Jennifer, 24, teacher at Primary School, Palabek Refugee Settlement, Uganda. Photo credit: Emmanuel Museruka

IMPACT EVALUATION OF REGIONAL INFLUENCING WORK IN HORN, EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

A case study of the Rights in Crisis and Extractive Industries initiatives

Oxfam's Horn, East and Central Africa (HECA) Regional Platform was established in 2016. Among the platform's far-reaching portfolio are two influencing initiatives – the Rights in Crisis network and Extractive Industries programme. Despite their ambitious scope and the challenging context, this report confirms that Oxfam has contributed effectively to change at all levels. These changes include increased refugee participation in advocacy initiatives and strengthened civil society engagement on issues involving the extractives industry.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxfam has been working in the Horn, East and Central Africa (HECA) region for over 50 years, and carries out a diverse portfolio of programmes across ten countries: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The regional priorities focus on three programme themes: tackling inequality; transforming conflicts; and transformative partnerships. This work is led by a regional platform (HECA RP) which was established in 2016.

Map of the HECA region and Oxfam's priority workstreams in the region
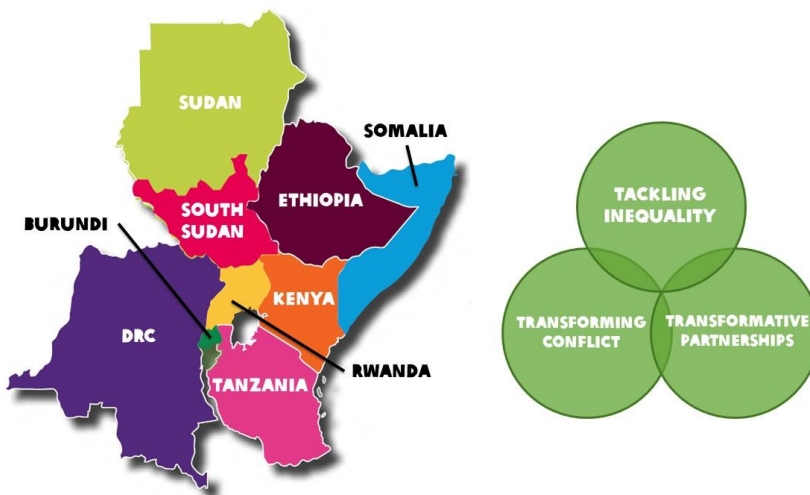
The region's socio-political landscape is dominated by chronic humanitarian crises and massive displacements of people attributed to prolonged droughts, unresolved conflicts and fragility. It has also experienced significant growth in the extractives sector in recent years, with oil and gas discoveries in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The region is rich in natural resources, a key driver of conflict in HECA and a frequent source of land disputes and displacement.

Oxfam's Rights in Crisis (RIC) influencing work in HECA focuses on:

- Conflict transformation and inclusive peace: work to address the root causes of crises and support for peacebuilding, including advocating for and supporting the meaningful participation of women, youth and refugees in peace and security mechanisms and discussions.

- Local humanitarian leadership: advocating for increased local humanitarian leadership as well as the leadership and participation of refugees in addressing the challenges that affect their lives. This includes work to support national and refugee-led organizations to be their own advocates and increase their participation and influence in policy spaces and discussions.

Oxfam's Extractive Industries (EI) programme seeks to create space for the voices of individuals impacted by the extractives industry to be heard, while working towards a realization of natural resource justice through the
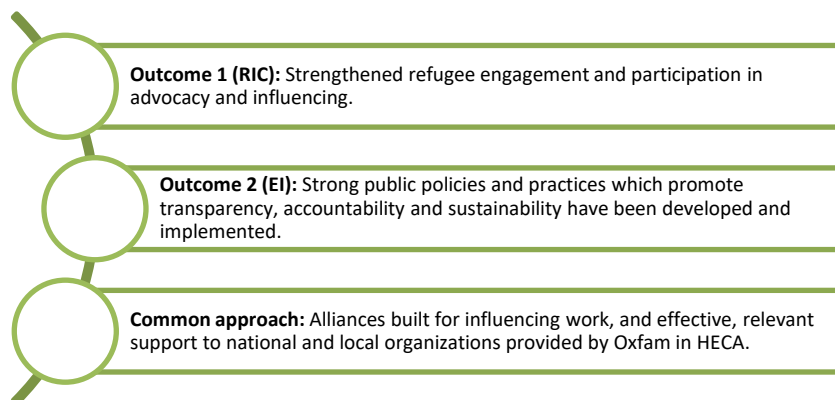
improved transparency of national and regional governance structures. This involves:

- Promoting strong public policies and implementation of regulations that encourage transparency, accountability and sustainability.

- Improving protection of community rights and enabling participation in EI decision making that has an impact on their land and environment.

- Ensuring transparent and accountable management and distribution of EI revenues towards sustainable, pro-poor investments.

- Encouraging multilateral development agencies and EI companies to adopt and implement progressive policies and positions on transparency and environmental and social safeguards.

EVALUATION APPROACH

This evaluation sought to determine the impact of Oxfam's influencing work in the HECA region on RIC and EI initiatives from 2016 to present. Two outcomes from Oxfam's RIC and IE influencing work in HECA were evaluated, serving as benchmarks against which impact was measured. In addition, a common approach used by both work areas was evaluated.

High-level outcomes and common approach linked to RIC and EI

Outcome 1 (RIC): Strengthened refugee engagement and participation in advocacy and influencing.

Outcome 2 (EI): Strong public policies and practices which promote transparency, accountability and sustainability have been developed and implemented.

Common approach: Alliances built for influencing work, and effective, relevant support to national and local organizations provided by Oxfam in HECA.

This is an ex-post theory-based evaluation which focuses on the results of Oxfam's influencing work. It seeks to test causality to understand why certain programmatic elements led to change. The evaluation adopted a qualitative approach, drawing on a review of primary and secondary data. A process tracing methodology was applied, along with outcome harvesting and contribution analysis approaches.

Six countries were selected for more in-depth assessment, with primary data collection carried out in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan and DRC. Data collection took place between April and June 2022, with in-person key informant interviews and focus group discussions in Tanzania and Uganda, and those for the other countries conducted remotely.

Analysis of these data led to the identification of key themes as well as the interconnection of Oxfam's work at multiple levels, including related intermediate changes observed; whether intermediate changes were

achieved or not achieved and were intended or unintended; at what level change was observed (local, national, regional and/or global levels); the significance of the change to the main outcome or common approach; and possible explanations and the contribution of interventions made by Oxfam in HECA or other actors.

Twenty-seven intermediate outcomes were identified as contributing to the main outcomes related to RIC and EI influencing.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In terms of Outcome 1 (RIC), the evaluation findings indicate that a significant amount of change has been made at all levels, and refugee engagement and participation in advocacy and influencing is firmly on the agenda. However, more must be done to bring key stakeholders along more meaningfully.

- At the local level, refugee-led organizations (RLOs) and refugee-led networks (RLNs) believe themselves to be more able to act coherently and cohesively to coordinate their advocacy and messaging.

- At the national level, changes were mainly seen in Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda. Strengthened refugee participation in influencing efforts was evidenced by RLNs reporting enhanced institutional capacity to sustain themselves, which in turn enables them to identify the needs among the RLOs they represent and support more cohesive advocacy efforts.

- At the regional and global levels, enhanced engagement and influencing opportunities for refugees with international stakeholders like the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were recorded, with RLOs and RLNs now invited to participate in meetings.

- External engagement on RIC refugee leadership has been key to success. However, engagement thus far on contentious issues such as the need to include the rights and specific vulnerabilities of LGBTQIA+ refugees in advocacy and influencing work has not gone far enough.

Recommendations linked to findings on Outcome 1 (RIC)	
1	Explore ways to secure meaningful engagement with UNHCR and some governments.
2	Explore ways in which Oxfam can expand work to address the needs of LGBTQIA+ refugees, including speaking up where local organizations are unable to.
3	Explore whether more logistical support could be provided to RLOs and RLNs to ensure the inclusion of refugees in advocacy spaces.
4	Work to develop more structure in the RIC influencing work to support more strategic and longer-term influencing plans, while retaining the current adaptive approach to respond flexibly to advocacy and influencing opportunities.
5	Investigate ways to provide improved fundraising support to RLNs and RLOs, especially to secure longer-term funding.

In terms of Outcome 2 (EI), the evaluation findings indicate that a significant amount of change has been made on enhanced civil society engagement and activity. Oxfam's work in partnership with civil society in the region has led to improved public policies and practices which promote transparency, accountability and sustainability in EI at multiple levels. However, there is evidence of a disconnect within Oxfam on the future of EI.

