# PHILIPPINES COUNTRY STRATEGY
## 2015-2020

**OXFAM**

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# VISION AND GOAL

*Oxfam's vision is a just world without poverty: a world in which people can influence decisions that affect their lives, enjoy their rights, and assume their responsibilities as full citizens of a world in which all human beings are valued and treated equally.*

*Our goal is to contribute to the eradication of poverty in the Philippines. We will support women and other vulnerable groups in saving lives and building livelihoods, enhancing their resilience to crises, shocks and stresses, and making their voices heard to hold duty-bearers accountable.*

Photo by Eleanor Farmer

# CONTEXT

The Philippines is a country where 17 million people live below the poverty line. It has persistent high levels of inequality and vulnerability. Further, it is one of the most highly at-risk countries from disasters, with pockets of fragility that threaten its stability and development.

However, the Philippines is also classified as a lower middle-income country. The country's recent macro-economic performance has been strong, and the government has made clear commitments with respect to poverty reduction.

Whilst these developments are positive, inequality is growing and poverty remains persistent.

*The Philippines has long suffered from a large number of natural disasters. It is also facing the impact of climate induced natural disasters.*

## Poverty and inequality in the Philippines are driven by persistent and structural factors

The government operates under a largely neoliberal economic development framework, with poor accountability mechanisms that do not relate to performance and encourage rent-seeking behaviour. This has translated into inequality stemming from a largely unfinished land reform project, a misguided allocation and management of government resources, and a mostly unregulated corporate private sector. These drivers of inequality also have important social, gender, spatial and political dimensions.

## Vulnerability to natural hazards and disasters

The Philippines has long suffered from a large number of natural disasters. It is also facing the impact of climate induced natural disasters (CIIIDs). It is estimated that the number of natural disasters is up 175% in the past five years, with a rising toll on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and a reduction of around 30% in crop yields associated with rising temperatures and flooding.

Typhoon Yolanda (International name Typhoon Haiyan) is emblematic of the changing nature and scale of hazards and disasters affecting poor, vulnerable populations. The typhoon's scale was unprecedented: it affected more than 14 million people, left at least 6,000 people dead and caused USD 13 billion in damages to crops and property. The disaster revealed and exacerbated inherent vulnerabilities due to poverty, ill prepared systems, weak coping mechanisms, and ineffective institutions.

## A significant part of Southern Philippines remains fragile

Intermittent conflicts have caused untold suffering for a vast number of people, particularly in the southern and central parts of Mindanao. Both a cause and consequence of the conflict is chronic poverty. A peace pact between the government and the main rebel faction is being upheld. A mutually agreed time table for the transition to a new political system is in place, which is intended to create the political and social environment for more durable peace and genuine development.

## Development actors combating poverty

The government of the Philippines is responsible for setting the course for development in the Philippines. It is supported by the international donor community, primarily from overseas development assistance (ODA) and multilateral financial institutions. Other institutional donors often focus on supporting humanitarian responses, the peace process in Mindanao or niche programmes in other parts of the country.

Capable CSOs, IIIIGOs and IIIGOs abound. These are complemented and at times challenged by religious-based agendas. Community-based work is a significant proportion of CSO and IIIIGO work, with religious-based IIGOs among the largest in the country. There are emerging social-enterprise players and the corporate private sector in the Philippines is active both in the area of development, through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and in humanitarian response, chiefly through the collection and distribution of relief items in times of emergency.



*Photo by Tessa Bunney*

## Opportunities for development and threats to combating poverty

Significant events that will have important implications for development include:

• **Presidential elections in 2016.** It is difficult to predict how the political landscape will look after the Aquino administration. The majority of people both within and outside the current administration agree that it could be substantively different. Hence, reform-minded people in government are fast tracking what they call "disruptive changes" to a point of irreversibility.

• Regional geopolitical developments. The ASEAN community integration will begin in 2015. A number of personalities in the region are underplaying the immediate impact of the integration to individual countries as a number of trade policies are already in play. Likewise, the government has said that it will enter into other regional and bilateral investments in trade and services agreements. Hence, this will subject the country to the potential impact of the integration as it moves beyond trade discussions into services, movement of people, capital and investments, and beyond.

• Climate Change Related Developments. When Typhoon Yolanda struck in 2013, a 'new normal' in extreme weather events became apparent. The Philippine government responded but not commensurate to the necessary scale. With scientists predicting increased severity and frequency of weather-related events and with the Philippines ranking second among all countries in the world most at risk from disaster according to Germanwatch 2014 Climate Risk Index, the government is called to ramp up its capacity and change its approaches to preparedness, mitigation and response. While the global and national climate change action continue to be an opportunity for engagement, the threats of an impending energy and water crises are expected to adversely affect and slow down economic growth.

