

# FOOD CRISIS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

PROGRESS REPORT JULY 2011–JULY 2012



**OXFAM**






# Food crisis in the Horn of Africa

Progress report July 2011–July 2012

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A group of approximately 15 people, including men, women, and children, are walking from left to right through a thick, orange-brown dust storm. The dust is kicked up by their feet, creating a hazy, low-visibility environment. The people are dressed in simple, everyday clothing. The background shows a flat, dry landscape with sparse, low-lying vegetation under a pale sky.

New arrivals queue outside the camp reception centre in Dadaab are caught in a brief dust storm whipped up by the harsh winds. They receive essential items including food, jerry cans, blankets, soap and plastic sheeting for shelter. Photo: Jo Harrison.

# FOREWORD

It is a year now since the world woke up to what has been called the worst food crisis in the 21st century. The footage of Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya was truly awful, and the conditions people were living in when they arrived at Dollo Ado camp in Ethiopia were quite shocking. The UN categorized parts of Somalia as being in famine – a term used so rarely now that we had started to think it no longer happens. While the situation has improved, Oxfam will continue to work with communities in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, to help reduce chronic vulnerability to drought and food insecurity.

From a historical perspective, the world has undoubtedly moved on in our ability to save lives. The numbers of disasters are on the increase. So too is the number of people exposed to them. But the numbers that actually die has gone down. Longer-term aid responses have contributed to this, and Ethiopia and Kenya have both developed safety-net programs designed to deliver long-term help to some of the poorest people in their societies. Only in Somalia has the situation not

improved at all, but this is directly attributable to two decades of conflict and political turmoil, poor international policies that have exacerbated the crisis, and curtailed access for the humanitarian community. However, while fewer people are dying, the numbers of people living in



poverty who risk losing their livelihoods in such crises has increased in vulnerable areas such as the Horn of Africa, and much more does need to be done by governments and the international community to address this.

Looking back on 2011, and more pertinently to 2010, we admit that we – as the entire international community – were slow to scale up our work. But once the crisis hit the headlines and the funds started to come in, I am pleased with the speed and dedication that Oxfam staff put in to what became a massive response in a highly complex, fluid, and often very insecure environment. Particularly noteworthy were the following: the commitment of Oxfam’s local partners in all three countries to take on more work; the professionalism of our existing teams of mainly national staff whose knowledge of contexts and communities gave invaluable insights; and the skills and global expertise of our specialist advisers who travelled to the region at short notice. Oxfam was well placed to use its existing programs and partnerships as a platform to extend its coverage, without which its response would have been weaker.

I am also grateful to Oxfam’s supporters. We are in difficult economic times, yet the generosity of individuals, companies, and institutions has been inspiring. This was the largest Africa appeal that Oxfam has ever launched, and one of its most successful in recent years. Without these funds, we simply could not have achieved what we did to save lives, prevent destitution, and sustain livelihoods. This is a long-term crisis for many communities in the Horn of Africa and Oxfam’s work is by no means over, but the commitments of donors meant that we could make that necessary gear-change when it mattered most. So thank you.

But doing good emergency work is not enough. Looking to the future, the humanitarian community should use the lessons learned during this crisis to create real momentum among governments, donors, and partners to do things differently. We need to make sustained investments in medium- and longer-term interventions if we are to break the cycle of food insecurity. We need to move away from stand-alone, quick-in-and-out emergency responses that keep people alive but do little to protect or improve livelihoods. Fortunately, it seems governments and donors are listening.

“Oxfam and the United Nations World Food Programme are in a unique position to build on the excellent relationships around the IASC Horn of Africa Plan of Action. The plan enhances support to regional and country-led processes that aim to address chronic hunger and malnutrition, build the resilience of vulnerable livelihoods, and ensure the early, appropriate, and effective scale up of assistance in times of acute crisis.”

Furthermore, Oxfam and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) are in a unique position to build on the excellent relationships around the IASC Horn of Africa Plan of Action. The plan enhances support to regional and country-led processes that aim to address chronic hunger and malnutrition, build the resilience of vulnerable livelihoods, and ensure the early, appropriate, and effective scale up of assistance in times of acute crisis. We will utilise all of our strengths: our ability to influence and advocate at a high level with governments and regional bodies such as the African Union, and our work with communities, partners, private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to develop a broad range of interventions that will help shape a better future for vulnerable people. Oxfam is totally committed to working together with others – in East Africa, West Africa, and other regions of the world – to end extreme hunger.



Jeremy Hobbs  
Executive Director, Oxfam International

# INTRODUCTION

The 2011 drought across the Horn of Africa was, in some places, the worst to hit the region for 60 years. It was first predicted about a year beforehand, when sophisticated regional early warning systems began to alert the world to the possibility of drier-than-normal conditions in key pastoral areas of Ethiopia, Somalia and Northern Kenya, linked to the effects of the climatic phenomenon La Niña.

These predictions were borne out by the failure of the October–November rainy season in 2010. When the following rains also failed in March–April 2011, louder alarm bells began sounding as a slide into major crisis started to look inevitable. Yet reactions were small-scale and patchy. No major response was launched, even when the Kenyan government declared the drought a national disaster at the end of May. It was not until images of the crisis appeared in global media, and the United Nations declared a famine in two parts of Somalia in mid-July, that international donors suddenly woke up to its severity. By that time 13 million people were affected.

## **What is famine?**

According to the United Nations (UN), famine is defined as the ‘triple failure’ of (1) food production; (2) people’s ability to access food; and finally and most crucially (3) political response by governments and international donors. Crop failure and poverty leave people vulnerable to starvation, but famine occurs only with political failure. In Somalia, years of internal violence and conflict have been highly significant in creating the conditions for famine. It is worth noting that Somalia had very good rains in 2010, so it took only two failed rainy seasons to plunge areas of the country into famine.

The UN uses a five-step scale, called the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), developed with NGOs including Oxfam, to assess a country’s food security. Stage 5 – ‘famine/ humanitarian catastrophe’ – applies when more than two people per 10,000 are dying each day, acute malnutrition rates are above 30 percent, and there are fewer than 2,100 kilocalories of food and four liters of water available per person per day.

### Existing vulnerability

Was the drought a purely 'natural' disaster? It is no coincidence that the areas worst affected were those already suffering from decades of entrenched poverty, where many communities considered to be on the fringes of society receive little investment of attention or resources. In particular, the pastoralist way of life is under severe pressure across the region, as their access to traditional grazing areas is restricted by settlement and poor policies. The situation is much worse in Somalia, where conflict is by far the biggest inhibitor of development and growth, with huge numbers of people displaced over two decades. All this makes poorer people very vulnerable to climate variability. So while severe and repeated drought certainly triggered the huge scale of the disaster, this crisis was undoubtedly caused by people and policies as much as by weather patterns.

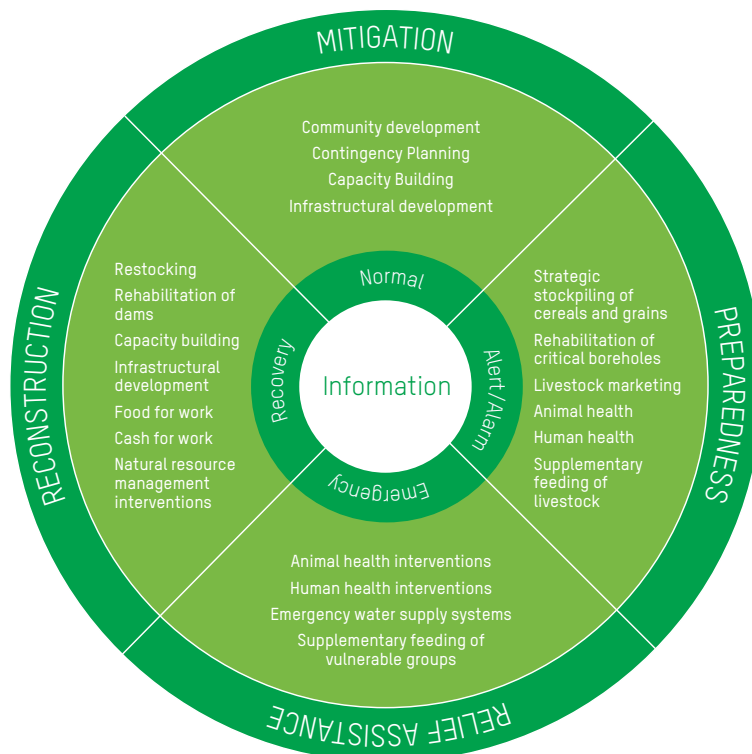
### Oxfam: existing programs and chronology of scale-up

While there are other natural hazards in the Horn of Africa – notably flooding – drought is by far the most widespread and long-term. Its very nature – a slow-onset hazard – requires a particular type of response. The Drought Cycle Management Model (Figure 1) looks at drought as a cycle of four phases: normal, alert/alarm, emergency, and

recovery. It guides what should be done at each of these four phases, thus ensuring that actions are appropriate and effective, and that they ultimately reduce the risks and consequences of any drought.

