

# OXFAM INEQUALITY GUIDE



Credit: Paul Smith/ Panos

The shanty homes of fisher families and city immigrants on Back Bay with the tower blocks of Nariman Point in the background. Mumbai, India. 2004

In response to the global inequality crisis, Oxfam launched Even it Up, its biggest-ever worldwide campaign. Oxfam also undertook a global online conversation between programme staff and partners about inequality – Oxfam Reflects on Inequality - in 2014. This process encouraged reflection on the drivers of inequality and how Oxfam should tackle them. Embedding inequality within Oxfam's country strategies and programme design is a core part of Oxfam's initiative to address the global inequality crisis. While most country programmes are already tackling inequalities, programming could be scaled up and connections between programme and the Even It Up campaign strengthened. This guide is about inequality in all its forms. It has been developed to support Oxfam country programmes as they redouble efforts to tackle the severe inequalities that are holding back progress in developing countries. This guide was built in response to requests from staff in the Horn of East and Central Africa Region (HECA) who wanted to have a stronger and shared understanding of the most important drivers of inequality and what Oxfam partners and allies might do to tackle those inequalities through more effective programming. Oxfam is now developing a global one-Oxfam programme 'Fiscal Accountability for Inequality Reduction' (FAIR). This guide is about inequality in all its forms. This guide has been used by several countries to help integrate inequality into Country Strategies.

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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide helps Oxfam staff explore the various types of inequalities in their country, analyse their main drivers and reflect on how Oxfam can tackle these inequalities in programme work. It provides clarity on the different types of inequalities and a range of ideas to help develop or scale up work.

While most country programmes are already tackling inequalities, programming could be scaled up. New approaches are needed to achieve impact in this difficult area.

Looking at your projects and programmes through an inequality lens is important, because it challenges you to think about differences throughout all research, analysis, planning, programming and influencing activities. It also brings gender inequality into the foreground. Above all the difference between an inequality approach and a more traditional poverty approach is that it forces us to think about those who have, and not just the have-nots; those with power, not just those without; and those at the top and not just those at the bottom. This will improve our analysis, our programme design and our impact.

Every Oxfam programme has already committed to gender justice, but there is more to be done. The challenge is also to adopt a more holistic approach to gender inequality, embedding solutions within a new 'national inequality conversation' and ensuring strategic partnerships with women's organisations.

### **This guide is divided into 4 sections:**

**Section 1** briefly explains what inequality is and why it matters to Oxfam, providing basic background on the topic. **Section 2** provides an overview of how different inequalities are measured. **Section 3** identifies drivers of inequality, including governance and political and participation inequalities; economic and social inequalities such as taxation, provision of essential services, access to jobs and fair wages, and access to land and capital. Gender inequality is also explored here. Finally, you can find support materials in **Section 4**.

## WHEN TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is useful for you if your answer to on any of the four questions below is 'YES'.

- **Are you designing a new project or programme?**  
The guide provides you with new ideas that can be incorporated into your programming.
- **Do you want to identify policy areas to tackle inequality in your context?**  
Country programmes can then take a closer look at these areas to check what can be analysed, what research undertaken and what new work started or improved.
- **Do you aim to design a country inequality report?**  
This guide provides ideas on areas to look at and guidance for key research questions and data gathering.
- **Are you planning to conduct workshops on inequality with staff, partners or allies?**  
This guide provides ideas and support material to shape the outline and content of your workshop.

The guide is not exhaustive; it does not look in any depth at access to justice, conflict and fragile states, natural disasters and environmental issues. It concentrates on a number of key areas which have the most direct links to economic, social, political and gender inequalities: governance and active citizenship; tax, including extractives taxation; budget and essential service provision; jobs and wages; land and agriculture; and women's personal, social, economic and political empowerment.

# SECTION 1

## OXFAM & INEQUALITY

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# 1.1 OXFAM & INEQUALITY

**Oxfam made clear institutional choices to address inequality:** We have always put gender inequality front and centre in our programme work, making a firm commitment to build up the voices of the most marginalised, and challenging power in all its forms. Yet what has changed in recent years is the explosion in economic inequality – the gap between the rich and poor – in countries around the world, which requires us to significantly increase our focus on inequality.

**We are influencing the terms of the inequality debate.** Oxfam has made headlines across the world for a number of years now, putting inequality firmly on the global agenda, and the urgent need to tackle it. Our statistics have been quoted by Presidents, Prime Ministers and many leading commentators. They have spread across the world. Our national inequality reports are beginning to do the same thing., starting national debates on the gap between rich and poor, the harm it does and what should be done to tackle it.<sup>1</sup>

**Extreme inequality is getting worse.** Figures calculated by Oxfam in our latest research (which now includes more data from China and India) show that 8 people (notably 8 men) own the same wealth as half of the world.<sup>2</sup> A year before, we calculated that that 62 people owned the same as 3.5 billion people in the bottom half of the population. This is a significant change from even 5 years before, when wealth was concentrated amongst 388 people.<sup>3</sup>

**These trends show no signs of abating.** We know that the evidence shows that spiralling economic inequality will jeopardise progress in all other spheres: increasing social tensions and conflict and hampering or reversing poverty reduction efforts. The growth in the gap between the rich and the poor will also exacerbate existing inequalities in other areas, such as those based on gender, geography, ethnicity, race, caste or religion, making the struggle to reduce these inequalities far harder.

