

Mid-Term Evaluation Management Report Response

The Raising Her Voice Programme Management team confirm that we find the overall quality of the final report good and its content very helpful. The evaluation process has been highly participatory and overall, we are very pleased with the findings. Its conclusions generally reflect our understanding and experience of the 17 country projects and the report provides strong evidence of the wealth of emerging impact being supported by Raising Her Voice projects and campaigns globally.

At country level, many practical recommendations for enhancing our support to embed and deepen these impacts are already being taken forward. The global coordination team is also now working on a comprehensive action plan to take forward the MTE learning – drawing on the report to contextualise recommendations in line with Oxfam’s global systems and processes so as to maximise their impact.

Our specific responses to the report’s conclusions and key recommendations are provided below:

MTE Conclusion/Recommendation	Programme Response
<p>The RHV ‘Community’ Evaluators noted ‘a real opportunity for the RHV team to become less centralised and to leverage more of the global capacity and knowledge that is held there’</p>	<p>Evaluators reflections in this area were very useful. Whilst the demands of both Oxfam and DFID’s accountability mechanisms mean that a certain amount of decision-making must always be centralised, strong horizontal relationships exist amongst the global team already and all are keen to develop this further in the time remaining.</p> <p>The evaluation –and direct feedback from RHV colleagues and partners – attests to the deeply inspiring value of horizontal learning and peer exchange. The focus on the global coordination role in facilitating more exchange of this nature will be an absolute priority in the two years remaining. Now that MTE and annual reports have been submitted, the new coordinator is being supported to take forward priority work on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up on specific areas for improvement raised in individual country MTEs • Supporting sharing of best practice of monitoring of women’s political participation and development of stronger methodologies appropriate for each country project; • Continue discussions started with the MTE process as to how to improve horizontal learning and better leverage the capacity, knowledge and experience held by colleagues and partners with a clear action plan developed to support this process; • Collective refresh of the RHV internal and external communications strategy; • Continue discussions started with the MTE process in Oxford and in RHV countries and regions regarding future funding for RHV country, regional and global projects supported by a clear action plan – see below.

<p>Key recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2011 global workshop (not in Oxford) to validate the theory of change, establish decentralised support, shared learning mechanisms and decision-making structures; • Based on the outcome of these discussions, regular communication between team members based on issues of interest to them, including strategies and approaches for working on women’s rights to political participation and representation, and funding and ideas for sustainability after 2013. <p>Specific recommendations for RHV global communication and identity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the most of online spaces and teleconference technology; • Creation of working groups or facilitated reflection; • Debate on different themes or management issues; • Issue of language to be considered. 	<p>Pan African partners from all 7 RHV countries – and SOAWR coalition host, Equality Now are meeting in Nairobi in mid July to share experiences and start to integrate best practice from other RHV countries into plans for domestication of the Protocol in their specific country contexts. The three days will give us the opportunity to look collectively at actions required for the programme’s final phase, particularly around improving our monitoring of such a wide range of strategies to enhance women’s political empowerment and to start to look beyond the end of the GTF grant. The agenda is being developed in collaboration with all participants.</p> <p>The process of explicitly framing an implicit Theory of Change (ToC) has been very useful for the RHV team and for OGB and OI more broadly – see sections 4&6. A formal process of collectively amending and agreeing it is now taking place – including upcoming discussion at the Nairobi meeting. The programme team notes the need to be clearer that the RHV logic model proposed by evaluators is nested within a wider organisational one - and that economic rights and political rights are closely interconnected (see section 5).</p> <p>Further 2011 regional learning exchanges are also planned for our Latin American and new Asia regions. These regional meetings are considered to be a more effective use of the programmes limited global coordination budget than bringing the whole portfolio together would be at this stage. OGB colleagues and/or partners from other regions will be invited to participate in these regional meetings where this will bring particular added value. Albanian and Armenian projects end shortly so partners from these countries will not be involved – again, due to resource constraints.</p> <p>More thematic teleconferences; revived use of the RHV web site (momentum lost following the departure of the previous coordinator); production of a series of country RHV case studies and an in-depth Nepal case study (both due by end July) and dissemination of key MTE findings will all support this.</p> <p>As the evaluators themselves observed, ‘a much slimmer project with a strong Africa bias’ means that our limited global coordination budget will not be able to free up significant investment for the development of bilingual resources. However, peer exchange between English- and Spanish-speaking RHV country projects will certainly continue in future learning visits and in key programme documents. The allocation of sufficient resources to provide for this element in future Oxfam global programmes is one of the key recommendations being considered by new programmes currently under development.</p>
<p>Programme Monitoring:</p> <p>Evaluators found that often, ‘women’s empowerment itself was not adequately monitored. Sometimes the indicators were not strong enough or did not focus on women’s empowerment and voices, in other cases activities were evaluated as outcomes.’</p>	<p>We share the evaluator’s concern that attention to and greater consistency in monitoring of women’s rights to political representation and participation should be a priority for the global RHV team. The programme Coordinator is therefore already leading follow up with each of the 17 country projects with regard to their specific MTE reports and recommendations – recognising that action to improve monitoring and evaluation processes should focus first at country level work.</p>

