



**Real Time Evaluation of the OGB Multi-Hurricanes
Response in Haiti**

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Mira Gratier – HD
Marfil Francke – LAC regional office

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Note: It is not the intention of the evaluation team to make comparisons between the Gonaïves and Nippes programmes as we appreciate the difficulties encountered around multi-site response decisions and funding concerns. We appreciate that there were also small responses in Cabaret and Port au Prince as well as rapid assessments in Petit Goâve and Grand Goâve.

Glossary

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
CAT	Catastrophe Fund
CBO	Community based Organisation
CD	Country Director
CfW	Cash for Work
CMT	Country Management Team
DPC	Direction Protection Civile
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping Analysis toolkit
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HD	Humanitarian Department
HPC	Humanitarian Programme Coordinator
HSP	Humanitarian Support Personnel
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
ITN	Insecticide Treated Net
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	Medicins sans Frontières
NFI	Non Food Item
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OGB	Oxfam Great Britain
ORS	Oral Rehydration Salts
PHE	Public Health Engineer
PHP	Public Health Promoter
PRT	Preparedness and response team
RHM	Regional Humanitarian Manager
RTE	Real Time Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference

Table of Content

Acknowledgements	2
Glossary	2
Table of Content	3
Executive Summary	45
Recommendations	67
1.0 Methodology	8
2.0 Findings	89
2.1 Benchmark 1	89
2.1.1 Timeliness	89
2.1.2 Flexibility	940
2.1.3 The response team	1044
2.1.3 Preparedness	11
2.2 Benchmark 2	12
2.2.1 The scale of the response and targeting	1243
2.2.2 Watsan	1243
2.2.3 PHP	14
2.2.4 Livelihoods	15
2.2.5 Shelter	1546
2.2.6 Accountability and monitoring	1546
2.2.7 Impact on the affected population and their views	16
2.2.8 Gender	17
2.3 Benchmark 3	1748
2.3.1 Management	1748
2.3.2 Decision-making	18
2.3.3 Funding	1849
2.4 Benchmark 4	19
2.4.1 Logistics	19
2.4.2 HR	1920
2.4.3 Finance	20
2.5 Benchmark 5	2024
2.5.1 Relationship with government and other NGOs	2024
2.5.2 The OI dimension	2122
2.6 Benchmark 6	22
Appendix 1: Places visited and people interviewed	23
Appendix 2: evaluation of the RTE and Day of Reflection	25
Appendix 3: Terms of Reference	26

Executive Summary

Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere and its economic situation has worsened due to the political turmoil and instability in recent years. Haiti is the 146th country out of 177 in the Human Development Index ranking (2007), and poverty is widespread, particularly in rural areas. The serious problems of public health and food security are linked with environmental issues, access to drinking water, sanitation, poverty and particularly to demographic problems. Furthermore, the country is highly vulnerable to natural disasters that exacerbate the already precarious situation.

The 2008 hurricane season commenced in Haiti with tropical storm Fay on the 16th and 17th August affecting more southerly areas of the country. Fay was followed by hurricane Gustav, making landfall on August 26th and sweeping across from the south causing flooding and serious damage. Hurricane Hanna, travelling westwards to the north of Haiti slowed to a tropical storm and changed direction, heading south towards Haiti. Hanna dumped torrential rains and brought strong winds on the northern parts of the country. Gonaïves, the third largest city in Haiti was left under water, affecting an estimated 250,000 people¹, including between 60,000 – 70,000 people in 150 emergency shelters and many more trapped in upper floors and on the roofs of their homes. The city was initially cut off by the floodwaters, due to the collapse of a bridge on the main road into the city. In the first week in September, Hurricane Ike exacerbated the already dire situation in especially Gonaïves.



The RTE was carried out in November with visits to Gonaïves and Nippes and interviews were held with a variety of actors including Oxfam staff (senior management in Port au Prince as well as field teams), affiliate staff, other NGOs, OCHA, the DPC and mayoral offices as well as focus groups and house to house interviews with members of the affected population.

On timeliness, the team found the same as in many Oxfam emergency programmes where initial assessments and some distribution takes place very soon after the disaster but then there was a slowing down of activities, especially in Nippes due to the priority to respond in Gonaïves and uncertainties around funding. The pre-positioning of the stock in both Port au Prince and Panama was a definite enabler in the timeliness of the response.

¹ Estimates from OCHA SITUATION REPORT # 3, HAITI: Tropical Storm Hanna and Gustav update, 04 September 2008

There was flexibility around approach: the regional preparedness and response team (PRT) started up the response in the shelters in Gonaïves during assessment, perceiving it to be appropriate given the high public health risks. The Nippes programme showed some flexibility also in responding to water needs on request. The cash grants to DPC in areas that were inaccessible or where Oxfam was not going to respond was innovative but needs to be evaluated for effectiveness.

There were definitely some constraints and lack of communication around the deployment of the PRT that need to be sorted before next year's hurricane season. Some of these issues have already been taken up in a regional country meeting held during the same period as the RTE.

The first steps in the contingency plan were followed (activation of minimum requirements, humanitarian commission, contingency stocks and early assessments) but there is a question around the scenarios and how relevant and useful these are. The current scenarios are for types of disasters; but they do not specify the kinds of responses for different disasters and do not take into account scale or multi-site response.

It would appear that relocated staff or staff secondments were not always strategically planned and there was no backup plan to cover in the primary position. There was also confusion around length of deployment, management and reporting lines.

In actual response, in Nippes there had been a small DRR programme. In the first days of the emergency, the committees seem to have functioned at various levels and the pre-positioned stock was used. However, apparently at least one of the mitigation barriers (Petit Trou de Nippes) was destroyed. There were mixed feelings from government officials over the quality and usefulness of these structures.

Oxfam has a high profile in Haiti especially in the DRR work where they have received extra funding from the two donors due to "good work." In Nippes after a request to respond and two assessments, there was a delay of a month before actual implementation. The evaluation team feels that the design of the Nippes project was good but the implementation model relies too much on local authorities targeting. With the delay in starting implementation, priorities have evolved and the intervention plans should be urgently reviewed.

The Oxfam 2004 water system response to hurricane damage in Gonaïves increased the credibility of the Oxfam profile in the area and meant that this year, people requested their presence again. Some members of the country team feel that the 2008 response is "no different to last time, only small and there was more damage." Others have expressed the worry that "there is nothing visible, we didn't leave any sustainable structures." However, the shelters were the most overcrowded, there was a high public health risk and Oxfam has experience in emergency latrines despite this intervention being lower profile than a water supply to the town. On the whole the PHP programme has been good although an integrated approach has not been possible in all shelters and latrine coverage according to Sphere standards has not been possible.

There is a good monitoring system in Gonaïves and the accountability is mainstreamed to some degree despite being an informal system. In Nippes, although the staff have a good rapport with the affected population there needs to be more accountability in the new programme. On the whole interviewees from the affected population were happy with the programme although there had not been much consultation especially in the initial stages. There are a few items for women that were missing from the kits.

On management, the humanitarian commission worked well in the beginning but there is a need for increased communication and more documentation of information especially of meeting minutes and decision-making. There also needs to be better communication and trust between expatriate teams and the country team and a clear management strategy. On the services there were some bottlenecks with logistics and although these were partly due to extraneous circumstances, they did impact on implementation in Gonaïves. Funding flow was also delayed due to problems with cash floats and lack of bank accounts, causing a suspension of implementation (albeit short) at one point in Gonaïves. On the HR side, staff movement was not always strategically planned and according to experience and needs in the field. The

differences in allowances and benefits between in country and out of country staff is a potential area for conflict.

Coordination with OCHA, other agencies and the government seem to be on the whole good with Oxfam influencing in several areas including getting shelter inhabitants moved to higher ground in the early days of the Gonaïves response. Oxfam's advocacy with the presidential office around the Gonaïves coordination is seen as positive. The OI HCT works well at national level but there is room for improved synergy between affiliates in the field. The piloting of the market access tool EMMA was a good coordination exercise and the results fed into the concept note for Nippes but it is debatable whether this was an appropriate time to carry out a pilot in a multi-site emergency.