**All forms of inequality matter to Oxfam,** which recognises the many and varied negative outcomes of inequality. A large body of research exploring the links between inequality and poverty shows how income inequality actively hampers poverty reduction in developing countries.



*"I have been fighting inequality my whole life. Where I grew up in Uganda, my family did not have much, but we were among the better-off in our village. My best friend and I went to school together every day. I had one pair of shoes, she walked barefoot. I did not understand why then, and I still don't now. Inequality must be fought, every step of the way."*

*Winnie Byanyima - Executive Director, Oxfam*

<sup>1</sup> [www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2016-01-18/62-people-own-same-half-world-reveals-oxfam-davos-report](http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2016-01-18/62-people-own-same-half-world-reveals-oxfam-davos-report)

<sup>2</sup> [www.oxfam.org/en/research/economy-99](http://www.oxfam.org/en/research/economy-99)

<sup>3</sup> [www.oxfam.org/en/research/wealth-having-it-all-and-wanting-more](http://www.oxfam.org/en/research/wealth-having-it-all-and-wanting-more)

## WHY IS INEQUALITY IMPORTANT?

Oxfam's primary mission is to eliminate poverty and suffering. It is clear that this will never happen unless inequality is tackled. The problem of poverty can only be solved if we close the gap between the richest and the rest.

Global research shows how levels of income inequality matter significantly in determining global poverty projections.<sup>4</sup> The World Bank has been clear that it will not be possible to eliminate extreme poverty unless we redouble our efforts to reduce the gap between rich and poor<sup>5</sup>. Research in Africa has shown the drag effect of high income inequality on poverty reduction in countries such as Nigeria, Ghana and Zambia.<sup>6</sup>

Inequality is the 'missing link' explaining how the same rate of growth can lead to different rates of poverty reduction. It is not just that the rich are growing richer. Research has also shown that when the top 10% of income earners expand their share of national income, it is often to the detriment of the poorest 40%.<sup>7</sup> The redistribution that is occurring in favour of the wealthy is taking place directly at the expense of the poor.

Research shows very clearly that more unequal societies do worse on measures of wellbeing, even when at similar income levels, from life expectancy to higher crime rates.<sup>8</sup> In a recent statistical analysis, the UNDP found that the distribution of income (rather than even income levels themselves) is driving social inequalities in education, health and nutrition.<sup>9</sup> The link between inequality and crime and violence has been widely noted and is a reality in many of the countries where Oxfam works.

Inequality can be politically corrosive and can become more deeply entrenched as stronger economic and political elites resist progressive policies and calls for redistribution. Inequality is central to development debates and will be a critical area within the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Framework. Yet there is still a persistent view that focusing on the incomes of the poor is enough. Reluctance to tackle wealth and income concentration at the top end will seriously impede policy efforts which are truly redistributive in nature. We are also still a very long way from the effective implementation of policies which genuinely challenge inequality in all its forms.

The interwoven and overlapping nature of the drivers of inequality compound and complicate inequalities that an individual may face. For example, economic inequality can be driven by the creation of jobs for different skills and the wages paid for different jobs. But it is also affected by the tax system and how much revenue is raised through taxation from wealth created in the country. The allocation and spending of taxes can contribute to social inequities; disparities in access to health and education can be affected by fiscal policy decisions. Exclusion from the political arena can limit influence over those policy decisions, further deepening the effects of inequalities.

Deeply embedded attitudes about the unequal treatment of women, ethnic minority or low-caste groups and poor people can normalise the situation, leading to greater inequality. The drivers of gender inequality are also related to both deliberate policy choices and deep rooted beliefs and social norms. These norms have long established a patriarchal social structure, where the power and control rests with men over women. This is also true for other identity-based, horizontal inequalities where cultural and social norms matter a great deal.

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Edward and Andy Sumner, *The Future of Global Poverty in a Multi-Speed World: New estimates of scale and location, 2010-2030*, Centre for Global Development, Working Paper 327, June 2013

<sup>5</sup> See World Bank Shared Prosperity Report, September 2016

<sup>6</sup> See: Africa Progress Panel, *Equity in Extractives: Stewarding Africa's natural resources for all*, Africa Progress Panel Report, 2013. In Nigeria income inequality has contributed to large increases in poverty between 2003 and 2009. In Ghana, while poverty fell between 1998 and 2005, due to rising income inequality progress was much less than it should have been. In Zambia while poverty should have fallen between 2000 and 2006 (predicted to fall in absolute numbers by 660,000) it increased, with rising income inequality explaining the discrepancy between anticipated & achieved poverty reduction.