- At the local level, change has been observed through communities' enhanced understanding of their land and human rights, and the establishment of participatory budget clubs, community human rights monitor positions, and community animator positions, all of which help to ensure that local government and private companies can be held more accountable for their work.

- At the national level, change has been observed regarding strong public policies and practices in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. This includes an enhanced legislative framework in Kenya which is supportive of transparency and accountability on EI. Uganda joined the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) discussed audit findings live for the first time ever; both changes which HECA RP helped influence. In Tanzania, there has been increased media engagement and coverage of EI issues as well as a gradual increase in the role of the Tanzania Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (TEITI); while in Uganda civil society actors have engaged parliamentarians on OAG report findings with the aim of developing regulations for oil revenue sharing, and establishing fiscal rules for the management of the Petroleum Fund.

- At the regional level, there is increased collaboration between nations regarding EI. For example, there has been work on the role of supreme audit institutions (SAIs) in ten countries. In addition, civil society is developing evidence to support the role of key accountability actors, thereby actively contributing to the strengthening of public policies and practices. Enhanced media coverage of EI issues was noted across the region, with an increased focus on oil and gas issues reportedly evident among several media outlets. This is putting pressure on companies and governments to enhance transparency and accountability, and has also increased citizens' engagement.

- An emerging disconnect between Oxfam's international-level commitments and regional and national work was raised as a concern by Oxfam staff at country, regional and international levels. Global North commitments to renewable energy and sustainability in the interest of climate justice contrast with Global South priorities which revolve around utilization of natural resources for national development. There is a need to work towards resolving this international/national disconnect on the EI vision. Failure to do so could lead to future challenges on the cohesiveness of Oxfam's work on EI and climate justice.

Recommendation linked to findings on Outcome 2 (EI)	
6	HECA RP could act as a bridge between Oxfam International and Oxfam country offices, using its position to convene an internal discussion between Oxfam stakeholders at all levels to further explore the international/national disconnect on the EI vision.

In terms of a common approach, the key lessons from the evaluation are that transformative partnerships work, that Oxfam's approach of capacity building and evidence-based advocacy is effective, and that the provision of technical capacity on RIC and EI for country offices is of continued importance. The focus on the inclusion of women is seen as positive in the HECA RP's influencing work. However, further progress could ensure the inclusion is sustainable and responds to women's strategic as well as practical needs. There is still a long way to go to ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups within influencing, such as those of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) and people with disabilities.

Recommendations linked to findings on the common approach	
7	For transformative partnerships, to ensure that the RIC and EI influencing work with partners is providing its capacity building work as effectively as possible, Oxfam could consider conducting light-touch refresher capacity assessments to identify outstanding areas of need.
8	To maintain technical capacity, Oxfam should recognize that one of its key contributions is the provision of technical assistance and leadership. It should ensure technical capacity is maintained at a regional level, particularly in cases where Oxfam country offices close.
9	Continue the positive focus on inclusion of women and identify strategies for more sustained and strategic inclusion of women, such as funding allocated to women-led local partners.
10	Explore and develop methods to ensure the inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC and people with disabilities in advocacy and influencing activities.
11	To facilitate the growth of networks and sharing of best practices, and enhance opportunities for knowledge sharing and joint learning between partners, Oxfam could consider developing and formalizing several communities of practice on issues relating to EI and RIC.
12	Oxfam could convene and engage donor meetings to share learning. Meetings between donors who support locally led action directly and those who do not would enable experiences of working with local partners to be shared, and encourage more local funding in the future.

ACRONYMS

CRED	Civic Response on Environment and Development
CSO	Civil society organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EI	Extractive Industries
HECA	Horn, East and Central Africa
HECA RP	Horn, East and Central Africa Regional Platform
INGO	International non-government organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
RLN	Refugee-led network
RLO	Refugee-led organization
RIC	Rights in Crisis
SAIs	Supreme audit institutions
SOGIESC	Sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristics
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OXFAM IN THE HECA REGION

Oxfam has been working in the Horn, East and Central Africa (HECA) region for over 50 years. It carries out a diverse portfolio of programme across ten countries: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Map of the HECA region

A regional strategy guide highlights priorities to work towards a 'transformed and stable HECA region where people exercise their right to challenge power and have dignity and security to drive transformative change in their lived experiences'.[1] The regional priorities focus on three themes: **tackling inequality**; **transforming conflicts**; and **transformative partnerships** (Figure 2). This work is led by a regional platform (HECA RP) which was established in 2016.

Figure 2 Oxfam's priority workstreams in the HECA region

1.2 INFLUENCING WORK IN THE REGION

Oxfam engages in influencing work across all ten HECA counties. It has worked with institutions such as the East African Community (EAC), East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and the Intergovernmental Authority and Development (IGAD) on issues ranging from humanitarian and conflict situations and extractive industries, to gender justice and civil space.

1.3 THE NEED FOR INFLUENCING WORK IN THE REGION

The HECA region's socio-political landscape is dominated by chronic humanitarian crises and massive displacements of people attributed to prolonged droughts, unresolved conflicts and fragility. National-level crises such as the Ebola epidemic and armed conflict in DRC, political and economic unrest in Sudan, electoral delays in Somalia, as well as incessant drought across the region contribute to significant humanitarian challenges.
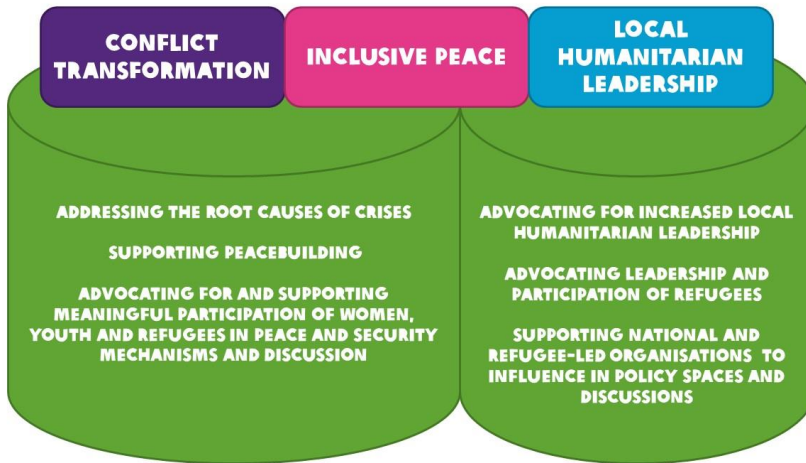
The region has also experienced significant growth in the extractives sector in recent years, with oil and gas discoveries in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It is rich in natural resources, such as gold, cobalt, iron ore, and rare earth minerals. Natural resources are a key driver of conflict in the region and a frequent source of land disputes and displacement. Communities in natural resource-rich areas are often excluded from decision-making processes, with women especially having few opportunities to contribute to discussions on extractive sector governance.

The Rights in Crisis (RIC) network and Extractive Industries (EI) programme are two of Oxfam's influencing efforts within this context.

1.4 INFLUENCING WORK ON RIGHTS IN CRISIS

RIC programming seeks to work with people affected by crises, providing space and support for individuals to be empowered and to take ownership of humanitarian processes. The Theory of Change diagram (Figure 3) describes the type of influencing activities carried out by Oxfam in HECA to achieve the programme's overarching goals related to RIC: **conflict transformation**; **inclusive peace**; and **local humanitarian leadership**.

Figure 3 Theory of Change – Oxfam's RIC influencing work in the HECA region

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION | INCLUSIVE PEACE | LOCAL HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP

ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF CRISES

SUPPORTING PEACEBUILDING

ADVOCATING FOR AND SUPPORTING MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND REFUGEES IN PEACE AND SECURITY MECHANISMS AND DISCUSSION

ADVOCATING FOR INCREASED LOCAL HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP

ADVOCATING LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION OF REFUGEES

SUPPORTING NATIONAL AND REFUGEE-LED ORGANISATIONS TO INFLUENCE IN POLICY SPACES AND DISCUSSIONS

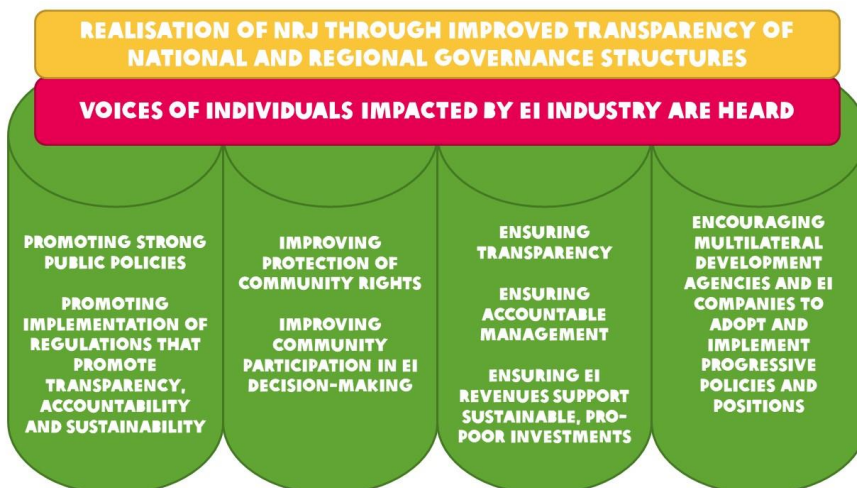Note: This is a simplified version of the more detailed Theory of Change diagram included in the Annex (Figure A1).