Evaluators noted that ‘the RHV portfolio would benefit from effective developmental monitoring of progress towards objectives of women's empowerment, continual review [of progress] and response to the learning. This could serve as a starting point for discussion in the RHV team of relevant indicators for the core principles and objectives of the project, women's political participation and representation, building on the work of other OGB initiatives such as the WeCan campaign, or the multi-country Enterprise Development Programme.’

Evaluators also noted: ‘It is very important that indicators, monitoring systems and informants are also identified and reviewed by the primary stakeholders – poor and marginalised women – using participatory monitoring and evaluation methods.’

Specific recommendations included:

- The global RHV team, including partners and primary stakeholders where possible, should review monitoring and evaluation indicators and systems to strengthen reporting on progress towards transformative change in women's lived realities with regards their participation and representation in governance. Reference should be made to existing methodologies and systems referred to above.
- The RHV coordinator and Programme Policy team should work to identify sources of further funding for facilitated reflection and documentation of how change happens around women's participation and representation in governance.
- The methodology developed for the Bolivia reflection and case study, or the critical stories of change methodology, should be the basis for future reflections and documentation of the contribution of RHV projects to such change.
- Closer analysis of INGO best practice in monitoring and documentation of work on women's empowerment would be very valuable to RHV and OGB more widely.
- Partners may also need support and capacity to monitor, evaluate and document changes to women's political participation, leadership and representation. RHV should think about ways in which it can support, understand and track transformative change in capacity and impact within partners, for their own learning and to help assess sustainability.

The global coordinator has negotiated additional support from colleagues in Oxfam's Monitoring Evaluation and Learning team - and will negotiate similarly with Programme Quality Advisors in Oxfam regions where appropriate - to identify practical ways in which OGB colleagues could better support our partners and coalition members to better monitor work on women's political participation. RHV experiences in Guatemala and Honduras of developing indicators and monitoring systems in collaboration with key stakeholders will be very useful to support this. We're also considering the possibility of contracting Leitmotif to provide some specific ongoing support in this programme learning process.

Other specific actions points include:

- The evaluation –and direct feedback from RHV colleagues and partners – attests to the deeply inspiring value of horizontal learning and peer exchange. The focus on the global coordination role in facilitating more exchange of this nature will be an absolute priority in the two years remaining.
- Horizontal exchanges, such as the recent Nepal peer learning exchange provide opportunities to reflect, exchange and document experiences in once space – and thus represent an effective and efficient method for three important RHV priorities.
- Where other funding can be secured, we will also continue to seek opportunities to include partners *outside* of RHV in these exchanges– recognising the value of different perspectives and the strength of some of the work on women's political participation being carried out by Oxfam partners in other programmes.
- Now that the MTE and annual reporting processes have been submitted the RHV programme team plan to submit an application to our internal Research and Learning Fund (max £10k) for additional resources to support the documentation of RHV impact. The focus of this will be decided in collaboration with RHV PMs and partners.
- We found the Bolivia case study methodology useful but again, limited resources mean that other ways to do this creatively have to be found. For example, the global coordination team are currently planning for our programme resource officer (who documented the Nepal peer exchange so well) to piggy-back a planned regional gender strategy meeting in Senegal and spend time with RHV colleagues and partners in Liberia next month - exploring the possibility of drawing on the Bolivian methodology in doing so. This would give us a valuable opportunity to document the experience of RHV partners, women activists and other stakeholders and to follow-up specific reflections and recommendations from the Liberian MTE.
- The RHV team will also explore the feasibility of incorporating the evaluator's proposal for assessing value for money in future.
- Work to improve the monitoring and evaluation processes is focusing first at country level. This will include development of the role of OGB in supporting partner capacities to do this – as well as sharing experience of and tools for tracking transformational change within partner organisations' themselves. Again, RHV experiences in Guatemala and Honduras of developing

indicators and monitoring systems in collaboration with key stakeholders will be very useful in this - as will the outcomes of a recent meeting in Nairobi on transformational change in Oxfam's gendered livelihoods work.