Recommendations

Benchmark 1

Clearer TOR for the regional response team with management lines, reporting expectations and what tasks could be expected including flexibility – make sure all country team staff have also seen these TOR

The cash grants to DPC should be evaluated for effectiveness and usefulness in order to assess if this system should be expanded to include other activities in the future

Evaluate the DRR mitigation measures put in place in Nippes to check on appropriateness and effectiveness. This could be done by the DRR adviser and team as a self-learning

In future emergency responses, work closely with the communal and local committees. Direct financial support to the National DRR system (SNGRD - DPC) can be a good solution; but the committees, where they are existing and active, should be involved all the time in the emergency response phases².

We suggest due to climate change and the increasing severity and frequency of floods and hurricanes, the next revision of the plan considers the scale of response and takes into account multi-site responses

A more overall strategic plan of humanitarian response would be an advantage for future emergencies with consensus reached between all parties: country team, region and HD

Consult donors as to the feasibility of temporary suspension of programmes in non-disaster areas if there is a large response such as Gonaïves

Pre-identify people to go in after rapid assessment with an agreement that they might spend four to six weeks in the field.

Conduct more training on assessments with a refresher workshop before the yearly hurricane season with a simulation exercise and coordination plan with other actors

The Humanitarian Handbook could be used for planning and implementation, especially the section on assessments (see section 3.2)

Hold a day of reflection after the hurricane season in order to evaluate and plan for next season

Set up a shadowing plan on other emergencies

Benchmark 2

In Nippes, stop relief programming and move to livelihoods recovery work

The country team needs to make a decision around the watsan strategy for the future, especially in large urban settings such as Gonaïves. Is the strategy to deliver water to large numbers of people or to have an integrated approach using Oxfam's expertise in PHP, community participation and accountability or both? The strategy needs to consider what materials should be pre-positioned or requisitioned as well as what capacity is needed for each type of response

Consider paying latrines attendants for communal latrines in the next response

² Recommendation by DRR adviser

Hold a underwear fair and distribute underwear, diapers and other hygiene articles for women – plan this in the next responses
Assess disabled access to latrines and discuss modifications with those in need
Set up information systems so the affected population is aware of future assistance plans
Provide a neutral mobile phone to teams so that this number can be given to committees for feedback and for getting in touch with Oxfam offices – log calls
In partnership with the HD PHE team, explore ways to provide urban sanitation in shelters where pits can not be dug
Review use of EMMA in emergencies

Benchmark 3

Write MOUs with committees and other groups where work is being undertaken so that both parties are clear about obligations and expectations
Check again to make sure targeting was correct and that no vulnerable families have been excluded
Hold discussions with women during “peace time” as regards sanitary towels and what is appropriate both during emergency and recovery phase – add these choices to pre-positioned kits
Clarify decision-making roles of the HPC and PMs including staffing and programming issues
Pre-deployment briefings should include clarity on the priorities and expectations of the country team and make use of handover notes or preferably handover telecons.
Given difficulties in acquiring funding, there needs to be a strategy to realign operational priorities to a more realistic scale. This should be linked to a needs-based assessment. In Nippes we would recommend that this take place urgently.
Improve communication and documentation especially around funding and decision-making
If possible, mix expatriate and national staff on response teams to counteract some of the cultural misunderstandings

Benchmark 4

There is a need to have a dedicated logistician for Gonaïves in the Port au Prince office, an idea endorsed by the logistics manager
Employing a female logistician at Port au Prince level would improve supplies for women and children
Regulate benefits and per diems for both in country and out of country staff and according to Oxfam normal R&R policy
Ensure that relocation TOR specify length of deployment as well as benefits
Before the hurricane season, draw up a HR contingency staff plan with relocation possibilities according to experience and with a clear back-stopping plan in the primary place of employment and with clear guidelines as to what is expected, whether it is assessment only or response or recovery
Have clear guidelines for new staff on Haitian HR and funding issues
Explore possibilities of setting in bank accounts and have agreements with banks in areas where there is potential for interventions in the future

Benchmark 5

Draw up a strategy for future cooperation with government departments with a system for validating selection processes

Benchmark 6

It is proposed that a monitoring system is set up in Gonaïves so that on a regular basis Oxfam could follow up on facilities and refresher for those already trained

A recommendation from the staff in Nippes is that they maintain contact as “standby team” for future responses

Exit strategies need to be written for both programmes including staff capacity building and the relationship with SNEP

1.0 Methodology

The RTE was originally planned to be a joint OI evaluation with team members from OGB, Intermon and Oxfam Quebec. However, this plan failed to materialise and the final team was composed solely of OGB staff. Although the other affiliates were interviewed during the evaluation, it was not considered appropriate to evaluate the work of other affiliates if they were not represented on the team. Coordination between affiliates was examined and affiliate work is mentioned where it impacts on or compliments the work of OGB but this report should not be considered an OI evaluation.

The evaluation teams visited two areas: Gonaïves and Nippes. Interviews were held with a variety of actors including Oxfam staff (senior management in Port au Prince as well as field teams), affiliate staff, other NGOs, OCHA, the DPC and mayoral offices as well as focus groups and house to house interviews with members of the affected population. See Appendix 3. In total the following number of people were interviewed: 24 Oxfam staff, two members of the PRT, nine people from UN and other NGOs, seven officials from government institutions, four representatives of other affiliates, four community mobilisers and 45 women, 16 men and five children as well as the many others who joined the groups of the affected population during interview. Two regional humanitarian staff were also interviewed.

2.0 Findings

2.1 Benchmark 1

<i>Relative to other actors our speed of response will be excellent. OGB has well-established offices at country level, and preparedness measures were in place</i>

2.1.1 Timeliness

The initial rapid assessments with some distribution of hygiene kits were extremely timely. In Gonaïves, the Oxfam team arrived on the first boat (along with other agencies such as MSF and ACF) into the area with a large number of kits eight days after the emergency. A one-day assessment had already taken place. The pre-positioned stock both in Port au Prince and Panama certainly helped to speed up distribution. This rapidity of the assessment team and use of pre-positioned stock is almost an Oxfam classic seen in several responses. While this is timely and commended, it is the slow-down afterwards that needs to be addressed.

In Nippes the flooding took place on August 26th and 27th and the first assessment team from Oxfam went on the 28th. Some distribution of water and kits also took place. This was extremely timely. The second assessment was on the 14th, although according to several interviewees, the second assessment did not add much more information for an implementation strategy than the initial one (according to one interviewee it was also incomplete and did not include an implementation plan). Then, as in Gonaïves, the implementation slowed and the Nippes response appeared to be on hold until Gonaïves was responded to. The actual implementation started on October 3rd, a month after the emergency. Although this is understandable given the circumstances, it is unfortunate in responding to immediate needs and such as delay should be avoided in future planning unless only recovery is being considered. Distribution of hygiene kits six weeks after a disaster is not responding to acute needs.

The need to do several assessments so soon after each other is also questionable, especially if the second assessment does not add more information. There is a need to reconsider this strategy of two assessments in the early phase.

During the month of October, Oxfam and other INGOs were trained on the use of EMMA and piloted the tool. According to the report “the EMMA pilot started on September 29, just weeks after the high winds and rain from Hanna and Ike hit the Island on 1 and 6 September. Up until then, Oxfam’s response to the crises has been largely in the sphere of public health promotion, public health engineering and the distribution of essential household items. During the first week of the pilot preparations, Oxfam had finalised an emergency assessment on the Department of Artibonite³, and it was during this period of reflection that Oxfam-GB decided to welcome the EMMA Pilot as another potential source of information.” However, to date there are no livelihoods activities in Gonaïves and the Nippes cash work started on a small scale in October. Given that the pilot took place during the acute phase, that according to the report there were teething problems with the method⁴ and that Oxfam public health intervention was slow to start in Nippes, the use of staff time for this pilot is perhaps questionable. Certainly the information fed both into the Nippes livelihoods concept note and Oxfam Quebec proposals and the tool has huge potential. However, as none of the RTE evaluation team had a livelihoods background, it has been impossible to judge completely the wisdom of running the pilot during a multi-site emergency.

2.1.2 Flexibility

There is a strategy in the contingency plan to do rapid assessments with some immediate distribution followed by a more in-depth assessment leading into planning and proposal writing. This was not the approach followed in Gonaïves as there the decision was made to concentrate in the shelters immediately during the assessment. There have apparently been different views around this decision although it is clear it was based on perceived immediate needs. The ECHO proposal was apparently written before the team left for the field and was based on the one-day quick assessment done by one of the PRT. The number of kits were cut due to expenses and it was thought by the acting HPC that people would return home after “a couple of weeks.” The view was apparently also held by several other agencies. The ECHO proposal did allow for some flexibility of activities should the situation change. The country team felt that the PRT did not discuss possibilities for change (for example livelihoods) whilst acknowledging the necessity of responding to immediate needs in the shelter.