Oxfam already had existing programs in all three countries hit by the drought. Since drought is a common feature in the region, much of Oxfam's long-term work is with communities in drought-prone areas; it works with over 250,000 people in the Wajir and Turkana regions of northern Kenya, and several hundred thousand more in the Oromia, Somali, and Tigray regions of Ethiopia. In Somalia, lack of access by humanitarian agencies had not stopped Oxfam working, because of its strong network of Somali partners. For several years, it had been working through local organizations across different regions of the country to provide both relief and development support. On the outskirts of Mogadishu, Oxfam has been providing emergency relief for about 300,000 people who have been living in makeshift camps for several years, having fled fighting in the city. It was also already supporting a community-based nutrition program in Mogadishu itself, giving therapeutic food to acutely malnourished children under five, and managing a large drought mitigation program in the south (Lower Juba), which involved extensive work on strengthening livelihoods to build people's

Figure 1: The Drought Cycle Management Model



*While there are other natural hazards in the Horn of Africa – notably flooding – drought is by far the most widespread and long-term. Its very nature – a slow-onset hazard – requires a particular type of response. The Drought Cycle Management Model (Figure 1) looks at drought as a cycle of four phases: normal, alert/alarm, emergency, and recovery. It guides what should be done at each of these four phases, thus ensuring that actions are appropriate and effective, and that they ultimately reduce the risks and consequences of any drought.*



Thousands of people displaced by the drought across Somalia are settling in open grounds in the southern part of Mogadishu. Here, children and adults shelter on the streets. Photo: Hijira.

resilience and improve their access to food. In these areas, Oxfam is confident that, without such interventions, the crisis could have been worse.

In January 2011, after the late 2010 rains failed, Oxfam started trucking water to 20,000 people in Ethiopia's Somali region as an urgent short-term measure to boost supplies before the hoped-for March rains. Longer-term work in the region involves improving sustainable water supplies, but some areas have no groundwater sources at all, so people are totally dependent on rainfall. By February, Oxfam was seeking additional funding to inject cash into areas of northern Kenya and to protect livestock from dying (a cheaper option than replacing animals after a crisis). Lack of water was the most pressing issue, but the price of food and fuel in available markets was rising dramatically, just as the value of people's assets (mainly animals) was collapsing.

In Somalia, in addition to its extensive existing programs, Oxfam began subsidizing fuel in Lower Juba (southern region) to keep boreholes running for 26,000 people, while paying communities to dig out existing shallow wells to increase water collection rates, which helped a further 27,000 people. By late March, Oxfam was in urgent discussions with institutional donors to provide more funds for water trucking (always an expensive last resort). Demand from existing

boreholes was getting so high that Oxfam was having to travel further afield to find water, as well as having to pay more for it. Oxfam managed to scale up its operations to benefit 33,000 more people in Ethiopia. However, these actions were small-scale in the face of the growing and more visible need; the substantial gear-change needed was not yet happening.

And then the April–May rains also failed. There was some patchy rain in parts of Ethiopia and Somalia, which improved things temporarily, but Kenya remained dry. By late June the media had finally woken up to the story, which was at its most dramatic in the Dadaab camp in Kenya. Dadaab, which has existed for 19 years, was already known as the world's largest refugee camp, home to many thousands of Somalis fleeing years of conflict. Now they were fleeing famine as well, and Dadaab grew to house 445,000 people by the end of the year – bigger than the city of Miami, Florida, and effectively making it the third largest city in Kenya, after Nairobi and Mombasa. Images of exhausted Somalis with malnourished children arriving in Dadaab – many of whom had walked for weeks across the desert – hit television screens and front pages, as the UN declared parts of Somalia to be in a state of famine. At that point, the international aid community sprang into very visible action.



“A drought is a slow onset crisis, and unlike a sudden catastrophe – say an earthquake or a flood – it can be difficult to ascertain the point at which the balance tips and it becomes imperative to intervene with urgent assistance.” Jane Cocking, Humanitarian Director, Oxfam GB.

Early in July 2011, Oxfam launched a massive public appeal for funds – the largest in its history – across several countries. The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) launched a joint

agency appeal in the UK almost immediately afterwards, as did the Dutch Co-operating Aid Organisations and the Canadian Humanitarian Coalition. Oxfam began to scale up rapidly, recruiting local staff, sending international experts to support them, and planning large-scale emergency activities with local partner organizations. Despite a difficult economic climate, the public responded very generously to the appeal, and the sustained media attention meant that donations continued to come in for several months after the initial launch. Oxfam raised a total of \$118.8m for this emergency, of which almost one-third came from members of the public (see the Finance section).

## Case Study Growing a future in Turkana

‘When I started working in the vegetable garden, I started using the plants to feed the children. If there are any vegetables left over after I have fed the children, I can sell them and buy schoolbooks and clothes for them. In the future I want to be trained so that I can have the power to change myself. I want to be able to do things that

I cannot do now. Before I didn’t know how to manage a garden and now I know’, says Selina Napetet, a female pastoralist in North Turkana, Kenya and a participant in a project run by Oxfam to encourage vegetable gardening.

She continues, ‘When I was young I didn’t think about things a lot. My father was rich and so I didn’t worry about the future. I had everything I wanted. Now I think about the future and I pray to God for strength and energy so that I can feed my children. I pray for a good future for my children. I don’t want them to have problems – that’s why I send them to school. I don’t want them to become pastoralists either, I want them to have good jobs and be employed so that they can take care of their families and have good futures. I am still waiting to laugh. When my children finish school and get good jobs, I will laugh then.’

Oxfam’s gardening project in North Turkana is specifically aimed at female pastoralists, with the aim of boosting their incomes and improving diets. Oxfam gave gardening tools such as rakes, hoes, watering cans, fencing, and seeds, and the plots are irrigated using the water run-off from nearby water points.

Selina Napetet, 59, lives in the village of Natoo with her family. They used to be pastoralists but lost all of their animals during the drought. Now Selina is working in Oxfam’s kitchen garden. Photo: Alejandro Chaskielberg.



Figure 2:  
Where Oxfam worked and  
who it helped.

Country	Regions	Beneficiary numbers from July 1, 2011
Somalia	Mogadishu, Afgoye, Lower Juba, Gedo & Middle Juba, Gedo, Hiran, Lower & Middle Shabele, Galgaduud and Somaliland	1,353,000
Kenya	Dadaab camps, Wajir, Turkana	1,050,000
Ethiopia	Somali region (Shenille, Jijiga, Afder and Liben zones) Oromia region (Borena, West Arsi, Bale and Guji zones), Tigray	425,500
Total		2,828,500

### Scope of this report

This report describes what Oxfam and its partners have achieved since July 2011, and also looks at what needs to be done in the future, both to help people recover from this particular drought and to increase their resilience to rain failures – which will certainly occur again. Given the very different country contexts in which Oxfam has been operating, the report is split into three sections summarizing what it has done (directly and through local partners) in Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia.

Sectorally, it describes how it has responded in the following technical areas:

- Access to food – both short-term (cash grants, food aid) and for longer-term livelihoods (restoring herds and farms, improving people’s access to markets, and helping them to diversify their livelihoods);
- Access to water – largely short-term;
- Improving public health where risks were highest;
- Using its experience on the ground to lobby for longer-term change.

This report is intended to account to the individuals, governments, and institutions that gave so generously to Oxfam’s Horn of Africa appeal, as well as to the organization’s partners, allies, volunteers, and staff. The Finance section (on page 26) provides the detail of how much money was raised for the East Africa food crisis appeal and how funds have been allocated.

Throughout the report, we use the term ‘Oxfam’ to refer to the Oxfam confederation as a whole and the Oxfam affiliates that are running programs on the ground in the Horn of Africa (i.e. Oxfam GB, Oxfam America, Intermón Oxfam, Oxfam Canada and Oxfam Novib), working with and through partner organisations in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya.

### What Oxfam did

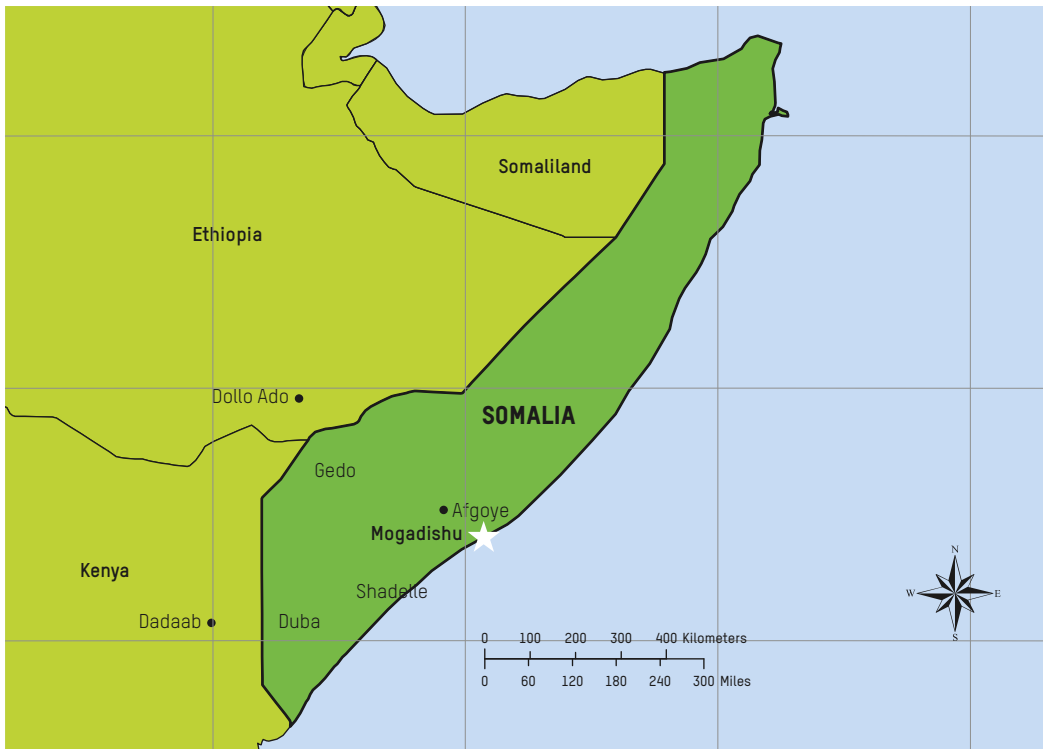
Because the drought affected three countries across one large region, Oxfam framed its appeal in terms of one overarching crisis affecting countries in the Horn of Africa. However, the crisis affected people differently in each of those countries. Their differing political contexts, for instance, required Oxfam to adopt different tactics, whether directly or through local organizations, or at greater or lesser speeds. Camp situations also required different responses to community ones. Therefore, rather than report back on a single program, this report looks separately at the ways in which Oxfam responded in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, bringing the three responses together in the financial summary section.