• **The Bangsamoro Peace and Transition Process.** While there was near-universal acceptance of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, there are concerns regarding the translation of the agreement into the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) and its implementing mechanisms. Consistent engagement as well as the effective realization of key milestones in the transition process, such as the passage of the BBL, the plebiscite and the transition towards the Bangsamoro political entity, is essential in continuing to tackle the causes and factors that underpin the conflict.

# OXFAM EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNED

Oxfam has been working in the Philippines in the Philippines for over 25 years. In the past five years this has been under a single-management framework where all Oxfam affiliates operating in the Philippines worked under one country strategy. Oxfam's work was framed within the broad programmatic pillars of economic justice, gender justice, rights in crisis and the Oxfam programme in Mindanao. In the last year, it added the Building Resilient and Adaptive Communities and Institutions in Mindanao (BRIDS) programme and the Typhoon Yolanda humanitarian response in Eastern Visayas and Cebu.

In the 12 months leading up to the start of this strategy, Oxfam has undertaken programme-level evaluations of these pillars. The evaluations, as well as other internal discussions, point to several observations and conclusions:

• Oxfam's success can be attributed to a mix of deliberate and opportunistic programme approaches (e.g., BINDS, reproductive health, Yolanda response, support to the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro); partnership-based work that included government and non-government entities at various levels; targeted resource-generation initiatives, mixed with flexible funding policies and strategies; clearer definition of Oxfam role and identity (especially in policy advocacy and campaigning); and Oxfam opening up new spaces for development and humanitarian work.

• Oxfam's work in gender justice contributed to women's empowerment. This resulted in national policies on reproductive health and gender-responsive budgeting and livelihoods programmes that include women, aiming to transform power relations in households and recognized care work. Work with indigenous, Muslim and rural women supported their struggle for agency and to live free as much as possible from violence.



*Photo by Rhea Catada*

• Its economic justice work has resulted in concrete national policy changes especially around agriculture, fisheries, women's livelihoods, and climate resilience. However these changes remain fragile and have not lived up to their potential impact due to lack of implementation.

• The Mindanao programme increased livelihoods options for men and women in small-scale agriculture and fisheries. This was based on a strong focus on women's rights and women's economic leadership in specific value chains. The policy environment and rights-claiming dimensions of these interventions remain as works-in-progress.

• The Rights in Crisis programme has delivered quality humanitarian response through timely and appropriate intervention and the capacity-building of local government, communities and partners. It supported the effective implementation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRM) Act at the local level while and civil society work on improving the implementing guidelines of the law. The Typhoon Yolanda response has shown that Oxfam remains a leading responder, and by sharing good practices and advocating for rights-based approaches it has had significant influence in the operations of other humanitarian actors.

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Photo by Eleanor Farmer

While these are significant achievements, the nature of poverty and inequality in the Philippines, as well as the emergence of new external and internal dynamics that impact on Oxfam's identity and work in the Philippines, means that there will always be challenges:

• Oxfam's overall and programme-specific power analyses and theory/ies of change need to be strengthened and refreshed. Oxfam must ensure that different categories and levels of interventions are interlinked and synergistic.

• Oxfam should determine the optimal size and scope of its work (both at the local and national level) required to contribute to change at scale.

• Oxfam must maintain a core competency or skill set of staff in the Philippines being able to exploit both deliberate and opportunistic approaches to change.

• Oxfam must clarify how it manages its multiple roles as a funder, facilitator, catalyst, capacity-builder, direct implementer and advocate, especially since some of these roles can be conflicting if not managed effectively.

• Oxfam will need to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation system which is the foundation of organisational accountability and learning.

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# GLOBAL PRIORITIES AND SHIFTS

Oxfam's Global Strategic Plan and its six Change Goals will drive all our work, with the vision to:

- Increase our impact
- Enhance our relevance and strengthen our ability to influence
- Be more accountable to people living in poverty and be a more legitimate voice for them
- Ensure our sustainability

At the heart of Oxfam's work is a theory of change that sees the interaction between active citizens and accountable states as fundamental to human development.

Oxfam's role in the development process is to enable transformational change, as convenor and catalyst. This includes:

- Opening up political spaces
- Building capacity and sharing technical expertise
- Raising funds and public support
- Providing strategic funding to partners
- Carrying out humanitarian work that integrates lifesaving response with building resilience
- Changing policies and practices to improve equality and inclusion

*Photo by Simon Rawles*

# THEORY OF CHANGE

Oxfam believes that progressive, sustainable changes can be realised through a transformation of power relations brought about by the mobilisation of a strong citizenry, able to hold government to account and to ensure responsible private sector investments and practices. Oxfam considers fundamental to any positive change process is the empowerment of poor women. This is critical to the transformation of unequal power relations and building more gender-responsive institutions.

In the Philippines the government is the key driver of change. The Philippines has had a functioning democracy for several decades, and the implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991 paved the way for decentralisation and greater balance of power between levels of government. The government is responsible for setting the development agenda through its laws, policies, programmes and budget. It does, however, remain influenced, to varying degrees, by other interest groups and other development actors such as the private sector, religious institutions, civil society, and media. To achieve change Oxfam must also work with, or influence, these other actors. For example, Oxfam's campaign on essential services was successful because it had dedicated staff and the targets were clear.

