

# RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

AT OXFAM



**OXFAM**  
Australia





## ABOUT OXFAM

Oxfam is a leading non-profit global development and humanitarian organisation with more than 75 years of experience. In 2017–2018, the global Oxfam confederation worked with 3,663 local partners to deliver life-changing development and advocacy programs for more than 22.3 million people in 79 countries around the world. Of that number, Oxfam Australia directly reached more than 1.7 million people in 29 countries. In partnership with our Oxfam affiliates, we reached 13.1 million people affected by disaster or conflict worldwide. Oxfam Australia is a member of Oxfam International, a confederation of 20 organisations that works with partners and local communities to mobilise the power of people against poverty.

## OUR VISION

At Oxfam we believe all lives are equal and no-one should live in poverty. We join forces with people who share this belief, to empower communities to build better lives for themselves. That's why we are there on the ground, not only to save lives in times of crisis, but also to develop lasting solutions. Our work spans wide because there are many causes of poverty. That's why we're also in front of decision-makers, governments and corporations, and speak out on the big issues. Together we are tackling poverty by changing minds, systems and lives.

## CONTEXT

We believe that risk and its impacts on people living in poverty is 'no accident', but the result of inequitable and unsustainable development that fails to address poverty, creates vulnerability and lets the burden of risk unfairly fall on the poorest and most vulnerable people.

Faced with a perfect storm of growing inequality, rapid urbanisation, unprecedented climate change, and increasingly frequent and intense climate-related disasters, we must seek out new knowledge and ways of working. In poor and marginalised communities, where recurring droughts, floods and disasters often impede progress, one of the greatest challenges in the coming years will be to improve access to food and the means of producing it. Moreover, building a resilient future also demands fair, equitable and sustainable access to and management of natural resources.

- More than 26 million people are uprooted each year by sudden-onset extreme weather disasters, and women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden. (World Bank, 2016)
- Every day, 1 in 8 people go to bed hungry, despite the fact that 80% of hungry people are involved in the production of food as fishers, herders, labourers and small-scale farmers. (WFP, 2018)
- More than 400 million women farm and produce the majority of the world's food supply, yet they own less than 20% of the world's land. (WEF, 2017)
- Between 1998 and 2017, climate-related and geophysical disasters killed 1.3 million people and left a further 4.4 billion injured, homeless, displaced or in need of emergency assistance. (UNISDR, 2018)

Cover photo: Ra province, Fiji: Vani and her daughter Sailisia are pictured with the hygiene kit they received from Oxfam after Cyclone Winston. Photo: Alicja Grocz/Oxfam.



## OUR GOAL

Our aim is to create opportunities and empower more women, men, girls and boys to realise their rights and improve their wellbeing, despite the various shocks, stresses and uncertainty.

## OUR APPROACH

Oxfam takes a rights-based approach, working with our partners, allies and local communities to empower people to defend and uphold their rights. We believe that transforming unequal power relations — and the structures, norms and values that underpin them — is critical to ending poverty and challenging inequality.

The Oxfam Framework for Resilient Development underpins our work. This framework seeks to change systems that create risk, fragility and vulnerability while simultaneously empowering vulnerable people with the skills they need to manage shocks, change and uncertainty in the long term. We integrate strategies for climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, sustainable natural resource management, food security and resilient livelihoods into our programs wherever possible or appropriate in order to address uncertainty and risk, and build resilience at all levels — household, national and global.

Oxfam has significant expertise in strengthening the capacity of people and institutions to address the causes of risk, fragility, vulnerability and inequality. This includes a long history of influencing policy development and implementation from national to local levels; building the skills and agency of communities so they can meaningfully engage in governance processes; improving equitable access to resources; and ensuring the voices of those most at risk are clearly heard during important decision-making processes. Resilience is a long-term, process-oriented approach that needs to be reviewed and enhanced continuously over time; in other words, it is not a fixed or end state, but an ongoing process.