To effectively implement drought emergency response projects, Oxfam has put in place strong field-based monitoring systems in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia (working through partners). This enables Oxfam to track the response situation very closely and amend approaches as necessary. Oxfam’s humanitarian response in each of the countries was evaluated after a few months, with a focus on assessing the timeliness of response, coordination, and collaboration with others. The information and learning from such evaluations (now a routine part of any Oxfam response) was used to address and improve program activities, and will also be used to improve the quality of future emergency responses.

# SOMALIA

Somalia was undoubtedly the worst-hit country in the region, with more than four million people (or close to half the total population) directly affected. A combination of drought, rising food and fuel prices, 20 years of war, and restricted humanitarian access were the main factors that pushed six southern and central areas into famine. The longstanding conflict played a particularly important part in people's existing vulnerability – those fleeing violence are not cultivating crops or earning much of a livelihood. The UN estimated in July 2011 that nearly 20 percent of the population (1.5 million people) were displaced inside Somalia, with thousands more leaving every week for camps in Kenya and Ethiopia. Displacement, loss of male breadwinners, and the collapse of community support structures has made women especially vulnerable. Often living in temporary shelters, with no steady income or sources of support, they do what they can to get through the hard times – taking on an increased workload and burden for the overall responsibility for the survival of their household.

Oxfam has been working in Somalia for many years, but, because of insecurity, non-Somalis cannot travel freely in the country. Oxfam therefore works entirely with local organizations, and for the past few years has been successfully delivering essential and longer-term services to large communities that have fled violence, including around 410,000 people living in makeshift camps along the Afgoye road out of Mogadishu. Oxfam was also working in Mogadishu itself, supplying water in Benadir hospital – the only children's hospital in the city – and running the single largest nutrition program in the country, via treatment centers run by a specialist partner organisation, which were already seeing over 12,000 children a month. In addition, the hospital runs immunization and nutrition programs for pregnant and lactating mothers, as well as hygiene advice. In the southern regions, Oxfam was supporting over 200,000 people affected by long-term drought conditions – diversifying crop production, improving irrigation, and supporting income generation.



In the early months of 2011, early warning systems charted the consequences of the failure of the rains and the gradual deterioration of the food security situation. Partner organizations began to make regular assessments of conditions, and Oxfam approached large institutional donors to request additional support. However, given the chronic state of emergency in Somalia, it was hard for staff to convince the outside world that this was becoming an unusually serious crisis. Additionally, given the challenges of getting anyone into the country from outside, raising the profile of the crisis in the media was extremely difficult. Oxfam continued therefore to increase support to its existing partners, but lacked the flexibility of being able to scale up support by sending in additional experts or to build prompt relationships with new partners, which it would have been able to do elsewhere in the world.

The influx of refugees into Dadaab, followed by the declaration of famine by the UN on July 20, brought huge media attention and the money needed to really scale up the relief effort, but all of Oxfam's work was conducted through local organizations whose expertise and capacity defined the scope and scale of response.

Nevertheless, just over two months into this scale-up phase, the combined efforts were impressive. Oxfam had found new partners in the Gedo region, expanded its support in Mogadishu, and extended its coverage of communities in the Afgoye corridor as well as the Hiran, Galgaduud, and Middle and Lower Shabelle regions. By September, its partners were reaching 24 percent of the affected population. The work focused on three broad types of support: the mass provision of water; the provision of a mix of cash, agricultural, and livestock support to help people access food; and therapeutic feeding of children under five. Oxfam was able to offer a good deal of technical support to its partners offsite, in Kenya and Somaliland, which included accounting, monitoring, reporting, and recruiting staff.

### **Water supply, sanitation, and hygiene promotion (WASH)**

Helping people get enough water was a crucial aspect of Oxfam's work in Somalia. Piped water systems, borehole repair and drilling, and trucking water to communities were the main activities. Oxfam did this across all its program areas, adapting its tactics to what was available locally. Boreholes require specialist equipment to drill deep into the ground, and motor pumps and fuel to pump the water out into storage tanks for

distribution. Where shallow wells can be dug or cleaned out, Oxfam can pay communities to dig them. Trucking water is expensive and is used only as a short-term measure, so water might be trucked to communities while a local supply is found or a pipeline is run in from another source.

Sanitation and hygiene promotion activities were largely restricted to camps for internally displaced people and places where displaced people were crowded together. The link between poor hygiene and malnutrition is strong in overcrowded environments, especially where people are used to living in more spacious rural environments. The risks of disease are high, as diarrhea inhibits the absorption of food and can set off a downward spiral of physical decline which can kill very young, old, or sick people. The sprawling settlements along the Afgoye corridor constitute a huge displacement camp, where partners' public health teams have been constantly employed in siting and maintaining latrines, mobilizing community groups to run campaigns promoting good hygiene and awareness of the most serious diseases, such as cholera, and distributing basic hygiene items like soap.

Given that WASH is one of Oxfam's principal professional competencies, it was frustrating not to be able to provide the level of direct technical support desired. However, Oxfam carried out detailed monitoring of its partners' activities,

which included water quantity and quality, physical facilities, latrine coverage, what essential hygiene items had been distributed, how the needs of men and women had been specifically met, and how the beneficiary communities had been involved in the whole process.

Over the first nine months of this response, Oxfam supported more than 980,000 people in Somalia specifically with clean water- and health-related activities.

### Why give cash in a famine?

In areas where there is some food production or there are existing trade routes bringing it in, Oxfam always advocates giving people cash to enable them to buy their own food, rather than taking on food distributions of its own. Contrary to what the term 'famine' implies, in Somalia's case the problem was not that there was no food available: markets were still functioning, selling local and imported food – but at high prices. Oxfam therefore took the decision to inject cash into the economy, giving the most vulnerable households the wherewithal to buy what they needed. The organization worked with partners in Juba, Gedo, Lower and Middle Shabelle, Hiran, Banadir, and Mogadishu to identify beneficiaries, prioritizing families with highly malnourished children and female-headed households. Then it used local remittance companies to manage the disbursements of cash, in amounts of between



◀ Oxfam partner Hijra has been providing safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, and public health advice, to over one hundred thousand people living in makeshift camps. Part of this involves setting up street signs promoting good hygiene practice. Photo: Caroline Gluck.



Children play at Badbaado IDP camp, which was opened in July 2011 and is the biggest IDP camp in Mogadishu, with over 5,000 people living there. Photo: Caroline Gluck.

\$75 and \$100 per household every month for six months. The cash rate was based on the price of an average food basket of basic necessities, adjusted for inflation. Over the six months, it managed to support over 33,000 families (nearly 200,000 people) in this way – an unprecedented number for an Oxfam cash program.

In the south and central regions, where Oxfam had a longstanding program of drought relief activities, it merged the cash disbursements with distributions of seeds and tools in time for the next rainy season. It also gave farmers donkeys and carts to help them to transport the tools necessary to prepare the land for planting.

In nine months, Oxfam had supported nearly 500,000 people out of the 1.3 million total targeted with a variety of activities designed to improve access to food, both short-term (i.e. cash) and longer-term (i.e. support to restore livelihoods).

### Feeding children

With famine affecting six regions of Somalia, thousands of Somali families fled into Mogadishu at the peak of the drought crisis, seeking food and other emergency support. Oxfam has an existing partner which runs health centers specifically for malnourished children. By increasing its support from eight centers to 16, Oxfam was able to help the health centers admit and treat more than 12,000 under-fives a month from August 2011 until the present.

In the centers, children are weighed and measured, and their mid-upper arm circumference (is measured. These tests will indicate how malnourished a child is. The most severely malnourished are admitted into the Outpatient Therapeutic Program, while others are admitted into the Supplementary Feeding Program. All are given packets of therapeutic food such as Plumpy Nut, and checked regularly thereafter to follow their progress. Children who have medical complications are immediately sent to stabilization centers that are run by specialist NGOs. The health centers also take the opportunity to vaccinate both mothers and children against the most serious contagious diseases, such as measles, whooping cough, and tetanus. By the end of March 2012, Oxfam had supported 155,000 children through the whole nutrition program.