*Social movements exist to challenge entrenched vested interests and help achieve progressive change.*



*Photo by Rhea Catada*

Social movements exist to challenge entrenched vested interests and help achieve progressive change. The elite often hold positions within the government at local and national levels as well being prominent private sector actors and landowners in urban and rural areas, respectively. Social movements sustain long-term awareness and pressure needed to capitalise on moments of opportunity, as well as ensuring that the government implements policies. The lack of policy implementation is often a reason why change is not achieved.

The periodic emergence of transformative government leaders is an opportunity to create positive changes to governance, primarily at the local level, which does lead to better implementation of policy. Changes have often remained at the local level and not translated into broader, national level reform. Wider strategies of accountability are required. Examples of when local level change or demand created national-level change can be seen in the success of the campaign for the People's Survival Fund. The ability to capture a national audience, with clear asks of what is needed and when alliances between IIGOs and transformative leaders exist, created innovative strategies for increasing participation in governance, meeting the needs of vulnerable households and service delivery mechanisms while realising progressive policy changes.

The country has experienced robust macro-economic growth, although the private sector in the Philippines remains largely characterised by rent-seeking and unregulated behaviour. The enforcement of existing national social and environmental policies also remains weak. This combines to impact the effectiveness of any government effort to address social, economic and environmental inequities and further undermines basic human rights. It is within the farming, fishing and forestry sectors where the consequences are most apparent, where the greatest levels of poverty and fragility exist.

Given the lack of government regulation, Oxfam believes that we, together with reform-oriented social movements, can influence and challenge the power of private sector through

collaborative approaches promoting "win-win" solutions for economic development between the large and small actors in the private sector, and working with the private sector to pilot these solutions. Changing the prevailing mindset and practices within the private sector can create wider level change that can be sustained. An effective mechanism that exacts accountability of the private sector is crucial in influencing positive behaviour as well as providing an opportunity to distribute the returns on investment more equitably.

The mainstream and social media are important in beaming the spotlight upon key issues, talking to power, and mobilizing the citizenry. The development of digital media, including social media, has led to a transformation in the way people access information. In the Philippines this has meant that on the one hand, people have greater access to multiple forms of independent and free media while, on the other, the power of the media is being harnessed by political, business and civil society actors to advance their own agendas. Social media represents a growing platform for young people's participation in political processes and issues.

*The mainstream and social media are important in beaming the spotlight upon key issues, talking to power, and mobilizing the citizenry.*

*Creating lasting change in the Philippines requires responding to the issues of women's rights by providing timely support to women's rights social movements and building the skills and confidence of women leaders.*

Young people have also emerged as drivers of innovation. An increasingly college-educated (tertiary level) population is seeing more of the young people venture out and set up new enterprises, particularly those that are maximising the use of science and technology.

Critical Junctures, brought about by previous disasters or the more recent Bangsamoro Peace Agreement, present opportunities for reactive and potentially transformative change in Philippine society. Such Junctures have often quickened the pace of changes in laws and practices because of the increased sense of awareness and urgency from constituents to respond. Examples include the development of the IIDRRM law following the country's experience with Ketsana or the more recent openings vis-a-vis land rights in the wake of Haiyan. Oxfam must be opportunistic and flexible to adapt to and harness these opportunities when they arise.

Creating lasting change in the Philippines requires responding to the issues of women's rights by providing timely support to women's rights social movements and building the skills and confidence of women leaders. Oxfam supports women's movements as they aim to change policies and hold government to account. Women have a stake in outcome of the Bangsamoro peace process, for one. Oxfam will continue to involve men in its work, aiming to support both men and women as transformational leaders pursuing a shared gender equality and women's rights agenda.

Finally, changes in laws and practices brought about by the above influencers will only be sustainable when accompanied by shifts in personal level beliefs and attitudes. This is particularly true for gender and identity issues. For example, any change to the Code of Muslim Personal Law or laws that address gender inequality, such as the Magna Carta of Women, will not be effective unless underlying community and indi vidual attitudes are also transformed.

# STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Economic Justice
Goal 2: Conflict Transformation
Goal 3: Rights in Crisis

Photo by Tessa Bunney

# GOAL 1:
# ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Contribute to reduction in inequality through effective policy implementation and the promotion of practices that favour the economic empowerment of poor and most vulnerable people in rural and urban Philippines.

## Objectives for 2020:

1. The poor and most vulnerable women in rural and urban settings are asserting their power in markets and households, have control of their productive assets and are benefiting from social protection mechanisms.

2. Vulnerable households have their land, common property and livelihood rights upheld.

3. Adaptation and Risk Reduction plans are financed and implemented to more equally share agriculture based livelihood-related risks in urban and rural settings.