1.5 INFLUENCING WORK ON EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

The EI programme seeks to create space for the voices of individuals impacted by the extractives industry to be heard, while working towards a realization of natural resource justice (NRJ) through the improved transparency of national and regional governance structures. The Theory of Change diagram (Figure 4) describes the type of influencing activities carried out by Oxfam in HECA to achieve these objectives.

Figure 4 Theory of Change – Oxfam's EI influencing work in the HECA region

REALISATION OF NRJ THROUGH IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

VOICES OF INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY EI INDUSTRY ARE HEARD

PROMOTING STRONG PUBLIC POLICIES

PROMOTING IMPLEMENTATION OF REGULATIONS THAT PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

IMPROVING PROTECTION OF COMMUNITY RIGHTS

IMPROVING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EI DECISION-MAKING

ENSURING TRANSPARENCY

ENSURING ACCOUNTABLE MANAGEMENT

ENSURING EI REVENUES SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE, PRO-POOR INVESTMENTS

ENCOURAGING MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND EI COMPANIES TO ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT PROGRESSIVE POLICIES AND POSITIONS

Note: This is a simplified version of the more detailed Theory of Change diagram in the Annex (Figure A2).

At the country level, Oxfam is working alongside local organizations and civil society partners such as KAWIDA (Kakindo Integrated Women Development

Agency), RACA (Raca for Development Counselling) and CRED (Civic Response on Environment and Development) in Uganda, Northern Coalition for Extractives and Environment (NCEE), MSOAPO and HAKIRASILIMALI in Tanzania, and the Kenya Land Alliance, Kenya Civil Society Platform on Oil and Gas, and the Diocese of Lodwar in Kenya.

2 EVALUATION PURPOSE

This evaluation sought to determine the impact of Oxfam's influencing work in the HECA region, with a focus on RIC and EI initiatives carried out from 2016 to present. This included exploring the interconnection of influencing work at the local, national and regional levels, including global-level links where apparent.
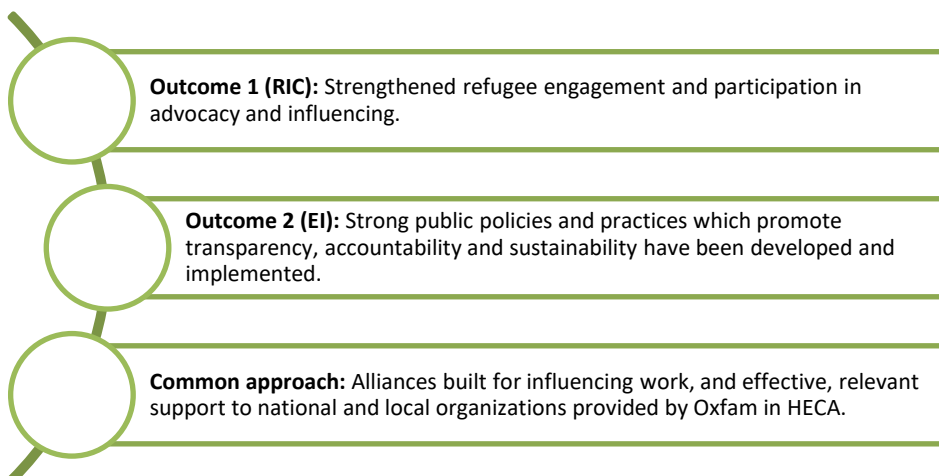
2.1 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The **study objectives** were four-fold:

1   Assess the impact of RIC and EI influencing initiatives on target groups, behaviours, policies, laws and institutions at the regional and country levels.

2   Identify enabling and hindering factors for RIC and EI influencing initiatives/work.

3   Assess the contribution to impact of the interconnectedness with programmes and across the region.

4   Document lessons to guide the design and implementation of future RIC and EI influencing work.

Two outcomes from Oxfam's EI and RIC influencing work in HECA were evaluated, serving as benchmarks against which the impact was measured. In addition, a common approach used by both work areas was evaluated.

Figure 5 High-level outcomes and common approach linked to RIC and EI

Outcome 1 (RIC): Strengthened refugee engagement and participation in advocacy and influencing.

Outcome 2 (EI): Strong public policies and practices which promote transparency, accountability and sustainability have been developed and implemented.

Common approach: Alliances built for influencing work, and effective, relevant support to national and local organizations provided by Oxfam in HECA.

2.2 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Table 1 outlines the questions that guided the evaluation process.

Table 1 Evaluation questions and corresponding study objectives

1 What is the impact of RIC and EI RP influencing work on intended and emergent outcomes at the regional and national levels? • Were the key regional or country-level influencing outcomes of the RIC and EI RP programme reached? • What was the HECA RP's RIC and EI programme contribution to this change? How and why? • Were there any unintended (positive or negative) changes registered from the EI and RIC RP programme? 2 What were the enabling and/or hindering factors to achieving impact? 3 What was the impact of building alliances/networks for greater influencing work? • To what extent did the bringing together/aligning of networks affect the knowledge of, and access to, refugee rights within the region? • To what extent have the influencing engagements contributed to enabling partners, alliances and networks the HECA RP worked with to take action and claim their rights? • To what extent have the civil society organization (CSO) networks been strengthened to advance transparency and accountability in EIs and public financial revenue management?	Study objectives 1 and 2
4 How has the interconnectedness of the HECA RP and country work contributed to the impact? • To what extent have RIC and EI RP influencing engagements furthered intra- and inter-community, local-level (sub-national such as district levels) changes? • How has local and national RIC and EI work contributed to the impact at the regional level?	Study objective 3
5 How did the RIC and EI RP influencing work shape or affect the other pillars of the RP influencing work? 6 How are these results applicable (or not) to the other pillars of the RP influencing work and what can we learn from it for the whole influencing programme? 7 What lessons can be drawn to guide the design and implementation of future influencing work?	Study objective 4

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 EVALUATION DESIGN

This is an ex-post theory-based evaluation focused on the results of Oxfam's influencing work in HECA since 2016. It seeks to test causality to understand the extent to which, and why, certain programmatic elements led to change.

3.2 METHODS USED

The evaluation adopted a qualitative approach, drawing on a review of primary and secondary data. A process tracing[2] methodology was applied, along with elements of outcome harvesting[3] and contribution analysis[4] (Table 2).

Table 2 Evaluation methodology

Primary data collection	Key informant interviews and focus group discussions
Secondary data collection	Comprehensive desk review
Process tracing methodology	To determine, analyse and interpret **major outcomes** relating to Oxfam's influencing work in the HECA region. The aim was to explore: 1 the links between potential causes for these outcomes. 2 the extent to which the selected outcomes had been realized. 3 participants' views on all possible explanations for the impact observed.
Outcome harvesting techniques	To determine **intermediate outcomes** relating to – and potentially involved in – the causal pathways leading to the three main outcomes selected for evaluation.
Contribution analysis	To assess **the extent to which Oxfam in HECA – or other potential actors and factors – contributed to an observed change** through the HECA RP's influencing work.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

Six countries were selected for data collection purposes: Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan and DRC. Data collection took place between April and June 2022, with key informant interviews and focus group discussions conducted in person in Tanzania and Uganda, and others conducted remotely (Table 3).

Key informant interviews aimed to collect perspectives on the extent to which Oxfam in HECA contributed to identified outcomes and causal pathways, compared with other factors.

Focus group discussions aimed to gather participants' perspectives on the extent to which public policies and practices with regards to EI have improved. To ensure a variety of perspectives, participants were chosen to represent communities at multiple locations in both countries. They also involved a mix of age groups, including elderly and young people.