### The year ahead

Somalia is no longer in a state of famine, but due to continued poor rains and unresolved conflict it remains in a critical emergency, which continues to be one of the biggest crises in the world. The lack of any sign of peace means that the Somalis now living in the refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia show no inclination to go home; this will have implications for Oxfam's work in those camps, as well as its continued efforts to give practical support to people inside Somalia and its sustained lobbying for humanitarian access and a longer-term political solution.

## Case Study Providing hope for the next harvest

Agricultural communities in southern Somalia – the country's grain basket – are being severely affected by the ongoing drought, which has resulted in widespread crop failure. In 2011, cereal crop production was the lowest it had been in 17 years, and prices soared due to dwindling local stocks. The crisis meant that seed previously kept aside for replanting was used as food, so farmers didn't have seeds to plant ahead of the approaching rainy season. Even when seed is available on the market, many households do not have the money to purchase it.

Farmers struggled to provide food for themselves and their families, and were also not receiving an income. It was expected that recovery for agricultural households would be slow, even if the November rains were above average. Oxfam helped farmers get through this difficult time and provided hope for a better harvest after the rains.

Since May 2010, Oxfam, through its local partner WASDA, has been supporting farmers in Lower and Middle Juba through a community-led food security initiative – a three-year project which supported eight villages in 2010, and is currently supporting a further seven villages. Another project, started in December 2010 and delivered through Oxfam partners CED and HARDO, has so far benefited over 14,000 families along the regions of Lower and Middle Shabelle and Hiran. These projects were scaled up in response to the famine in 2011 and are still ongoing.

The project transferred cash to farming families to help them meet immediate food needs and purchase seeds. Over the past year, over 300,000 people in South Central Somalia received between \$80 and \$100 – enough to buy food and supplies for a family for one month. In addition, over 90,000 farmers in Lower and Middle Shabelle, Lower and Middle Juba and Hiran have benefited from agricultural inputs such as seeds, tools, land preparation and technical training, to help them grow crops in time for the next harvest. New water pumps and the rehabilitation of local wells helped farmers irrigate their land for cultivation.

Hassan, a farmer in Lower Juba, said the project helped his family stay in Somalia rather than move to Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya: *"I was contemplating to move to Dadaab with my family since we did not have any food in our store due to failure of rains last season and we had no other source of income to survive. Luckily, the WASDA team came to our village and told us they can support us with water pumps to irrigate our farms and I was lucky to be among those selected to benefit from the support. Now I have enough food for my family until next season"*

As a result of the project, farmers in several areas affected by famine managed to successfully harvest crops – both providing food for their own families and also making staple foods more available and affordable.

*Below:* Harvesting maize in Middle Juba. Photo: WASDA



# ETHIOPIA

In 2011, two consecutive seasonal rains failed in Ethiopia. The result was severe drought affecting a number of provinces – in particular in the Oromia and Somali regions. By July, the Ethiopian government estimated that an acute food crisis was affecting 4.5 million people – an increase of 40 percent from an estimate it had made three months earlier.

Oromia and Somali are both huge, remote, and essentially rural regions. Sixty percent of the people living there make a living from pastoralism, relying on livestock for sustenance and an income, and moving with their herds according to the seasonal availability of pasture. A further 25 percent are agro-pastoralists, engaged in a mix of animal rearing and crop cultivation. The remaining 15 percent are mostly sedentary, farming land near rivers.

Pasture, being entirely rain-fed, suffered badly during the drought, and pastoral communities were forced to go further afield to find fodder. This stresses animals and increases the pressure

on whatever pasture is left. Livestock market statistics in early 2011 from both regions showed steadily deteriorating body condition among cattle being sold, and hundreds of thousands of animals died between February and July, with cows usually being hit the hardest because of their total reliance on pasture. As animals weaken, the quality of their milk and meat drops, as does their market value. As households try to sell off animals they cannot feed, they flood the market and reduce the price further. Cereal prices, on the other hand, rise as demand increases and supply falls. People have no choice but to go into debt or go hungry.

Water sources vary from shallow ponds and wells to deeper, fuel-dependent boreholes. Recurring drought had caused the water table to drop, and pumps at many shallow wells broke down from over-use. Ponds tend to be seasonal anyway, and dry up for several months of each year. Water quality is also an issue where ponds are concerned, especially when people share the source with their livestock. In one community



in Oromia, staff noted that women were walking up to seven hours a day to fetch water from a distant pond after the generator pumping water from their local well broke down.

In addition to the slow-onset crisis unfolding in the rural regions, a more sudden-onset crisis was happening in the southeast, where refugees from Somalia were fleeing drought and conflict, and in July were arriving in Ethiopia at a rate of about 2,000 per day. This represented a very different type of problem: on the one hand, the hardship suffered by nomadic communities dispersed in small numbers over vast distances and, on the other, the suffering of a large and growing population of malnourished people arriving with nothing onto a site with no facilities. These different contexts required very different types of response by Oxfam.

**Oromia region: Borena and Guji zones**

Oxfam and its partner Gayo had been monitoring conditions in the region through a drought early warning system known as DEWS, which relies on household data to track broader environmental changes. In March 2011, it launched a cash-for-work initiative in two of the worst-affected districts in Borena, supporting herding families and those who combine herding with farming.

Cash-for-work projects involved the rehabilitation of 34 community ponds and benefitted 5,000 households (nearly 30,000

people) who were already severely affected by the drought. Among them were people who had no food at home or assets to sell to buy food, households with a high number of dependants, and households headed by women, along with elderly people and those with disabilities. By providing people with cash in exchange for their work, Oxfam aimed to stimulate the development of local markets and give families greater flexibility to buy what their households needed most. The project also aimed to help people hold onto any existing assets, so they would not have to sell them to buy food. In addition, pond rehabilitation would increase the availability of water for human and livestock consumption. Households that didn't have anyone to contribute labor to the project were given cash grants. New rounds of cash-for-work projects followed; the work included excavating silt from ponds and clearing brush from grazing lands to allow grasses to regenerate and provide fodder for livestock in the future.

With the same partner, Oxfam supported a supplementary food distribution program in the Taltalle district for moderately malnourished children under five, pregnant or nursing mothers, and some elderly people. These distributions included Famix – a high-nutrient food supplement – and cooking oil to cover a three-month period. Altogether, Oxfam and Gayo helped 1,500 people.



## Case Study Finding water in times of drought

On the road between Yabello and Dubuluk – two towns in drought-plagued southern Ethiopia – a shower in early October had drained into muddy pools. Crouched by two of them, women concentrated on their work: scooping water from the puddle into large plastic jugs. This was their source of drinking water – closer than a dwindling pond two hours walk from home. They wouldn't get sick from the puddle water, they said. They were used to it. One woman said she would use purification tablets to treat the water, and then boil it before drinking.

Miles away in Dubuluk, Abdala Ali, a pump operator, waited for fuel to arrive. Without it, he couldn't run the pump to draw water from a well that serviced the town and provided water for families deep in the bush who had no other supply. The water is loaded onto a truck, organised by Oxfam and its local partner, the Gayo Pastoralist Development Initiative. When the fuel finally came, it took an hour to fill the 13,000-liter tank on the truck with water. In a cloud of exhaust fumes, the truck lumbered away over dirt tracks so rough that it would take another three to four hours for the driver to reach his destination about 25 miles away.

For many people in southern Ethiopia, this is what it is like every day during times of severe drought: water is extremely scarce, there is little permanent infrastructure for its delivery, and every drop requires enormous amounts of energy to fetch or ferry. Without emergency measures like water trucking, the consequences for countless people would be catastrophic.

'We would have been dead like our cattle,' said Doba Wako, an elder in the small village of Afura, which he said had been receiving water deliveries about twice a week. 'We are living, so we appreciate it. But it is not enough. Not for all of us.'

Nearby, in the village of Golicha Goro, Buke Koru described the hardships that families in this region have endured. A mother of five, she is a member of a local committee that oversees the distribution of water delivery by Gayo. 'The last good rain was three years ago,' she said. 'Since then, everything is getting worse. Even if you plant maize, you get nothing. The rains are not enough.' A few yards from her home stands a 5,000-liter plastic water tank – the community's lifeline, which was being filled regularly by Gayo. Koru keeps the key that allows villagers to open the tap and fill their jugs, filling them up to the very top and capping them carefully to save every drop. One jerrycan – 20 liters – might last her family until late in the afternoon, the water slowly dribbled out for cooking, washing dishes, and bathing.

What does the future hold for families here – a place where rain is so uncertain and options for making a living are so limited? 'Even if you have the last breath, hope is always in your mind,' said Koru. 'So we'll do whatever we can.'

*Below:* Buke Koru, a mother of five, helps oversee the distribution of water in a region that has had almost no rain in the last three years. Photo: Oxfam.



Plans also called for the repair of motorized boreholes and the delivery of water by truck to communities with extremely limited access to supplies – Oxfam helped 6,000 people during the peak water shortage times. In addition, it has been working to expand a bio sand filter project to give families access to clean water in their homes. It has also been working on the construction of systems to harvest rainwater from the roofs of schools and health posts, for when the rains do appear.

In neighboring Guji zone, Oxfam supported a local partner, Action for Development, which collaborated with the local water authority to improve water supplies for domestic and livestock use. They worked to clear out and reinforce reservoirs, repair water pumps, and increase the number of hand-dug wells available to communities. Beneficiaries included some of the most vulnerable and destitute community members, such as women, children, and elderly people, some of whom were given paid employment clearing land and doing the repairs. Nearly 98,000 people benefitted from this work.