In Nippes the team has responded to requests for assistance in water in urban and rural areas that were not in the original plan. It is commendable that programmes can respond to changing situations but could it also be that the idea of two assessments in such a short space of time needs to be revised. During the Day of Reflection, the group also questioned the two-assessment strategy as it “slows down the dynamic” and a large part of the information is available from other sources (although of course these should be checked for reliability). The first rapid assessment should take into account the scale of the damage and the staffing required to respond. It was also suggested during the Day of Reflection that there are two teams: one to do a rapid assessment (and then continue assessing in more depth) and one to start the response. Both teams need clear concise TOR. An example of good practice can be

³ Rapport de Mission d’Evaluation des dégâts causés par les Ouragans Gustave, Ike et la Tempête tropicale Hanna sur le département de l’Artibonite : communes des Gonaïves, Gros-Morne et Ennery Artibonite, Haiti 10-29 Septembre 2008

⁴ Auerbach A. Pilot report. Testing emergency market mapping and analysis (EMMA) Haiti following cyclones Gustav, Hanna and Ike. 2008

found from the Philippines Hurricane Durian response.⁵ The evaluation team suggests reconsidering the phases' matrix in the contingency plan (Section V, point IV).

In areas where access was difficult or where Oxfam was not intending to respond, money was given to the DPC for implementing activities. Although procedures are in place for retirement of the amount as well as reporting, it would be worth the country team evaluating the impact of this intervention in order to assess whether this is something to continue doing in the future. Monitoring has been carried out around the activities but the evaluation should concentrate more on the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of this scheme as it does appear to be a good way of providing assistance in places where access is difficult. The evaluation could also explore the potential for expanding activities through this method of support.

2.1.3 The response team

The regional preparedness and response team (PRT) name is a misnomer given the fact that the RHM made it clear to all involved that the four members would not necessarily be sent to work as a team. Apparently the original idea in Haiti was to send three members to Gonaïves and the engineer to Nippes⁶. According to an e-mail from the RHM “the deployment of the PRT manager was to work with (acting HPC) on the coordination of the assessments and possible response, supporting on analysing the data from the assessments for the purpose of concept note writing.”

The PRT were sent to Gonaïves initially to do an assessment and to do some distribution of hygiene kits. They were accompanied by a team of national staff who were to assist with distribution on the kits. There were no senior HR or finance at this time. Once on the ground, the team clearly saw the need for an immediate intervention in the shelters, although this had not been their primary remit. In at least one handover report, it was stated that a response was not in the plan for the PRT. It is difficult to understand why this flexibility was not stated in the initial TOR given that they were a highly specialised team with response experience. There were definitely some constraints and lack of communication around this deployment that need to be sorted before next year's hurricane season.

Time and again, during the evaluation the problem of trust and understanding was raised as an issue between expatriate staff and the country team. There were definitely personality clashes that may or may not have been avoidable. Some of this may be due to lack of cultural understanding and miscommunication but it is an area that needs to be addressed. It is not the role of the evaluation team to determine where the fault lies as questions were raised by both the country team and the response team. Some of the comments received by the evaluation team were directed at individuals, which is more of a performance issue rather than the subject for an RTE report.

There was some confusion around line management and reporting lines despite the fact that an early e-mail from the RHM made it clear that the manager member of the PRT would report to the CD while the other three members would report to the HPC. The response team was seen by some country team members to be outside of the line and having “parallel communication” with the region. The response team did not feel this was the case; neither did the RHM. There was less communication between the team and CMT than was desirable. Some of these issues have already been taken up in a regional and country team meeting held during the same time as the RTE.

Certainly the plans for next year's team to carry out some preparedness and orient themselves in countries before the hurricane season is promising although there is still a need for clear

⁵ A twofold approach, consisting of an integrated public health / EFSL team rapidly assessing the affected/needed areas and a second team implementing the response, enabled a quick response that was based on field-assessed needs. (RTE Hurricane Durian response 2007)

⁶ E-mail from RHM

TOR, clarification of roles and an in-country induction. There also needs to be more of a discussion around the country team's vision and strategy including staff movements so that there are no surprises. The PRT TOR needs to state the possibility of having to start a response even if the initial request is for an assessment. Maybe also more consideration is needed around whether the whole team needs to deploy together to one site or whether there is expertise among relocated staff.

2.1.3 Preparedness

The contingency plan was signed off in May after several workshops attended by all three active affiliates. The first steps in the plan were followed (activation of minimum requirements, humanitarian commission, stocks and early assessments) but there is a question around the scenarios and how relevant and useful these are. For example floods and hurricanes have a great deal in common and there needs to be a strategy for multiple site responses. The current scenarios are for types of disasters; but they do not specify the kinds of responses for different disasters nor do they take into account scale. We suggest due to climate change and the increasing severity and frequency of floods and hurricanes, the next revision of the plan considers the scale of response and takes into account multi-site responses. During the Day of Reflection, it was noted that the expected scale should also include the resources needed and donors to be approached so that funding could be better planned. All emergency programmes include DRR, which is highly commendable if this is more than just a token gesture.

The pre-positioned stock of already prepared kits worked well and also the fact that new improved kits were quickly packed and dispatched to Gonaïves.

During the day, it was also felt that the PRT should have a communications kit as well as all Oxfam formats for management (including HR, logistics and finance) pre-loaded on a laptop computer.

There does not appear to be an overall strategy for staff movement from longer-term programmes to emergency programmes during hurricane season⁷. There is a database with names of those who have worked with Oxfam before and staff who are available and experienced are supposedly also identified. However, it would appear that secondments did not always take into consideration the experience of the staff member and there was no backup plan to cover in the primary position. There was also confusion around length of time expected away from the primary station, management and reporting lines. It is proposed that the country team make an HR contingency plan every year at the beginning of the hurricane season with clear guidelines as to what is expected, whether it is assessment only or response or recovery.

The suggestions from group work during the Day of Reflection were to:

- Pre-identify people to go in after rapid assessment with an agreement that they might spend four to six weeks in the field.
- Conduct more training on assessments with a refresher workshop before the yearly hurricane season with a simulation exercise and a coordination plan with other actors
- Hold a day of reflection after the hurricane season in order to evaluate and plan for next season
- Set up a shadowing plan on other emergencies

According to the DRR adviser, all DRR staff are also trained to do emergency response (although it would appear it is more around initial assessment and distribution). In June 38 people were trained in minimum requirements but apparently only five of these were part of the actual response. A recent evaluation of the OI capacity building initiative showed that training is not enough to ensure that staff are able to respond – there needs to be planned

⁷ There is a plan for senior staff but nothing for field staff such as PHPs and PHEs with back stopping in their current positions

follow-up and mentoring to monitor performance and evaluate the effects of the training. Different methods of exposure can be used such as those proposed during the Day of Reflection⁸.

In actual response, in Nippes there had been a small DRR programme that was about a close. The evaluation looked at some of the DRR (or rather preparedness) structures that had been put in place. In the first days of the emergency, the committees seem to have functioned at various levels and the pre-positioned stock was used. The emergency operations centre was utilised in which Oxfam took part during the initial stages. According to staff, one of the mitigation barriers were destroyed ((Petit Trou de Nippes)⁹. There were mixed feelings from government officials over the quality and usefulness of these structures. A more in-depth evaluation of DRR measures that worked could be carried out by the DRR adviser.

2.2 Benchmark 2

Relief provided is appropriate to the context, of a quality and scale that would be expected of Oxfam's capacity, and valued by beneficiaries

2.2.1 The scale of the response and targeting

Oxfam has a high profile in Haiti especially in the DRR work where they have received extra funding from the two donors due to “good work.” In Nippes we were asked to respond and did two assessments but then a month went by before we had capacity to continue implementing. Would it have been more appropriate to switch to a livelihoods intervention at that point in recovery rather than continuing relief? Is it pressure and profile that made us go back to Nippes or was it need? There has to be a balance.