<sup>7</sup> See UNU-WIDER article on this: [www.wider.unu.edu/publications/newsletter/articles-2015/summaries/en\\_GB/4-2015-RA-1](http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/newsletter/articles-2015/summaries/en_GB/4-2015-RA-1)

<sup>8</sup> Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, 2009, *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone*

<sup>9</sup> UNDP, 2013, *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries*

Economic inequalities are hugely influenced by the ability of the poor to access land, capital, knowledge and technology, as well as how public spending supports the poor to improve their education, skills and overall wellbeing. Food security and nutrition are also affected by access to land, as well as by jobs and wages. Policies like privatisation can result in essential services becoming unaffordable to the poor, which again exacerbates inequalities. Discriminatory wages and skewed public investment designed to benefit non-minority groups can create inequality. In some cases, government policy reproduces and exacerbates inequalities: in women's sexual and reproductive health rights, for example, or when government spending favours dominant groups. Impunity and the control of the judiciary by the minority elite can lead to the rule of law being applied unequally, intensifying inequalities, where justice is for sale. Conflict can reaffirm and perpetuate the power of special groups and may be used as a tool to concentrate wealth and power among the elite.

*"If we don't tackle inequality as well as poverty it will be like trying to walk up an escalator the wrong way – hard work and ineffective"*

*Simon Ticehurst - Oxfam Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean; Oxfam reflects on inequality interview, 2014*





# 1.2 INEQUALITY & THE OXFAM STRATEGIC PLAN

## **Goal 1: The Right to be Heard**

Existing high levels of inequality mean the poor – particularly women and minority groups – are not being heard. Ingrained social, economic and political inequalities mean the participation and voice of minority groups are hugely constrained.

## **Goal 2: Advancing Gender Justice**

One of the most pervasive and serious forms of inequality is discrimination against women. Oxfam seeks to tackle gender inequality in the personal sphere as well as tackling the economic, social and political inequalities suffered by women.

## **Goal 3: Saving Lives Now and in the Future**

The poorest and most marginalised are disproportionately affected by disasters, conflict and crisis which deepen inequalities. Risk is unfairly distributed downwards onto those who can ill afford it. More equitable public investment in infrastructure, essential services, and resilience and adaptation strategies could close the gaps in this area.

## **Goal 4: Sustainable Food**

Smallholder farmers suffer particularly from the effects of deep social, economic and political inequalities. Inequalities between urban and rural areas are high: typically, public investment is biased away from rural areas and the smallholder agriculture sector. Policies to tackle inequality will necessarily mean correcting for this imbalance.

## **Goal 5: Fair Sharing of Natural Resources**

Unequal access to land and productive resources, and increasing competition in this area, are deepening social, economic and political inequalities. Poor management of natural resources – including the revenue raised – increases economic and social inequalities. Inequality in developing countries cannot be effectively reduced without addressing issues of land ownership. Redistributive taxation is impossible without more effective and equitable taxation of the natural resource sector.

## **Goal 6: Financing for Development and Universal Essential Services**

Social and economic inequalities are sustained by insufficient financing for development and the failure to provide universal essential services. Conversely, fair and efficient taxation systems which are then used to fund universal essential services are a central weapon in the fight against all forms of inequality

## OXFAM'S EVEN IT UP CAMPAIGN



Oxfam's Even It Up campaign aims to draw attention to the starkly growing trends of wealth concentration and calls for action to close the gap between the rich and the rest.

Making global income inequality trends more visible is a critical first step given this issue has previously been ignored or tacitly accepted as a 'normal' outcome of the current economic model.

The campaign has six key asks, including that all governments:

Act now to reduce inequality levels and close the gap between the richest and the rest.

Ensure tax systems are fair and free of loopholes so that the rich pay their fair share of tax;

Invest in vital public services like universal healthcare and education;

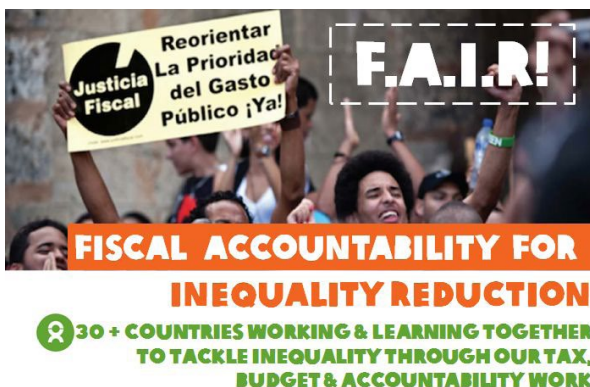
Make sure everyone has decent jobs and fair pay;

Ensure economic policies work to close the gap between women and men;

Work for their citizens first, with the interests of the richest no longer put ahead of the rest.

[www.evenitup.org](http://www.evenitup.org)

## OXFAM'S FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INEQUALITY REDUCTION (FAIR) PROGRAMME



Oxfam has extensive experience in 26+ countries of delivering programmes and campaigns that advance people's rights through work on tax, budget and social accountability. We are working with women, young people, rural and urban communities so that they can influence and challenge vested interests and power structures of the private sector, multilateral institutions and governments.

The programme framework is based on three interconnected routes for achieving fiscal justice at scale:

Active citizens and their organizations, shape, monitor and challenge fiscal systems, public spending policies and practices.

Increased fiscal justice and revenue mobilisation in pro-poor, gender responsive, fair, progressive, transparent, inclusive and accountable ways.

More progressive public spending (allocation and expenditure) for quality public services, which reflects community needs in a pro-poor, gender responsive, decentralised, transparent and accountable way.