### **Somali region – Shenille, Jijiga, Liben and Afder zones**

The Somali region is highly prone to natural disasters and was severely affected by the drought. Situated in the east of the country, it is one of the poorest parts of Ethiopia. It is relatively isolated and receives little attention from the federal capital. Livestock forms the backbone of the community's economy, which is mainly pastoralist (75 percent). The scarcity of natural resources and the remoteness of the area, as well as above-average prices for staple foods, all contributed to the vulnerability of Somali households.

Oxfam has been working in the area for nine years and responded to this food crisis with a large-scale emergency program, improving access to drinking water and food security, as well as promoting good hygiene practices for more than 137,000 people. The activities were shaped to have an immediate impact on the population (e.g. water trucking and repair of boreholes, cash-for-work and cash transfers), while also having long-term impact through the training of water committees and animal health workers, and through hygiene promotion sessions.

Work here was slower – Oxfam did not have a partner in the region, and staff had to travel vast distances to find isolated communities that consisted of just a handful of households, to find out how they were coping and what their needs were.

One of the major challenges was being able to reach communities. Being pastoralists, they travel frequently with their herds, so permanent latrines, for example, are useless. Also, the Somali region is vast, with small, isolated pastoralist communities spread across a wide area, which created significant logistical challenges.

Oxfam's WASH work included a substantial public health component. The organization distributed hygiene kits (soap, water purifiers, a bucket with a lid for water storage, and a strainer) to 4,000 households that had participated in cash-for-work programs. To aid preparedness, it stockpiled Aquatabs in local health posts so that they would be ready for distribution to families to help them keep their water clean in the event of an outbreak of acute watery diarrhea. Oxfam also ran a large public health campaign, which included the celebration of Global Handwashing Day on October 15 in local schools, and outreach to community health workers who made household visits to share information about treating water and the importance of hand-washing. Over 67,000 people were supported by health education campaigns at a variety of public gatherings and in market places.

Other challenges also had to be overcome. Hygiene promotion sessions, for instance, had to be adapted to a drought context in keeping water use to a minimum. Oxfam had to negotiate with the local authorities before giving unconditional cash grants to families who were unable to take on paid work (e.g. due to age, disability, or caring responsibilities), because this is not a recognized support tactic under normal circumstances. In summary, intervention in the Somali region targeted hard-to-reach beneficiaries in hard-to-get-to places.

Oxfam also took part in a livestock health initiative, providing veterinary support in the form of vaccinations and treatments for about 25,000 animals, which benefitted about 5,000 households.

Oxfam's work in the Somali region continues to respond to chronic needs through long-term development programs, while closely monitoring local conditions so that it will be able to launch another timely and relevant emergency response if necessary. Through its longer-term approach, Oxfam aims to increase the capacity and preparedness of vulnerable communities to reduce their own disaster risks and build resilience to future shocks.

### Dollo Ado

The site at Dollo Ado, in the Liben zone on the border with Somalia, is a windswept desert of sand and rock. In mid-July 2011, the moment Oxfam got permission to work in the camp there, known as Hiloweyn, it ordered a plane-load of equipment to supply water and sanitation facilities for 60,000 people. By the end of July,

the equipment had been trucked from Addis Ababa to this border region, where technical teams were waiting for it. Digging to any depth in Dollo Ado is very difficult because of the rock – without machinery it is impossible to get deeper than 30cm. Oxfam sourced water from a treatment plant on the Genale river, 2.5km from the camp. After chlorination, it was trucked over to the camp (work began in September to lay a pipeline from the treatment plant to the camp) and put into 70,000-liter tanks, from where it was piped to tapstands in the camp itself.

By mid-September, people were receiving 16 liters of water per person per day – more than the standard target of 14 liters. A small team of staff worked around the clock to prepare the site as people arrived – one humanitarian worker described it as 'Oxfam at its best'.



◀ Abbra, an Oxfam driver, lends his efforts to helping make the camp ready for the refugees by assembling tapstands sent from the UK. Photo: Jane Beesley.

Building latrines was a particular challenge, given the rocky terrain. Oxfam used a specialized trench excavator belonging to the UN to dig communal latrines, and built additional raised ones on sandbags. Health promoters organized camp residents into hygiene committees, trained them in the importance of clean water and safe excreta management practices, and mobilized regular camp clean-up campaigns. The main health problems were the high malnutrition levels and measles, and during the first few months there was an acute diarrhea scare which had staff on high alert.

Work was also carried out with local Ethiopian communities around Dollo Ado. The surrounding population was also affected by the drought, and the influx of thousands of Somalians threatened to put pressure on already scarce resources. As an immediate response, Oxfam trucked additional water to these communities and distributed non-food items (buckets, jugs etc.) to more than 3,500 households in Dollo Ado. In addition, Oxfam repaired traditional water infrastructures such as hand dug wells, ponds and birkats (water storage facilities), so as to increase the capacity of the local population to deal with the impact of future droughts. In Dollo town, latrines were completed in a short period of time to upgrade facilities at the main health center. Other health promotion activities were also organized for local authorities and communities in the area, providing training about safe hygiene practices, such as how best to store water and stop the transmission of water-related diseases. At the beginning of 2012, Oxfam started to repair and improve numerous motorized and traditional water supply schemes along the Dawa River and in more remote areas where water was scarce, benefitting more than 10,000 people. Motorized schemes require a larger investment because of the pumps and the fuel (or solar energy) needed, but they successfully cater to larger populations. In localities where populations are smaller, traditional hand-operated water supply schemes are more appropriate. Latrine construction and rain harvesting projects were also initiated, specifically at schools and health posts.

### **Gorobaqaqsa**

Oxfam's work in Gorobaqaqsa, in Afder zone, was all the more important because no other international agencies were working in this severely drought-affected area, inhabited by

56,000 people. Oxfam's program to provide emergency water supplies and food security for people made vulnerable by a succession of failed rains was a challenge because roads in this area were in a particularly bad state, making access to remote communities difficult. In spite of this, Oxfam launched a water-trucking operation to reach the most drought-affected population – which reached 3,900 households – and distributed non-food items to more than 5,200 of the most vulnerable households in the area.

A mass vaccination and treatment campaign to minimize the threat of outbreaks and decrease the prevalence of livestock diseases in animals was completed in early 2012. This operation, delivered in close collaboration with local authorities and community leaders, was the first of this kind in this area. As a result, more than 1,700 goats, camels and cows received vaccination and treatment services (in Gorobaqaqsa, Ghura Damole and Karsadula).

Oxfam also repaired and rebuilt 12 traditional birkats and ponds, reaching 3,500 people, while conducting hygiene promotion activities in parallel so as to ensure that beneficiaries understood how to store and use water safely. In order to increase water storage capacity for local people, Oxfam organized the transport of a bulldozer to communities living by one of the largest inland ponds in the area, where it was used to deepen and de-silt the pond, providing better access to water for more than 6,000 people and 37,000 cattle.

A large-scale cash voucher project continues to enable 1,100 of the most vulnerable households to access basic food items and buy goats to restock numbers. This initiative, implemented with local cooperatives, also had a very positive effect on the development of the local economy, which had been quite limited due to the remoteness of the area. An additional 400 households benefited from cash-for-work activities related to the digging of four water ponds.

### **Tigray**

Oxfam organized a series of paid activities, under which communities built check dams, terraced hillsides, and laid roads in return for a daily wage; these activities benefitted 17,000 people. It also repaired or rehabilitated water sources, vaccinated animals, and carried out public health campaigns with community groups.

# KENYA

Early in 2011, Oxfam staff were predicting that people would need emergency assistance if the April rains failed. Surface water points – water pans, shallow wells, and traditional hand-dug wells – began drying up in the north of the country in February, and the resulting migration by communities towards boreholes led to overcrowding, mechanical breakdown, and the potential for conflict. Similarly to Ethiopia, the areas worst affected by the drought were the northern pastoralist districts, where up to 95 percent of people in some areas live below the national poverty line. These areas are largely marginalized and suffer from limited government attention, low levels of private investment, regular outbreaks of livestock disease, and recurrent drought.

Oxfam has a longstanding program in these arid and semi-arid lands, designed especially to address the chronic protracted crises of poverty and environmental stress. In March it began to increase the level of support it was giving, with a drought-mitigation program involving cash

distributions, water trucking, animal health activities such as de-worming, and the culling of weaker animals to protect food supplies for remaining herds. Over the next two months, it scaled up its programs in Wajir and Turkana to reach 250,000 people. However, while a few donors were on hand with additional funding, overall funding constraints limited what Oxfam could do. Donors did not release additional money to fund expanded programs until the Government of Kenya officially declared an emergency in late May.

Late June was also when the scale of the emergency hit the world's media. Somalia was the focus of this and, as news teams were not able to access Somalia itself, the headlines focused heavily on Dadaab camp, in north-eastern Kenya. Unlike Dollo Ado in Ethiopia, Dadaab camp was not new – Somalis had been fleeing conflict and settling there for 19 years, and it was already known to be the largest refugee camp in the world. However, the flow had been increasing throughout 2011, and the

authorities' previous reluctance to allow it to expand changed in May, when permission was granted for extensions to the existing sites and for the relocation of refugees into them.

