OXFAM IN RWANDA

- Oxfam has been working in Rwanda since the 1970s. Acting as a catalyst as well as a facilitator, bringing different actors together while influencing how sustainable change happens.
- We work towards building sustainable livelihoods and participatory governance.
- Oxfam aim is to empower the poorest and most vulnerable by enabling them to be part of the decisions which affect their lives, for sustainable growth and development.

IN NUMBERS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Reached</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participatory Governance</td>
<td>8,525</td>
<td>50,185</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainable Livelihood</td>
<td>64,950</td>
<td>47,231</td>
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The Republic of Rwanda continues to move beyond its tragic past and is achieving impressive growth and stability. However there are some challenges, like many other African countries nearly half of the Rwanda population is living in poverty and there’s a great need of support to create work in rural as well as within the urban areas.

As the country tries to build from her subsistence agricultural economy, it is equally important that all Rwandans can take an active role in shaping the progress of their country as it moves towards vision 2020. Consequently, Oxfam has been engaging with various actors from small-holder farmers to those in private-sector in improving the value chain system for sustainable livelihoods.

HOW OXFAM WORKS

Today, Oxfam acts as a catalyst and facilitator bringing people together to influence how change happens. Working with civil society, private sector and government bodies, we create partnerships, build capacity and facilitate access to skills, knowledge and technical expertise.

We continue to be a knowledge driven organization oriented to value and inspired by learning and respected research and analysis, often in partnerships, in order to support poor people to influence on their causes. Oxfam’s vision is for a country where women and men enjoy equal rights and benefits as part of an inclusive development process. Our strategy commits us to working with others to contribute to equitable economic development and participatory governance over the next five years.

Our partners include farmers’ co-operative associations and organisations, civil society, private sector enterprises, national organisations, women’s groups, research centres, government bodies and finance institutions. We work closely with all of these groups to bring about long-term changes to the lives of people living in poverty.

* numbers indicated as of end of FY2013/14
Our work focuses on sustainable livelihoods and participatory governance. Our aim is to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable directly benefit from development and can influence the decisions which affect their own lives, leading to a more stable and sustainably peaceful Rwanda. We passionately believe in supporting women’s empowerment and equality between men and women.

**OUR VISION**

- To create meaningful, sustainable jobs for poor people – especially by finding ways for the growing agricultural sector to deliver higher returns for the poorest communities.
- Women to be respected for their skills, leadership, technical skills and entrepreneurial activities, instead of being seen as agricultural labourers.
- To change power relations in the home and community to ensure both women and men benefit equally from economic development.
- To strengthen and influence government, civil society and the private sector so they choose to invest in pro-poor initiatives, supporting both women and men.
- The voices of all marginalised Rwandans to be at the centre of development.
- Local authorities to upwardly reflect the needs and concerns of all poor and vulnerable people.
- Central government to replicate participatory governance and accountability good practice at all levels.
- To see more space for citizens and civil society organisations to speak out safely about rights and protection.

**SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS**

Oxfam works with others to create direct and indirect job opportunities for Rwandans living in poverty. With our partners we offer assistance to businesses working with small-holder farmers through pilot projects led by civil society and the private sector. Our support is time-bound – we want businesses to quickly become self-sufficient and able to expand. As more Rwandans choose to live in cities, Oxfam will support new ventures that can provide urban jobs. Ultimately we want to develop and demonstrate gender-sensitive and pro-poor models of work which can be replicated by the Government, private sector and others.

Our work under sustainable livelihoods includes:

- Developing innovative new business models that support pro-poor growth.
- Facilitating the development of business services for medium-sized enterprises, including access to finance.
- Increasing the effectiveness of small-holder farmer enterprises.
- Addressing gender issues in agriculture supply chains to ensure women benefit equally.
- Providing gender mainstreaming and governance technical support for government, civil society, private sector bodies.
- Investing in knowledge management and learning.
- Influencing government and private sector on policy and implementation issues.
PARticiPAtORy gOveRnAnCe

In addition Oxfam strongly supports the development of participatory governance in Rwanda. We encourage all Rwandan citizens to engage with the state and Oxfam facilitates individual and community voices to be heard through a strong and legitimate civil society. We support the country’s reconciliation efforts as a foundation for collective action and strive to increase access to justice for all Rwandans.

Under participatory governance our work includes:

- Supporting active citizenship through encouraging people’s rights awareness, access to information and justice, and promoting channels for participation.
- Grassroots reconciliation work as a foundation for positive, collective action.
- Building the capacity of Rwandan civil society to focus on outreach, research, policy and advocacy, as well as linking people to form strategic coalitions and alliances.
- Engaging with government institutions to support a robust, sustainable decentralisation process.
- Facilitating evidence-based advocacy and policy dialogue on priority issues for Rwandan citizens.

In addition to our work on sustainable livelihoods and participatory governance, we work on a number of issues as cross-cutting themes relevant to all our Rwandan programmes.

HIV: Oxfam focuses on HIV in our livelihoods work. We want to ensure that our programmes are open to all people able to work while living with or affected by HIV. We also support the rights of sexual minorities to live free from HIV and work to reduce discrimination towards lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people.

Gender: In all our work we aim to build gender equity and support women’s rights. We use a mix of approaches including direct focus on women’s economic and social empowerment and leadership. We also advocate for gender action learning’ – looking at how women and men can benefit from shared decision-making, whether at household or national level. In certain instances we focus specifically on men as agents of positive change in gender relations as is the case with our campaigns against gender based violence.

Humanitarian preparedness: We support the Rwandan Ministry of Disaster Management through participation in the Disaster Management Task Force, as a partner in effective disaster preparedness and response.

Risk reduction and adaptation: We support farmers and businesses to manage agricultural risks through natural resource management and climate change adaptation, as well as working on low carbon options in enterprise development.
Oxfam is an international confederation of 17 organisations which works in over 90 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty, inequality and injustice. We work to ensure that poor people can improve their lives and have a say in decisions that affect them. In a world rich in resources, Oxfam believes that poverty is not a fact of life but an injustice to be overcome. Oxfam strives to ensure everyone can be secure, healthy, skilled, safe, heard and equal.

We work with poor communities, local partner organisations, volunteers and supporters to make this a reality. When people are suffering from conflict or natural disasters, Oxfam’s emergency response is swift and focused and we provide assistance to help people to survive, recover, and rebuild their lives. Through campaigning and advocacy, Oxfam also seeks to influence and change policies that prevent people from escaping poverty.

Where our money comes from working effectively with others means that we are able to achieve most impact with the limited resources we have. Oxfam’s money comes from a wide variety of sources – regular donations from hundreds of thousands of private individuals, Oxfam shops, emergency appeals, institutions, governments, other agencies and fundraising events. We are very grateful for the generous support of our donors as our work would not be possible without them.

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