The FAIR framework is closely linked to the Even it Up Campaign. Campaigning for change at country level is a core part of the FAIR programme, and is also the programme foundation for the global Even it Up campaign.

Work is underway to turn this new global programme framework into a reality. Get in touch with Sarah Hall ([shall@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:shall@oxfam.org.uk)) if you would like to know more about it.

# 1.3 TYPES OF INEQUALITY

There are many kinds of inequality, from economic inequalities to social inequalities to inequalities that are based on aspects of identity such as gender, ethnicity or caste. These inequalities often interrelate, becoming determining factors over a person's quality of life and shaping the societies we live in. Inequality can be directly observed and measured, such as different income levels or different health or educational outcomes. It can also seem invisible, 'normal' or inevitable.

## ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INEQUALITY

Inequality can be sub-divided into three key types: economic inequality, social inequality and political inequality. Social, economic and political inequalities reinforce each other. No one type of inequality 'comes first' – it is essentially a circular question. For example, a child with poor nutrition and health will be less able to learn at school, resulting in lower educational attainment levels and lower lifelong earnings, which in turn affect economic inequalities. Similarly, women – who are routinely excluded, who society treats as second class citizens, may have little self-belief that they should have more say in decision making – may be less likely to vote, which reinforces their limited political influence. Interrelated inequalities are self-perpetuating.

**Economic inequality** refers to inequality of income and inequality of wealth. **Social inequality** is a broad category referring to the difference in social outcomes between groups, such as health and educational outcomes, but also nutrition, housing, water and sanitation, energy access and more. Discriminatory norms and beliefs lead to additional negative, social outcomes, for example, when people from lower classes or castes are socially excluded and marginalised groups are routinely denied dignity, legitimacy and voice. **Political inequality** is commonly thought of as the concentration of political power in the hands of a few, but should be broadened to include participation inequality, to take into account the inclusiveness of political systems and opportunities for active citizenship – areas of great interest to Oxfam.

## VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL INEQUALITIES

Economic, social and political inequalities can be described as **vertical inequalities**, which refer to differences based on 'vertical concepts' of income and wealth. The word vertical is used because it means inequalities that are based on the division between those at the top and those at the bottom. By its very nature, the concept of a vertical inequality does not differentiate between the identity of groups of people, but simply measures difference based on income levels.

**Horizontal inequalities** exist between different groups and are based on aspects of identity. Gender inequality is at the forefront, while other horizontal inequalities include those based on ethnicity, race, caste, religion, sexual orientation and disability. Spatial inequality is a form of horizontal inequality that focuses on geographic location, the most common being the inequalities that exist between urban and rural areas. Increasingly, the growing concentration of the poor in peripheral urban areas and informal settlements is becoming a hallmark of spatial inequality. Such settlements are often notorious for their poor conditions, greater vulnerability to natural disasters and heightened stigmatisation. The reduction of urban spatial inequalities may also form part of national inequality debates.

## INEQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Inequality of opportunity relates to how the various types of inequalities affect a person's access to opportunities in life. This can be assessed by evaluating public spending policies on whether they effectively aim to equalise opportunities. While important, debates around equal opportunities can distract from actually achieving more equal outcomes and are often used to argue against substantive action to tackle inequality. It is the combination of factors outlined above that contributes to inequality – not just unequal opportunities – which will ultimately determine the outcome of every person's life and which states are called upon to tackle. It is also the case that today's unequal opportunities are tomorrow's unequal outcomes. The child who goes to private school will in turn have richer children who live longer.

# SECTION 2

## MEASURING INEQUALITY

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# 2.1 MEASURING INEQUALITY

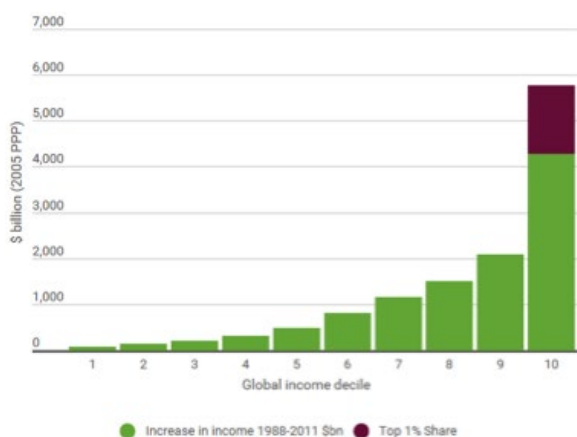
Inequality can be measured in different ways. For a comprehensive summary of key inequality measurements please go to [support material 1](#). Many of the data sources presented in support material 1 are based on national household survey data, however these data can have limitations, including long gaps between surveys, when no data is published. Household surveys do have disaggregated data on women and men, but this is often not used. Other surveys, notably demographic and health surveys (DHS) do. Disaggregation based on race, ethnicity, caste and other features of identity is likely to be even worse. Consistently tracking these types of data, we can identify important trends and gaps which are important to inform programme and policy work.