Gender justice is at the heart of all we do because women's rights are central to equitable and resilient development. So we work closely with women's rights organisations, networks, and movements as partners and allies to support their catalytic role in promoting women's rights and gender equality. We also support people from the most poor and marginalised communities around the world, including people with disabilities, sexual and gender minority communities, Indigenous peoples, and young people, empowering and inspiring vulnerable individuals to participate more equally in the world around them.

Oxfam works in partnership with local communities, governments, civil society and private sector organisations to deliver our development, advocacy and humanitarian programs. We draw upon this experience and evidence to influence global systems and structures that perpetuate and reinforce poverty, injustice, and inequality.

Oxfam puts gender justice at the heart of all we do because we know that genuinely equitable and sustainable development can only happen when women's rights are upheld. To this end, we work closely with women's rights organisations, networks, and movements, as partners and allies, supporting their catalytic role in advancing gender equality.

### The Future is a choice: the Oxfam Framework and Guidance for Resilient Development



Oxfam's Framework for Resilient Development provides a framework for Oxfam staff to design programs and campaigns that contribute to resilient development. Oxfam defines resilience as 'the ability of women and men to realise

their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses and uncertainty'. Our governance-based approach to enhancing resilient development addresses the impacts of shocks, stresses and uncertainty on people living in poverty, as well as the causes of vulnerability and risks.



# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

## Disaster risk reduction

No amount of planning and preparation can fully shield people from the impact of disasters or extreme weather events. But those who are least prepared tend to fare the worst when disasters strike. So Oxfam supports vulnerable communities and local institutions to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.

**Project:** Indonesia Disaster Risk Management

**Project date:** 2013–2018

**Project value:** AUD \$3.3 million

**Funded by:** Australian Government through Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

In Indonesia, Oxfam supports rural and urban communities, particularly young people, women and people with disabilities, to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. We deliver training to local partners and government agencies, and facilitate contingency planning and real-time simulations.



Sulawesi, Indonesia: After the region was devastated by tsunami, Sumiar received a hygiene kit from an Oxfam distribution outside of Palu. Photo: Hariandi Hafid/OxfamAUS.

With 14 local partners, we established the Disaster Risk Management Humanitarian Knowledge Hub to help civil society respond to disasters. We work with government agencies in Mataram and Bima to develop and implement micro, small and medium (MSME) enterprise resilience models, and Oxfam's National Guidelines on MSME Resilience have been endorsed by Indonesia's National Disaster Management Authority, including first-aid and search-and-rescue. We also developed a monitoring system with sensors at various points in the river so that trained community members could automatically receive SMS alerts when river levels rise, and take early action.



"Before Oxfam came into our life, our life was very poor. We didn't do terracing, we just planted straight into the ground. When we would collect our harvest it wasn't much, it was very little. When Oxfam came, we planted everything like vegies and corn, and we harvested much more than before. Our life is better."

— Marcelina, Timor-Leste

Oecusse, Timor-Leste: Since Marcelina and her husband received training from Oxfam to learn new farming methods to grow drought-resistant crops, their garden is thriving. Photo: Vlad Sokhin/Panos/OxfamAUS.

## Food security and resilient livelihoods

Oxfam supports more equitable and sustainable production, distribution of, and access to food, so that more people who live in poverty, particularly women, can enjoy food security and be more resilient to the effects of climate change.

**Project:** Strengthening Community Livelihoods in Timor-Leste

**Project date:** 2015–2020

**Project value:** AUD \$6.9 million

**Funded by:** Australian Government through Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Oxfam is using a community-led approach to improve the food security and livelihoods of small-scale farmers, particularly women, in Dili, Oecusse and Covalima in Timor-Leste. Together with partners, we are supporting communities to establish permanent gardens and seed banks to increase crop diversification and production. We are also delivering agricultural training, teaching vulnerable local farmers new techniques for rice intensification and composting. Furthermore, the project facilitates Savings for Change groups, which help women and men save money, access finance, and plan for their futures. As a result, farmers have reported increased food security and a 43% increase in annual income.