4. Public, corporate and civil society resources are responsibly invested in improving the economic conditions of the poorest and most vulnerable.

*Implementation of land use plans, agrarian reform and local development plans to benefit the poor and most vulnerable women.*

## Achieving the goal:

• Addressing economic inequality and building resilience, by working within networks that have the power to promote:

a) Identification of leaders who come from the government and from the private sector at the micro, meso and macro levels and who are willing to engage in developing examples of sustainable and resilient agriculture practices. Support local organisations to transform good practices into policy and implementation guidelines.

b) Evidence of increased central government investment flows to local government for smallholder agriculture and social protection mechanisms

c) Increased private sector and civil society investments to support women small-holder farmers.

d) Policies that benefit poor and most vulnerable women by re-balancing investment and services between small- and large-scale enterprises.

e) Implementation of land use plans, agrarian reform and local development plans to benefit the poor and most vulnerable women.

f) Increasing capacities and opportunities for young women who are leaving the rural setting to peri-urban and urban settings.

• Addressing social inequality through:

a) Government investment in urban and peri-urban essential services and social protection mechanisms that serves the most vulnerable and is resilient to the shocks and stresses that they are likely to incur.

• Addressing political inequality that is limiting the opportunity of all Filipinos to move out of poverty by:

a) Engaging with all levels of government, as appropriate, to influence policies, programmes and budgets.

b) Equip smallholder farmers and their partner CSOs with the necessary skill sets to negotiate for fair terms in contractual agreements with the private sector. Combine legal processes and campaigns to expose unequal agreements to see positive changes in the conditions of poor people.

- **Addressing gender inequality, by:**

a) Facilitating consciousness-raising of and support to individual women and women groups to demonstrate confidence and skills to assume leadership roles in local organisations and markets. Approaches will need to use spaces in both formal and informal structures, and through individual and collective actions.

b) Enabling women to produce higher value products, increase visibility as economic leaders and have greater access to markets.

c) Empowering women and engaging men to negotiate household barriers, cultural norms and exclusionary practices that maintain inequality in everyday practices.

d) Generate evidence on gender-responsive budgeting, care work initiatives and policies regarding gender discrimination, anticipating moments of community- and/or government-generated momentum that can promote national-scale change.

- Understanding urban economic opportunities and the way in which the youth will engage will be further explored within the first two years of the strategy.

## Human/Partner resources

Oxfam will work with CSOs to advance and protect gains in pro-poor policies and implementation.

Oxfam will work with private-sector partners who have business interests and are willing to invest in business models that have commercial and development objectives aligned with smallholders.

Oxfam in the Philippines will have core staff dedicated to co-designing, implementing (with partners) and monitoring changes. These staff will be based in Eastern Visayas, Mindanao and, only when appropriate, in Manila. Skills for advocacy and campaigning will exist within programme teams in Eastern Visayas and Mindanao, either in partner organisation and/or Oxfam staffing structures.

As a global campaigning organization, Oxfam in the Philippines will maintain its role as an advocate. This will be done in support of regional and global campaigns. National-level advocacy will be done by national and local organisations with Oxfam in a supporting role.

Photo by Rhea Catada

# GOAL 2:
# CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Ideas, beliefs and institutions are transformed to end violent conflict and promote sustainable peace in the Bangsamoro.

## Objectives for 2020:

1. Young men and women recognise the identity, diversity, and unique needs and aspirations of the Bangsamoro.

2. Bangsamoro leaders and citizens develop and implement inclusive development plans and achieve greater social accountability.

3. Essential services that support human development and gender equity are prioritised and resourced to benefit women in the Bangsamoro.

*Address gender inequality by engaging women groups within the Bangsamoro to unite and push for gender equality perspectives in legislation, policies, programmes and projects.*

## Achieving the Goal

- **Advancing social equality through:**

a) Supporting credible networks to generate wide support for the overall peace process and transition so that the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) is translated into Law and is ratified.

b) Young women and men in the Bangsamoro take positive action to recognise inequality, ethnicity and gender-based discrimination and violence are not acceptable.

- **Addressing gender inequality, by:**

a) Engaging women groups within the Bangsamoro to unite and push for gender equality perspectives in legislation, policies, programmes and projects.

b) Promoting women's leadership to participate in conflict resolution and peace building.

c) Influencing public health providers to improve public access to sexual and reproductive health services and encouraging women and young people in the Bangsamoro to access to these services.

d) Raising awareness about and promoting policies that aim to change the practices of early marriage, inheritance, women's representation and violence against women.

- **Reducing fragility through good governance by:**

a) Providing technical support to CSOs so that they become aware of and are able to engage constructively with complex issues and participate in transition and development processes.

b) Working with CSOs in creating spaces for individuals and groups to become engaged in addressing key drivers of conflict.

c) Supporting national- and local- level CSOs to network with and advocate central government for increased essential services budget allocation.