**Household surveys:** Income levels, a key component of economic inequality, are tracked in national household surveys which provide data on the different income shares. Household surveys - which purport to capture income and which are used to inform discussions on income inequality - often don't directly capture income. They are notoriously bad at collecting the data of the richest, who do not respond to surveys, which means inequality is underestimated.

It is **consumption data** that is the most widely recorded as this is easiest to measure in developing countries. This may be imperfect but it does demonstrate the level of economic inequality to some extent - while also underestimating it. Using consumption data, India has the same inequality level as Ireland- but if income data is used India is as unequal as Brazil. All of Africa uses consumption to measure inequality, meaning it is significantly underestimated.

**Gini coefficient:** While data are available to track the specific income shares of the poorest and richest groups in society, the most common way to present this is via the Gini coefficient, which, although widely used, is not easily understood. It measures in a cumulative fashion the % of income (for the poorest 20%, then 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%). The distribution of income is then plotted on a graph and compared to the 'line of equality' and the distance from that line is the extent of inequality in a given country. It is expressed as a measure between 0 and 1 or a number between 1 and 100. A smaller Gini is preferable and a rise in the Gini implies rising income inequality in country. The Gini has been criticised for focusing too much on what happens to the middle of society, rather than what is happening to the very rich and the very poor.

Figure: Global income growth that accrued to each decile 1988-2011: 46% of the total increase went to the top 10%



Source: Laliner-Milanovic World Panel Income Distribution (LM-WPID) database (2013). Created for C. Laliner and B. Milanovic (2013) 'Global Income Distribution: From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Great Recession', World Bank. Data for 2011 provided through personal correspondence with B. Milanovic, September 2015. Calculations by Sophia Ayale; more details on the methodology used to construct this chart can be found in the accompanying methodology note, available at <http://oxfam.zn15>.

**The Palma indicator** measures the ratio of the income of the top 10% to that of the bottom 40%. A very equal country has a Palma of 1, whereas the most unequal have Palmas of 5 or 6. The Palma is preferred by Oxfam as a measure of inequality because it attempts to look at the incomes of those at the top of society.

**Shared Prosperity:** The World Bank has introduced a new indicator, called 'Shared Prosperity' which looks at the extent to which the incomes of the bottom 40% are growing. They then compare this to the average growth in the country. This indicator has been used as the main one for the SDG on inequality. It is deeply flawed, and is a very poor measure of inequality as it fails to take into account the incomes of those at the top of society. Oxfam is calling on the World Bank to use the Palma indicator instead, comparing the incomes of the bottom 40% to the top 10%.

**Wealth data** measures something distinct from income. It captures all financial and non-financial assets (e.g. housing, land, bank deposits, assets such as stocks and bonds etc., minus liabilities such as mortgages or loans). Most of the poor and the middle classes have almost no financial assets, even in developed countries, meaning wealth is more unequally distributed than income. Income measures reported in national surveys can show what is happening to the income share of the poor, but to understand what is happening at the top end it is preferable to look at both income and wealth data. In the poorest countries one of the biggest sources of wealth is land, so inequality of land ownership is closely linked to inequality of wealth. Oxfam uses wealth data to produce its famous facts on the 62 people owning the same as half the world. The Forbes list will give you data on the wealth of billionaires in your country if you have any. We can then compare the incomes of the richest with those at the bottom.

**Top Incomes:** In some countries information has been gathered on the incomes at the top using tax records, rather than household surveys. This enables much more accurate data on the top 1%. This has been done by countries like Brazil, South Africa and the U.S. There is a need for more governments to be pressured into releasing this valuable data. There are also other ways of estimating top incomes being tried in some places, such as real estate prices, or the cost of luxury goods.

**Disparities in social incomes:** Oxfam regularly analyses and reports on disparities in social outcomes. There is a wealth of data that can be mined to investigate social inequalities, although data on the impact of discriminatory social attitudes and beliefs are less available and qualitative research in this area is necessary. Ideally, country programmes will not only identify social inequalities by highlighting unequal social outcomes but also track how these gaps evolve over time.<sup>10</sup> Knowledge of where gaps are widening and inequalities are worsening can be a powerful tool for influencing work, particularly when linked to work on taxation, public expenditure and essential services. An analysis of national survey data will provide this understanding.

**Gender:** Disaggregated data can be found but is rarely used. The World Values Survey has interesting information related to social attitudes about gender inequality. The Gender Inequality Index (part of the UNDP's Human Development Index) and the Global Gender Gap Index<sup>11</sup> of the World Economic Forum can help measure gender gaps and compare progress across countries. Together, these sources make it possible to build a detailed picture of gender inequality and its overlap with economic and social outcomes in every country and track progress over time.

**Political participation:** Data to measure levels of political participation are scarce. There are some related to women's participation in political and public life, but data on the participation of excluded groups such as ethnic minorities or indigenous groups are generally not available. National surveys will likely have some relevant information; existing national public opinion surveys focused on governance and accountability issues shed some very limited light on this matter. International surveys looking at issues such as corruption and trust are also relevant. These are profiled in the additional data table provided in section 4; support material.