Table 3 Primary data collection

Data collection method	Total	Location	Respondents
Key informant interviews	38	Conducted in-person in Tanzania and Uganda, and remotely in the other four countries	Those familiar with Oxfam in HECA and those not familiar with Oxfam in HECA
Focus group discussions	7	Four in Uganda (Buliisa and Rakai) Three in Tanzania (in Tanga and Mtwara)	Men (71%) and women (29%) community members

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

During the initial design phase of the evaluation, two high-level outcomes related to Oxfam's RIC and EI influencing work in HECA and a common approach were identified (Figure 5).

The analysis of primary and secondary data led to the identification of key themes which were mapped onto a findings, conclusions and recommendations matrix. A causal explanations evaluation matrix was then developed for a more detailed analysis of the interconnection of work at multiple levels, including:

- related intermediate outcomes/changes observed;

- whether intermediate outcomes/changes were achieved or not achieved and were intended or unintended;

- where the intermediate outcome/change was observed (local, national, regional and/or global levels);

- the significance of the change to the main outcome or common approach;

- possible explanations for the outcome or change observed;

- contribution of interventions made by Oxfam in HECA or other actors.

Twenty-seven intermediate outcomes contributing to the main outcomes related to RIC and EI influencing were identified from the causal explanations matrix (Table 4). To test each intermediate outcome in terms of strength of contribution and strength of evidence related, scores were assigned to each one.

Table 4 Achievement of intermediate outcomes

|	Outcome achieved	Outcome not achieved	Total
Rights in Crisis (RIC)	6	3	9
Extractive Industries (EI)	10	3	13
Common approach	3	2	5
Total	19	8	27

Data analysis utilized triangulation throughout, to verify the consistency of findings across different respondent types and sources.

Theory of change visualizations were also created to depict:

- the main outcomes evaluated for RIC and EI;
- intermediate outcomes contributing to them;
- a set of causal pathways and hypotheses demonstrating how each intermediate outcome contributes to the main outcome;
- a visualization of how the outcomes intersect across the local, national and regional/global levels.

Figure 6 illustrates the main steps involved in the data analysis phase. This includes the identification of high-level outcomes and key themes and content among the primary data, through to the key findings which were used to respond to the evaluation questions.

Figure 6 Data analysis process
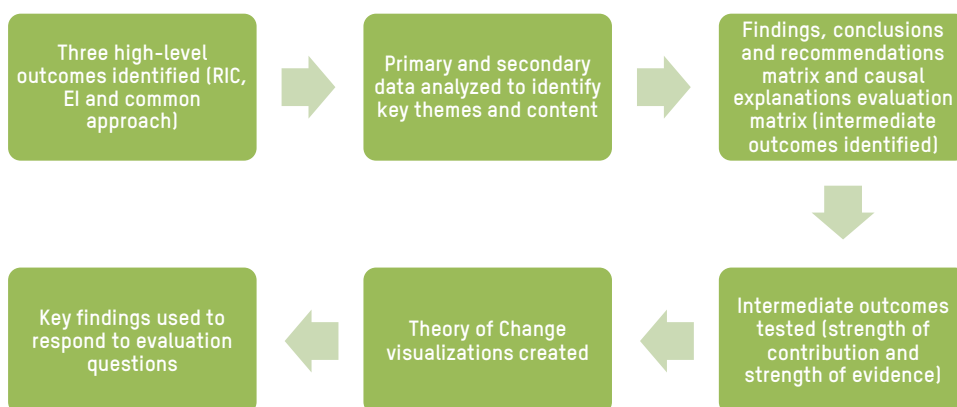
Two sense-making workshops were held following the initial data analysis, each with a different set of objectives and outputs (Table 5).

Table 5 Sense-making workshops

Workshop	Objectives	Outputs
1	• Co-analyse and interpret the evidence of causal linkages between programming and identified outcomes. • Give stakeholders the opportunity to share perspectives and provide deeper insight into the accuracy and credibility of the initial findings.	Refined causal explanations matrix. Development of two theory of change visualizations (see Figures 3 and 4, and Figures A1 and A2 in the Annex).
2	• Ensure greater participation of key stakeholders in the evaluation process. • Co-analyse initial findings and discuss the Theory of Change visualizations. • Discuss key learning and contribute to more robust evaluation learning.	Refined Theory of Change visualizations. Stakeholder comments used to support answers to the key evaluation questions.

3.5 LIMITATIONS AND RISK MITIGATION

Several limitations affected this evaluation; however, measures were taken where possible to reduce their impact on the overall findings (Table 6).

Table 6 Limitations and mitigation measures

Limitations	Mitigation measures
Data gaps: RIC: People affected by crises; limited data collected for DRC and Ethiopia; those not familiar with Oxfam's work in HECA, but familiar with refugee engagement and leadership in the region. EI: Private companies; EI donors.	Data gaps were flagged early, which allowed time to capture some outstanding perspectives through primary data collection. Where this was not possible, additional analysis of secondary data was undertaken to resolve gaps.
Marginalized groups such as people with disabilities and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) were not represented in focus group discussions.	Explicit questions were asked in key informant interviews and focus group discussions about the inclusion of people of diverse SOGIESC and people with disabilities.
The balance of evidence available for the evaluation's selected outcomes. With the resources available, priority was given to data gathering and analysis for the main outcomes for RIC and EI. Fewer findings were related to the interconnectedness of Oxfam in HECA's influencing work.	Some findings have been shared in response to the fifth evaluation question: How did the RIC and EI RP influencing work shape or affect the other pillars of the RP influencing work?

4 WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF OXFAM'S RIC INFLUENCING?

The evaluation findings indicate that a significant amount of change has been made at all levels, and that refugee engagement and participation in advocacy and influencing is firmly on the agenda. However, more must be done to bring key stakeholders along.

At the local level, refugee-led organization (RLOs) and refugee-led networks (RLNs) believe themselves to be more able to act coherently and cohesively to coordinate their advocacy and messaging. Refugee participation was evidenced through enhanced engagement and leadership on camp management and local refugee issues.

- One RLO reported that as a result of Oxfam in HECA's support they have been able to support single mothers to begin their own businesses through livelihood support and providing small amounts of capital. The same organization reported being on the frontline to distribute personal protective equipment as part of the humanitarian response during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- A second RLO respondent reflected that there is now much more recognition of the respective strengths of refugees, what they can offer their countries and communities, and how they should be included in policy conversations.

At the national level, changes were seen mainly in Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda. Strengthened refugee participation in influencing efforts was evidenced through reports from RLNs like RELON-Kenya, RELON-Uganda and the African Refugee Network. These RLNs claim to have enhanced their institutional capacity to sustain themselves, which in turn enables them to identify the needs among the RLOs they represent and support more cohesive advocacy efforts.

- Most of the national-level changes were recorded in Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan, where there is evidence that local partners like RELON-Kenya, RELON-Uganda, CECI Uganda and I CAN South Sudan have been playing an active and engaged role – in partnership with Oxfam in HECA – to support refugee participation in advocacy and influencing efforts.

- The production of advocacy materials like the case study on refugee access to COVID-19 vaccines in Uganda, the More Local is Possible report in Ethiopia designed to support RLO registration and recognition nationally, and the No Time to Mourn book to showcase the experiences of South Sudanese women refugees, is evidence of strengthened efforts to ensure the inclusion of refugee voices in advocacy and influencing efforts.

- Oxfam's positive relationship with governments means it retains influencing capital and can support the production and release of

'UNHCR – the main stakeholder – are still grappling with refugee leadership and how to approach it. Oxfam need to continue to work with them to bring them along.'

Comment from Oxfam HECA RP staff member

potentially controversial reports. However, there is less evidence of national-level change in countries like Ethiopia (where the situation for refugees remains more exclusionary and RLOs are unable to register as legal entities) and DRC (where it is felt that other priorities such as the humanitarian response take precedence).

At the regional and global levels, enhanced engagement and influencing opportunities for refugees with international stakeholders like the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were recorded, with RLOs and RLNs now invited to participate in meetings. Furthermore, refugees participated more actively in large global events such as UNHCR's 2019 Global Refugee Forum, the 2019 Africa Refugee Summit in Addis Ababa, and the UN Women's Peace and Security event in Denmark.

- The evaluation was unable to determine the extent to which increased refugee engagement in such global events has been meaningful since no real evidence of substantive change, such as increased funding from UNHCR to RLOs, was reported. However, increased refugee participation in itself is a notable change.

- Several respondents reflected that more needs to be done to engage key stakeholders, such as UNHCR, to ensure that they consult refugees more meaningfully on all issues which concern them.