Photo by Shei Datinguinoo

### Human/Partner resources:

CSO partners will take the lead in advancing the productive engagement between citizens and the government. For this to be effective, technical support will be given to CSOs. The focus will be on women's rights organisations.

Oxfam in the Philippines will have core staff dedicated to co-designing, implementing (with partners) and monitoring changes. Staff of Oxfam working on this goal will be based in Mindanao, and have regular engagement with civil society and government at the local level.

# GOAL 3:
# RIGHTS IN CRISIS

The Philippines will improve its resiliency and save lives now and into the future by investing in mechanisms that reduce the risks, the impact of disasters and being able to respond quickly to disasters, prioritising assistance for the most vulnerable.

## Objectives for 2020:

1. National and local governments integrate adaptation and risk reduction across institutions, policies and programmes, which are also responsive to gender-specific needs and capacities, while creating spaces for meaningful participation of women and men as rights-holders.

2. Government agencies, communities and local humanitarian actors respond to humanitarian situations in a timely and targeted manner, meeting international humanitarian standards, and upholding rights of the most vulnerable.

3. Oxfam, with its partners, will prepare for and respond to disasters as a technical leader in WASH and EFSVL, using a gender and protection lens to identify the most vulnerable in humanitarian situations.

## Achieving the Goal:

Resiliency will be increased by:

a) Supporting women's rights organizations in response, recovery, rehabilitation, and preparedness through innovative partnerships that place importance on the gender-specific risks and needs.

b) Seizing opportunities to influence major changes in national policies in the aftermath of a natural disaster to ensure long-term recovery and resilience within rehabilitation, reconstruction and development plans.

c) Women and men are able to have greater access to information, articulate their concerns and hold duty-bearers accountable in implementing national policies and plans on adaptation and risk reduction.

d) Regional and international adaptation and risk reduction platforms support the national disaster management law, structures and mechanisms, primarily in ensuring the implementation and improvement of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act at the national and local levels.

e) Using science and technology to promote innovations in agro-ecological practices, building codes/designs, and an ecosystems approach to land use and risk transfer.

f) Indentifying and working with local government leaders who demonstrate a keen interest in mainstreaming adaptation and risk reduction in local development plans. Supporting local organisations to ensure that gains made under individual leaders are sustained.

*Photo by Eleanor Farmer*

**The quality of responses will be improved by:**

a) Working within networks of both international and national organizations to influence through lobbying and partnership (where appropriate) with the government and the UN system using evidence-based approaches to ensure that plans for disaster response adopt a rights-based approach that clearly targets vulnerability.

b) Improving monitoring and evaluation, particularly in "real-time" responses, with improved ways of working and systems so that changes are made to implementation plans based on evidence collected.

c) Government Contingency Plans, which humanitarian agencies are aligned to, are developed, updated (at least annually) and followed.

d) Oxfam and by the strengthening of humanitarian partners will lead responses focused on WASH and EFSVL, with a strong gender and protections lens. Appropriate shelter support will be provided in the aftermath where there is a recognized need.

e) Oxfam will directly engage in Category 2 level responses while phasing back to Category 1 level responses in 2017 as strong partners are seen to lead and implement Category 2 and 3 level responses.

f) Building relationships with the private sector, to influence their humanitarian responses and to ensure that they are 'building back better'.

*The quality of responses will be improved by building relationships the private sector, to influence their humanitarian responses and to ensure that they are 'building back better'.*

**Gender Equality will be achieved in humanitarian response/s and implementation of the adaptation and risk reduction laws and mechanisms through:**

a) Influencing the government's position in national and regional mechanisms to advance the voice of women and gender perspectives.

b) Promoting women's leadership.

c) Influencing responders to adopt minimum standards in gender in emergencies.

d) Promoting spaces for civil society engagement with national policies and plans and spearheading a gender-responsive DRR agenda.

## Human/Partner resources:

Partners from civil society will deliver on objective 1 and 2. Oxfam staff will provide technical skills or help forge some of the relationships.

In responding to category 1 and 2 responses, Oxfam will largely be operational in the first phase, increasing partnerships in the early and longer term recovery phases. By 2017, partners will be demonstrating the capacity to lead and implement category 2 responses. Oxfam may remain operational in the early and longer term recovery phases in the area of WASH and Livelihoods. Category 3, and by 2017, Category 2 level responses will be partner-led, and the partners will come from civil society, the government and the private sector.

Oxfam in the Philippines will need to maintain a core group of experienced staff, either located within the Oxfam team, within NGO organisations or who are part of a database of people ready to respond in the first phase.

Photo by Genevive Estacaan

# INTERNAL GOALS

Oxfam has been working in the Philippines since 1988, and has been able to contribute to significant change in that time. As the Philippines and Oxfam change, Oxfam's role in the Philippines has also evolved.

To ensure that Oxfam maximises its impact in the coming six years, Oxfam must maintain an appropriate level of management, administration and programme staffing. There are also internal goals to advance Oxfam's efficiency and effectiveness.