The evaluation team feels that the design of the Nippes project was good but the implementation model relies too much on local authorities targeting. Firstly Oxfam does not have a say in the selection criteria and secondly there is no crosschecking as to whether those selected are the most vulnerable¹⁰. The response to date has not corresponded to the scale proposed due to funding, logistics and staffing capacity.

In 2004, Oxfam responded to the hurricane damage in Gonaïves with water provision for the whole town as well as a large PHP programme and rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in schools and some neighbourhoods. This increased the credibility of the Oxfam profile in the area and meant that this year, people requested their presence again. This credibility also assisted the Intermon team when they arrived. In the 2008 response where the mudslides were worse and where people were in shelters, Oxfam chose to work in the shelters. However, there were members of the country team who feel that the 2008 response is “no different to last time, only small and there was more damage.” Others have expressed the worry that “there is nothing visible, we didn’t leave any sustainable structures.” There is a feeling that the 2008 response does not match the Oxfam 2004 response. However, the shelters were the most overcrowded, the water supply was already covered, there was a high public health risk and Oxfam has experience in emergency latrines. The choice this time is justified.

2.2.2 Watsan

In the Gonaïves ECHO proposal the result under water was as follows:

Approximately 15.000 women, men and children will have access to safe and adequate drinking water in target location

⁸ See the PFC evaluation 2008 for an example of shadowing in Nicaragua

⁹ Rapport sur l’Etat des lieux des activités du PUGRD dans l’Ouest et dans les Nippes, 2008

¹⁰ There is some disagreement around this issue from the country team but the point is more to check that the system is actually working and to plan for future responses

Oxfam in Gonaïves did not get involved in the supply of drinking water apart from supplying bladders and carrying out essential water testing in which they have expertise. The approach was to concentrate on latrines in shelters as it was felt that the water supply delivery was already being taken care of by MSF, ACF and the Spanish Red Cross. Oxfam called the first WASH cluster meeting in Gonaïves and found that “it was clear that there was capacity to deliver drinking water.” This was also backed up by MSF and the other agencies who made it clear in the early days that they had the equipment and they already had a presence in the town.

However, talking to MSF during the evaluation, there was a different perspective. It should be noted that the person interviewed was not in-country during the early days and therefore, was not part of the initial discussions in the WASH cluster. The person interviewed said, “MSF always expects Oxfam to do the hard ware so that we can get on with the medical issues.” Also “Oxfam is not proactive, they seemed to have changed their strategy.” They felt that despite having all the equipment either with them on the boat or arriving on the 15th by plane, they had not planned to put up such an extensive system. As their exit strategy is to leave when the medical work is completed, they are now left with the problem of the water system. At no point was this discussed with the Oxfam programme manager. There was some frustration on the part of the PRT engineer about the lack of watsan material on the first boat but it appears that this was not feasible given it as a UN charter and Oxfam had little say over cargo. The Panama stock arrived in Port au Prince on the 15th and in Gonaïves on the 16th. This was the same day as MSF received their air-freighted equipment so Oxfam could have contributed to the water supply if they had been requested by MSF or others, which they were not

According to MSF they are reaching 150,000 people with their water system whilst Oxfam has 15,000 beneficiaries. Had Oxfam wanted to repeat their high profile water systems that they set up during the 2004 response, they could have done so. This is not a criticism of the PRT decision to not “do water” as there were clear messages from other actors. It is a question for future responses.

It is a good opportunity for the country programme to decide what it is they want to concentrate on: large water supplies to many people (higher profile) or a more concentrated public health programme for those at most risk (lower beneficiary numbers with possibly lower profile) or both? This needs to also include decisions on capacity and resources. The added value of the Oxfam integrated approach is the community participation and mobilisation as well as specialised areas such as latrine design and water testing. The CD feels that “It is not a dichotomy between high profile and needs – we are high profile because we respond to needs of the most vulnerable” However, it would be useful for the country team to look at whether they want wider coverage and if so, what needs to be put in place in the way of contingency.

In Nippes it was the opposite: after two days, Oxfam assisted SNEP to repair the water system thus servicing a large urban population. This was prioritised over shelter water provision as meeting the needs of the majority and as being a quick win. However, there has been a considerable delay in providing water and sanitation to those in acute need in the shelters. To date, these have not been met, although the number of families still in shelters is small.

The Oxfam latrines built are emergency ones made of plastic slabs and plastic sheeting. In the transitional camps as there is no ventilation, there were complaints of “not being able to breathe.” Originally there was a plan to have them covered but as they became stifflingly hot during the day, people cut holes in the plastic and after consultation with the community, the latrines were left open: a good example of responding to community feedback.

Given that urban disasters are on the increase and that space is often limited in the schools, public buildings and churches to which people go to shelter, it might be appropriate for Oxfam’s PHE team to explore ways of providing sanitation without digging pits. We simply cannot continue ignoring the needs of the urban affected.

2.2.3 PHP

It was not possible in Gonaïves to do the standard integrated approach as in some shelters Oxfam was only providing latrines whilst in others PHP was the sole activity. Given the circumstances, this was probably the only way to operate.

The PHP intervention has been very well planned and executed. It is always difficult to measure impact and attribution but given that there have been no outbreaks or epidemics (according to MSF) some credit must be given to both the latrines and the PHP programme.

The intervention started after assessing 20 shelters and after insistence by the PHP team. The hygiene kits were distributed 7-10 days after the emergency happened. One positive consequence of giving out bottled water is that families now own a “galleon” the large water container that can be used to buy purified water at kiosks in the town. Apparently these are expensive to buy and are considered to be extremely valuable for usage in the future.

A baseline survey was carried out and a monitoring system set up. Oxfam also assisted with providing messages to accompany the ITN distribution as is considered good practice. It would appear that if Oxfam had not insisted, the nets would have distributed without any user information.

Logistics have been slow in providing some of the equipment such as the containers for hand washing at communal latrines in the shelters¹¹. Certainly some of the buckets currently being used are very dirty and full of soapy water. Plans to distribute underwear and nappies for children have also not been put in practice. This is definitely an oversight in the pre-packed hygiene kit contents. Disabled access to latrines was also lacking but is planned for the transitional camps.

Implementation was hindered by the lack of experienced personnel to work with the PHP response team member. One D2 position was filled but it was necessary to train other local staff who had little or no experience. It is a pity that the PHP from Belle Anse was not better utilised in the first weeks of the response. Although this was due to the need to complete activities under the ECHO proposal and to cover for the programme manager, it again points to a need to have a more comprehensive plan for utilisation of staff in-country. It also brings up the need to explore with donors such as ECHO the possibility of suspension of programming at one site if a multi-site emergency occurs.

Latrine cleaning is considered to be a very menial task and people are reluctant to do it. In the shelters it would appear it was the mobilisers who had to organise this. Given that most of the shelters are temporary, it would probably have been better to pay people to clean them. This is often standard Oxfam procedure.

The PHP member of the response team had wanted to set up ORS corners to cope with the increased cases of diarrhoea but there was no ORS available. This arrived in the beginning of October. There was no ORS in the Panama contingency stock but this might be to do with the limited shelf life.

In Nippes, there is still no PHP team. This has limited the team’s ability to have direct contact with the affected community and the whole participation/consultation ethos is lost. This is besides the fact that the ongoing public health risks are not being addressed. This concern was highlighted during discussions with the shelter inhabitants. There are apparently 20 trained PHP mobilisers from last year’s response although whether these were contacted during the present crisis has been difficult to establish.¹²

One PHP staff member felt that there is sometimes a limited understanding of PHP at funding and proposal writing level as in the first budgets there was only money for hygiene kits (although these were later changed). The country team did not feel that this is the case. However, it would be good to reinforce the Oxfam approach for new support staff and those involved in proposal writing. Inductions should also include an overview of what Oxfam

¹¹ See Logistics section for constraints

¹² The PHP team leader for Nippes was scheduled to arrive at the end of the evaluation period

Comment [v1]:

Comment [mg2]: Are you absolutely sure about this?

means by PHP especially the community participation and accountability aspects. There are now two expatriate PHPs in country and it would be good if they could do more orientation of all staff in the coming months.

2.2.4 Livelihoods

There was no livelihoods person in the regional response team. However, a national EFSL staff member accompanied the team on the assessment and also carried out an assessment in the surrounding areas. At the time of the evaluation, no livelihoods activities had commenced in Gonaïves.