5 WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF OXFAM'S EI INFLUENCING?

The evaluation findings indicate that there has been a significant amount of change on enhanced civil society engagement and activity.

Oxfam's work in partnership with civil society in the HECA region has led to improved public policies and practices which promote transparency, accountability and sustainability in EI at multiple levels. However, there is evidence of a disconnect within Oxfam on the future of EI.

At the local level, change has been observed through the following:

- Enhanced knowledge evident in communities' understanding of their land and human rights.

- The establishment of participatory budget clubs, community human rights monitor positions, and community animator positions, all of which help ensure that local government and private companies can be held more accountable for their work.

- In Kenya, it was noted that gender is being more commonly mainstreamed into private companies' impact assessments.

At the national level, change has been observed regarding strong public policies and practices:

- In Kenya, the Mining Act 2016 was implemented in a way which is supportive of communities' rights (communities are informed about how EI might have an impact on them, and what rights they have to challenge these effects). An enhanced legislative framework is also apparent, supportive of transparency and accountability on EI (with examples of relevant legislation and practices cited as the Petroleum Act 2019, the Mining Act 2016, and the Turkana Extractives Economic Policies).

- In Uganda, a significant change to which Oxfam and local partners may have contributed was the country's decision to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. In addition, the Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas worked with Oxfam to organize a radio talk show where the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) discussed audit findings live for the first time ever. As a result, the OAG representative pledged to continue such engagements in future.

- In Tanzania, national-level changes were apparent in enhanced media engagement with, and coverage of, EI issues. National-level decision makers have also been gradually increasing the role of TEITI (the Tanzania Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative).

- There is evidence of private companies introducing more accountable, transparent and inclusive practices. For example, Total now meets with Oxfam and community members on a regular basis, and also released a human rights impact assessment and resettlement action plans in 2019, in line with Oxfam recommendations. Tullow have also included

'The change that I have observed is that at least people now know their rights. Yes, human rights, as well as land rights. And even women also know their rights.'

Comment from a community group member in Uganda

gender considerations within the impact assessments of work in Turkana, Kenya.

- Civil society actors in Kenya held a public meeting to analyse the Turkana County Annual Development Plan (ADP) 2021/2022. In Uganda, civil society actors have engaged parliamentarians on OAG report findings, with the aim of developing regulations for oil revenue sharing and establishing fiscal rules for the management of the Petroleum Fund.

At the regional level, there is increased collaboration between nations regarding EI, such as:

- Work on the role of supreme audit institutions (SAIs) in ten countries has been presented at the African Parliament and to the community of Arab SAIs, with findings relating to different contexts highlighted.

- Civil society is developing evidence to support the role of key accountability actors like SAIs. In this way they are actively contributing to the strengthening of public policies and practices.

Enhanced media coverage of EI issues was noted across the region, with an increased focus on oil and gas issues reportedly evident among several media outlets, including Channel 10, Habari Leo Newspaper, Mashujaa FM Radio, JAMII FM and SAFARI radio. This is putting pressure on companies and governments to enhance transparency and accountability, and has also increased citizens' engagement.

An emerging disconnect between Oxfam's **international-level** commitments and regional and national work was raised as a concern by Oxfam staff at the country, regional and international levels. The disconnect was framed as Global North commitments to renewable energy and sustainability in the interest of climate justice conflicting with Global South priorities which revolve around utilization of natural resources for national development. Non-renewables are currently generally more accessible, receive more investment internationally, and are a means for communities and countries to have agency over economic growth and livelihoods.

Unless this disconnect can be resolved, it was felt by staff that Oxfam International and Oxfam in HECA's approach of being led by national priorities could be at risk, and Oxfam country offices' ability to align with the wider confederation might be challenged.

'There is a disconnect on priorities at the international level. The Global North is keen to focus on renewables; the Global South is wondering why the North is trying to prevent them from using their natural resources for development. With that in mind, there is a need to proceed on clean energy conversations very carefully.'

Comment from Oxfam country office staff member

6 ENABLING AND HINDERING FACTORS

6.1 WHAT WAS OXFAM'S CONTRIBUTION?

The evaluation found that Oxfam in HECA's contribution to change has been crucial in RIC and EI. Oxfam's value and core contributions to the impact and change identified come most clearly through its complementary skills and competency areas. Enabling factors contributed by Oxfam toward the changes observed include:

- **Financial and technical expertise** which it brings to support capacity building for Oxfam's country offices, local partners, and national and regional networks and alliances. The evaluation highlights that HECA RP has been able to provide effective, relevant support driven by the needs of its partners, including local CSOs and country offices.

- **Research expertise** to develop products for evidence-based advocacy and effective influencing. HECA RP has initiated and supported the development of research and advocacy products to support refugees' knowledge of, and access to, their rights.

- Its **role as a convener** and ability to use its regional presence and international reputation to support the growth and interconnectedness of refugee networks and alliances. Having a strong regional network enables it to open doors and create spaces for increased refugee participation.

- **Expertise on gender equality** and work to ensure the inclusion of women in RIC influencing activities. Recognizing the importance of women's inclusion, Oxfam has made efforts to place emphasis on this in the work that they support and fund.

- **Engaging and training media and journalists** at the national and regional levels to increase citizens' awareness of EI issues, their rights, and hence their more active engagement. In addition to bringing issues from the community level to national attention, this also increases government accountability and attention to the policy implications of community issues.

- **Supporting engagement with private gas and oil companies** in the region enabled more engagements on human rights issues as well as research on revenue management.

- Together with Oxfam country offices, **encouraging private companies to consider gender within impact assessments** was a contributing factor for gender inclusion on work around the impact of EI in Kenya.

- **Supporting regional coordination** of advocacy and influencing between Oxfam country offices.

'One of the main reasons we chose to work with Oxfam in HECA is because of their useful networks within civil society. We can ask Oxfam for a contact, and they can usually provide it.'

Comment from a regional EI partner

- **Cross-organizational learning to support influencing in other areas** has been very important. As local actors are generally more aware of local issues and needs than large international NGOs (INGOs), this contributed to timely and adequate responses, and increased contributions from local and national actors and refugees to humanitarian response planning.

6.2 EXTERNAL ENABLING FACTORS

In combination with Oxfam's contributions, external factors and the work of others also contributed significantly to changes identified in this evaluation.

External enabling factors for RIC influencing were:

- **Political will** in some countries was noted to be improving on refugee engagement; for example, Kenya has made updates to the legislative framework on refugee inclusion.

- **Global and regional frameworks** such as the Global Compact on Refugees and the Comprehensive Refugee Response framework have supported the development of national-level institutional and policy frameworks to increase refugee participation.

- **Strong coordination of advocacy messaging** between RLOs, facilitated by RLNs like the ARN, RELON-Kenya and RELON-Uganda, was noted to have enabled impact (including refugee participation in global events) through cohesive, concerted messaging.

- More generally, **RLO and RLN commitment and expertise** were noted to be essential to creating impact through informing messaging, participating in resource development for **advocacy and influencing products,** attracting and competing for funding, and ensuring they have the institutional capacity to do so.

- **Lobbying efforts and the technical and financial support of NGOs and INGOs** to RLOs and RLNs, have led to greater opportunity for refugee involvement in high-level events and advocacy. UN agencies are recognizing the need for greater refugee participation in global and regional-level advocacy and influencing, and are increasingly creating the space for this – largely as a result of CSO and INGO advocacy efforts.

- **Increased funding opportunities.** Donors like Open Society Foundations, International Rescue Committee and Danida have been open to providing funding to RLOs and RLNs more frequently, generally small grants. This has meant RLOs and RLNs are able to operate more sustainably, ensuring more sustained advocacy.

External enabling factors for EI influencing were:

- Actors like the **Norwegian government** were noted to be active on issues like public financial revenue management, supporting and funding advocacy on related work in the region, such as work to build coalitions of active citizens to engage government for more fiscally just policies and practices.

- The **establishment of various fora and groups** like civil society budget

action groups, participatory budget clubs, and the county budget and economic forum in Turkana, Kenya, was noted to be a useful factor enabling enhanced civil society engagement, and therefore improved transparency and accountability.

- **Political will** in countries like Kenya and Uganda was noted to be more facilitative of engagement on EI work now; for example, advocacy with the Kenyan government on the Petroleum Act 2019 and the Mining Act 2016.

- An **enabling environment** created by district, local and national governments and the African Union, who have opened the legislative and consultative space for community engagement, been open to enhanced transparency and creating change in their practice, policies and legislation to ensure private companies act with transparency and accountability.

