given for age.*

**“SO1: Nature, scope, and effectiveness of any programs and practices that assess and manage the impacts of operations on communities, including entering, operating, and exiting.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on how the programmes in place to assess impacts of operations on local communities function. Nor does the report include information on whether the programmes have been effective in mitigating negative/ maximising positive impacts; or on examples of how feedback has informed steps toward further community engagement*

**“SO3: Percentage of employees trained in organization’s anti-corruption policies and procedures.”**

*Comment: The report does not include number of staff going through anti-corruption training.*

**“PR6: Programs for adherence to laws, standards, and voluntary codes related to ethical fundraising and marketing communications, including advertising, promotion, and sponsorship.”**

*Comment: The report does not include information on the frequency with which it reviews compliance with this standard; or on the number of complaints of breaches of standards for fundraising and marketing communication practices in relation to stakeholders.*