



OXFAM

**HECA Regional
Food Security & Livelihoods Framework**

(Draft v 7, 24 May 2012)

Section 1: Background and Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The countries that comprise Oxfam’s HECA region represent a wide diversity of opportunities for food security and livelihoods. However these opportunities have historically been available to only a portion of the population living in the region. Poor governance, low investment, and resource scarcity have led to compromised ability of poor people to attain food security and sustainable livelihoods strategies. These problems are compounded by recurring drought, flooding and conflict which characterize the region, as well as effects of global events such as climate change, price volatility, and financial crises.

Integration between Oxfam’s long term livelihoods work and humanitarian interventions is of paramount importance to building resilience and sustainable livelihoods. The divide between ‘emergency’ food security and livelihoods is blurred and artificial – in reality people move between varying states of food insecurity and threats to livelihoods. In some cases we can build better risk management into programmes; in others this is not enough and people need to be able to switch to new livelihoods options. To others for whom attaining food security is an improbability in the next 5–10 years, if ever, we need to ensure that the systems exist to provide them with the basic food security and needs to live a dignified life. Finally, quick onset emergencies will still occur and community/system resilience (e.g. government response) will take time to function fully. In recognition of this, we also need to ensure adequate monitoring and planning, leading to clear triggers allowing us to intervene in emergencies at the right time and with the right activities meeting basic needs while supporting long-term aims. These complex contexts within which we work, and the non-linear relationships between actors, interventions and their outcomes, demand a new approach by Oxfam.

This Framework is intended to set out an ambition for developing and imbedding these approaches into our work in order to develop long lasting, sustainable solutions by and with the communities for whom we work. As the OI Humanitarian Strategy 2020 acknowledges, there is no single overall ‘model’ that will address all the needs of people living in poverty. Instead, this framework aims to outline what needs to be done, leaving the implementation – or how – to each country programme under its new SMS structure to decide. The framework has been developed to set out OGB’s vision and approaches as a pre-cursor to discussions with our country teams, other affiliates and external stakeholders. As such, it does not attempt to synthesize all existing strategies and programmes (such as those laid out in JCAS’s or in global OI strategies¹), but rather to link with them where appropriate.

1.2 Main Messages / Summary

Oxfam’s one programme approach, the regional JCAS’s and this framework focus on leveraging systemic changes that bring about transformational changes that benefit poor women and men.

All our programming must build resilience into its core – enabling programmes and communities to identify and consistently monitor risks and triggers, as well as to act on them promptly – for instance by mobilizing government support.

We recognize that we will need to provide humanitarian responses for the foreseeable future. This will require improved understanding, improved planning and clear monitoring of key indicators allowing for timely response. However, any responses to emergencies must be done in such a way, so as not to undermine long-term sustainable livelihoods and food security through, for instance, creating dependencies on Oxfam (or other NGOs) or disrupting markets that long term solutions rely on.

While we recognize the ongoing prerogative to meet humanitarian needs directly, our programmes should be moving clearly towards creating the conditions where communities and the women and men

¹ The Framework was developed in consultation / with input from leads for the OI Economic Justice change goal, HECA Grow Campaign, as well as the OI Humanitarian Strategy 2020.

within them can meet their needs through sustainable livelihoods strategies. This will require systems approaches where we analyse and understand the entire system, identify key leverage points, and allow a level of flexibility in our programming to capitalize on new opportunities and meet new challenges.

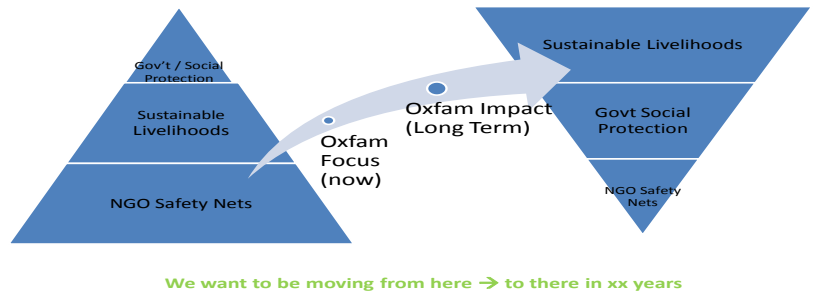
Markets are pervasive and largely form the foundation of most livelihoods and food security strategies in HECA. We will continue to work with and through markets, seeking to improve poor women’s and men’s access to markets for commodities (food and other needs and services), inputs, and products and services (such as labour). In our long-term programming, we can build on ‘access’ to markets and support services which seek to influence or develop market systems that benefit small producers

This will mean working at three levels:

- INFLUENCING key actors (at local, national, regional and global levels) who can generate the conditions necessary for people to enjoy food security and livelihoods
- Facilitate building the voice, capacity, and motivation for people to place demands themselves on different actors and hold others to account for delivering changes that lead to their food security and livelihoods.
- Where we implement programmes directly, ensuring that these support the principles of empowerment and dignity; building power within people to become drivers of change; and supporting social capital & cohesion interventions as a basis for community coping mechanisms.