- **Regional groups** such as the Africa Organization of English-Speaking Supreme Audit Institutions (AFROSAI-E), the INTOSAI Working Group on Extractive Industries (WGEI) and the Tax Justice Network-Africa (TJN-A) have made critical contributions to various advocacy products.

- Organizations like **CRED** have made critical contributions by providing legal counsel to affected communities regarding compensation and resettlement.

- **Women's empowerment movements** such as Maendeleo Ya Wanawake in Kenya and local partners have facilitated women's engagement in county government-level decision-making processes and dialogue about land governance, tax justice, local budgeting and revenue management.

- **Enhanced media engagement has been supported by local partners** who conducted training with journalists to report on land issues, and partnered with community radio stations and media houses to educate the public on topics like tax justice.

6.3 EXTERNAL HINDERING FACTORS

There were also external factors that limited the achievement of outcomes and impact. Without these hindering factors, the work of Oxfam and others could have contributed to even greater changes.

External hindering factors for RIC influencing were:

- **Some governments were noted to be less receptive to refugee engagement and participation than others**. For example, in Ethiopia it is currently not possible for RLOs to register as legal organizations, which limits the ability of refugees to participate in issues which concern them.

- It was generally felt that **refugee participation was not entirely representative**. For example, many refugees participating in RLO and RLN work are from a small number of countries or are generally better educated – this suggests representation does not account for intersecting oppressions faced by refugees.

- Where **public information** remains inaccessible or of poor quality, this was considered a key constraining factor.

- **Reticence among some donors to fund the work of RLOs and RLNs directly** was noted. Some RLNs and RLOs flagged that many of their staff work on a voluntary basis, which creates risks for staff retention and has the potential to damage sustained advocacy through loss of institutional memory and momentum.

- **Reduced influencing capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic**. During the peak of the pandemic, many INGOs were forced to reduce their operations. RLOs had to step in to fill their place in the humanitarian response within their settlements, camps and communities, and this led to reduced capacity for influencing work on RIC.

External hindering factors for EI influencing were:

- **Bureaucracy** in some government and regional bodies, like the EAC, was noted as a factor hindering swift progress on EI.

- The risk of **change of political actors** – for example, as a result of elections (which are taking place in Kenya in 2022) – was noted as a critical potential hindering factor. Changing governments and officials mean carefully developed relationships can disappear overnight, and advocacy work must start again.

- Some **government officials have insufficient time to focus on EI issues due to competing priorities**, which can reduce their interest and engagement.

- A **lack of accurate, clear information** from government and private companies to support transparent and accountable public financial revenue management.

- **Concern over shrinking civil society space in Uganda poses a risk to transparency and accountability of EI policies and practice.** Civic space continues to shrink in Uganda and CSOs haven't been spared. Recently, 54 CSOs were suspended including many that were working on issues of governance, public financial revenue management, human rights and democracy. Several laws have been used to suppress dissenting voices and silence political opposition including the Public Order Management Act (2013) the NGO Act (2016), the Penal Code Act (1950), the Anti-Terrorism Act (2002), the Police Act, chapter 303 (2006) and the Press and Media Act (2000).

- **Legislative frameworks and practices do not account adequately for those with disabilities.** Inclusivity for people with disabilities has been hindered in all stakeholders, including local partners, national governments, private companies and communities.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEARNING

7.1 RIGHTS IN CRISIS INFLUENCING

UNHCR is considered to be a critical partner for Oxfam's work on refugee engagement and influencing. However, to date, there are limited examples of changes being made by UNHCR to their operations as a result of increased refugee participation. It would therefore be beneficial for Oxfam to explore different solutions to ensure that engagement is meaningful and results in improved practice at the operational level.

It was also noted that some governments in the HECA region, such as Ethiopia, are less progressive on issues such as refugee engagement and leadership than others. More work is needed to explore how this challenge can be tackled and to ensure all governments are aligned behind the 'nothing about us without us' agenda.

Potential steps forward include:

- Revisiting any political economy analysis which has been conducted by the RIC influencing team to determine the structural, institutional and relational/stakeholder barriers which may be hampering progress and preventing buy-in on refugee inclusion in influencing.

- Developing a more strategic, long-term advocacy plan, including the development of more cohesive uptake planning for various advocacy products and the identification of areas where more evidence may help advocacy to reduce barriers in future.

Other recommendations related to RIC:

- While Oxfam is generally right to work through its local partners, it could take more of a stand on principled issues that are hard for local organizations to speak out on (such as the need to include the needs of LGBTQIA+ refugees and consideration of their rights and specific vulnerabilities).

- More could be done to support RLNs and RLOs to secure longer-term funding. Some RLN and RLO participants reflected that funding and fundraising support is still inadequate to enable them to be fully self-sustaining. Where funding is secured, it is generally short-term, which creates staff retention and operational risks.

- RLOs and RLNs reflected that Oxfam (including the HECA RP and country offices) could offer more logistical support – such as vehicles – to help refugees travel between settlements and to advocacy events, as travel is still a challenge for many and limits the inclusion of less mobile refugees such as those with physical disabilities.

- More structured RIC influencing work could support the development of more strategic, longer-term influencing plans, which was felt to be

particularly important for influencing key stakeholders like UNHCR. At the same time, the current adaptive approach should also be retained to some extent, as it means Oxfam can flexibly respond to advocacy and influencing opportunities as they arise in the HECA region.

7.2 EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES INFLUENCING

The emerging disconnect between Oxfam International's commitment to renewable energies and climate justice, and national priorities around transparency and accountability in financial revenue management and use of non-renewable natural resources for development, must be negotiated.

The HECA RP can act as a bridge between Oxfam International and Oxfam country offices – using its position to convene an internal discussion between Oxfam stakeholders at all levels to explore the disconnect in further detail. The discussion should aim to:

- determine the organization's positioning and plans on this shift;

- explore the extent to which this disconnect is having an impact on current and future commitments and strategies at all levels of Oxfam's work; and

- consider potential strategies for mitigating the risks which the disconnect poses to ensure Oxfam can remain aligned on its EI priorities.

7.3 ALLIANCES BUILT FOR INFLUENCING

Across EI and RIC, a core contribution of Oxfam has been as a network builder and convener. Supporting the development of networks and alliances built for influencing work has enabled more interconnected and cohesive influencing across EI and RIC workstreams.

Oxfam's strong regional network allows it to open doors to decision makers and make useful introductions between different potential partners. This is particularly the case for RIC, where a core focus has been on strengthening the role of RLNs.

Networks help to create a 'critical mass' of pressure on decision makers – such as camp authorities, governments and UN agencies – to ensure that refugee rights are realized. They also play an important role in strengthening the knowledge of refugee rights, and supporting refugee participation in advocacy and influencing, at multiple levels.

Evidence of strengthened networking related to RIC comes from the increased opportunities to work with UNHCR and further opportunities to strengthen ties and relationships across multiple levels.

Oxfam also supported cross-border work in EI; for example, on the East African Crude Oil Pipeline between Uganda and Tanzania. It was generally

felt, therefore, that Oxfam added value when it came to strengthening alliances between CSOs.

7.4 TRANSFORMATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Oxfam's influencing working on RIC and EI in HECA involves supporting the development of, and being led by, the expertise of partners. Driven by local needs and priorities, this approach is effective and highly valued and is noted as a key enabling factor supporting its effective delivery of advocacy and influencing support to local partners. It also aligns to Oxfam's strategic commitment to forming transformative partnerships and has been supported by the sector-wide conversation on localization.

Oxfam's listening approach was identified as good practice. Partners feel able to provide regular feedback to Oxfam and believe that Oxfam will respond openly and appropriately.

The formation of equitable partnerships was reported to have been a success of partners' work with Oxfam, supporting them to conduct more effective influencing, as a result of Oxfam's ability to open doors, make introductions and support them through capacity building.

> **Recommendation 1: Oxfam in HECA could introduce light-touch refresher capacity assessments**
>
> To ensure that the RIC and EI influencing work with partners is providing its capacity building work as effectively as possible, Oxfam could consider conducting light-touch refresher capacity assessments – to determine outstanding areas of need.

7.5 EVIDENCE-BASED ADVOCACY

Evidence-based advocacy is effective and supports civil society. Oxfam has a core contribution to make in supporting – and where necessary leading – the development of quality advocacy products and reports, at the regional and national levels, to ensure influencing work at both levels is evidence-based. Oxfam was also noted to be ahead of other INGOs on refugee inclusion, and it was felt that they could do more to share their learning with other INGOs to encourage wider sector activity in this area.