Cash grants in Gonaïves would probably not have been appropriate given the high insecurity and the fact that there were gangs of youths waiting at each distribution to steal from the shelters. However, now people need money especially for school uniforms, shoes for their children and in some cases fees. ACF also felt that cash grants would require good coordination, as everyone needed to give the same. There was one NGO that gave 10,000 HTG to people as an incentive to leave a church before a festival was due to take place. Other NGOs wanted to avoid this happening again.

In Nippes, in the two assessments and concept note there was a heavy emphasis on livelihoods. However, the same delays that affected the Watsan work also impacted on the livelihoods. There were experienced livelihoods staff but no one was assigned to deal specifically with this until late October. The affected population interviewed highlighted the loss of assets as a priority need. They felt that if livelihoods were restored, they would be able to cope without support.

The cash for work programme was designed to provide income for the most vulnerable families but the team is concerned that the current selected families are not the most vulnerable, the targeting being done by the délégué. The evaluation team recommends that the scale represents the situation and that targeting is done more appropriately.

In the Day of Reflection the team seemed to agree that Oxfam has missed the boat on relief in Nippes and that it would be more appropriate to switch to livelihoods recovery. The planting season is approaching; the people will need seeds, tools, cash and other assets. A suggestion during the Day of Reflection was that there is a need to identify funding sources for livelihoods recovery during “peace time.”

Oxfam was one of the initiators for testing the market access tool EMMA¹³, which is designed to “provide a framework for analyzing the appropriateness of food, non-food, and cash-based initiatives to meet emergency needs and support markets critical to recovery.” The use of the tool was supposed to feed into the strategic planning of the livelihoods part of the response. The only example of usage of the tool was found in the Nippes livelihoods concept note where results from the market access survey showed that food was available and the prices had actually decreased. After a visit from the HD EFSL adviser, the information was also used in the Gonaïves concept note. See section 2.1.1 for more on EMMA.

2.2.5 Shelter

In Gonaïves, it is IOM that is coordinating the shelter cluster. Oxfam has not been involved apart from assisting with assessments. In Nippes shelter kits are being distributed but again, the targeting is questionable.

2.2.6 Accountability and monitoring

In Gonaïves, the team is working on a formalisation of the existing system. Generally all members of the affected population interviewed felt that they had a good relationship with the Oxfam staff: “they laugh with us and play with our kids, they are always around.” There was

¹³ Emergency market mapping analysis toolkit

a feeling that it was easy to “go and talk to them.” A practical example is after distribution, some containers were broken and after reporting this to the staff, the problem was resolved. There is no formal feedback system although previously feedback boxes have been tried in Haiti. However, there are committees in all of the shelters who are the contact between the population and Oxfam. The PHP team have been responsible for accountability given their daily presence in the shelters. The management has given out a phone number to call if necessary. However, when interviewed, a couple of shelter inhabitants said that Oxfam field staff had refused to give a contact number: this could possibly be for personal safety reasons. Our recommendation is that the office has a neutral phone number to give to committee members so that no personal numbers are involved.

The monitoring system is well developed, a baseline has been carried out and used to monitor against for the public health component.

In Nippes, there is no monitoring system and there is no formal accountability system. However, there is good rapport between Oxfam staff and the community members or community-based organisations. We would recommend that systems be put in place for the coming activities¹⁴. The coming of the PHP team leader with expertise in community participation and accountability should address this gap. The lack of MOUs with committees and other stakeholders needs to be addressed as it could lead to problems in the future. An example is the water committee in Châlon.

2.2.7 Impact on the affected population and their views

In any emergency evaluation, it is difficult to get past the gratefulness syndrome. When interviewed, some of the affected population in the shelters and transitional camps said that they felt like “rejects” and were therefore grateful that Oxfam had worked with them. As one person said: “when someone gives you something they are free to choose what they want to give you.”

The initial hygiene kits were a good initiative in both sites as they were distributed after seven to ten days. The women were especially glad to receive sanitary napkins. Although there had been no consultation around the content of the early kits, women did acknowledge the difficulty of both getting kits out early and of consulting at the same time. The women did say that they would have liked to receive bras and panties¹⁵, diapers, sheets, blankets and mattresses. The latter could also be used when people went home. Fuel is an issue and people asked for stoves. In one of Gonaïves transitional camps, people were consulted and felt they had, for the most part, received what they requested. The staff in Gonaïves during debrief felt they had responded to felt needs.

On selection criteria, no one was able to say why they had or had not been selected and there was a feeling that not everyone who was needy had received. In the one Gonaïves school visited, the coordinator said that he had been asked for a list of families in the shelter and that everyone had received. In Nippes it was the délégué or mayor who had provided the lists for distribution, which were checked by Oxfam staff. Some interviewees expressed concern that people living in host families and the generally affected population were not included. This is a question that is often raised in these kinds of emergencies and it would be worth Oxfam staff checking again to make sure they have targeted the most needy. A survey of host families is apparently being carried out by CARE and Oxfam needs to utilise this information. The actual distribution methods in Gonaïves had been good; in one instance, distribution was held away from the shelter where it was more secure. No one mentioned the presence of the police as an aggravation or a hindrance to the process. The police themselves singled out Oxfam’s distributions as being well planned and executed. In Nippes, the first distributions were well planned and followed standard Oxfam practice. The more recent distributions

¹⁴ The French version of the accountability framework has been given to the teams

¹⁵ Panties were ordered but came in the wrong size and have had to be re-ordered

carried out through the délégué were less well thought out. Hygiene kits being distributed now is less appropriate: markets are functioning and cash may be more useful.

In Gonaïves, consultation around latrine design and siting varied in different places. In one of the transition camps, the latrines are quite far away on the edge of the camp whilst in another camp they are among thorn bushes although this will change as more tents are expected to be erected. The technical teams in the transitional camps felt that they had discussed with both leaders and women but that there were constraints such as the smell of latrines if they were placed any nearer to the tents. The consultation was confirmed by several women in the camp. There are, however, some unresolved issues in Gonaïves. In one of the transitional camps a disabled woman was interviewed. Although the PHP team had talked to her about cleanliness and hand washing, she had not been consulted about her special needs regarding latrine use. In the same camp, women also said that they were frightened to go to the latrines at night so they used a container and emptied it in the morning. There is no electricity in this particular camp or in many of the shelters. Lamps or torches could be considered.

The impact on diarrhoea rates has been positive in Gonaïves (according to MSF statistics) but in Nippes (according to anecdotal evidence) there is less of an impact. We have done no latrines or PHP and the water problem is not yet sorted.

2.2.8 Gender

The Nippes assessment includes a good gender analysis on the impact of the disaster on women. However, during implementation there has been little attention paid to gender aspects.

When the committees were set up in the Gonaïves shelters, Oxfam was very involved. The suggestion was to have 50% men and women although in reality the ratio is slightly higher for men.

The sanitary napkin issue came up as it does in almost all Oxfam evaluations. The pre-packed kits contained disposal napkins and the PHP team make a point of telling people to bury them instead of throwing them in the mud or out with the other garbage. During focus groups, the women actually preferred white material that they could wash once the water became cleaner. This issue could be looked at during “peace time” when better consultation and planning around the needs in the emergency and the recovery phase could take place. Underwear has been delayed in purchasing partly due to supply. The panties that were bought were the wrong size making maybe the hiring of a female logistician a necessity for larger emergencies.

Protection and GBV issues are being addressed by both OCHA who have just recruited a senior protection officer and UNFPA who have done some group discussions with women in the shelters. The Gonaïves PHP team has talked to their staff and told them to be aware of protection and GBV issues and to report if they hear anything. The livelihoods component is important as people in shelters become frustrated with not having anything to do. The police commissioner was also concerned about increasing frustration of young men in shelters, which could lead to more violence.

2.3 Benchmark 3

<i>An effective management structure is in place, and providing clarity and well-communicated decision-making and direction</i>

2.3.1 Management

Support and communication with the region appears to have been good in the initial stages of the response but the country team was not transparent enough when it came to reporting concerns around the PRT. Maybe if this could have been discussed earlier, some of the frustrations could have been avoided. The role of the Humanitarian Emergency Coordinator (HEC) appears a little confusing. The Emergency Coordinator TOR states that “if required,

and agreed with the RHM deploy to areas of emergencies to offer hands-on support to country offices.” The e-mail correspondence between region and country stated that there would be support to the Haiti team “during the current emergency and particularly with a focus on preparing for the coming hurricanes to impact on Haiti”. In other country programmes if an emergency coordinator came in, it would be seen as a step-aside for the HPC. The HEC did in fact act as the HPC during the time that the acting HPC was out on the country. On the return of this person they went back to managing their own large programme although this decision does not appear to have been discussed with all involved, including the region. This scenario will not re-occur as the regional post was temporary and an HPC is now being recruited for Haiti. However, there needs to be clarity on decision-making roles of the HPC and PMs as some staffing decisions were made without PM consultation. The previous acting HPC was an advisory post with no sign-off powers something that is not practical in an emergency setting. Other HPCs often have an increased sign-off limit during an acute emergency.

