

Evaluation of the Australian Humanitarian Partnership's Activations on Food Security and Livelihoods in Ethiopia and Kenya: Joint Management Response

An independent evaluation assessed the effectiveness of Australian Humanitarian Partnership's Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) activations in the Horn of Africa in 2023-2024.

The evaluation covered three FSL projects implemented in Ethiopia and Kenya.

- In Ethiopia, Plan International Australia (PIA) led one consortium including Plan International Ethiopia (PIE), Action for Needy Ethiopia (ANE), Save the Children International Ethiopia (SCIE) (supported by Save the Children Australia), and Pastoralist in Action Development Organisation (PIADO).
- Oxfam Australia led the other consortium in Ethiopia in collaboration with the Relief Society of Tigray (REST), Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) and Women Empowerment – Action (WE-Action).
- Oxfam Australia through its national affiliate (Oxfam in Kenya) also implemented a project in Kenya with three independent national organisations including Strategies for Northern Development (SND), Pastoralist Community Initiative and Development Assistance (PACIDA), and Turkana Pastoralist Development Organisation (TUPADO) working under the umbrella of the Arid and Semi-arid Lands Humanitarian Network (AHN).

Policy Research Institute was contracted by the AHP Support Unit (AHPSU) to conduct the evaluation. An evaluation review committee facilitated by the AHP Support Unit provided oversight of all key stages and products of the evaluation.

DFAT, Plan International Australia and Oxfam Australia have responded to the evaluation's recommendations in the management actions table below. Of the seven recommendations, six have been agreed or partially agreed and one has been noted. This joint management response outlines the agreed actions that will be taken forward.

Management Actions

Recommendation	Responsibility ¹	Level of Agreement ²	Action	Timeframe
<p>1. For AHP partners and country-level consortium leads, explore how to connect local and regional-level coordination mechanisms with national-level humanitarian coordination efforts so that they can learn from the field and influence national-level humanitarian policy.</p>	<p>ANGOs and implementing partners</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>Oxfam is implementing a follow-on AHP response in Kenya from July 2024 to September 2025. Oxfam has addressed this recommendation under Output 4.2 in the Kenya Phase 2 proposal: <i>Output 4.2. Increased Participation in National, Regional, and Global Influencing Opportunities</i>. Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.2.1. Support AHN members in participating in national, regional, and global policy forums and advocacy events. • 4.2.2. Develop and disseminate briefing materials and policy positions to equip AHN members for effective engagement in influencing opportunities. • 4.2.3. Coordinate with stakeholders to ensure representation and active involvement of AHN members in key policy discussions. <p>Oxfam is already engaging with both local and national coordination mechanisms in Ethiopia and plans to continue this through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leveraging the existing Humanitarian Coordination Structures to advance collaboration between field level and national level actors. 	<p>Within the project period (Oxfam), Quarterly / Biannually (Plan International)</p>

¹ Where matters are related to both NGO partners – Plan International and Oxfam – will hereafter be referred to collectively as ANGOs.

² Levels of Agreement: agree; partially agree; disagree and noted.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adopting partnerships through joint working groups and task forces already in place both at the country level as well as the Woreda level. <p>Plan International will action this recommendation through quarterly joint coordination meetings between local-regional and national coordination platforms. Plan will also hold biannual field visits that enable sharing of experiences and engagement with affected populations.</p>	
2. For implementing partners, whenever possible, identify local solutions and suppliers to ensure improved efficiency and to mitigate logistical challenges.	ANGOs and implementing partners	Agree	<p>Oxfam’s approach in the previous phase in Kenya was to prioritise local suppliers and vendors as this is our standard procurement procedure. Oxfam will continue this in Phase 2. Implementing partners will prioritize identifying and partnering with local suppliers and solutions to enhance operational efficiency and reduce logistical hurdles. Implementing partners will collaborate with local vendors to provide Non-Food Items (NFIs), dignity kits and use M-Pesa for Multipurpose Cash Assistance disbursement (MPCA). All start up kits on agricultural initiatives will be sourced locally based on the climatic condition. This aims to build relationships with local vendors and leverage community knowledge for contextually appropriate solutions.</p> <p>Likewise, Oxfam in Ethiopia’s current programming prioritises local sourcing. The Oxfam strategy is to continue this through thorough market assessments that establish relationships with local businesses. Oxfam will also keep supporting local capacity building through training and mentorship, which is embedded in ongoing projects.</p>	Within the project period (Oxfam), Ongoing (Plan International)

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			Plan International will engage in institutional capacity building of implementing partners in various ways, such as local resources mobilizations, to enhance efficiency and capacity to address food crisis and malnutrition.	
3. For implementation partners and consortium leads, strengthen collaboration with organisations of people with disabilities while at the same time strengthening capacity of implementing organisations staff to plan and implement strategies that can ensure meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities.	ANGOs and implementing partners	Agree	<p>This has been addressed under Output 3.4 in the Kenya Phase 2 proposal: <i>Enhanced participation of vulnerable groups (PLWD, elderly, youths, female headed households) in various community activities</i>. Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.4.1. Capacity building of stakeholders in the target counties on inclusion especially disability. • 3.4.2. Organise regular workshops and forums where vulnerable groups can share their needs and concerns through a facilitated dialogue between community members and local authorities ensuring that the voices of the vulnerable groups are heard, and their suggestions are incorporated into community planning and activities. <p>In Kenya, Oxfam will engage with Organisations for People with Disabilities (OPDs) through consultations and partnership-building efforts to better understand the specific needs of people with disabilities in the target areas. For the identification and targeting of people with disabilities, Oxfam will explore the use of the Washington Group Questions as a standard tool. This will enhance our ability to collect accurate data, ensuring that our interventions are inclusive and responsive to their needs.</p>	Within the project period (Oxfam), Ongoing (Plan International)