7.6 TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND CAPACITY

Oxfam staff's technical expertise and capacity was considered to be crucial in supporting the work of Oxfam country offices, particularly where country office capacity is lacking (as it was noted to be in several countries across the region). Some concern was noted about the potential risks posed by reduced HECA RP technical capacity, particularly regarding RIC (although it

is noted that the HECA RP's RIC technical capacity is being maintained through recruiting additional staff).

Recommendation 2: Maintenance of technical capacity

Oxfam should recognize that one of its key contributions for Oxfam country offices is the technical assistance and leadership it is able to offer. It should ensure technical capacity is maintained at a regional level, particularly as Oxfam country offices close.

7.7 INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

Across EI and RIC, the inclusion of women in influencing was found to be intentional and considered at all levels.

For example, RIC influencing teams have made efforts to actively seek out women-led RLOs to support in Uganda, while EI influencing teams ensure that community meetings in Kenya are scheduled at times which are convenient for women to attend. In addition, some women-only meetings have been organized to ensure female voices are heard.

However, this evaluation highlights that women's inclusion has not yet led to the sort of structural, sustained change listed in the RIC global MEAL framework (e.g., 'A dynamic network is built which connects women and girls and women's rights organizations and links them to audiences in the South and North to strengthen networks and build a movement for change').[5]

Recommendation 3: Identify strategies for a more sustained and strategic inclusion of women

Oxfam should work with its local partners to identify strategies for a more sustained and inclusive inclusion of women in advocacy and influencing work.

Strategies may range from more funding allocated to women-led local partners, to increased focus on the inclusion of women who are less well-educated according to an intersectional approach, through to efforts to learn from organizations like the Network for Empowered Aid Response regarding their approach to women's inclusion through capacity sharing between Northern and Southern organizations.

Ideally, a clear, consistent and concerted approach should be taken to introduce and implement any new strategies related to improving the inclusion of women.

The evaluation found that refugees participating in influencing opportunities tend to be better educated, are generally men, and often represent a small number of ethnicities. While Oxfam is intentionally trying to ensure the inclusion of women, the inclusion of other marginalized groups, in particular people of diverse SOGIESC and people with disabilities, is not yet actively considered enough.

Barriers to SOGIESC inclusion are: the illegality of homosexuality in some countries makes it hard to have influence on these issues, particularly for locally registered partners; concerns among RLOs that representing the needs of refugees of diverse SOGIESC might put those refugees at risk; and a feeling among some Oxfam staff that it would be a difficult topic to raise internally. In disability inclusion, it was felt to be logistically challenging to include those with physical disabilities in influencing work where travel is required, while mental disabilities were not thought to be well-enough understood for adequate accommodations to be made.

Recommendation 4: Explore and develop methods to ensure the inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC and people with disabilities in advocacy and influencing activities

Oxfam and its partners are not yet intentionally seeking to ensure more marginalized groups, such as people of diverse SOGIESC and those with disabilities, are included in their influencing work. There are several steps which could be taken by Oxfam in HECA to make progress in this area:

- Thanks to its regional stature and position, Oxfam can potentially speak out on contentious issues like SOGIESC more robustly than its locally registered partners. It can therefore more intentionally advocate for SOGIESC inclusion in EI and RIC at regional and global levels.

- It can ensure that the needs of community members with diverse SOGIESC and community members with disabilities are well-reflected in global frameworks and policy plans, which will help to create an enabling environment at the local and national levels. This may require carrying out needs assessments at the community level.

- Oxfam can conduct an anonymous staff survey to determine internal attitudes on issues relating to SOGIESC and disability inclusion within its influencing work to help determine whether more internal work is needed to develop a better understanding of the rights of people with diverse SOGIESC and people with disabilities. Ensuring that staff understand the challenges may enable them to support more intentional and informed work on this in the future.

- It can advocate for more funding to be allocated to the inclusion of people with disabilities in influencing opportunities, to help resolve accessibility issues.

7.8 FUNDING

Forward-thinking donors like Norad (for EI) and Open Society Foundations, Danida and Oxfam IBIS (for RIC) are supporting effective, locally led action. However, there is some reticence among some other donors to fund the work of small local partners directly, meaning there is limited funding for local partners, which poses a risk to their independence and sustainable working.

For RIC, Oxfam's work to support RLOs and RLNs to access increased funding by linking and connecting them to organizations like World Vision and Open Society Foundations, ties into the wider RIC intermediate outcome of increased funding to national and local humanitarian actors. Oxfam has also

acted as a guarantor to donors by mitigating risks associated with lending directly to local partners.

7.9 COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

The evaluation found that the enhanced opportunities for knowledge-sharing between partners – facilitated by Oxfam – were valued as a means to share learning, best practices, and strategies for responding to challenges. These opportunities were also felt to strengthen the ability of partners to develop their networks independent of Oxfam, leading to more sustainable influencing work.

To facilitate the sharing of learning and best practice across Oxfam country offices' work, it was suggested that Oxfam could convene and establish 'communities of practice' comprising different partners on RIC and EI.

Recommendation 5: Communities of practice on RIC and EI with partners

To facilitate the growth of networks and sharing of best practice, Oxfam could consider developing and formalizing several communities of practice on EI and RIC issues – for example, to share and develop good practice on intersectional refugee inclusion, engagement of private companies on human rights impact assessments, or the experience of locally led action.

- A community of practice could be something as simple as a formalized mailing list, administered by an Oxfam staff member, through which partners at regional, national and local levels could share learning, best practices, and common challenges.
- Additionally, meetings could be held biannually to discuss common challenges and best practices on particular subjects. This would facilitate the organic strengthening of networks between allies and partners, as well as strengthening learning in a light-touch way.

NOTES

1. Oxfam in Horn, East and Central Africa. (n.d.) Who We Are. Retrieved 17 November 2022, from https://heca.oxfam.org/who-we-are

2. Process tracing seeks to determine all possible causal explanations for an identified outcome.

3. Outcome harvesting seeks to determine all outcomes which have resulted from a particular activity or body of work.

4. Contribution analysis seeks to determine the extent to which different actors and/or activities may have contributed to the realization of an identified outcome.

5. Oxfam. (2020, March). Oxfam MEAL Framework: Rights in Crisis Campaign 2020–2024. Unpublished report.

ANNEX: THEORY OF CHANGE DIAGRAMS

Figure A1 RIC Theory of Change showing contributions to impact

Key

Achieved (green box) · Not Achieved (pink box)

—— Confirmed / likely hypothesis

- - - Uncertain / ambivalent hypothesis

H1

(IO1b) RLNs are making progress in ensuring they have the appropriate staffing, **institutional set-up** and facilities to support network strengthening, the work of RLOs, and - in turn - enhanced advocacy.

(IO1c) …however, the capacity needs of RLNs and RLOs with regards to **fundraising** and advocacy are either uncertain or not yet met.

(IO1e) RLNs and RLOs have limitedly increased opportunities to secure **direct funding**, enhancing their ability to self-support and engage sustainably.

(IO1d) Quality **research and advocacy products** (e.g., 'More Local is Possible' and 'No Time To Mourn') are being used to support RLNs' and RLOs' advocacy; however, progress here may be limited or ad hoc, rather than sustainable and strategic.

(IO1f) Limited work has been advanced to strengthen the capacity and engagement of RLOs in **Ethiopia** and the **DRC**.

H2

(IO1a) There are increased opportunities for refugees to engage in advocacy and **influencing moments** at the regional and global level, with stakeholders more united behind the 'nothing about us without us' vision

H3

(IO1i) HECA RP RIC work has necessitated a conversation, internally to Oxfam, on how to **break down silos** for improved ways of working, to support enhanced refugee engagement and participation (e.g., through use of programmatic experience for advocacy credibility).