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<sup>10</sup> For example, in Nepal gaps are widening between the richest and poorest children with regard to under-five mortality rates. See: Oxfam, January 2015, Asia at a Crossroads: Why the Region Must Address Inequality Now, Briefing Note [www.oxfam.org/en/research/asia-crossroads](http://www.oxfam.org/en/research/asia-crossroads)

<sup>11</sup> See more here: [hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii](http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii)

## 2.2 OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE DATA

### Data collection matters

What is and is not being measured matters: it gets attention, it reflects a country's priorities and it is likely to determine how public policy is designed and how aid funds are directed. With the post-2015 SDG framework – and the increasing commitment to tackling inequality and adoption of new targets – the attention to improving data is likely to increase and there will be greater opportunities for Oxfam country programmes to contribute to improving data issues. (Also use the Table with data sources in the support material)

### OXFAM can...

Advocate for governments to commit to measuring inequality before and after taxes and transfers, in line with the commitment to tackling inequality under the SDGs. National statistical institutes will need support to do this. Some academics are already looking more closely at this aspect.<sup>12</sup>

Advocate for all national survey data to be disaggregated by location, sex, income level, ethnicity and other relevant identity-based factors, so that more information is available on the progress of different groups and across different geographies.

Advocate that national survey data should include decision making within the household, attitudes towards women and women's control over income and family planning decisions. Oxfam can also advocate for data to be collected on the participation of women in local governance structures. An internationally accepted indicator related to local-level participation and influence is needed to increase progress in this area.

Advocate to improve the agricultural census, a major area of weakness for many developing countries, since the pattern of land ownership is omitted or poorly covered, including its gender aspect. The World Census on Agriculture provides a picture of how data are being collected across countries, which may allow for the evaluation of data gathering in your country by comparison.



São Paulo, Brazil. 2008. The Paraisópolis favela (Paradise City shantitown) borders the affluent district of Morumbi. 2008.

Advocate for improved measurement of intimate partner violence (IPV), which is not standard in all countries. How data are gathered on violence against women is relevant to a country's criminal justice system. This can be included in Oxfam's 'data advocacy' to highlight the problem of violence against women.

Advocate for anonymised income tax records to be made publicly available, which would provide interesting data for tax research, advocacy and campaigning work. The Top Incomes Database collects information from this source, but only from a small number of countries.

Advocate for the Palma to be used as an alternative to the Gini coefficient as the official, national measure of income inequality. This will ensure national attention is more clearly focused on what is happening to the income share of the richest as compared to the poorest in the country. The UN has already adopted the Palma as a relevant measure in its HDI report.

<sup>12</sup> The Commitment to Equity programme is looking at this. See: [www.commitmenttoequity.org](http://www.commitmenttoequity.org). Oxfam is partnering with the CEQ. It is also being looked at by UNU-WIDER. See: [www.wider.unu.edu/research/TIS-programme/inclusion/en\\_GB/economics-politics-taxation-social-protection](http://www.wider.unu.edu/research/TIS-programme/inclusion/en_GB/economics-politics-taxation-social-protection)

# SECTION 3

## TACKLING INEQUALITY

Section 3 is the most practical section of this guide. It (1) explains why a certain issue is relevant for your work, (2) provides questions to explore with your team and partners and (3) gives options for action for all of the following areas:

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# 3.1 TACKLING POWER AND POLITICAL INEQUALITIES



## WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

As economic and social inequalities deepen, so too do political inequalities as the wealthy move into key government positions and deepen their influence over government decision making. Governance systems are eroded in such contexts and inequality becomes entrenched. This is a problem for developed and developing countries alike. The wellbeing and opportunities of the poorest are directly affected by how much wealth is concentrated at the top end of the distribution and by the hoarding of opportunities by the privileged. This is why Oxfam is very clear that focusing on 'the bottom 40%' is not enough.

## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

Power relationships need to be researched so that political capture may be better understood. Oxfam has a well-developed resource base of materials related to power analysis which country programmes increasingly use in their programme design.<sup>13</sup>

### Q. Is there information available on campaign and political party financing?

Access to this type of information is often restricted, so few international NGOs and local CSOs are actively looking at this. Brazil's Instituto Justica Fiscal has developed a tool to explore campaign financing and political capture. This analysis is related to the potential for tax reform and the structure of the tax system, bringing together political and economic inequalities in a useful way.

<sup>13</sup> In addition Oxfam is working with a US university on a special political inequality research project, creating a detailed model to analyse the issue of elite capture. More tools will therefore be available in future.

**Q. Where is the influence of wealthy groups most visibly leading to an imbalance in public policies?**

It is important to do detailed power analysis in relation to all policy work. Both the policy dimensions and power relations are important here, given there are multiple experiences where good policies are either not adopted or not being implemented because of consistent political barriers. It is also worth seeking collaborations in this area, particularly from large donors who may be doing more sophisticated political economy analysis with a level of specialisation and access that is not available to CSOs.

**Q. What is being done to increase the political participation of marginalised and excluded groups?**

To address political inequalities – and fight for more progressive policymaking – promoting the full and active participation of women and minority groups in political and public life is essential. However, since this type of data is rarely available, country programmes will likely rely on Oxfam’s own understanding and experience on the ground. Evaluating governments’ commitments to inclusive political participation at local, district and national levels and monitoring policy implementation in this area is critical.