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			<p>Oxfam in Ethiopia is committed to disability inclusion through the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam will conduct Disability Inclusion Assessments including to assess existing programs, identify barriers, develop action plans and create strategies to address identified barriers and promote inclusion. • Through the ongoing advocacy efforts, Oxfam will continue to advocate for inclusive policies with government agencies and other stakeholders. <p>Oxfam will also continue to regularly monitor the effectiveness of inclusion efforts, collect feedback, and adjust as appropriate.</p> <p>Plan International will define a clear action plan to build the capacities of organizations working on disabilities and ensure participation to address the hunger crisis, working closely with the Women and Social Affairs bureau (Rehabilitation Unit) and other organizations for people with disabilities. Disability and social inclusion will also be treated by Plan International as a stand-alone approach, separate to gender equality, to ensure adequate focus on this issue.</p>	
4. For AHP partners, to improve consistency in data collection, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, and learning for the response, establish a centralised digital platform that integrates data from all implementing	ANGOs and implementing partners	Agree	Oxfam in Kenya will continue to invest in and build upon centralized digital platforms such as KOBO and Survey CTO to integrate data from all implementing partners using standardized tools. This will support real-time monitoring and improve the accuracy of the data collected. Tools will be scripted to these online mobile digital collection	Within the project period (Oxfam), Ongoing (Plan International)

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<p>partners and stakeholders. This platform should include standardised data collection tools, real-time monitoring dashboards, and automated reporting functionalities.</p>			<p>platforms to ensure real time data collection with appropriate data quality assurance checks. This recommendation has also been addressed under the MEL section in the Kenya Phase 2 proposal.</p> <p>Oxfam in Ethiopia currently uses a centralized digital platform for data collection and reporting that all implementing partners contribute to. This also helps the team to improve consistency in data collection, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, and learning. Oxfam also conducts joint monthly MEL sessions with implementing partners to discuss challenges and share learning, as well as capacity building actions and follow-ups.</p> <p>Plan International will assign full time dedicated M&E professionals to support project teams and provide M&E trainings to project teams to better enable clearer and more consistent data collection and reporting templates, guidelines and frames across AHP responses.</p>	
<p>5. Implementing partners should consider utilising short term funding opportunities like the one evaluated to promote government integration of FSL interventions into existing government programmes. This approach will help to link short-term humanitarian aid and longer-term development efforts where possible, ensuring that immediate lifesaving</p>	<p>ANGOs and implementing partners</p>	<p>Noted</p>	<p>All activities implemented by Oxfam in Kenya are aligned to the county specific needs assessment and evaluations (e.g. Long Rain and Short Rain Assessments). By working closely with governments, partners will create pathways for continuity between emergency responses and lasting development.</p> <p>Oxfam in Ethiopia’s current programming emphasizes the integration of humanitarian and development efforts. Oxfam in Ethiopia will continue to design projects with a nexus approach for short-term humanitarian interventions</p>	<p>Within the project period (Oxfam), Ongoing (Plan International)</p>

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<p>interventions are followed with, or contribute to, more sustainable development and enhanced resilience.</p>			<p>and longer-term development efforts. Oxfam will also work on strengthening local capacities through training and mentorship, which is a core part of our programming on the nexus approach. Additionally, Oxfam will continue to promote alignment of programs with existing government programmes (where they exist and as appropriate).</p> <p>Plan International will strengthen the focus on long-term development and addressing the root causes of poverty. For short-term interventions (less than one year), the focus should be on life-saving assistance such as direct food and health assistance. Two to three years of FSL interventions are required to achieve greater outcomes and impact and to reduce disruption of collecting outcomes and conducting evaluations before this point.</p>	
<p>6. Where possible identify opportunities where humanitarian funding, as a short-term lifesaving effort, can be integrated or added to efforts that are more development oriented. This could serve to capitalize on and consolidate gains made through humanitarian funding. Specifically, this could include:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Encouraging partners to critically assess their interventions and seek funding, including informing partners of opportunities outside</p>	DFAT	Agree	<p>DFAT is consolidating gains made in the AHP Food Security and Livelihood Interventions in Kenya through a further AHP response that commenced in mid-2024. The response will build on the work of the earlier food security and livelihood interventions. Together with the AHP protection-focussed response in Ethiopia that also commenced mid-2024, these responses will enhance the resilience of communities and strengthen access to protection services for vulnerable groups.</p> <p>DFAT will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support response proposals that work closely with government, local organisations and communities to promote sustainability. The DFAT Guidance 	Ongoing

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<p>the humanitarian budget lines where available and within DFAT’s control, to continue elements which can benefit from longer term implementation.</p> <p>b. Encouraging partners to engage with government on options to absorb intervention elements into longer term development, or resilience building efforts.</p>			<p>Note on Locally-Led Development and the AHP Localisation Roadmap both support this approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourage AHP partners to continue consideration of internal and external options for longer-term funding where appropriate for the context. 	
<p>7. Contribute to and support local and regional coordination where possible to help promote the inclusion of field experiences into national-level humanitarian policy discussions.</p>	DFAT	Partially Agree	<p>AHP requires partners to outline coordination approaches and mechanisms in proposals that will ensure the program is aligned with national and regional priorities and with other development partners operating in the sector.</p> <p>DFAT Posts have regular consultations with partner governments on humanitarian and development policies and programs, including through the development of country plans under the Australian International Development Policy and actively engage with national systems.</p>	Ongoing