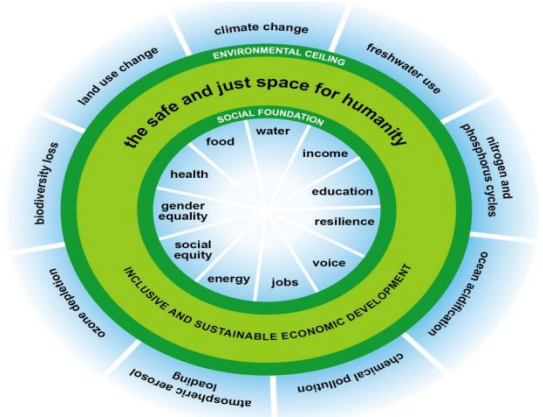
For those who cannot and will not be able to participate in livelihoods strategies that meet all their needs, Oxfam will ensure that there is adequate protection and support to provide these women and men with food security and livelihoods. We will work with governments to ensure that they are able to provide these safety nets in the long term thereby reducing reliance on NGOs. In the most insecure contexts (e.g. Somalia), Oxfam will work with other partners to ensure these basic needs are met.

Transition – from Safety Nets to Livelihoods with Social Protection



Oxfam in HECA will engage with different stakeholders to involve as well as influence them in providing sustainable solutions for livelihoods and food security. This includes the communities and households themselves, government (at different levels), other NGO’s and civil society organisations, as well as the Private Sector.

Achieving sustainable livelihoods in HECA will require that all people have the resources needed – such as food, land, water, health care, and energy – to fulfil their human rights. The impacts of livelihoods programming on natural resources need to be better understood, and solutions sought that build the natural resource base and Earth’s critical processes and systems. ²



² See Kate Raworth, *A Safe and Just Space for Humanity*. Discussion paper, February 2012.

1.3 Vision

Oxfam in HECA's livelihoods vision is that all communities have diversified sustainable livelihoods, live dignified lives, have access to resources and opportunities, demonstrate resilience and are at the frontiers of development. Sustainable livelihoods are the foundation on which people's lives are built and through which there can be an end to poverty and suffering. In this regard, Oxfam's rights based approach is grounded on the belief that people are entitled to a claim of basic conditions of living with dignity and access to opportunity, as a basis of fulfilling their human potential. Sustainable food security and livelihoods strategies enable people meet their immediate and future needs; enhance their dignity and voice; empower them economically, politically and socially; and develop the communities and countries which people belong to and live in.

Oxfam livelihoods work in HECA addresses both the most extreme forms of livelihood vulnerability and food insecurity and develops livelihoods as a key driver of change within the region, recognising the potential for equitable economic growth to contribute to peace, stability, good governance and general well-being for communities across the region as well as improving food security. We aspire to continue building and strengthening approaches that integrate food security and livelihoods across all of our programming – recognizing that the distinction between 'EFSL' and 'long-term livelihoods' is artificial and that Food Security and Livelihoods programmes in rural agricultural, arid/semiarid lands, and urban need to be developed to address a range of issues.

1.4 Context

Oxfam in HECA recognizes that we are working in a complex world that is organic, emergent, changing and interconnected. Interactions occur between the economy, society, environment and politics at local, national, regional and global levels. Actions at one level can have effects elsewhere which 'feedback' to the origin of that action. These feedback loops are complex and often unpredictable –emerging in new scenarios that require re-thinking the context.

Figure 1 & 2 & 3 – (See Appendix for possible depictions of LH Model in view of complexity)

In our Food Security and Livelihoods programming, there is a need to adopt systemic thinking and scenario building as a basis of adjusting programmes to seasonal changes and shocks. Equally, there is a need to seize new opportunities and take risks which are calculated and managed based on thorough understanding of both the potential benefits and harm of programmes and actions. Oxfam's interventions will require continuous analysis and updating of the understanding of the context within which we work and accepting that people have to adapt their livelihoods to achieve a better future. Opportunities for growth must exist and people must be able to respond to and take these opportunities and to deal with and recover from any shocks without sliding too far down the 'coping' ladder so as to begin again at the bottom rung.

Oxfam defines resilience as the ability of an individual or community to anticipate absorb and recover from shocks with little or no external help, as well as being able to maintain their wellbeing despite changes that take place over a longer time period. Resilience is not a fixed end state, but is a dynamic set of conditions and processes that enable individuals and communities to maintain the capacity to improve their wellbeing despite adversity, and to keep pace with rapidly growing and evolving types of risk. This will require long-term investment in addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability, including inequality, environmental degradation, gender equity, land rights, poor infrastructure, weak governance, and access to essential services and economic opportunities, among other things.³

³ Taken from 'Oxfam Discussion Paper on Resilience, May 2012'

Sometimes this entails building on existing assets and resources to develop and strengthen livelihoods strategies. At other times it will involve adapting or even shifting away from existing strategies towards new or different, more stable ones. In order to be sustainable, all livelihoods strategies need to build in resilience and work with or influence others who compromise livelihoods of poor and vulnerable households and communities. Therefore the models and interventions and their impacts will vary and need to be developed jointly with communities and other stakeholders.