“We got vegetable seeds and received training on how to sow the seeds. We keep some vegetables and sell the surplus at the market.”

— Rina, Bangladesh

Satkhira, Bangladesh: Rina tends her thriving vegetable garden. She received support from Oxfam partner Shushilan to establish the garden so she could supplement her family's income and also provide them with nutritious food. Photo: Tasha Black/Oxfam.

## GROW and Behind the Brands

Oxfam's GROW campaign grew out of an ambitious goal to transform our broken food system so that it works for everyone around the world. The campaign set out to improve global food security, ensuring that the system is fit for the challenges of the future, including natural resource constraints, population growth, climate change and other environmental challenges.

We believe the private sector can play a positive role in tackling food insecurity and make healthy returns from developing solutions to the challenges we face. Our Behind the Brands campaign held the world's biggest food and beverage companies to account, assessing their performance against key standards, mobilising their customers to demand better, and encouraging a “race to the top” to improve.

## Climate change

Oxfam supports individuals, communities and governments to influence climate action, from local to global levels. We also as share new strategies and techniques to help vulnerable communities adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

**Project:** Pacific Climate Change Collaboration, Influencing and Learning

**Project date:** 2018–2022

**Project value:** AUD \$2.9 million

**Funded by:** Australian Government through Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Oxfam works to strengthen the influencing capacity of Pacific climate change networks to ensure that action on climate change, in the region and globally, is more effective, inclusive and collaborative. We collaborate with key climate change action networks in the Pacific, including the Vanuatu Climate Action Network and the Pacific Climate Action Network, as well as leading the establishment of a new civil society climate change action network in Solomon Islands. These alliances are strengthening the influencing capabilities of civil society; increasing cooperation and negotiation between civil society, government and the private sector with regard to climate change and disaster issues; and effectively translating project insights into practical applications.



## INNOVATION AT OXFAM

Poverty is a complex challenge that demands creative solutions and outside-the-box thinking. If we want to change the world around us, we need truly game-changing ideas — ideas that raise the bar on best practice. That's why we constantly search for better, more effective ways of working, and we refuse to settle for the status quo. Year after year, we continue to push boundaries, collaborating with engineers, designers and businesses to find the most practical, efficient and sustainable ways to empower poor and marginalised communities and help people overcome poverty.

### Supporting cooperative and small-medium enterprises

As the saying goes, there's strength in numbers. So we support the development and resilience of cooperatives as a means to boost incomes and create greater livelihood stability. We also equip small-medium businesses with fundamental startup skills and financial literacy, as well as resources and market connections to remain viable.

**Project:** Building Resilient Livelihoods in Afghanistan

**Project date:** 2015–2020

**Project value:** AUD \$4.4 million

**Funded by:** Australian Aid

Despite improvements since 2001, Afghanistan remains one of the world's poorest countries, with nearly 40 % of the population living below the poverty line. Afghanistan has long been mired in conflict, so our work in the region is sensitive to the nature of conflict. We constantly assess how our work affects conflict dynamics, aiming to avoid negative impact, and maximise positive change.

Partnering with the Organization of Human Welfare, we work with marginalised people in Afghanistan, such as farmers and women, to improve their lives by learning new vocational skills, building sustainable work opportunities, creating links to markets, and building resilience to climate change. The program supports small and medium enterprises, particularly those that are women-led, in the dairy and almond value chain. We also address some of the root causes of conflict by promoting fair and equal access to natural resources.



“Although we had insured our crops before, we never received a payout as we couldn't deal with complicated forms ... this year, for the first time ever, we were compensated for losing our crops. The money we got helped us to buy seeds paddy for the next cultivation.”

— Sivanathan, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Oxfam's innovative crop insurance system mitigates the risk of crop devastation for farmers like Sivanathan in flood-prone Sri Lanka.  
Photo: Nipuna Kumbalathara/Oxfam.