Since 2010, Oxfam has had a small presence in Dadaab camp, where it was tasked with designing and installing water and sanitation facilities for up to 40,000 people at a new camp known as Ifo 2 East. Work was delayed after January 2011 when the government issued an instruction to suspend work at Ifo 2, which meant that the camp could not be opened. After a reversal of this decision in July (in which Oxfam's own advocacy work was influential), and with an agreement to open two further camps (Ifo 2 West and Kambioos), Oxfam increased its commitment, promising to provide essential water and sanitation services for up to 210,000 people.

### **Sustaining life and livelihoods across the north**

By July 2011, the market for livestock across northern Kenya had almost completely collapsed; the price of a cow had dropped from \$220 to \$30. People were walking huge distances to find water for themselves and their remaining animals, and pressure on water points was intense. Oxfam's focus was two-fold: the urgent need to increase the supplies of water available to an adequate level, and the equally important but less 'life-saving' requirement to keep markets functioning and stop people becoming destitute.

In Turkana, Oxfam staff worked directly with communities, while in Wajir the agency worked entirely through partners. In Wajir, 27 sites were quickly identified as being most urgently in need of water – communities where the supply had totally dried up. Oxfam's partners began trucking regular supplies to these communities, travelling an average of 70km per trip and supplying 76,000 people, emptying water into specially built underground storage tanks. Where boreholes existed but had broken down through age or over-use, Oxfam repaired them and provided subsidies to help communities buy fuel for the pumps.

Early assessments of markets in both Wajir and Turkana indicated that, unlike in Somalia, very little food was available locally. The Kenyan government runs a regular safety-net program targeting the very poorest in society, but the numbers of vulnerable people had been increasing steadily over the year. People's purchasing power had been declining for months, and this was a disincentive to traders to bring in food that few could afford. However, this meant that, despite the near famine conditions across Kenya, food could be made available if traders knew it would be worth their while.

Cash grants were therefore an important part of Oxfam's response, as a way of sustaining a normal market system and helping both consumers and suppliers. In Wajir county,



## Case Study Solar power in Kenya

During droughts in Turkana, many communities have required significant external support to ensure that water points remain functional, and to minimize the loss of human and animal life.

Diesel systems are capable of very high output, but their consumption of fuel means very high operational costs too. During droughts, they might need to operate for 18 hours a day to keep people and animals alive. But just when people need water the most, they have less money.

Many diesel pumps have exceeded their original design life and are poorly maintained; their failure rate is high. If governments or NGOs provide fuel and spare parts to subsidize the costs of operation, it reinforces a sense of dependency and fails to address underlying economic and management issues.

Oxfam has installed eight solar pumping systems in seven villages. Five of these have replaced diesel pumps, enabling direct comparisons to be made. The seven communities all reported significant benefits – most importantly, improved access to water and reliability of supply. The tangible evidence is that, during the 2011 drought, all these villages were self-reliant for water supply and even able to set up small irrigated plots.

The community of Meyan was previously dependent on traditional ‘scoop holes,’ which were unsafe not only because of waterborne diseases but also physically dangerous as they sometimes collapsed – burying and killing people as they collected water. The solar pump has provided this village with a continuous water supply that people have used to start vegetable gardens and cook food. The community reports less illness and, above all, villagers value the fact that they can still get a water supply during periods when it is difficult to collect tariffs for fuel.

Two frequent assumptions about the supposed inadequacies of solar power in particular have been challenged. One is that the output of a solar pump would not be able to meet demand. In fact, the net output from the solar pumps is significantly greater than their diesel counterparts. The second assumption is that the capital cost of solar is significantly higher than for diesel. This is not so. Solar pumps tend to replace larger-capacity submersible pumps and generators of comparable or greater cost. And, as

expected, the solar pump has significantly lower operating costs. In Kaaleng village, water users say they have saved about \$1,240 and have paid off debts.

There are some challenges, however. Solar pumps cannot draw a sufficient quantity of water from deep boreholes. Output also drops significantly in cloudy conditions, and there is none at all at night. However, this is easily overcome by having a small back-up petrol generator (which each village has).

Turkana is ideally suited to solar pumps, with ample sunshine and fairly shallow groundwater depth. In places with higher demand and/or deeper groundwater, such systems may not be appropriate. Nevertheless, Oxfam’s experience in Turkana demonstrates that solar power is simpler, more reliable, and a big step in the right direction in terms of increasing communities’ self-reliance during dry seasons and drought, as well as reducing the level of external support.

*Below: Solar panels powering water system managed by the Loarengak water users association, in Turkana, Kenya. Photo: Jane Beesley.*





Newly arrived refugees in IFO camp at Dadaab have been eagerly waiting to collect water from Oxfam's newly installed taps. Many refugees have walked to the camp from Somalia and have little food to eat. Photo: Jo Harrison.



Oxfam worked with local banks to distribute cash to 25 percent of the population (over 150,000 people). It prioritized the participation of vulnerable women, especially female-headed households. Monitoring visits to see how cash was spent showed that a large proportion of it went to buy food items, while other expenditure included children's schooling, medical treatment, and paying off household debts. As well as improvements in the physical well-being of households, the cash grants had a profound effect on relationships between husbands and wives – boosting the self-confidence of women as custodians of the cash, and the respect they were given by men.

In Turkana, Oxfam adopted a new tactic, which was to work directly with traders as the distributors of cash. It gave grants to 115 local traders to encourage them to buy stock, and then identified over 5,000 households (82 percent of which were female-headed) to receive grants of 3,000 Kenyan shillings (about \$34), which were given to the traders for onward distribution. The trader network was faster, more efficient, and more secure than using other distribution mechanisms. Early assessments showed that beneficiaries had increased the number and variety of their daily meals, and that they had stopped selling off or culling any further livestock. Over 60 percent of the grants were spent on food, with smaller percentages used for education, building up small businesses, family health needs, and paying off debts.

## Dadaab – the largest refugee camp in the world

Oxfam assumed a massive responsibility with its commitment to supply 100 percent of the water and sanitation needs in the additional sites designated by the Kenyan government at Dadaab. During the bureaucratic problems that delayed the transfer of refugees into Ifo 2, Oxfam utilized the water systems it had installed there by extending a pipeline from the empty site across to another site that was full, which was quicker than setting up a whole new supply.

Oxfam's work in Dadaab has continued steadily for a year – expanding infrastructure in the new camps, as well as performing routine maintenance on pipelines, servicing generators, and digging new latrines. Maintaining a hygienic environment in a camp this crowded is vital – Oxfam regularly distributes cleaning kits (including rakes, wheelbarrows, gloves, brooms, dust masks), as well as jerrycans and soap, and it runs large-scale public health campaigns to promote the importance of hand-washing and the risks of diarrheal diseases.

In addition to work inside the camp sites, it has been important to support the surrounding communities, who were also affected by drought, but subject to considerably less media attention. Tensions between the resident population and the refugees were high; Oxfam tried to minimize the possibility of flashpoints by trucking water and subsidizing fuel to water pumps used by the host communities. As longer-term measures, Oxfam has supplied new boreholes, built latrines and bath-houses, and supplied donkeys and carts to some of the poorest people in these villages.

Tensions, however, have persisted in Dadaab. Threats of violence and kidnapping began to restrict Oxfam's operations to 'life-saving activities only' in mid-October. This coincided with the rainy season, causing localized flooding in the sites and increased the risk of cholera. Oxfam's strong relationships with local contractors and the communities themselves meant that it could hand over much of the maintenance of camp hygiene and public health standards during the times its staff were absent. Over the year, Oxfam has achieved a great deal in very difficult circumstances – in the past few months, it has handed over much of its work permanently to communities and other agencies, but will maintain a presence in Ifo 2 East, to support up to 40,000 people for the next year, at least.

## Case Study Alice Elim Koloy, a trader in Turkana

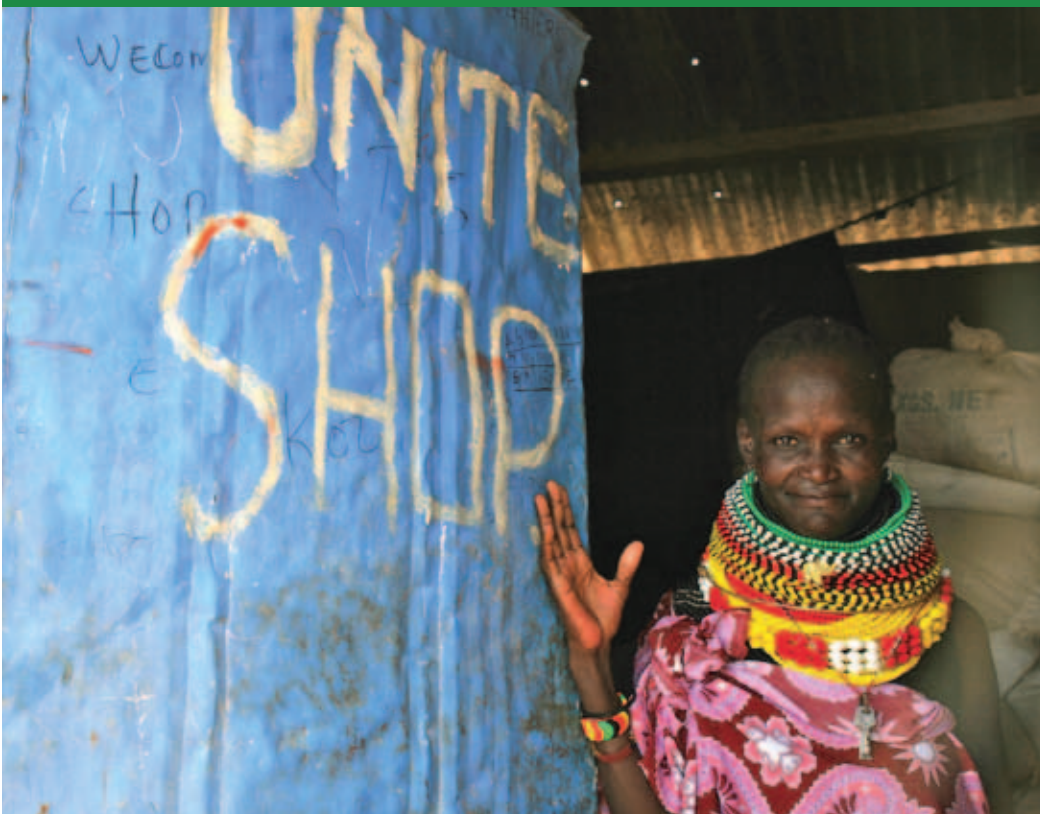
'I was really affected by the drought. Most of my livestock was destroyed. The price of items shot up...everyone has been affected. There was not enough water, everything dried up and there was a lot of congestion at the water points. Even cooking became a problem because we had so little water. During the drought we took our remaining livestock closer to the border areas, but there is conflict there with people from Sudan as they are also taking their animals there because of the lack of water and grass.