Common trends Affecting HECA	Implications for livelihoods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Shocks and volatilities: food and energy crisis, financial crises, cultural & political intolerance, conflict – Changing demographics such as urbanisation, population growth and consumerist orientation – Increasing power of ICT - computing power, (tele)communications and transport – Increasing role of the private sector e.g. in CSR, Investment flows, services that support the poor e.g. MPESA and intertwining with governments/authorities – Reducing development funding flows – less from traditional donors more from China as well as the role of private sector in development work – Globalization of markets vs. protectionism approaches by nations against global influences & new markets – Increasing power struggles over declining natural resources – Changing international & regional power dynamics e.g. role of China in the region, the Arab spring etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Enhance community resilience</i>: focus on climate change adaptation/DRR; support social protection schemes including in volatile/conflict contexts; work with breakaway groups from traditional livelihoods systems; and introduce trend watchers and introduce trend watchers. – <i>Power analysis</i>: analyze power relations between CSOs, international community, private sector, civil society etc and implications on livelihoods food security work – <i>Understand urban context</i>: build new responses that cater for growing urban poverty, focusing on both pull and push factors and all urban (non rural) set ups. Understand livelihood strategies, distress signals and movement trends within (rural) and urban contexts. – <i>Integrated approaches</i>: holistic (gendered) livelihood analysis; factor environmental complexities; adopt an emergence approach; integrate wealth creation and influencing into ‘one programme’ – <i>Governance</i>: explore different avenues of engagement; look into rights/responsibilities of citizens & governments – <i>Work with others</i>: multi-stakeholder processes with public & private sectors; linking with markets & private sector – <i>Approach/role</i>: Facilitate more, share more, influence more, but implement less – <i>Communication</i>: Convey message that it is not business as usual with communities or stakeholders. – <i>New opportunities</i>: Identify opportunities arising out of a more connected world (ICT) – <i>Influencing donor funding priorities</i>

1.5 Whom do we work with and where do we work?

HECA encompasses a wide range of contexts, and Oxfam focuses on areas where people have been most marginalized and are most vulnerable to shocks and / or exploitation. The degree of poverty and vulnerability will vary according to the country and context itself. The people whom we work with can range from vulnerable food insecure and asset poor women and men, through to productive and better off members of society who can provide the drivers for development and improved food security and livelihoods, but nevertheless face many of the same challenges and shocks to their livelihoods.

Broadly, Oxfam’s livelihoods strategies fall into three main contexts: Rural; Arid and semi-arid areas; and (increasingly) urban. Within these areas a range of different vulnerabilities exist – from cyclical droughts and floods, to unpredictable conflict or economic or political crises. Severe shocks within the HECA context linked to drought and flooding are cyclical and recurrent and present major challenges to Oxfam’s ambitions and efforts for sustainable food security livelihoods in HECA. Over and above the drought cycle management approach⁴ currently adopted by Oxfam, there is realization of a need to build progressive emergency responses that build on the gains of long-term programming, utilize existing capacity and have clear mechanisms to link back to development so as create a trampoline

⁴ See Annex XX for DCM Diagram

(bounce back) effect which will enable a positive spiral. While conflict can be less predictable, in many cases it is either protracted or is linked to seasonal or political incidents. Again we need to build our capacity to respond effectively, but at the same time try to create an upwards cycle of development where possible taking into account protection needs.

In order to support livelihoods strategies, Oxfam works with other NGOs as well as the Private Sector and Government. Our work with the Private Sector helps build a fair and equitable private sector that provides livelihoods opportunities, through jobs or markets, for people living in poverty. The Private Sector can also furnish essential ingredients for building livelihoods through services and inputs. The way in which poor people benefit from the private sector depends on the overall business model of companies, and Oxfam can influence these models or regulations that govern them. Governments have a role to play in creating an overall environment that is conducive to investment and development of livelihoods.

Reference – Figure 4 (See Appendix for possible diagram to be modified to suit different contexts)

1.5 Strategies for change

One Programme Approach: There is a need to practically institute a ‘one programme approach’ which links humanitarian development and campaigns by working beyond silos. Food security and livelihood intervention in complex and rapidly evolving contexts like HECA compels Oxfam to look for multiple entry points and to move beyond a homogenous ‘community’ view and a narrow sectoral perspective, and instead see linkages between sectors while connecting the micro to the macro and the formal to the informal. This calls for moving away from universal (policy) prescriptions to context-specific approaches that allow alternative, local perspectives to reveal themselves (emergence). It implies thinking out of the box, away from conventional approaches that are often restricted to identifying problems and finding solutions (i.e. linear cause-effect relations). The Oxfam food security and livelihoods framework proposes making livelihood interventions not only longer term but also process oriented (organic).

Analysis: The Oxfam livelihood program in HECA aims to analyze, understand and address trends, shocks and seasonalities not only at the local & country level but across the entire system i.e. markets systems, ecosystems, landscapes etc. The programs need to be designed not only to respond to crisis but also opportunities, while taking into consideration the benefits and potential harm of our actions. The table below highlights some of the common trends that transcend the local, regional and global levels but which have implications across the various contexts that Oxfam works in HECA.