We endorse the decision taken by CMT in Port au Prince to send a senior HR, logistics or finance person to a future emergency together with the response team. However, in a bigger emergency, we would propose that a senior manager (HPC or business manager) take control in the first few weeks in order to improve communication between the field and the country team.

Pre-deployment briefings should include clarity on the priorities and expectations of the country team and make use of handover notes or preferably telecons. Overall communication and transparency needs to be addressed.

2.3.2 Decision-making

The activation of the humanitarian commission in the early stages is seen as being effective in giving guidance, making necessary decisions and generally increasing information sharing. This is highly appropriate whilst field teams are being assembled. However, once the initial concept has been proposed, senior management should sign off on it and delegate responsibility to programme managers. This would relieve the pressure on senior managers who also have the advocacy angle, representation, fundraising and the longer-term programmes to consider. Decision-making around the Nippes programme seems unclear and not well communicated or documented. Changes in decision making are not always communicated.

Staff movements – staff were deployed from other longer-term programmes both to Gonaïves and to help with assessments. The coordinator from the EU funded Cap Haitien programme was doing at least two jobs at one point. Decisions on staff movement did not always seem to be appropriate and according to people’s experience. On the other hand, according to the country team, staff sent to the field were not always utilised according to their skills.

A decision was made early on to use members of the Haitian police force to guard the entrance of the shelter during distribution. This was done after consultation with the affected population and at their request. Discussions were also had with local staff who had local knowledge and the proper channels for gaining permission were sought. There have been no complaints received from shelter users and no one during the evaluation expressed concerns about this issue. The protection cluster has monitored the procedure. This is a good example of well thought out risk management.

2.3.3 Funding

The absence of a permanent funding coordinator has been felt as there were multiple proposals and few people to write them. Even when there are people in post, communication and information sharing can be a constraint. There appears to be a tradition of having a great deal of verbal communication but less documentation, especially minutes of meetings. A

learning from this year is that a funding coordinator is crucial but this should be a country post rather than regional.

Given difficulties in acquiring funding, there needs to be a strategy to realign operational priorities to a more realistic scale. This should be linked to a needs-based assessment. In Nippes we would recommend that this takes place urgently.

The incident of parallel proposals submitted from Oxfam GB and Intermon to ECHO should be avoided in the future. The HCT should decide which affiliate will be responsible for funding requests and this should be conveyed to the Barcelona funding unit.

2.4 Benchmark 4

Key support functions are sufficiently resourced, being effectively run, and minimising risk to an acceptable level. Risks that are being taken are being calculated and documented

2.4.1 Logistics

Compared to other Oxfam responses, the number of logistics officers appears to be adequate. It was fortunate that the Logistics manager arrived just as the Gonaïves emergency had happened. Having a logistician on the response team is also an advantage compared to other responses. Also having the logistician on the assessment teams is admirable as this is often highlighted as a constraint in other evaluations.

The pre-positioned stock in Panama was a good idea although it was requested quite late. Of course, it's always a balance between getting equipment to the field that is not required and having a timely response. Given the transport problems to Gonaïves with the road impassable and being dependent on UN sea transport, it may have been better to make an earlier request.

There have been supply problems in Nippes and to a lesser degree in Gonaïves. Although there are obvious explanations such as price rises, supplier demands for pre-payment and road conditions, we would recommend an earlier procurement planning. There is a need to have a dedicated logistician for Gonaïves in the Port au Prince office, an idea endorsed by the logistics manager. This would also free up capacity in Port au Prince to deal with the Nippes requests.

2.4.2 HR

It was unfortunate that the HR manager was new and on induction in the regional office when the Gonaïves emergency happened. There were definitely problems around HR in the Gonaïves programme. The constraints seem to have been: lack of senior HR staff in country, lack of induction and understanding of Haiti specific procedures by the response team (contractual issues and daily rates) and a lack of early HR support to the field office. The HR manager is now writing guidelines for Haiti, which will help. Not having Creole or French speakers does raise a barrier especially when negotiating for office and house space or buying goods locally. Again, this shows the importance of having good finance, HR and logistical support from the country team to the PRT right from the start as well as having good communication and trust in each other to get the job done.

Relocated staff have been used in a response in 2004 but the relocation package has not been updated. There is a difference between per diems paid to staff from outside the country and those who have relocated within the country. This needs to be considered as it can only widen the gap between two groups, as will the policy for medical cover and R&R. Some relocated staff have apparently been promised transport to their home several times during their deployment. In most Oxfam humanitarian programmes R&R is taken only after six to eight weeks continuous deployment. Policies need to take into account funding constraints as well as expectations of what relocation or secondment entails.

It is commendable that a list of staff has already been drawn up in the contingency plan. However, staff on the register to be deployed to an emergency need to have a clear idea as to

what is expected of them in terms of time commitments. This should be agreed with their managers and a contingency plan drawn up for cover in the long-term programme while the staff member is on secondment. Prior to the hurricane season, a deployment plan with back fill should be drawn up.

There was not always a good use made of experienced staff. There was a PHP who has experience from major emergencies such as the Pakistan earthquake who was used for the Nippes assessment but not the response. At the same time there was a lack of D2 positions in PHP in Gonaïves and no PHP team leader in Nippes. Although the RTE team recognises the need for the Belle Anse programme to work to a tight ECHO deadline, it does highlight the need for a) exploring possibilities for programme suspension in multi-site emergencies and b) having an HR plan with backup if staff do need to be moved.

2.4.3 Finance

It is highly commendable that the minimum requirements were put in place so early on. This is not something that always happens in Oxfam programmes.

There were conflicting reports around cash flow between Port au Prince and Gonaïves with complaints on both sides about slowness of cash transfer and the setting up of a bank account. The PaP team requested documentation for the float taken by the response team, which was apparently not always available. The country team clearly feels that they need to have good systems in place and that they have overall financial accountability responsibility. This is of course correct, but there was a great deal of frustration and miscommunication that needs to be addressed before the next response, especially as this impacted on implementation where activities were suspended for two days with a following slow down¹⁶ because of lack of funds. This simply must not happen in the early stages of a response. It is appreciated that banks in Gonaïves were not functioning for the first few weeks and that there are procedures for opening a bank account, which require the presence of a finance person. There are conflicting views as to whether the request for assistance was made or not but for future responses a bank account should be one of the first priorities. An example of preparedness would be exploring possibilities for bank accounts in vulnerable areas or looking for alternatives for transferring money. The minimum requirements give further guidance.

The sign-off levels for senior staff appear to be quite low compared to other Oxfam programmes and the minimum requirements. There is a risk that these levels could cause a bottleneck especially in a big response where funds need to be disbursed quickly. As mentioned previously, in other countries the HPC sign-off limit is often increased during a rapid onset response.

2.5 Benchmark 5

Our relationships are productive and well coordinated, and we are having a positive influence on others

2.5.1 Relationship with government and other NGOs

Oxfam's relationship with OCHA is seen as very positive. The only complaint was that sometimes Oxfam is slow in passing on information regarding problem areas such as the malnutrition in Belle Anse. OCHA would prefer informal information passing instead of waiting for Sitrep sign-off. Once the information was passed, we facilitated the government and a specialised NGO to address the problem.

The advocacy work done around getting better coordination and clarity of government plans for the displaced people in Gonaïves is commendable. It appears to be supported by other actors such as OCHA.