'Because of this [Oxfam] project, my business has expanded and I've been able to have more stock. Because I have more business, my family has had less hunger because we now can afford to have something to eat. I'm now able to pay for school uniforms and school fees, and the children can go to school. I now have an iron-sheet house and we are now building a toilet... I didn't have either of these things before the project. I'm now planning to

extend the shop by making it bigger. Another thing is that now I've gained more economic power. I can buy new clothes and send my children to school. I feel I have dignity in the eyes of the village. I feel I'm someone now and I'm recognized.

'I've developed budgeting skills. I know how to prioritize the goods that I purchase to sell by looking at what goods go faster, what sells well and what does not...these items I don't buy or buy less of. I also know about the importance of good customer-trader relations and the importance of looking after your customers...like providing items they ask for.

'The people trust me because I don't deduct any money and they respect me because of this. It also keeps me very busy and I feel very happy because I'm working. Before, because of the drought, I had little to do... no business, no money, and no other work opportunities...so I felt idle and this also made me unhappy.'



◀ Alice Elim Koloy, outside her shop. Through Oxfam's help, she has been able to expand her business, and pay for her children to go to school. Photo: Jane Beesley.

# REGIONAL ADVOCACY

In the early months of 2011, Oxfam focused on pressing governments for a decisive response to the crisis, securing increased funding to prevent the situation worsening, and conducting extensive national and regional advocacy work to highlight the long-term problems which have made the situation so serious. Then, in July, Oxfam helped to establish the 'Africans Act 4 Africa' (AA4A) campaign, which built on grassroots movements and provided a platform for African citizens to call on their own governments and regional bodies such as the African Union to address the food crisis as an urgent measure. African celebrities and popular musicians from across the continent took to social and traditional media to ensure good coverage, and the campaign helped to generate vital political pressure; African governments pledged \$43m to fund relief efforts. AA4A will continue to work to hold governments to account in delivering these pledges, and making sure that next time more is done more quickly to protect vulnerable people.

In September 2011, Oxfam joined partners from around the world to develop, draft, and launch the Charter to End Extreme Hunger. This urges governments to meet their responsibilities by taking concrete steps to prevent future food crises. The Charter has received widespread support from key international figures, including the Kenyan Prime Minister, the EU Commissioner, and the UK Secretary of State for International Development.

Oxfam is part of the REGLAP consortium – a regional multi-agency learning and advocacy program, which documents good practices and lessons learned on how to best strengthen the resilience of communities in the drylands of East Africa. It lobbies governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders to adopt improved policies.

In January 2012, Oxfam published an influential report, *A Dangerous Delay*, jointly with Save the Children. Since then, many donors have announced more flexible approaches to funding that will allow for longer-term investment, before situations become critical. The European Union has been notable for its generous and prompt funding for the 2012 food crisis in West Africa, using humanitarian



funds for early mitigation of the developing crisis. Several countries, including Kenya and Ethiopia, are now developing plans to build resilience to chronic drought for their populations. However, the current West Africa food crisis also indicates that many actors have yet to implement lessons learned from the Horn of Africa crisis.

Such lessons include the importance of early warning systems focusing more on livelihoods, coping mechanisms and food security projections than on nutritional data, and the need for substantive donor investment in household and community resilience and early mitigation activities as well as supporting capacity-building in civil society to deal with crisis situations and shocks.

Oxfam continues advocating the relevant actors to change their approaches to better meet the challenges of the coming years.

▲ Dadaab: to prevent the build up of algae in their water containers, women and girls are provided with soap and trained how to properly wash them clean.  
Photo: Jo Harrison.

# FINANCE

Oxfam raised \$118.8m for its drought response program. By the end of June 2012, approximately \$86.7m of these funds will have been spent. There are plans to spend the remaining funds, which are made up of both public appeals income and contracts with donors, during the coming year.

Note: this financial report uses forecasts for both income and expenditure for April to June 2012.

## Sources of funding

Funds for Oxfam’s response to the drought in East Africa came from a wide range of sources. \$32.7m of the total came from public donations. A further \$15.2m came through other mechanisms, such as the Dutch Cooperating Organisation (SHO)

fund, the Canadian Humanitarian Coalition, and the UK’s Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC).

Governments and other agencies provided \$63.8m for the response. Governments supporting Oxfam’s response include those of Australia, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, New Zealand, Regional Spanish Governments, Sweden, Scotland, the UK and the USA<sup>1</sup>. Other agencies include the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and several UN agencies, such as the Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UNICEF and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). The remaining \$7m came from other sources, including foundations and trusts.

<sup>1</sup> Oxfam America does not directly accept US government funds. This money was given to Oxfam GB.

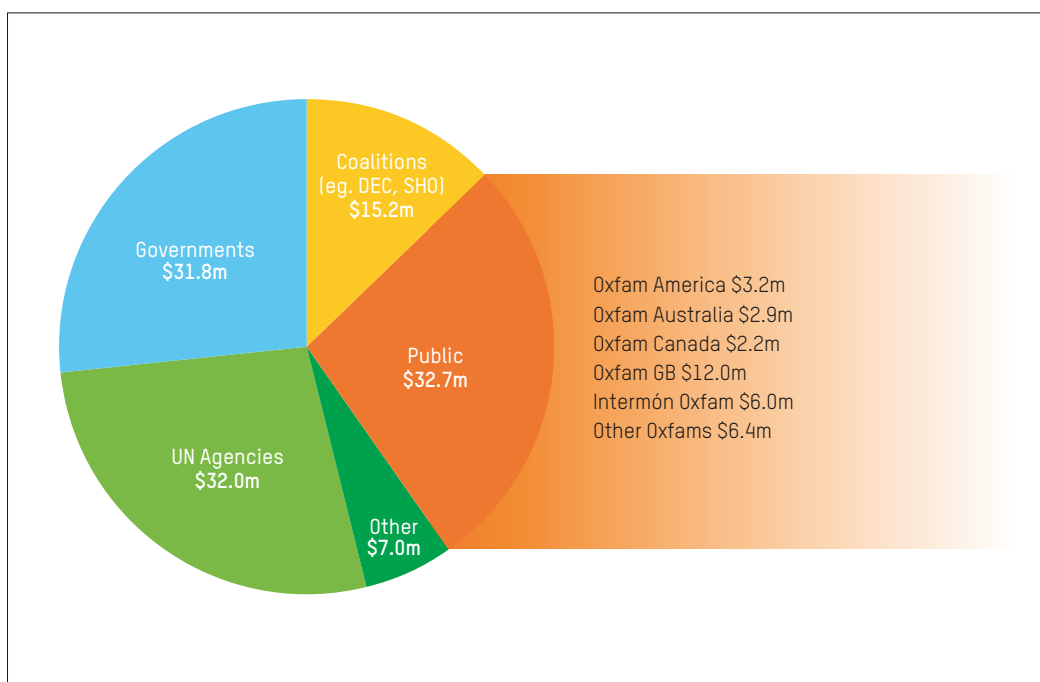


Figure 3: Sources of funding for Oxfam’s drought response in East Africa 2011/12 – total \$118.8m.

**Note:** Public appeals totals shown exclude income used to cover fundraising costs.

Affiliate	Income Received
Oxfam America	\$5.4m
Oxfam Canada	\$5.3m
Oxfam GB	\$77.7m
Intermón Oxfam	\$8.5m
Oxfam Novib	\$20.6m
Not yet allocated	\$1.3m
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$118.8m</b>

Figure 4: Funds allocated by Oxfam affiliates – total \$118.8m.

The Oxfam confederation is made up of 17 independent affiliates, working together as one to share learning, experience and resources, in order to maximize impact and results. The main Oxfam affiliates working with partners and delivering program activities in the Horn of Africa are Oxfam America, Oxfam Canada, Oxfam GB, Intermón Oxfam (Spain), and Oxfam Novib (Netherlands). However, the fundraising appeal and other related media and campaigning activities were a confederation-wide response.