Adaptation – generating the ‘upward spiral’: Realizing a seamless integration of emergency food security, longer-term livelihoods and social protection work, in a non linear way across different contexts require a rethinking of the needed capacities, skills and abilities to enable a more integrated, business oriented, scalable and facilitative work within the sector. Since most livelihoods shocks in HECA are cyclical/ongoing, we need to programme in a way to make them generate an ‘upward spiral’ of development. We need to embrace continuous critical analysis that seeks to unpack complexity and plan in ways that allow for greater flexibility in all aspects of programming. We need to continuously assess our work from a benefits and harm perspective; look at livelihoods with an ecosystem; and recognise opportunities and try new things from which we take.

Accountability: We need to be accountable to the people whom we work with/ support, treating women and men living in poverty as rights holders as well as responsible drivers of change and contributors to development. This implies a shift in approaches from consultation and delivery/ implementation’ to more emphasis of co-creation and facilitation.

Section 2: Framework for Oxfam LH Programs in HECA

2.1 Key Changes: what we think we can achieve

Oxfam seeks to attain changes that lead to food security and livelihoods through influencing and changing the systems that cause injustice and poverty, facilitating the following change in HECA:

1. Improved and sustainable livelihoods for small scale producers, especially women, across HECA region. In other words, smallholder women farmers, pastoralists and traders are living lives of dignity and accessing opportunities and resources within environmental limits.
2. Increased resilience for chronically vulnerable/ food insecure communities across HECA region through appropriate interventions that support Long term livelihoods building, including work with the growing urban populations across the region
3. Access to social protection measures, primarily provided by governments, for chronically vulnerable people and safety nets that prevent people from slipping into chronic poverty / vulnerability during periods of ‘shock’ (see section 5a).
4. Promotion of women’s economic opportunities to enable them harness development gains to improve their wellbeing and that of their families
5. Improved emergency response, guided by in-depth contextual understanding, better planning & clear monitoring of key indicators that inform when to intervene. Such programmes should aim to support longer-term aims and also aim to be phased out as community resilience increases.

In pursuing the above ambitions, Oxfam recognizes the diversity, complexity and myriad of livelihood situations and needs existing within the HECA context and appreciates the need to prioritize its efforts and resources where it adds most value. The specific focus, approaches and strategies under each of these choices will be in turn be dictated by changing contexts and priorities of communities, Oxfam’s capacities and interventions of other actors. The section below elaborates these choices.

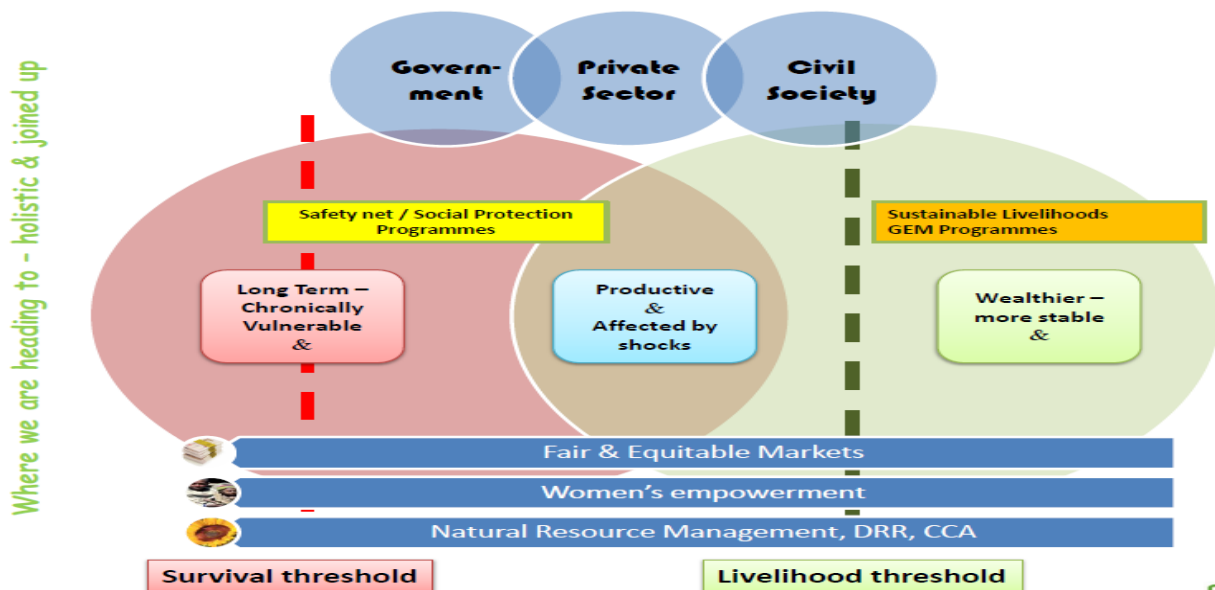


Figure 5: The figure above shows how the priorities described in section 2.2 below relate and contribute towards food security and livelihoods in different contexts in HECA. The over-lapping spheres represent people with different levels of vulnerability for which different types of interventions / programming will apply at different points in their lives. The spheres at the top represent ‘good governance’ by different actors, while the bars at the bottom are cross cutting issues across all programming.