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## Goal A: Enhanced programme quality, monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

Oxfam improves its work and enhances its value and contribution to addressing development and vulnerability in the Philippines by ensuring accountability to communities and effective organisational learning.

**Objectives for 2020:**

1. Use learning tools in a better way, customising learning styles to the individual programmes, while having country-wide learning spaces. Incorporate more external learning into the reflection on and direction-setting for Oxfam's work in the Philippines.

2. Train teams to design, implement and evaluate programmes that reflect and advance the goals and objectives of this strategic plan. The results will be developed and shared with communities to improve Oxfam's accountability.

**Achieving the goals:**

• Learning events, with partners, taking place based on evidence, for each programme every six months with country-wide learning space on an annual basis. Results are shared with communities to increase accountability.

• Increase the usage of Oxfam regional and global advisors so as to increase institutionalisation of learning.

• Dedicated time for all senior staff member to bring in new learning from other organisations.

• Adopt monitoring and evaluation approaches, for humanitarian, development and advocacy projects, that focus on progress towards achieving outcomes and demonstrating accountability to communities.

## Goal B: Investing in Partnerships

Oxfam builds strategic relationships, from various sectors, which serve as the foundation for building greater national capacity and sustainability.

### Objectives for 2020:

1. Oxfam's partnerships with, for example, CSOs, the government and the private sector are consolidated, strengthened and thus become more effective in advancing our strategic goals and objectives.

2. Partnership modalities that Oxfam is engaged in are more focused on sharing information and people, linking organisations and ideas and technical assistance, particularly in areas of articulating causes of inequality and humanitarian interventions.

3. Mechanisms of sustaining the achievements of our partnership relations are established, functioning and evaluated.

### Achieving the goals:

• Oxfam staff are equipped to work with partners, to co-create pieces or work, and to hold each other accountable for performance.

• Partners are identified and the relationship advanced, based on the diversity of partners and their ideas, and the clear added value of each organisation as well as Oxfam's to a partnership.

• Building a shared culture of trust, realism and honesty.

• Strong systems in place to indentify and maintain relationships with partners, looking at organisations' implementation, financial management and governance capabilities.

*Oxfam staff are equipped to work with partners, to co-create pieces or work, and to hold each other accountable for performance.*

# Goal C: Effective and efficient business model

Oxfam will have a business model that reflects the context of the Philippines, using financial support provided by international donors, as well as forming relationships with organisations that more equally share the commitment to generate income to fund the partnership.

**Objectives for 2020:**

1. Increase resources raised from Philippines-based income streams that exist within foundations, corporate and institutional donors.

2. Seek partnerships, where both/all organisations actively seek funding streams to deliver on programme goals.

3. Explore opportunities that encourage Filipino individuals to provide financial support to Oxfam in the Philippines for use in the Philippines.

4. Have diverse staff members who have experience in multiple disciplines and are equipped with different skills that can lead on the agreed business model.

**Achieving the goals:**

• Foundations, corporate and institutional donors: Develop ca• Foundations, corporate and institutional donors: Develop capacity to increase new high-return funding partnerships, including consortia management, tendering, and competitive bids. Develop capacity of staff to develop and maintain strategic donor relationships.

• Develop partnerships with national organisations/companies that are able to source funding support from Filipino individuals and foundations.



*Photo by Veejay Villafranca*

# GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Oxfam will focus its interventions in Autonomous Region of **Muslim Mindanao** (most of which is likely to be become the **Bangsamoro**), **Central Mindanao, CARAGA Zamboanga Peninsula** and **Eastern Visayas.** These four regions of Mindanao plus Eastern Visayas remain among the poorest within the Philippines, with the greatest level of inequality.