¹⁶ There is some disagreement about this point both as to whether this actually happened but also as to the number of days work affected

In Gonaïves, the relationship with DPC seems to be good and Oxfam is very active in the WASH and shelter clusters. It was Oxfam that initiated the first meeting of the WASH cluster as soon as most actors had arrived. In Nippes, we are working closely with all levels of government. We have had some negative feedback to manage with respect to last year's work and high expectations from many parties. This puts a great deal of pressure on the team and needs to be addressed. As there are not many actors in Nippes, this puts extra pressure on Oxfam to respond to a variety of problems instead of lobbying others such as OCHA or UNICEF to address these issues. As the délégué said: "Oxfam has longer arms." We need to manage these expectations: the balance between profile and overstretching resources. Usually Oxfam in humanitarian works either as a direct implementation or through local NGOs or CBO partners. Close government cooperation is a factor in both these approaches. However, in the Nippes programme the government is involved as an intermediary in the delivery of the Oxfam programme. During the Day of Reflection, the team looked at advantages and disadvantages of this approach. The following table was produced:

	Risks	Advantages
Alone	Lack of pertinent information Lack of local capacity development Problem of credibility and acceptance Lack of coherence with the development programme	Rapid implementation More control Upward Accountability easier
Local actors	Cronyism Political groups using Oxfam to their advantage Money being diverted for political gains The most vulnerable not reached Slow to start	Ownership Capacity development Mutual learning Better impact More information for decision making Better articulation with development programmes

2.5.2 The OI dimension

At national level in Port au Prince, the HCT functions well and the coordination is exceptionally good. The affiliates within country were part of the contingency plan workshop and also discuss proposals and areas of work. Only one interviewee mentioned some concerns about information sharing for Sitreps. There was also good coordination around the EMMA pilot project. The "blip" with ECHO appears to be the mistake of the funding department in Barcelona and the country team were not aware of this happening. The letter from the HCT clearly states their point of view. The regional office may need to give a clearer steer on what is expected of the lead agency.

All the assessment teams were OI but affiliates run separate programmes although they are supposed to coordinate and pass on information. However, synergy is not as good as at national level. For example, in Nippes in Paillant there is a possibility for overlap in activities between Oxfam Quebec and OGB.

In Gonaïves, Intermon has a different pay scale for local staff as well as different working hours. As they share an office with OGB, this has meant for example the OGB storekeeper has to come in on Saturdays to open up for Intermon staff. Although the pay difference has been partially solved by the person in question working away from the office, the Saturday working hours do not appear to be resolved.

2.6 Benchmark 6

The programme has considered the longer term implications and has taken connectedness into consideration

The longer term plans for those who have lost their houses in Gonaïves are really out of the hands of the NGOs as it is up to the government to decide where the remaining families can be re-located. Oxfam has a phase two proposal in preparation but is not planning to continue in Gonaïves area after early next year. Staff members felt that given the environmental vulnerability in the area around Gonaïves, it is only a matter of time before the same disaster happens again. It is proposed that a monitoring system is set up so that on a regular basis Oxfam could follow up on facilities and refresher for those already trained. The contingency plan should also reflect multi-site responses as proposed earlier in the report.

In some areas it would seem that Oxfam continues to have a succession of short-term projects (one programme but different funders for projects). This could be due to funding but makes it difficult to have a coherent approach. It also puts pressure on Oxfam to respond - as one interviewee said: "we have invested a lot in Nippes and we are used to responding." A recommendation from the staff in Nippes that they maintain contact as "standby team" for future responses. However, a more strategic plan is also needed.

There appeared to be a mechanism for early response phase that worked but otherwise it was difficult to evaluate the impact of the DRR work in Nippes. There needs to be a strategy for Nippes around DRR (including environmental) and response. According to the DRR adviser, all DRR staff are trained on response. However, it was not clear how well this idea was actually put in practice.

As mentioned previously, there should an evaluation of the funds given to DPC in order to assess if this is a viable option for delivering aid to inaccessible communities.

Plans should be put in place for building capacity of staff as soon as possible especially when internationals need to be replaced. Exit strategies should be developed for both areas and include national and local level policy on our relationship with SNEP.

Appendix 1: Places visited and people interviewed

Date	Activity
1 November	Mira and Vivien leave for Haiti
2	Arrival in Haiti
3	Port au Prince office weekly meeting Security briefing Briefing on programmes - Luc Saint Vil Meet with OGB Humanitarian Commission Meet with DRR adviser – Ysabeau Rycx
4	Meet with Funding consultant – Myra de Bruijn Interview with finance, logistics and HR – Kader Diallo, Sandra Guerrier, Daurice Fleurant Interview with Oxfam Quebec – Dario Arthur and Philippe Mathieu Interview with Business manager – Amédée Maescot
5	Interview with CD – Yolette Etienne Meeting with Intermon – Interview with member of response team – Charlie Rowley Interview with PHP HSP – Margaret Asewe
6	Meeting with OCHA – Manuela Gonzalez Interview with RHM – Maret Laev Team 1 to Gonaïves Marfil arrives Port au Prince
7	Team 1 – security briefing Visit to Camp Hanna (Praville) – focus group with community, house to house interviews (in all 7 women and 6 men) and meeting with technical staff – Lamarre Clervoix and Parnell Osias Visit to Camp Eben Ezer – house to house interviews (13 women) and meeting with technical staff – Leonard Cenophat and Frantz Joseph Visit to Ecole Nationale Pont-Gaudin – site visit and interview with camp coordinator (Jean Robert Sylverna) and one PHP volunteer - Mirlande Aurelien Interview with member of response team (PHP) – Veronica Kloster Team 2 – travel to Nippes Meeting with Oxfam team – Max Astier (PM), Medi (PHE), Museau (Logs) and Olbert (PO) Meeting with Délégué, Mayor of Mirogoane and DPC Visit to 2 shelter sites for hygiene kit distribution
8	Team 1 Interview with Gonaïves PM – Sara Almer Interview with PHE – Laurence Hamai Interview with IOM – Monique Van Hoof Interview ACF – Fanny Hubert Interview with MSF – Vikki Stienen and Djilali Abdelghafour Interview with Intermon response team – Nadia Dufils Team 2 Visit to Paillant impluvium, discussion with 20 community members Interview with Mayor of Paillant Interview with Comité de Crise de Chalon (3 of out 7 members) Visit to Xscandale shelter – focus group with 7 women and 2 men – expanded to about 20 adults and 20 children

	Group meeting with first phase beneficiaries at Delegation (7 women and 6 men) Debrief with Nippes team
9	Team 1 – report writing Team 2 – return to Port au Prince
10	Team 1 – telephone interview with Logistics Manager - Kader Diallo Telephone interview with former acting HPC - Kone Amara Meeting with WASH cluster lead – Atchade Julien Kossi Participation in OCHA Coordination meeting Team 2 – travel to Gonaïves Security briefing Visit to Marché Bienac shelter – discussion with 6 women, 2 men and 5 children and a community mobiliser Visit to Camp Hanna (Praville) Participation in OCHA Coordination meeting
11	Team 1 Interview with Ministry of Works and Social Affairs – Annessie Claude Interview with DPC and Haitian Red Cross – Daniel Dupitan Visit to Université Indépendance shelter – discussion with affected population Interview with Police Commissioner and assistant – Keli Moise and Kada Visit to Eglise Beraka shelter –discussion with affected population Team 2 Visit to Eben Ezer camp – discussion with 5 women, 2 men and the community mobilisers Interviews as above Debrief with Gonaïves staff and dinner
12	Return to Port au Prince
13	Preparation for Day of Reflection
14	Day of Reflection
15	Report writing
16	Team leaves Haiti
17	Arrive home

Interviews were also held with Vincent Koch (HSP coordinator), Paul Sherlock (UNICEF) and Camilla Knox-Peebles (EFSL adviser) prior to leaving Oxford. The final reports of Bibi Lamond (PHE – response team) and Eva Ntege (Logistician – response team) were also considered for this report.

Appendix 2: evaluation of the RTE and Day of Reflection

This exercise was carried out at the end of the Day of Reflection

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating 1= not at all, 5 = very well</i>
To what extent did the RTE team accurately capture the experience of this response?	2 – 1 response 3 – 4 responses 4 - 5 5 - 1
To what extent has to day been useful in helping you discuss the critical issues and challenges of this/future responses?	3 – 2 4- 7 5 - 2
To what extent has the manner in which the RTE team conducted the exercise worked for you?	4- 7 5 - 3

Comment [mg3]: This is not very clear

Comments by participants

Question 1: the one to one interview was very good initiative. It allows people to give some clarification and to express their own feeling

Question 1: the team doesn't seem very clear on the assessment and response in Gonaïves. The team had not gone deep enough on the topic of coordination of OI

Question 1: how did you manage to collect so much information? Maybe you should share your methodology!