### Weather Index Insurance

In poor and marginalised communities, access to financial products and services is often a major barrier to progress. So we broker equitable access to financial products and services from private sector providers, giving vulnerable communities a fair chance to build resilience and recover from disasters.

**Project:** Promoting Resilience through Index Insurance in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh

**Project date:** 2017–2019

**Project value:** AUD \$1.7 million

**Funded by:** Australian Government through Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

In Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, we are helping rice and papaya farmers, particularly women, to access weather index insurance, which gives them protection from significant climate and disaster risks. Oxfam has established a weather station that monitors rainfall and automatically communicates in real time via SMS with farmers, government agencies and insurance providers, who trigger automatic payments when tragedy strikes.

To realise this initiative, we partnered with Sanasa Insurance, Aon Business Insurance, Swiss-Re, and Ernest & Young. Oxfam recently hosted the Mutual Exchange Forum on Inclusive Insurance, a peer network of insurance regulatory authorities in Asia. The Australian Financial Review named Oxfam's Weather Index Insurance the Best Social Innovation of 2017.

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Oxfam's programs are designed and implemented in collaboration with communities and civil society partners. Oxfam Australia partners with various donors to implement our programs, including the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), European Union, World Bank, UN agencies, philanthropic trusts and foundations, and the Australian public. We are efficient and accountable stewards of donor resources. In 2017–18, we spent \$57.3 million on development, advocacy and humanitarian programs. Of this, 67% was spent on direct programming, 23% on promotion and fundraising, and 10% on administration.

All Oxfam programs are delivered in line with our Program Management Procedure. Oxfam Australia is a member of the Australian Council for International Development and is a DFAT-Accredited Australian non-government organisation.

### Technical assistance

Oxfam's Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Advisors offer technical assistance across the project management cycle, providing Oxfam staff and partners with training, mentoring and support to mainstream gender and social inclusion in all Oxfam development and humanitarian programs.

Oxfam's in-house expertise provides thematic guidance, thought leadership, knowledge management and learning support in several areas, including:

- disaster risk management;
- humanitarian capacity building and localisation;
- climate change adaptation, sustainable natural resource management and governance;
- food security, resilient livelihoods and pro-poor market-based solutions;
- climate and disaster risk financing, including locally appropriate insurance models;
- research and policy analysis;
- gender and social inclusion in resilient development; and
- advocacy and influencing for resilient development from local to global levels.


## LEARNING FROM OUR WORK

Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning are crucial for the continued success and improvement of our programs and projects. By weighing up what worked well — or not so well — and sharing those insights within the sector, we stay on the path to real progress and sustainable development.

Our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) frameworks are underpinned by Oxfam's Common Approach to MEL and Social Accountability (CAMSA). We use iterative learning and adaptive management to ensure our resilient development programs are flexible and fit for changing contexts and uncertainty over their lifetime.

At Oxfam, we are committed to transparency in our work and accountability to our key stakeholders — especially people living in poverty. We share information with people living in poverty, partner organisations, and the general public, and we are accountable to our staff, volunteers, supporters, donors, suppliers and partner governments. We are committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment in our workplaces and programs, always striving to “do no harm” and working to prevent or limit any unintended negative impacts of our programs.

Our two resilience hubs — Resilience Knowledge Hub and Asia Resilience Hub — facilitate a global network of Oxfam staff, partners and development practitioners at country, regional and global levels, all working on resilience. Oxfam also partners with other networks, such as the ACFID Community of Practice on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, ACFID's Humanitarian Reference Group, and numerous social enterprises, think tanks, private companies and universities, including the Monash Sustainable Development Institute.



Daykundi province, Afghanistan: Oxfam provided Kobra's family with goats for breeding so they can increase their household income. She says, “I had one goat and it produced three kids and in the future I hope that I have more milk.”

Photo: James Riturban/OxfamAUS.



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