Oxfam will influence the use of power and resources particularly in these geographical areas. Where required, pressure will also be placed on the various levels of governance and business. The result of the influence, be it directly in Mindanao or Eastern Visayas, at national, regional or global levels, will be evaluated against the impact of this change on vulnerable women and men who reside within the selected geographical areas.
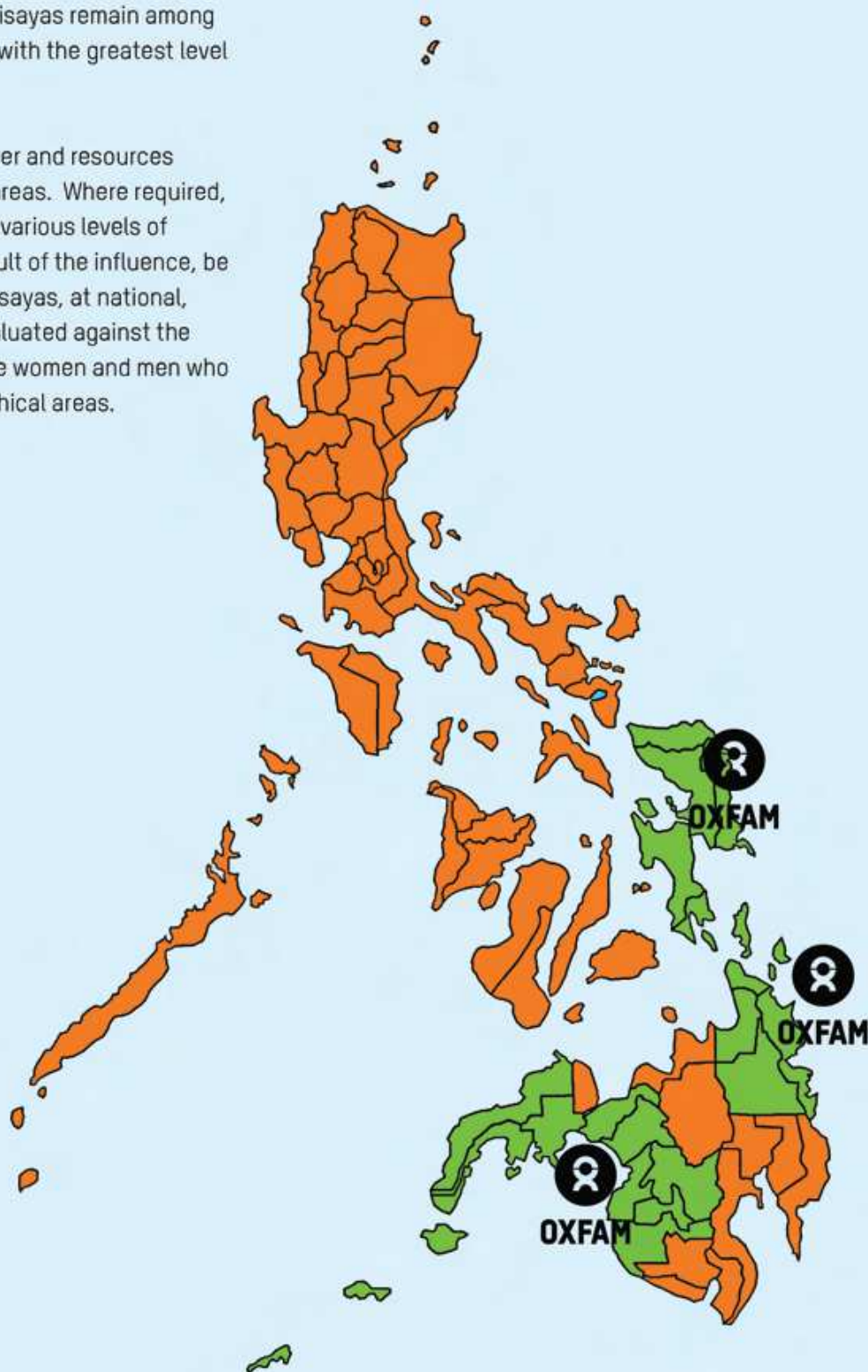
# CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES

Photo by Tessa Bunney

# CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES

## Worldwide Influencing Network (WIN)

Oxfam will achieve more profound change in the lives of those living with poverty and injustice on a greater scale by creating and being part of a world-wide influencing network, with the ability to use the full range of influencing techniques. Oxfam will be participating in a wider movement to fight against the injustice of poverty, which is the context for its country planning and programming.

## Transformation Leadership for Women's Rights (TLWR)

TLWR requires organisational commitment and routine organisational reflection. As the Oxfam International paper on TLWR states, "The purpose, values, and principles that are at the root of transformative leadership are foundational to Oxfam's mission."

Active leadership and participation of poor women is seen as key to the transformation of unequal power relations. While Oxfam will continue to involve men in its work, women will be prioritised in terms of their leadership and participation in the work supported by Oxfam. This is based on poor women representing an economic force in both the rural and urban settings, but whose contribution is often hidden.

## Through Partnership

Oxfam believes it can best bring about change by strategic partnering with local and international IIGOs, private sector, research institutes and social movements. An appropriate working relationship with the government, with particular emphasis with the local government units, is also essential. Experience has shown the value of engaged and sustained partnerships that have a strong focus on networking and clarity on the added value of each member. Influencing the provincial and national government is equally important.

As a global organisation, Oxfam will bring to the partnership access to information and people, the ability to link organisations and ideas, and technical assistance, particularly in areas of articulating causes of inequality and humanitarian interventions. At times, funding will be provided as a catalyst to shape how other resources are used. Oxfam will engage with organisations that already have expertise in their given area of work, who have an equal commitment to bringing about positive change to people living in poverty, and where clear added value for a partnership with Oxfam is recognised. Oxfam will only provide strategic funding to partners.

*Active leadership and participation of poor women is seen as key to the transformation of unequal power relations.*

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## An accountable and learning culture

Oxfam needs to promote an evidence-based accountable and learning culture among partners and staff built on effective monitoring and evaluation of their work. Being accountable to communities will enable Oxfam to reflect on and change its approaches where necessary. This supports the learning culture, which will be complemented by other sources of learning and knowledge.