Main outcome (O1): Strengthened refugee engagement and participation in advocacy and influencing

Local · **National** · **Regional / global**

Cross-cutting

Women refugees now have limitedly strengthened participation in advocacy and influencing; however, the majority of RLOs continue to be led by men. (IO1g)

Refugees with **disabilites** and those of diverse **sexual orientation** remain largely excluded from advocacy and influencing work. (IO1h)

H4
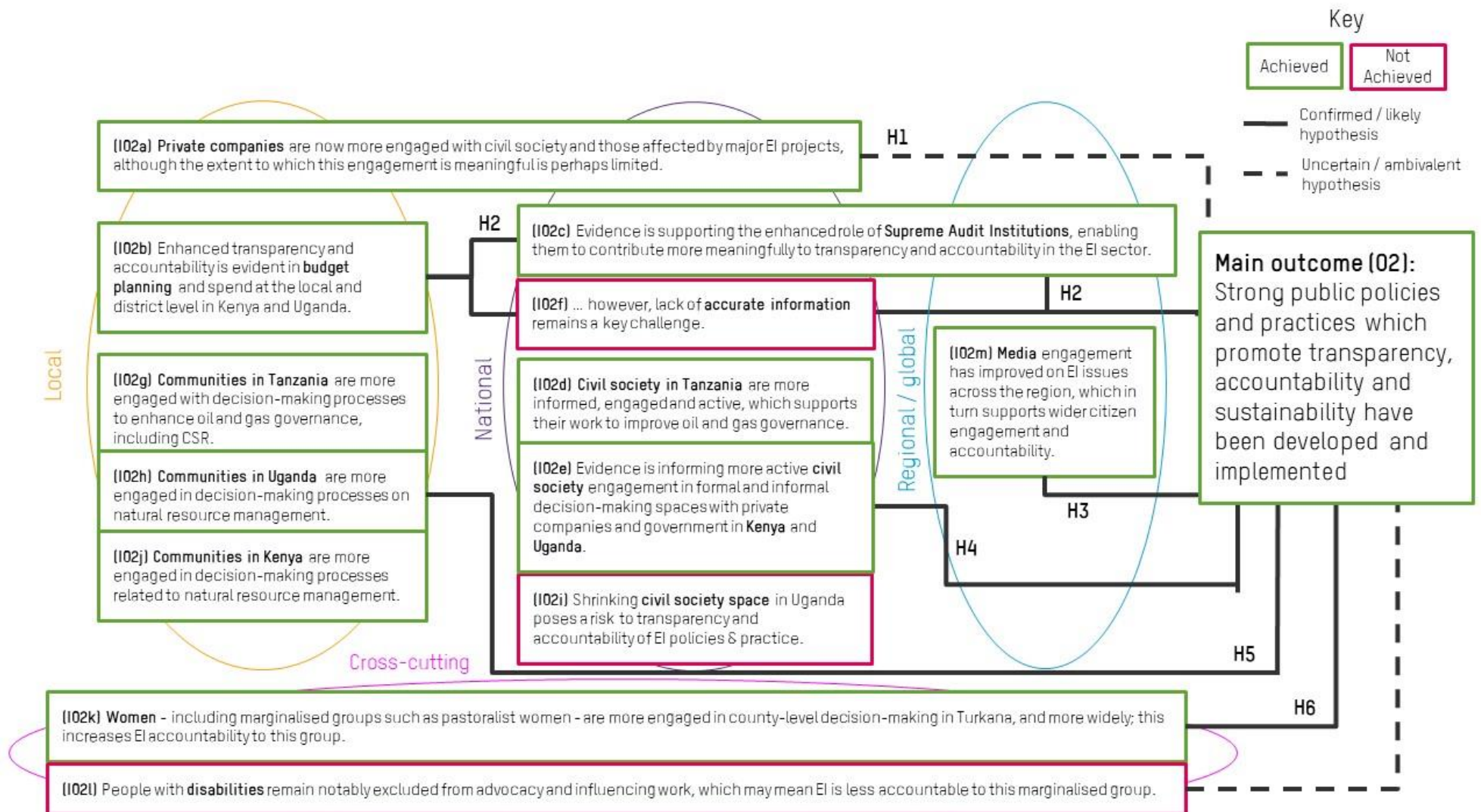
33

RIC hypothesis definitions

H1 Capacity strengthening/movement building – If RLOs and RLNs are well set up institutionally, have the correct internal capacities, and can self-support through strong funding pipelines, they will be able engage and participate well in advocacy and influencing opportunities at the regional and international levels. These conditions must be supported by an enabling environment, in this instance a sector which is supportive of increasingly localized action and global frameworks like the Global Compact on Refugees which encourages refugee participation in the issues which concern them. However, even with these enabling conditions, RLO and RLN capacity may be undercut if RLOs and RLNs remain financially dependent on their partners.

H2 Refugee voice in research reports – When refugees – through RLOs, RLNs and partners like the HECA RP – consolidate records of their needs and experiences into advocacy products and reports, it helps ensure evidence is recorded and can be effectively used for advocacy and influencing purposes.

H3 Breaking down silos – Cross-cutting work (e.g., work which relates to both advocacy and humanitarian response) enhances the quality of advocacy products as well as the internal ways of working of multiple partners. This creates the opportunities for strengthened engagement of refugees in advocacy and influencing (for example, through use of programmatic evidence to inform advocacy).

H4 Inclusive engagement – Where concerted efforts are made to ensure refugee representation is gender balanced, and that women's experiences are reflected in advocacy and influencing tasks, decision makers are more likely to be made aware of women's specific needs and address these. However, this goes the other way too; for example, where marginalized groups such as those with disabilities are not intentionally included, their needs will be less well understood and represented by decision makers.

Figure A2 EI Theory of Change showing contributions to impact

Key

Achieved

Not Achieved

—— Confirmed / likely hypothesis

- - - Uncertain / ambivalent hypothesis

(IO2a) Private companies are now more engaged with civil society and those affected by major EI projects, although the extent to which this engagement is meaningful is perhaps limited.

H1

(IO2b) Enhanced transparency and accountability is evident in **budget planning** and spend at the local and district level in Kenya and Uganda.

H2

(IO2c) Evidence is supporting the enhanced role of **Supreme Audit Institutions**, enabling them to contribute more meaningfully to transparency and accountability in the EI sector.

H2

(IO2f) ... however, lack of **accurate information** remains a key challenge.

(IO2g) Communities in Tanzania are more engaged with decision-making processes to enhance oil and gas governance, including CSR.

(IO2d) Civil society in Tanzania are more informed, engaged and active, which supports their work to improve oil and gas governance.

(IO2m) Media engagement has improved on EI issues across the region, which in turn supports wider citizen engagement and accountability.

(IO2h) Communities in Uganda are more engaged in decision-making processes on natural resource management.

(IO2e) Evidence is informing more active **civil society** engagement in formal and informal decision-making spaces with private companies and government in **Kenya** and **Uganda**.

Main outcome (O2): Strong public policies and practices which promote transparency, accountability and sustainability have been developed and implemented

H3

(IO2j) Communities in Kenya are more engaged in decision-making processes related to natural resource management.

H4

(IO2i) Shrinking **civil society space** in Uganda poses a risk to transparency and accountability of EI policies & practice.

Local

National

Regional / global

H5

Cross-cutting

(IO2k) Women - including marginalised groups such as pastoralist women - are more engaged in county-level decision-making in Turkana, and more widely; this increases EI accountability to this group.

H6

(IO2l) People with **disabilities** remain notably excluded from advocacy and influencing work, which may mean EI is less accountable to this marginalised group.

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EI hypothesis definitions

H1 Private company engagement – Direct engagement with private companies to monitor their human rights records and to ensure communities affected by their work are routinely consulted and compensated is necessary to improve the transparency and accountability of their EI practice. This hypothesis is uncertain because of evidence that private actors' engagement is not yet sincere; for example, agreed compensation is not always paid.

H2 Improved evidence and information – Access to improved evidence and information supports active and engaged civil society to hold governments and private companies accountable for EI issues such as public financial revenue management, therefore improving governance. However, this work continues to be challenged by ongoing access issues.

H3 Media and citizen engagement – Increased media engagement on EI issues, and improved quality of reporting as a result of training, can improve citizen interest, knowledge and engagement, which in turn puts pressure on governments to act in a transparent and accountable manner.

H4 Capacity building of civil society – Engaged and active civil society plays a critical role in holding decision makers accountable for sustainable and transparent practice on EI issues such as securing free, prior and informed consent from communities and ensuring fair distribution of revenues. Therefore, when INGOs support civil society in this work – for example, by participating in capacity-building activities – they have the potential to fulfil this role even more effectively. INGOs' support role has the potential to be especially important where civil society space is under threat.

H5 Empowering communities – Communities understand their local context, and how EI work has an impact on them, better than anyone else. Therefore, working with them to ensure they understand and can act upon their human and land rights through active engagement with private companies and local government is critical to ensuring accountability to them.

H6 Inclusive engagement – Where concerted efforts are made to ensure women are engaged equitably by private companies and government, their specific needs are more tightly addressed (e.g., in compensation packages). However, the inclusion of other marginalized groups – such as those with disabilities – is also critical as EI infrastructure projects often have a disproportionate impact on them, and they are inadequately represented.

For further information on the issues raised in this publication please email policyandpractice@oxfam.org.uk

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