- An in-depth evaluation of the RHV Indonesia project, piloting a process tracing methodology, has also been carried out as part of Oxfam's monitoring of the previous DFID PPA funding agreement. Findings should help contribute to a better understanding of causality of the impact of an identical project approach in the two very different operating contexts of Papua and Aceh.

Documenting and communicating RHV experiences and impact:

Evaluators noted that with 'strong learning and evidence emerging from RHV projects, and a renewed commitment in OGB to 'put women's rights at the heart of all we do', there is somewhat of a buzz about RHV in Oxfam's Oxford office. This provides an opportunity for RHV to communicate its findings and multidimensional theory, and influence and inform the wider work of the organisation.'

Specific recommendations included:

- The Global Coordinator and wider PRG team should expand RHV reporting from progress reports to donors to include strong evidence and learning about multidimensional approaches to women's rights and governance.
- Communication and outreach need to be based on a clear strategy and stakeholder mapping, within Oxfam (GB, international and affiliates) and beyond to DfID and other development and women's rights actors.
- OGB and the RHV global coordinator can actively seek opportunities for integrating the learning and approaches from Raising Her Voice into other OGB and OI work, including advocacy, campaigns and development programming, and debates (see sections 4 and 6).

The global team is now planning a series of summary papers to ensure as wide as possible readership, understanding and application of the MTE findings in Oxfam (and where relevant, beyond), particularly since we find the evaluator's Executive Summary a little too long and process-heavy to encourage the same debate, learning and positive engagement as the full report has already inspired.

We are particularly keen to ensure that the summary reports communicate some of the impressive hard data being recorded by RHV partners and OGB colleagues in their annual reporting.

Our Gender Lead is supporting us to find ways to enable others in OGB to access information and learning about RHV. The first part of this requires a refresh of the RHV communications strategy and is already set to take place on 4th July – with partners and RHV colleagues globally feeding in through face to face meetings and remote consultation. The full strategy is due for sign off by the middle of August. This will include specific communications work following two high profile visits by members of the Oxfam supporters group the 'Lawyers Circle' to Tanzania and Uganda respectively and the press interest being generated by the wife of the Deputy Prime Minister's experiences of RHV.

The global team are already working closely with the writer of our 'Poverty to Power' blog, Duncan Green to see how RHV MTE findings and highlights from the annual report can best be shared through his daily blog to OGB staff and other development actors and activists. The evaluator that carried out the Bolivian case study is working with partners to adapt the document for an article for Oxfam's next Gender and Development journal on governance; and RHV will also feature in a new 'Programme Insights' series on local governance, to appear early in 2012. RHV is also being profiled on Oxfam's new 'professionals' web site – due to go live in mid-July. Oxfam's Senior Governance Advisor and the RHV Coordinator have planned a July meeting with GTF-funded programme peers in Christian Aid to jointly review the findings of our Mid Term Evaluations.

Various RHV internal presentations have been made at Oxfam House and a reflection session on the MTE findings formed part of a recent Campaigns and Programme Department leadership team learning day. Further internal presentations in RHV country and regional offices will likely

form a key part of the communication strategy.

RHV Partners and OGB country teams are also now starting to document case studies and develop other professional communications materials such as the short films and publication documenting the experiences of Women Leaders Group members in Pakistan. The coordinated sharing of these materials will also help to enhance cross-project learning.

4) Programming Lessons for OGB

Evaluators noted that 'To develop such a complicated structure without much precedent has been a very challenging task, and a lot has been learned.

Key recommendations:

Coherence: A commonly constructed and held theory of change should allow some flexibility within clearly defined shared goals and vision, allowing people to make sense of their work together. Tools and methods for systematic and continual planning, such as outcome mapping, are also useful for developing a shared overview from which to plan and monitor work at all levels.

Resourcing: There is a clear lesson here: global programmes add value when the resources are sufficient to generate and extract that added value.

Funding: OGB and the RHV global coordinator in particular to actively seek opportunities for integrating the learning and approaches from Raising Her Voice into other OGB and OI work, including advocacy, campaigns and development programming, and debates.

Value for Money: Because of the varying quality and methodologies of the different midterm reviews it has not been possible to make any meaningful overall or comparative assessment of efficiency or value for money.