**Q. How pervasive are problems such as impunity, embezzlement and high-level corruption?**

Depending on the extent to which these problems impoverish the state and capture state assets, more emphasis may be needed here rather than around formal tax-budget-service provision issues. It is important to investigate what information is in the public domain, how big the problem is and who is working on these issues. Research and analysis on potential controls and measures to effectively tackle these problems is also important.

**Q. What are the different perceptions of the elite in your country?**

Work in this area is rare, since CSOs tend to engage with elites on a philanthropic basis, but given Oxfam’s broader commitments, this is an area that should not be ignored. Understanding how elites perceive inequality and its impacts on society is an important foundation since there is generally some common ground to be uncovered here. Engagement in this area can be a powerful first step toward demonstrating why more equality would be better for everyone.

## **OPTIONS FOR ACTION**

**Engage in in-depth power analysis**, conducting more deliberate political and elite mapping as part of programming and policy work.

**Carry out or support research to look at political capture**, including campaign financing and political party financing structures. This can also be linked to tax and budget analysis. Oxfam’s LAC programmes have recently started new work looking at how political capture relates to fiscal policies across the region, providing useful new learning for others.

**Support the political participation of women and marginalised groups** through long-term organising and capacity building work such as surveys and case studies related to political participation.

**Engage elites to explore inequality** as part of a wider process of structured dialogue.

## 3.2 STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND SPACE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY



### WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

Transparency matters because it is the lack of access to information that allows the political elite to manipulate public finances and where there is much less chance for citizens to influence and improve their lives. Spaces for participation and protecting civil society space for citizens to be able to hold power holders to account matters for tackling inequality, because without these the voices of the more marginalised in society are not heard, their demands not responded to and their needs not included in national development. They are left behind as a result of the compounding inequalities.

Key areas to explore here include transparency and access to information, the nature and effectiveness of citizen participation, access to redress or justice and addressing shifting civil society space, be it shrinking or expanding. Active citizenship work is likely to be underway in the majority of Oxfam's country programmes. Key approaches here will include: building civil society capacity, supporting their access to information and ability to conduct research and analysis in key areas; supporting partners in their efforts to participate and influence governments, donors and private sector; and long-term capacity building to strengthen the participation of women and other excluded groups.

## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

**Q. Is civil society able to access information in a timely fashion; to understand, evaluate and influence government decision making, policy design and implementation?**

It is important to understand the mechanisms for accessing information and the practices of relevant line ministries and the central government, particularly when legislation, policy and national budgets are at the draft stage. The Open Budget Survey of the International Budget Partnership (IBP) is one source of information, but the full local context of freedom of information should be explored with CSOs.

**Q. Is civil society able to participate effectively in government decision making processes?**

The quality of civil society participation in policy design, implementation and impact evaluation matters. Access to line ministries is important, as is access to parliamentary committees that propose, scrutinise and evaluate the impact of legislation. The formal mechanisms in place, the informal barriers to action and the capacity of CSO networks, trade unions, faith-based organisations, people's organisations, citizen alliances, etc. all need to be assessed.

**Q. Are the most marginalised groups organised and represented by CSOs?**

It is important to map the nature of organisations and to understand the level of voice and influence they achieve. Organisations representing groups traditionally discriminated against – such as people of low-caste or indigenous or tribal peoples – can be the least organised and supported. Trade unions may be particularly lacking in influence due to private sector lobbying and media bias. Faith-based organisations may have strong influence in certain contexts.

**Q. How effective is citizen participation at the local level?**

Oxfam is likely to be involved in enabling participation at these levels and will be aware of the mechanisms available, the quality of participation and the limitations of current strategies to improve here. It is important to learn from what others are doing in other parts of the country.

Inequalities based on gender, race, ethnicity, caste, religion, disability and the ability of these groups to develop a genuine voice and influence are important factors to be looked at here.

**Q. Is civil society space shrinking or expanding?**

If civil society space is shrinking, political inequalities are likely to increase. Oxfam has already developed some tools to assess and analyse civil society space and more will be forthcoming. It is important to use these within programmes and in moments of strategic, national-level analysis.

**Q. Are all citizens able to access justice on an equal basis?**

Access to a fair trial will be affected by the quality of governance, the level of discrimination within society and government investment in the judicial system. The ability to access justice is particularly important when citizen activists are targeted for their work. Programmes supporting citizen activism need to be aware of the risks, and prepared with strategies to protect and support activists.

## OPTIONS FOR ACTION

**For those interested in protecting and expanding civil society space and influence at national level, Oxfam can:**

**Work in alliance with others to protect civil society space** where nationally trends are negative and civil society space is under threat.

**Support advocacy around freedom of information legislation** and efforts to improve transparency areas such as tax and budget transparency initiatives. Oxfam can also work with CSOs supporting their efforts to get access to information to track revenue raising, including from extractive industries, and how revenues are being spent.

**Support CSOs in their efforts to influence national policy**, including building broad alliances, assisting groups in accessing information and using Oxfam's role as convenor and broker to its full effect. This is particularly valuable in broad, political areas such as national tax, budget or land reform debates.