### How the money has been spent

The main focus of expenditure is on relief supplies and materials, with \$38.2m spent on

emergency food security and livelihoods work and \$23.3m on water and sanitation inputs. A further \$5.5m was spent on other program activities, including advocacy, campaigning and media. \$15.6m was spent on direct management support to the program, including financial, logistical, HR and program support, with all but \$1m of this being spent locally. An additional \$4.1m was spent in head offices, in order to provide the monitoring, coordination and reporting necessary to effectively support the affiliates' ongoing programs.

Note: Nearly all of the Program Support expenditure was spent locally, and includes logistics expenditure.

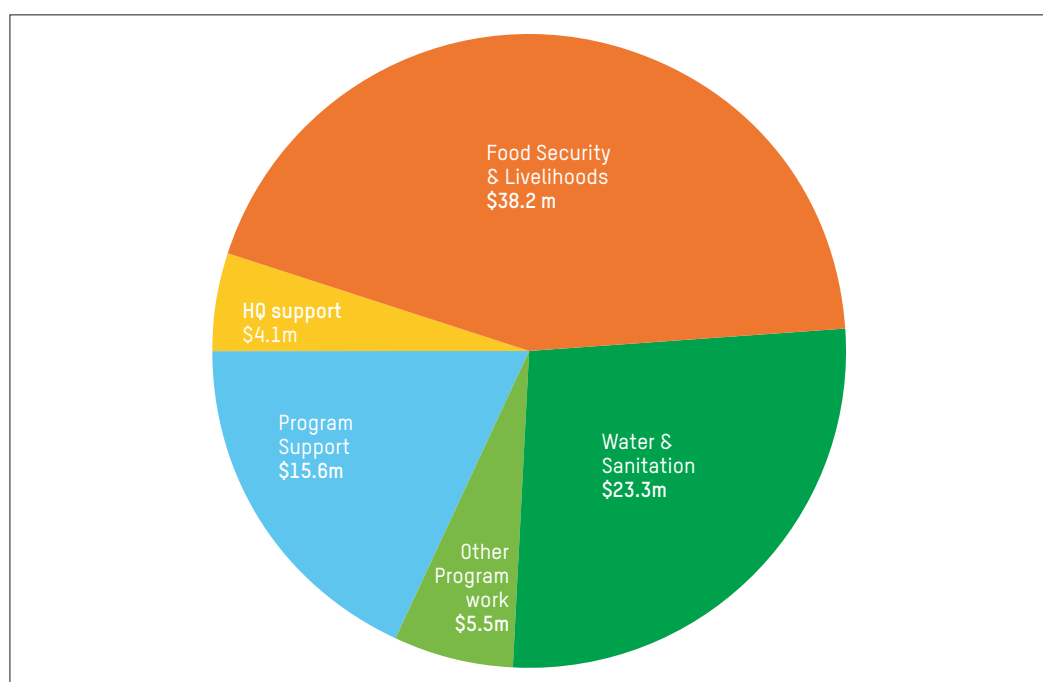


Figure 5: Expenditure on Oxfam's drought response in East Africa 2011/12 – total \$86.7m.

**Note:** Nearly all of the Program Support expenditure was spent locally, and includes logistics expenditure.

Country	Direct Program Spend	Program Support	Other Support Costs	Total
Ethiopia	\$16.7m	\$7.5m	-	\$24.2m
Kenya	\$16.5m	\$0.9m	-	\$17.4m
Somalia	\$33.8m	\$4.7m	-	\$38.5m
Regional	-	\$1.5m	-	\$1.5m
HQ	-	\$1.0m	\$4.1m	\$5.1m
	\$67.0m	\$15.6m	\$4.1m	\$86.7m

Figure 6: Expenditure by country/region – total \$86.7m.

# THE FUTURE – REDUCING THE RISKS

The Horn of Africa is suffering, and will continue to suffer from, chronic cyclical drought conditions. This makes the situation very different from that of one-off, sudden-onset disasters such as the South-east Asian tsunami or the earthquake in Haiti. Over the year, Oxfam has been able to move from emergency 'Relief Assistance' to the 'Reconstruction' and 'Mitigation' segments of the Drought Cycle Management Model (illustrated in Figure 1 on page 5). However, while last November's rains were good (and heavy rains after drought cause problems of their own), the 2012 March–April season was patchy and inadequate in many places, and forecasts for the rest of the year remain mixed. Oxfam and its partners therefore have to stay alert to the possibility of having to prepare for another period of relief assistance in some areas if the rains fail again.

However, they also recognize that, while droughts in dry zones such as these cannot be prevented, they only become disasters because of the increased numbers of people living in extreme poverty, without the resources to cushion them against even minor shocks such as localized rain failure. This is the man-made element in this 'not-so-natural' disaster. Disaster risk is generated by inequality and injustice, which hit poor and marginal groups hardest. Early warning systems can now make very accurate weather predictions, but they are effective only if early action is taken as a result.

The lessons from the drought in the Horn of Africa in 2011 have been clearly summarized in Oxfam's joint report with Save the Children, *A Dangerous Delay*. As Jan Egeland (the UN's Emergency Relief Coordinator in 2003–06), said, 'The greatest tragedy is that the world saw this disaster coming but did not prevent it'. *A Dangerous Delay* examines the factors that allowed the drought to escalate into a crisis. It concludes that the delay was caused by a culture of risk aversion, with many donors wanting proof of a humanitarian catastrophe before acting to prevent one. The report makes concrete recommendations for national governments, the international aid community, and donors to put more resources into programs that reduce the risk of disasters affecting people. There were lessons for Oxfam

too, with an acknowledgement that there needs to be greater flexibility between its long-term 'development' programs and its 'humanitarian' interventions.

Long-term programs are in the best position to respond to forecasts of a crisis: there are established links with communities and partners, the complexities are understood, and work has already been negotiated with government bodies. But Oxfam has to get better at adjusting the scale and priorities of existing programs and providing the necessary technical and staff capacity to allow speedy expansion. In its future work, Oxfam will be working to close this artificial gap by integrating our emergency responses more closely with our own long term work, taking into account chronic as well as acute problems that people may be experiencing.

Tayto Mesfin, 55, says "Food aid is a shameful practice. When we relied on food aid, we didn't have skills to improve our farming practice but now we have more income. Oxfam helps give us skills to manage our resources so we can improve our farming...one day, Ethiopia won't need food aid. I'm hopeful that day will come in my lifetime."  
Photo: Caroline Gluck.



## EXAMPLES OF OXFAM'S RISK REDUCTION PROGRAMS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

### Reducing disaster risk in Turkana District

Oxfam is working in the Turkana District of Kenya to help pastoralists respond to animal disease epidemics and drought. Support has been provided to local-level Livestock Marketing Associations to make livestock markets more equitable – including marketing, improving sanitary standards relating to animals, and financial support to develop new markets. Four livestock markets have been established, helping many pastoralists to sell their animals at decent prices, even in times of drought. The livestock marketing system is now more efficient and more capable of responding effectively to disaster events.

### Rebuilding ecosystem services and pastoralist livelihoods in Somaliland

Income and livelihoods were collapsing in Ga'an Libah as fodder became scarce, due to severe environmental degradation as a result of conflict and drought. Participatory community-based land-use planning was key to addressing this problem. Working with Somali partner Candlelight, Oxfam supported the construction of stone terracing to minimize water run-off, the revival of grazing management systems, and reforestation. Now livestock herd sizes and animal body weights have increased, resulting in greater

income with many benefits, including more children attending school.

### Pastoralists seize a new opportunity in a harsh environment

As a result of Oxfam and partner interventions to help families build and preserve livelihood assets in Ethiopia, some communities that received emergency aid in previous droughts may no longer require it. For example, a small-scale irrigation project was developed in the Liban district of the Guji zone. This pumped water from a major river to enable pastoralist households to produce grain not only for their own consumption but also some to sell. The corn residue – stalks, leaves, and husks – is helping to feed local cattle as well.

### Micro-insurance schemes to build resilience

By buffering losses in a predictable way, insurance can build resilience and can potentially also enable risk-prone households to take on 'high-risk, high-return' activities that increase their chances of moving out of poverty. The 'R4' program in Ethiopia, launched as a partnership between Oxfam and the WFP, gives farmers the option of paying for their insurance premiums through labor on projects designed to build community resilience. Projects often include things like soil and water conservation and tree planting. R4 builds on the initial success of a program called HARITA, developed by the Relief Society of Tigray, Oxfam, and a host of other partners.

Oxfam partners in the Horn of Africa	
ADCS	Adigrat Diocesan Catholic Secretariat (Ethiopia)
AFD	Action for Development (Ethiopia)
AFREC	African Rescue Committee (Somalia)
ALDEF	Arid Lands Development Focus (Kenya)
	Candlelight (Somalia)
CDI	Center for Development Initiatives (Ethiopia)
CED	Center for Education and Development (Somalia)
DPA	District Pastoral Association (Kenya)
GPDI	Gayo Pastoral Development Initiative (Ethiopia)
HARDO	Humanitarian Action for Relief and Development Organization (Somalia)
HIJRA	Humanitarian Initiative Just Relief Aid (Somalia)
SADO	Social Life and Agricultural Development Organization (Somalia)
WASDA	Wajir South Development Association (Kenya and Somalia)
RCWD	Rift Valley Children and Women's Development Organization (Ethiopia)
REST	Relief Society of Tigray

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For further information on the issues raised in this paper please e-mail [advocacy@oxfaminternational.org](mailto:advocacy@oxfaminternational.org)

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