Some of the evaluator's broader observations about Oxfam's programme management systems and processes are naturally unable to reflect the diversity, strengths and weaknesses of our full range of global work. Some of these recommendations are therefore less useful to us as a global coordination team. However, we broadly welcome the evaluator's reflections in this area - and many of the recommendations will be extremely helpful for future programming. **Specific examples include:**

- With hindsight, we recognise that the portfolio is indeed 'spread too thin' and future programming is already learning from the RHV experience and keeping the number of participating countries to a minimum. This will mean that resources are sufficient to ensure that quality, sustainable and multi-dimensional work at both grassroots and national level can be better supported in future.
- In the two years remaining and 5 projects completing their DFID-funded lifespan this year, RHV will also be a slimmer programme. However, we have leveraged huge amounts from the breadth of issues addressed and the different levels of work over 17 countries and two regional campaigns. This diversity has also been a real strength – giving us a richness of experience that we might otherwise not have had.
- One of the key things we need to ensure for future programming is that more time is allocated at the start of the programme to ensure that each country project can properly embed new work and partnerships into existing staffing, systems and processes. Crucially too, to ensure that new work has strong senior management support.
- A small RHV induction pack is set to be developed for new OGB and partner staff – covering global and country specific programme management, finance and monitoring issues specific to RHV. This should help to improve project management and continuity.
- The explicit RHV theory of change is also feeding in to OGB and OI wider thinking on how change happens – for example, our East Asia Regional Change Lead for Governance has included the RHV logic model as a model of good practice in the Program Quality Guidelines. The ToC is proving particularly valuable in helping Oxfam's understanding of the linkages between marginalised women's economic and political rights – see section 6.
- Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Team are also using the proposed theory of change and key evaluation findings related to monitoring impact and ensuring accountability in the technical support being provided to other programme and campaign colleagues.
- Findings from the RHV MTE report on multi-country programming (i.e. portfolio size,

<p>Partnerships: ‘However, often the evaluations did not mention OGB as a partner, though sometimes as a funder. OGB is not presented as working closely on the substance and content of the projects, contributing its own capacity, organisational experience or objectives into the mix, beyond the initial concept.’</p> <p>‘With more time and space for reflection and documentation, these experiences could be an invaluable tool for OGB's own partnership development strategies. What’s more, our own assessment of OGB’s partnerships in RHV suggests that Oxfam not only needs to consider its own added value, but look at what it can learn and gain from the capacity of its partners.’</p>	<p>management systems and processes) are already being incorporated into the development of new OGB proposals for a new Essential Services campaign and for the new DFID-funded Governance in Fragile and Conflict Affected States programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTE findings are also being used in the internal review of Oxfam’s corporate governance framework; contributing to renewed commitments to putting women’s rights at the heart of our work on governance and to a solid model of change for better quality governance programming. <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RHV has proven a really valuable vehicle for many of the country projects involved to reframe partnership – in Nepal for example where we’ve worked with women-led NGOs for the first time, and in Uganda, with strong feminist organisation that has offered to help look at concrete ways to strengthen our work on gender equality in other programme areas. • We accept the findings about the lack of evaluation of OGBs added value in country MTEs. Although the RHV and GTF ToRs were disseminated to all partners, in most countries, partners themselves were in control of contracting the evaluation teams – and did not often seek to assess the OGB input and support provided. We have countless examples of OGB colleagues providing RHV partners with technical assistance, support in programme and organisational development processes and significant campaign and advocacy inputs. It is a shame that these have not been documented. Examples of good practice – and areas where OGB needs to improve - will be discussed at the July RHV meeting in Nairobi. • We will ensure that all Final Evaluation reports specify that the OGB role in RHV is evaluated as part of the process. We will also ensure that RHV PMs in each country sign off ToRs for all final evaluations. • A ‘Rough Guide’ (an internal OGB document for programme managers) on coalition building is currently in development drawing on the outcomes of the RHV global partner meeting held here in Oxford in December last year. • Learning from partners is an issue relevant to all INGOs and one that Oxfam is looking at in depth as part of the 2011 planned refresh of our partnership policy.
<p>Women’s rights within Oxfam GB: Evaluators noted that ‘By validating the theory of change proposed in this evaluation, and building up strong evidence on the value of a multidimensional approach to women's rights from ongoing work, RHV could become an influential force to broaden the organisation’s thinking and programming on women's right to be heard, and support arguments for a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of development.’</p> <p>However, the evaluators also noted that ‘These discussions leave us with many questions about OGB’s work on gender and women’s rights,</p>	<p>We reiterate that these are all welcome observations but that some of the recommendations in this section fall outside the scope of the evaluator’s original terms of reference. This was clearly discussed during the review process, and we encouraged them to include their observations and perspectives; but the report itself is not as clear as it might be that these observations are based on the inevitably very partial and secondary information that became available through the RHV documentation, rather than an adequate data set covering Oxfam’s wider work on women’s rights.</p> <p>Specific OGB action points/responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strong potential for learning from RHV to feed into and broaden Oxfam’s thinking on women’s rights has been widely recognised – and has reinforced agreement that work on