2.2 HECA Livelihood Priority Choices and Strategies

To achieve the changes outlined above, Oxfam in HECA has identified six priority areas that we will focus on across our programmes in rural agricultural areas, ASALs and Urban contexts:

1. Market Systems

People's livelihoods are intrinsically connected to markets. People living in poverty suffer from unequal and limited fair access to markets and their benefits e.g. due to unfair trade terms and limited (bargaining) power. Market analysis and programming forms a foundation running across Oxfam's food security and livelihoods work, from ensuring access to food through markets, to providing fair access to markets for selling products and services. Oxfam's 'Gendered Enterprise & Markets' approach provides a framework for developing and influencing market systems so that they benefit smallholder women producers in particular, while the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis toolkit allows programmes to develop markets based interventions to secure people's access to food and essential goods and services in times of crisis.

Equal and fair participation in and benefits from markets for women is core to these approaches, and Oxfam will keep 'women at the heart' of programme development to promote women's empowerment while remaining cognizant of the potential to 'overburden' women's roles as key care givers and providers in households. There is in this regard a need to include deeper analysis of the 'household system' alongside the production system and market system e.g. by looking for alternates that enable women to engage in economic activities while taking care of household responsibilities.

Market systems approaches invite us to analyze and understand the whole system as a basis of improving people's lives. Markets analysis entails different stakeholders coming together to jointly map out all the actors in a system - from local producers & consumers to distributors, regulators, governments and regional/ global actors – to analyze their (power) relations, and to find means of facilitating win-win situations for all these actors. This necessitates a need to analyze/focus on the entire market system (actors, roles, power, fairness etc), and not just the production end of a value chain.

2. Governance

Good governance underpins sustainable livelihoods as government policies and investment flows determine people's access to food, basic products and services etc. Through its livelihoods work, Oxfam seeks to develop the capacities, rights and responsibilities of marginalized people – in particular women. This requires engagement with the political elite as well as promoting a public-private partnership in which governments become enablers rather than blockers. Other areas of focus could include working with governments/duty bearers/ traditional authorities to improve the overall operating environment and ensuring that the authorities/other duty bearers are held to account – while holding other actors like the private sector to account. Our governance work involves influencing different actors (through advocacy, lobbying, providing evidence and engagement) to develop and implement pro-poor policies and practices for livelihoods. It involves building active citizenships where people hold duty bearers and private sector to account by themselves.

Efforts are also needed to champion the building of social protection systems by government to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are met; improvement of public goods and services in dry lands; [leveraging and policy change](#) e.g. development of clear policies and frameworks to link rural and urban areas/concerns; management of resource-based conflicts; harnessing information technology and unity in policy at its country, regional, and local levels; good governance within the market/ value chain; and power analysis to identify vulnerabilities of

particular population. The goal of all these should be to cultivate deeper linkages between communities and government.

Women's economic leadership is in this regard one 'entry point' which can lead to improved political power for women. However, the two often are reciprocal and livelihoods programming needs to link with our governance and women's empowerment work to ensure that these complement the rights of women.

3. Natural resource management / environment

Ecosystems are increasingly characterized by variability and unpredictability. Recognition of this uncertainty and complexity requires a focus on protecting the ownership of and revenue from natural resources for indigenous people, including land rights while working with institutions governing common property. Women in particular have historically been stewards of the environment since household needs require access to resources such as water and land. However, they are often marginalized from unlimited access to these very resources. Oxfam needs to develop interventions that uphold access to and sustainable use of resources, mediating between communities, governments and the private sector to ensure that natural resources are managed sustainably within environmental limits and with fair access for their rightful stewards. Furthermore, our programmes should aim to support sustainable resource planning, use, and management whereby the natural resource base on which livelihoods depend are not eroded and irreparably damaged, thereby securing fair and equitable access to these resources in the future.

4. Women's Empowerment

In HECA, both men and women play substantial economic roles, in agriculture, pastoralism, fishing and wage labour. Women are more active in the agricultural cycle than men, specifically in food crop production, marketing, and processing of agricultural products. They also are most vulnerable in terms of food insecurity, violence and conflict, and limited access to resources. Despite all the work women do towards household and community livelihoods, women are more likely to be poor than men.

Oxfam is committed to 'putting poor women's rights at the heart of programming' through working towards three objectives which were agreed during the 2011 Livelihoods' Learning Event on Gender:

- a) Support for livelihoods programme development in HECA that will deliver *transformational changes* leading to economic, political and social empowerment of poor women.
- b) Ensure learning on approaches to putting women at the heart of programming is shared across the region and globally.
- c) Provide mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and improving livelihoods programmes so that they have a real impact on women's livelihoods and rights.