## Adaptation and Risk Reduction (ARR)

Oxfam's work in development, humanitarian response and campaigns will incorporate an analysis of disaster and climate risks and will seek to reduce or mitigate these risks. Adopting this approach will enable women and men to protect their lives and livelihoods from disasters, shocks, stresses and uncertainty.

*Being accountable to communities will enable Oxfam to reflect on and change its approaches where necessary.*

## 10 General Indicators

**Economic inequality impact will be monitored against existing available information that tracks:**

• Growth and inequality indices.

• Equal opportunities and working conditions for women coming from diverse cultural backgrounds and settings, in terms of employment and livelihood, access to markets and means of production, and to leadership positions has increased.

• Equitable distribution of lands per hectare and productivity of small farms increased.

**Political inequality will be monitored using a combination of internal monitoring reports as well as external data to determine the level of change in:**

• Government resources, as determined by a consultation process between communities and local governments, for the development agenda are used to benefit the poor and basic sectors.

• Women's representation in key decision-making positions in the public sector has increased.

**Gender inequality change will be monitored against external information that looks at:**

• Levels of violence against women and children are significantly reduced.

• Maternal mortality has decreased and access to reproductive health services has increased within the Bangsamoro.

**Resilience impact will be assessed against:**

• Increased number of local governments able to effectively respond to Cat 3 disasters and address slow onset impacts of climate change through sustainable adaptation actions;

• Income and its predictability increased for women in the agriculture sector, formal and informal sectors and from cash transfers.

# KEY ASSUMPTIONS

Within the context of the Philippines, there are assumptions that have been made within the course of this strategy:

• That there will be a peaceful transition in leadership in 2016. While the results of the 2016 election is unknown, it is assumed that the constitution will be upheld during this transition and open democratic spaces continue to be in place for meaningful engagement between active citizens and the state.

• The Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro is translated into the Bangsamoro Basic Law, and is legislated during the current administration.

• That Philippines does not enter into war with another country, destabilising its trade opportunities at a regional level. Diplomatic approaches continue to be the primary mode of engagement in resolving international disputes in the Western Philippine Sea, and the eruption of violence is prevented.

• That while humanitarian responses will be required throughout the lifetime of the strategy, that both the Philippine Government will continue to lead in responses, with the international community providing technical and financial support to such responses as called upon by the government.

*It is our intention to support the development of global humanitarians among our staff and partners who can play a leading role in humanitarian responses inside and outside the country.*

## Relationship to Oxfam Strategic Plan

With these strategic external and internal priorities, Oxfam in the Philippines intends to contribute to Oxfam's work on addressing poverty in the world particularly in the following areas:

• **Saving lives, now and in the future** – Oxfam in the Philippines intends to carry out Oxfam's global humanitarian imperative, maintaining quality standards in its humanitarian response/s and linking these to disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, resilience, conflict transformation and broader development. Oxfam in the Philippines intends to maintain this capacity and to be able to develop knowledge products on rights-based approaches to humanitarian work that can be shared within and outside the confederation. It is also our intention to support the development of global humanitarians among our staff and partners who can play a leading role in humanitarian responses inside and outside the country.

• **Sustainable food and fair sharing of resources** – Our work on economic justice will be a significant contribution to Oxfam International's strategic intent to foster substantive and durable change in the way resources are shared and food is produced and distributed in the world. We expect that our efforts towards asset reform, access to resources, agricultural policy development and agricultural innovations in the face of climate change and disasters, will contribute to global discourse and good practice.

• **Right to be heard: People claiming their right to a better life** – Our programme in the Philippines is strongly rights-based and founded on the recognition of the necessity for empowering people and making their voices heard in the struggle to address poverty, vulnerability and inequality. Our work shall promote active citizenship, and see that more women, young people, and the poor exercise their political right to influence decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods.

# SUMMARY RESOURCES
## REQUIRED

Goals 1 and 3 will require the greatest investment throughout the life of the strategy. This proportion is justified by the scale of work that Oxfam will need to undertake in order to achieve the influence that is aspired to, as well as the prominent role that these goals play within the wider context.

Both Goal 1 and 3 will also be implemented in the geographical area covered by Goal 2, and as such the resource investment for Goal 3 is what is additional for the Bangsamoro.

In all Goals, it is recognised that the size of investment required is dependent on the number and scale of humanitarian events that are responded to. The budgets show an initial heightened investment in objectives 4 and 3 of Goals 1 and 3 respectively, which is a result of the needs associated with Typhoon Yolanda.

# THE POWER OF PEOPLE AGAINST POVERTY.

Oxfam is an international confederation of 17 organisations networked together in more than 94 countries, as part of a global movement for change, to build a future free from the injustice of poverty. In the Philippines, we work with poor people to sustain their livelihoods, and reduce their risks to natural and human-made disasters.

www.oxfamblogs.org/philippines

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