Question 1: the difference between Gonaïves and Nippes are not well explained (more resources and priority for Gonaïves). The relationship between the response team and communication lines require more recommendations. The relationship between HD, region, country and OI

Question 1: the evaluation of the situation was not deep enough. The understanding between local and international teams is not explored enough

Question 2: Not enough time for giving opinions

Question 2: Very, very useful. This allows me to better understand my participation in the response process and to learn more with other feedback.

Question 2: helped to clarify and confirm the strategies. Explore recommendations to improve. Maybe the roles between members of the evaluation team should have been explained.

Question 3: Good manner especially explaining the fact that this is our own evaluation and also what use we can (make) of it for the future.

Question 3: a lot of respect, capacity to listen to identify problems and identifying some issues

Appendix 3: Terms of Reference

Real Time Evaluation Haiti response

1. Introduction

During the hurricane season in September 2008, Haiti has been hit severely by four consecutive storms and cyclones, Fay, Hannah, Gustav and Ike. Gonaives and its department were left under water during several days, affecting an estimated 90,000 families (estimation from OCHA), including 120,000 people in emergency shelters.

Flood levels resulting from tropical storm Hannah were reported to have reached 3.4 meters in places. Access by air has been hampered by high winds and access by sea has been hampered by strong currents. Rough seas have prevented the transportation of emergency supplies of water and hygiene kits from reaching Gonaives.

There was significant damage to infrastructure and urgent need of water, food sanitation materials and significant risks in terms of public health, livelihoods and security. At this stage there are still a significant number of people living in emergency shelters. The situation is very precarious because the cleaning of the town of Gonaives will take lot more time than previous hurricane Jeanne in 2004. Indeed, the town covered by mud has left a large part of the town still uninhabitable and authorities have not made any decision of what should be done.

Doubts are raised whether cleaning of the entire city is a feasible undertaking, based on both considerable costs of such a cleaning operation and the time it would take to complete, as well the probability that such an event will be repeated in the foreseeable future. The two most likely possibilities seem to be the cleaning up of the city or relocation of part of the city to higher grounds. However, scenarios are changing daily, the situation on the ground is volatile and the reality is, Gonaives will remain vulnerable to other natural disasters.

2. Purpose of the Real Time Evaluation

Oxfam International is committed to assessing and improving the quality of its humanitarian programs. As a contribution to meet this commitment, and create space for humanitarian teams to “step back” from their work, the organization has begun to make use of “real time evaluations” (RTE). These reviews are usually completed at an early stage of an operation and lead to the production of succinct reports with recommendations for action and/or lessons identified.

The overall objective of this RTE is to review, progress to date, and capture emerging lessons both for the country program as well as being of relevance to other operations responding to similar emergencies, and where possible draw on learning from previous RTEs. Taking place in the first phase of a response requires a very flexible approach from the RTE team to fit in with the demands and challenges facing the country team/s, partners and affected population.

3. Objectives

To review the response against established benchmarks and to recommend immediate changes

To identify good practices

To identify persistent weaknesses for organizational learning
To promote a learning approach within the participating Oxfams
To promote cross-affiliate learning and to identify enablers and constraints for good affiliate cooperation

4. Methodology

The assignment will be undertaken by a team of three people: Vivien Walden (team leader) from OGB, Mira Gratier from HD and Marfil Francke from OGB regional office. A representative from Oxfam Quebec may also join the team. The timing will be the first two weeks in November starting on the 2nd.

The team will carry out the exercise as follows:

An initial discussion with the commissioning Lead Agency and the country team to ensure that all are clear on expectations and outcomes

A short planning meeting that involves the RTE team and the OGB CD and other managers will be held to look at the program logic (how activities link up to expected outcomes), identifies resources, stakeholders and data sources and finalizes evaluation questions

The team should draw on existing reports to maximize incremental learning from RTEs across the organization

Use the six benchmarks with sub-headings set out below

Discussions with OI affiliate staff (OGB, Intermon and Oxfam Quebec), partners and other stakeholders to reach conclusions against these benchmarks

Ensure that the affected population is consulted and that participatory tools are used as far as possible

Assess the critical enablers and barriers (internally and externally) that contributed to the program implementation, “seeking the explanations.” If agreement between informants on “explanations” cannot be achieved, then the differing opinions will be separately recorded

Submit lessons identified for OI affiliates, partners and other stakeholders

Present to the team/s) and management in a workshop before departure to discuss findings and give opportunities for the team/s to agree on action points, learning and recommendations

While seeking to obtain an understanding of the complex challenges facing Oxfam affiliates in this operation, the RTE will seek to focus on the following areas of enquiry:

1. The speed and timeliness of the response will be good relative to other actors, with consideration of emergency preparedness measures in place

How did the response link to the Preparedness, DRR, NCS (National Change Strategy) and Contingency plan?

Could we have done something different in terms of response?

What were the organizational expectations (at various levels) versus the actual response?

How did learning from previous in-country emergencies feed into this response?

What was the role of the media and/or political pressure within the affiliate headquarters in prompting this response?

Were there security issues and if so, how did this affect the response? Is there a security plan in place? In an insecure environment, how aware are staff regarding security issues?

2. Relief provided is of a quality and scale appropriate to the context that would be expected of Oxfam’s capacity, and is valued by the affected population

What is the scale of the response in comparison to the size of the disaster?

Was gender taken into consideration and are there good examples of innovative thinking?

Is there evidence of women being consulted and their needs being met?

Is there evidence of men being consulted and their needs being met?

How have safety issues for women, men, girls and boys been addressed?
What evidence is there of affected population consultation and satisfaction with services/goods supplied?
Was post-distribution monitoring conducted?
Is there a monitoring system in place and how effective is it?
Is there an accountability system and are all staff aware of accountability issues?
How has the flow of information been to the affected population?
Is there a complaints system in place?

3. An effective management structure is in place, that provides clarity and well-communicated decision-making and direction (including partners) and is appropriately accountable to the affected population
What is the structure and leadership of the Haiti team and how effective is it?
What is the level of awareness of humanitarian work compared to other programmes?
How have internal communications been and how has this affected the programme?
Any evidence of affected population feedback influencing decision-making?
How was the assessment carried out and were decisions based on the findings?
How were decisions made regarding targeting, number of affected population and the areas for response?

4. Key support functions are sufficiently resourced and being effectively run. Risks that are being taken are being calculated and documented
How has monitoring been carried out and is it robust enough to allow staff to correct and to adapt to the situation?
How has support been from the region and what were expectations from the field and from the regional office?
How have support services, finance and HR and logistic been at field level?
Are risks being adequately assessed and documented?

5. Our internal OI relationships are productive and well coordinated, under the leadership of the Lead Agency, and we are having a positive influence on other actors. OI inter-affiliates agreements are in line with the procedures of the Humanitarian Dossier
What is OI's relationship with UNICEF and other UN agencies?
What has been the influence of applying EMMA?
How has it been working through DPC (Civil Protection)?
How has the OI relationship been- planning and working together, clarity of plans and management structure?
How has the response model, partly through partners, sometimes with UN or existing structure and directly operational worked?

The programme has considered the longer term implications and has taken connectedness into consideration

Will there be rehabilitation or recovery programs to link emergency response to the longer-term solutions?

5. Presentation and documentation of findings and recommendations

The RTE team will debrief with the field teams and senior representatives of the three affiliates on its main findings at a Day of Reflection workshop in Port au Prince, and complete a draft report preferably before leaving Haiti. A final report should be produced ideally within the following week. The report should be brief, around 15 pages plus some short annexes containing the Terms of Reference and a timeline. The final report will be posted on the dashboard. Each affiliate will be responsible for taking forward the action

points and recommendations. Affiliates may also wish to hold debriefing meetings in regional centres or headquarters to share learning.

6. Ownership, resourcing and timing

The RTE commissioning manager is the CD for Haiti – Yvette Etienne.
Administrative and logistical support will be provided by the country office/s and should be discussed among in-country affiliates before the arrival of the team.

Assumptions and requirements

Evaluators will have access to all documentation and can take part in relevant meetings and field trips

Evaluators will have access to key staff in all responding affiliates for conducting interviews

Evaluators will have access to members of the affected population for conducting interviews

Evaluators will take into consideration confidentiality and objectivity during process