5. Building resilience

In the context of HECA crisis/stress linked to drought and flooding are cyclical and recurrent. It is also recognized that these stresses represent set-backs to the Oxfam HECA livelihoods vision. Although sustainable livelihoods and DRR measures can lessen the impact, it is a certainty that many people with marginal livelihoods will fall into severe food insecurity. Historically the drought cycle management (DCM) approach has helped us to position our interventions, but often the cycle can be seen to be a downwards spiral. Through building progressive emergency responses which build on the gains of long-term programming and build on/strengthen existing capacity to further enhance people's adaptive capacity (including enhancing traditional social capital based coping mechanisms), we aim to create a trampoline effect which will enable a positive upward spiral.

a) Social Protection and Safety Nets

Social protection measures can help bring dignity to people who can't build their own livelihoods such as people with disabilities and who should thus be provided for by governments, local or

national. Oxfam sees its role in this regard as helping states who are willing but perhaps not able, to build coalitions, and benefit from pilots. Where possible, social protection should act as a stepping stone to lift people out of poverty - for groups who are more able to engage in economic development, it is vital that livelihoods interventions and opportunities run alongside so that those remaining on social protection are only those who cannot engage in economic activity.

Safety nets on the other hand prevent people from losing their basic assets and aim to prevent negative health outcomes during times of crisis. Oxfam's 'humanitarian mandate' requires responding to between 10% and 25% of such affected populations. However, in order to ensure that any such humanitarian relief does not undermine long term sustainable livelihoods of the affected people, Oxfam needs to consciously discourage interventions that create dependency, distort markets and/or destroy resilience. This requires that good baseline information is present, clear preparedness actions are taken and response plans are created which can be easily taken up by others. In addition key indicators need to be consistently monitored and linked to triggers which can enable timely and targeted response.

Oxfam sees its role in this regard as helping states who are willing but perhaps not able, to build coalitions, and benefit from pilots. Where possible, social protection should act as a stepping stone to lift people out of poverty - for groups who are more able to engage in economic development, it is vital that livelihoods interventions and opportunities run alongside so that those remaining on social protection are only those who cannot engage in economic activity. Safety nets should be provided in ways that build on existing capacities and enhances instead of undermining long-term programming. These also require that good baseline information and clear plans are created which can be easily taken up by others working on the same in the region.

b) Protection in situations of conflict and fragility

In situations of fragile or inexistent governments it has often been assumed that longer-term programming is not possible. However, while it may be the case that emergency safety nets are a necessity in rapid onset, or displacement situations, it is important to also develop longer-term strategies and enhance capacities. These need to include clear protection assessments prior to engagement regarding access to market and inputs. It is also important to recognize the parties playing governance roles in where the government is absent -private sector or civil society – and engage with them innovatively. While food security may remain a primary aim efforts are also needed to find ways in which sustainable livelihoods and social safety nets can be introduced, in these environments, through innovation and partnerships.

6. Working with the private sector

Oxfam recognizes the private sector as a key driver of development and a possible formidable force in poverty reduction *if its actions do not compromise the rights of people and the environment*. Oxfam sees its role in this regard as facilitating fairness and equity in the activities of the PS by engaging, lobbying, contracting, consulting and working with the latter in a variety of ways. This requires a deeper understanding, working with, and promoting the development of a 'fair and equitable' Private Sector that contributes to equitable economic growth, livelihoods, and economic justice through providing jobs, services, goods and market access for people, particularly women, living in poverty as well as ensuring sustainability not only in financial or economic terms but also environmental terms. We will particularly seek out opportunities for promoting women's empowerment through women's equitable involvement in and benefits from private sector development.

Working with the private sector encompasses a range of approaches – from influencing to increase investment in services and goods such as provision of appropriate technology and energy; co-creating products and services for the poor, such as financial products; as well as working with the informal or formal 'micro / small / medium' sized sector to develop an equitable and fair private sector that provides opportunities for women and men living in poverty.

Within Oxfam, inter-disciplinary processes will be required to solve the mix of problems, to determine various approaches to managing the different systems. The need therefore to mobilize science (natural and social) and innovation for development using both traditional and scientific approaches.

Note: Linking HECA regional priorities to Oxfam global priorities

The above regional priorities fit well within the *Oxfam global priorities* as summarized in here below:

1. *Sustainable food security and poverty reduction*: securing the asset base; sustainable production; power in markets; national agricultural and food security policy
2. *Redistribution/ re-directing of major financial flows*: transparency, accountability and due diligence in corporate & public governmental financial flows; domestic tax reforms; community voice and participation
3. *Equitable and sustainable use of land, water and carbon*: Equitable and sustainable natural resource use; ethical lifestyles; coalitions of ambition to reduce carbon emissions
4. *Enabling environment for poor women's economic empowerment*: strengthening women's property rights; ending regulatory and customary discrimination; increasing women's representation in producer organizations
5. *Urban*: support women's & youth's economic empowerment/leadership via social enterprises e.g. waste recycling, green jobs, cheap renewable energy, water & the informal sector.