<p>such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could OGB systems for project design, quality control and evaluation mechanisms do more to ensure that adequately ensure strong gender analysis and effective work on gender equality objectives? • How, in the absence of a network of gender experts can OGB mainstream gender most effectively, keep up to date with relevant methods and information, and support peers and colleagues to work on women's rights? • How can OGB mutually reinforce its work on both women's political participation and women's economic rights and livelihoods to ensure the broadest possible, multidimensional understanding of women's rights and strengthen impact? • How can OGB support and develop consistency amongst individuals in key positions responsible for quality assessment and approval of the gender component of projects? • Recognising that work on women's personal, social and political empowerment can be difficult to monitor, how can OGB staff and partners communicate and report on gender in ways that can really help understand how change to gender relations and women's lives happens, and the contribution OGB can make? 	<p>women's political participation needs to be part of Oxfam's wider women's rights programming in future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RHV ToC is already being used to support OGB and OI thinking on how change happens. For example, OGB's Senior Gender Advisor has been working with colleagues in our Horn, East and Central Africa Region to improve linkages between work on women's political empowerment, gender justice and economic livelihoods within the regional gender strategy – and will provide continued support to the subsequent development of individual country plans. • A regional Oxfam West Africa meeting, due to take place in mid-July, will help to facilitate a similar process of integration of women's rights approaches in joint country programming.
<p>Specific recommendations for RHVs future:</p> <p>Evaluators noted that...‘at national level many RHV projects are well embedded in wider processes, although not always in OGB's own work, and these links need to be strengthened and extended in order to clarify the most appropriate role for RHV after 2013. On a global scale, RHV has the potential to become a 'brand' or space to connect, support and publicise different work in the organisation around women's rights and governance.’</p> <p>‘At this time of change to a single management system in Oxfam, there is a great opportunity for RHV to plan for a future position bringing together these different areas of work, and highlighting ways in which they complement and link into other areas of Oxfam's programming. This may also build momentum for an eventual global campaign on women's rights.’</p>	<p>The MTE findings have been very helpful to Oxfam's thinking about the RHV programme's future. For example, RHV has proven a valuable vehicle for many of the country projects involved to reframe local partnerships - including in Nepal, where Oxfam has worked with women-led NGOs for the first time, and in Uganda, with a strong feminist organisation that has offered to help look at concrete ways to integrate women's political participation into gender justice work in other programme areas.</p> <p>RHV is also being used as a useful point of programme collaboration across Oxfam International affiliates. The global MTE case study of Bolivia for example highlighted the value of RHV as a strong potential vehicle for enabling programmatic coherence across the new OI management structure. Similar discussions about the potential of RHV as a multi-affiliate country programme are now also taking place in Indonesia and in Nepal. In Nepal and Pakistan, Oxfam has started to integrate RHV and We Can (global campaign to end all violence against women), for example in Pakistan We Can ‘change makers’ are joining Women Leader Groups to enhance their skills, integrate VAW into work on other local priorities, build collective action and amplify their voices.</p> <p>Now that the MTE and annual reporting processes have been submitted the RHV programme team are turning their attention to looking to continue this work beyond the scope of the GTF portfolio as a priority for the remaining two years. Specific actions include:</p>

- RHV projects in Nepal, Indonesia, Armenia and Guatemala all come to an end this financial year and are interested in finding ways to secure follow-on funding for successful early work. The Global Coordinator is supporting them in their efforts wherever possible. Individual and multi-country submissions have already been made for RHV Indonesia and Nepal.
- Colleagues in the Supporter Marketing Department in Oxford are inviting proposals from RHV projects seeking additional or future support - for matching bids for £20-100k to new and existing UK donors. Again, the Global Coordinator is supporting these efforts wherever possible;
- The RHV PM team will meet with Oxfam's Chief Executive, Barbara Stocking in early August to start to discuss the programme's organisational future.
- Members of Oxfam's 'Lawyers Circle' supporter group have also expressed a firm commitment to Oxfam's Chief Executive to support these efforts following a recent visit to Uganda. This provides valuable private sector momentum to the strong internal case for the Oxfam future of RHV.
- As the evaluators pointed out, 'RHV has built a strong, well respected 'brand' and it could provide us with a useful vehicle for continued support to this kind of work (with mechanisms for shared exchange and peer learning) beyond the original 17 DFID grantees.' The RHV coordination team is also looking at the potential for Oxfam support to other work on women's political participation and leadership – including a new Arab Spring project - under the umbrella of Raising Her Voice.