2.3 Other General Strategies/ Approaches

Other than the strategies and approaches mentioned under each of the regional priority systems,

Oxfam HECA will work on:

- a) Analyzing and understanding the whole system, including how interventions or actions lead to different outcomes – i.e. not 'log frame thinking' but more outcome mapping
- b) Building on opportunities, understanding & managing risks better i.e. encouraging contingency planning; community based disaster risk management etc
- c) Development and/or adoption of clear exit strategies for the various interventions
- d) Ensuring that protection analysis is part of livelihood building in contexts vulnerable to conflict
- e) Creating emergency response plans which build on build on and not undermine people's traditional coping mechanisms, especially in chronic stress situations and which are implemented as the exception and not the norm

On the other hand, Oxfam HECA will stop/ **move away from**:

- a) Inputs and direct service provision, with key exceptions that should be short-term/ transitory, and contributing to women's economic and social empowerment
- b) Humanitarian/development divides, focusing instead, where feasible on long term strategies that improve food security
- c) Small scale projects that do not bring about systemic opportunities for livelihoods improvement
- d) Projects that do not bring disproportionate benefits for women relative to their needs, and which are not used as broad catalysts for women's empowerment, unless the humanitarian imperative is such that response demands more broad-based support e.g. conflict.
- e) Programs that bring about more harm than benefits in the long run

Section 3: Ways of Working

3.1 Roles of Oxfam Country Teams and HECA Regional Centre

a) Roles of Oxfam HECA Country Teams

Country programmes are drivers of changes in programming, and are at the forefront of translating the livelihoods framework into programmes. Countries which allow innovation and piloting of new programmes, developing successful ones into the core of their programme, and discontinuing those that fail can lead to programming that achieves the ambitions set out in this framework. In contrast, countries which dedicate resources to approaches and programmes that have failed to achieve resilient sustainable livelihoods and food security need to revise their approach to programming to allow & reward greater (calculated) risk taking, innovation, and adaptation of impactful programming.

High ↑ Strategic Relevance	Venture Capital Time bound investments in innovation Unrestricted Funding 20%	Core Programme Areas of recognized expertise Institutional Donors and multi-annual funding 60%
	Dead Dogs Failed innovations maintained for emotional reasons Poor results on unrestricted & undemanding donor funding 0%	Capital Gains Programmes that maintain profile, leverage and income Institutional donors only 20%
Low	Case for 'funding' → High	

Country programmes can also help improve Oxfam’s impact by sharing good practices and learning. Within countries, evidence from programmes is used to influence stakeholders. This learning, shared with other country programmes, allows us to avoid past mistakes and progress our programming. Because much of livelihoods programming depends on specific skills rather than routine procedures, sharing skills between countries – through hosting visits, providing support functions to other countries and secondments – is also an important driver of change across the region. Some countries (e.g. Kenya) are already setting up advisory services that can share expertise and learning with other countries.

b) Regional Role

Shifting towards a truly integrated, one-programme approach requires conceptualizing Food Security and Livelihoods across different contexts. The division between ‘emergency’ and ‘long term’ programming does not help achieve this ambition, and the division between ‘EFSL’ and ‘Livelihoods’ should be reconciled at all organizational levels to reflect the principles outlined in this Framework.

This will entail revising the way in which advisory / support services are provided such as through:

- Consolidated 'emergency' and 'non-emergency' livelihoods advisory / support functions into one team with different 'technical' specialists who are capable of acting in different contexts.
- A database of consultants / partners at regional level, with a standard level of ‘capacity’
- Some countries offering 'support services' to other country programmes - i.e. cross-country support (on short term or longer 'secondment' basis) (see above)

It is proposed that all livelihoods related staff work within one team, bringing specific ‘technical’ skills to food security and livelihoods programming in different contexts. These technical experts would provide support in different contexts, for instance droughts when needed, or for long term programming at other times. Some of these skills may be sourced externally (e.g. through consultants) – however require a ‘kick start’ to develop institutional knowledge, align thinking strategically and build a reliable database of external consultants.

Technical skills that are currently in demand are markets programming, financial expertise, protection, and social protection. Support would focus on providing capacity development and advisory support to the country programs, helping the countries think about what they want to do and how to best showcase their work, rather than what Oxfam (global) wants to do. The role of regional advisors on this regard could entail accompaniment and mentoring of country staff as well as sharing of innovations, trends and learning and not gap filling within countries and across the region. Analysis of the capacities resident at both the regional center and the HECA countries needs to be evaluated with a view to facilitating intra and inter country support. While we may require some of these skills in-house for some period of time, the requirements, and therefore the roles, may change over time.

The Livelihoods team could be led by a ‘team leader’ who also provides support to emergencies and long-term programming, coordinates deployment of the technical experts, and leads on strategic thinking on Livelihoods. This role could eventually mean an amalgamation of the existing EFSL and LH roles, or in the short run, be a dual-managed team. Reporting lines would be to the Aim 1 & Aim 3 (DRD) with dotted line responsibility to humanitarian team (as there is no ‘long term programming’ team.). There is also a feel that country livelihood advisors should work more as a team with the Regional Livelihoods Lead, say through an organic structure, having regular (joint) reflection events, and/or learning platforms.

5.2 Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

MEAL systems and processes need to reflect the constant state of flux / change and encourage emergence and learning rather than traditional linear and prescriptive cause-effect orientation. This requires that mechanisms are developed to improve seeing what we are doing well or not so well and gaining learning from it - gathering more information or stories on how people’s lives are being changed by intended or un-intended ways as part of MEAL. Flexible models of change at program level, as well as clear monitoring and evaluation strategies/plans can ensure clarity of (expected) changes as well as the time and investment requirements.

In order to realize the above, there will be need to develop capacities in an inclusive manner - involving staff & communities from design to operationalisation - to ensure co-creation, joint learning and ownership of MEAL processes and systems. This also requires that learning is set as integral elements of programming, not as appended extras, and could include amongst others inter and intra team reflections, and a shift from ‘management meetings’ to ‘reflection meetings’.

3.3 Capacities & capacity development

Moving towards the directions contained in this framework will require different types of knowledge, skills and attitudes which call for advisory service to support countries to develop and implement their food security and livelihoods programmes. In general, such support could involve building in systems analysis/ thinking into entire programme to enable creativity and robust analysis and critical thinking; build in the flexibility in programs, processes, systems towards facilitating change and risk taking; and investing in greater LH context analysis and mapping relevant data sources e.g. from private sector, universities and research institutions and others.

3.4 Organization: Systems and Structures

At a regional workshop on Livelihoods, participants agreed that Oxfam's systems currently discourage innovation and risk taking, and even put off some stakeholders, like the Private Sector, from working with us. There needs to be a serious look at some of the systems and processes within Oxfam, what purpose they serve, and how they are carried out. While recognizing the need to remain accountable to stakeholders, many of our systems could be streamlined so as facilitate nimbleness, reduce response times and encourage (calculated) risk taking.

Oxfam will need to invest in systems thinking so that structure of working focuses on the entire system rather than individual silos. Oxfam HECA will find a balance between delivering outputs and finding time and resources to step out and undertake some uncertain ('risky') work. This requires a system that recognizes and rewards innovation and critical thinking amongst staff, particularly during staff appraisals and performance reviews. This involves investing in people's good ideas and passions

Some of the practices that need to be changed in this regard include heavy systems/controls; large workloads against small staff numbers; top-down orientation hinders from taking independent decisions/ developing new ideas and high staff turnovers. for instance reducing the number of signatures required to approve certain processes.

Recruitment of new staff should endeavor to bring on board visionary staff to encourage diversity of thinking. There is also need to create opportunities for communication, learning and sharing of ideas including seeking advice/ skills from outside the confines of Oxfam, if needed.

3.5 Funding

Many of the approaches to livelihoods programming contained in this framework will require changes to Oxfam's approaches – and therefore to the way in which funders / donors are willing to support us. Some donors are already embracing the principles we discussed, for instance to bring short term / humanitarian responses more closely in line with long term development approaches. Other approaches, such as being responsive to changes in a complex world, will challenge donors comfortable in traditional 'logframe' style programming. This requires better profiling by showing evidence based impact, stories, experiences and learning with a view to making Oxfam the "Go-to-Agency" for donors.

Oxfam needs to be more strategic in working with donors. This means being more pro-active and seeking to influence donors through evidence gathered in our programmes. It also means being more selective and willing to forgo funding streams which do not meet programme needs. Preferred funding is that which has the ability to influence people's life's rather than on the budget size i.e. be choosy regarding the funding type/ sources, moving away from short term to long term funding and remaining engaged with smaller foundations. At the global level, the 'bid no bid' framework need to be used for choosing funding. At the internal level, we need to ensure more efficient cost recovery.

3.6 Working with Others

Further, consideration could be given to systematizing livelihood analysis to influence learning with all stakeholders at forums as well as collaborative learning & influencing with other stakeholders in multi-stakeholder forums. This would entail for example collaborating with others outside the organisation to bring in new ideas, as well as moving towards a model where all support is demand driven and paid for by Oxfam HECA country teams.

Other Oxfam facilitative roles could entail bringing different actors together to design and implement complex programmes; influencing the private sector through promotion of new business models/ programmes that build sustainable markets and value chains for the poor. Efforts to will be made to create and/or supporting multi-stakeholder platforms and alliances and build a HECA-wide influencing

agenda (e.g. on EAC, China, CSR) and to drive effective engagement and communication with key state and non state actors.

Greater emphasis need to be granted to action research, reflective learning and documentation. There is need to improve the quality of research particularly the lack of systematized peer reviews, and consider linking with regional entities e.g. IGAD and IFRC etc for regional level researches. Such research needs to be credible, relevant and grounded in program learning and peer reviews.

3.7 SMS

This Framework has been developed predominately by Oxfam GB staff and reflects ambitions and thinking embraced by the OGB regional leadership team. At a time when countries are forging ahead to integrate their programmes with other affiliates, this framework acts as a good marker of where OGB stands. However, in order to become relevant, it needs to be shared and imbedded in the SMS process. In some cases, this is already happening at a country level, and learning from countries could usefully be shared across the region, particularly on how to translate this Framework through programming.

4.0 Conclusion

Much of Oxfam's livelihoods work in HECA is shifting from addressing only the most extreme forms of livelihood vulnerability and food insecurity, to developing livelihoods as a key driver of change within the region. This shift recognizes the potential for equitable economic growth to contribute to peace, stability, good governance and general well-being for communities across the region as well as improving food security. We aspire to continue building and strengthening approaches that integrate food security and livelihoods across all of our programming – recognizing that the distinction between 'EFSL' and 'long-term livelihoods' is fuzzy if not artificial and that Food Security and Livelihoods programmes in rural agricultural, arid/semiarid lands, and urban need to be developed to address a range of issues.

//ENDS