For those interested in broad-based citizen participation efforts, Oxfam can:

**Support local-level citizen participation in budgeting, budget tracking and social audit work**, as well as using techniques such as public hearings and citizen scorecards.

**Support citizen awareness raising and mobilisation** to strengthen both the 'demand side' and the 'supply side' of governance. For example, train community animators, which can be combined with training local government staff. Oxfam Tanzania has used this approach successfully within its Chukua Hatua Accountability programme.<sup>16</sup>

**Explore new partnerships in relation to working with excluded citizen groups** on their key political demands. This could mean dynamic, new social movements in labour rights, land rights or urban-based movements.

**Increase social media use within broad-based citizen participation efforts** in the areas of budget, tax and anti-corruption work at local and national levels, which can neutralise some of the problems that flow from political capture of traditional media sources. Oxfam has experience in Cambodia using ICT with youth to increase voter participation and detect and report election-related irregularities.

For those seeking to increase the participation of traditionally marginalised groups, Oxfam can:

**Target its support to CSOs genuinely connected to and/or made up of marginalised groups.** Many Oxfam programmes have experience in this area, including Oxfam India as profiled in CASE 2 on the next page.

Put gender equality at the forefront of its citizen participation work. Oxfam has already developed resources on women's participation in decision making, women's leadership and political representation.<sup>17</sup>

## CASE 1: WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE STATE

### Governance and inequality in fragile and conflict-affected states

Oxfam's Within and Without the State (WWS) programme – implemented in Afghanistan, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo – seeks to go beyond humanitarian service delivery to work on strengthening governance. In fragile or conflict-affected countries, governance is often weak or may be authoritarian.

Through the WWS programme, Oxfam has been working to build the capacity of civil society to engage with power-holders and participate constructively in state-building processes. Violent conflicts are rife with inequality issues, such as large numbers of unemployed youth or widespread ethnic or religious inequalities. Conflict may also be used by elites to reaffirm their position of power.

Where constructive engagement and dialogue is being pursued with power-holders (whether formal or informal), tackling inequality is a relevant theme for discussion. Establishing a social contract in these difficult circumstances also calls for dialogue around the perceptions of inequality, the various forms of discrimination and exclusion, and their many and varied social, economic and political impacts.

The relationship between gender inequality and fragility and conflict is unclear, although most fragile and conflict-affected countries are towards the bottom of the gender inequality index. Gender issues are often disconnected from broader efforts to understand and respond to fragility, and while it may seem impossible to challenge gender roles and inequality in such difficult contexts, reviews of the WWS programme have shown that to address the causes and drivers of fragility, Oxfam must put gender at the heart of the programme.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on the Tanzanian programme see: [policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/the-chukua-hatua-accountability-programme-tanzania-338436](https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/the-chukua-hatua-accountability-programme-tanzania-338436) For a great series of case studies on the importance of working on active citizenship and some insights into how to do it see: [policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/2015/01/14-ways-to-better-promote-active-citizenship](https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/2015/01/14-ways-to-better-promote-active-citizenship)

<sup>17</sup> See: Oxfam, Programming on the Right to be Heard: A Learning Companion for a list of tools and resources in this area. [sumus.oxfam.org/knowledge-hub-governance-citizenship/wiki/learning-companion](https://sumus.oxfam.org/knowledge-hub-governance-citizenship/wiki/learning-companion)

## CASE 2: FOREST COMMUNITIES IN CHHATTISGARH STATE

### Active citizenship in India

Eighty percent of the population of India's heavily forested Chhattisgarh state live in rural areas and 32% of the population are 'tribal' and among the poorest and most marginalised people in the country. Forests provide jobs and income through the collection and sale of non-timber forest products, as well as food and medicine. Thanks to legislation passed, after much struggle, in 2006, the tribes were guaranteed rights over the forests and its natural resources. Despite this legal provision, mining and other industries have increasingly been encroaching on tribal land.

An Oxfam baseline study found that the local-level government administration was not taking proper steps to implement the legislation. Most tribal communities were unaware of it; few had initiated the lists of settlements process essential to lodge a claim; and hardly anyone was aware that mining companies had to get consent from the community before using forest land for mining. Oxfam worked with local partner Chaupal, which is made up of a combination of four predominantly tribal people's organisations. Chaupal's work has focused on mobilising communities, facilitating the engagement of the tribal communities with the state, building the capacity of tribal communities and organisations and conducting research-based advocacy. In January 2013 Chaupal filed the state's first claims for community forest rights, following up with many more claims as work continued. Titles have been granted as a result. A good relationship with the local and district government administration combined with its deep roots and legitimacy in the tribal community, has allowed Chaupal to successfully bridge the divide between marginalised communities and those in power.



Credit: Tom Pietrasik / Oxfam

*Adivasi (tribal) Baiga casual day-wage workers on their way home after a shift crushing bauxite at the Bodhi Daldali mine. They live 8km away in the village of Kukra Pani*

*Day-wage work at the mine will earn these men Rs.125 (bauxite fetches Rs.600-700 per ton). Located in the Maikal hill range, the 668 hectare Bodhi Daldali Bauxite mine, has been operational since 2003. The mine directly employs just 70 people. 750 contractors, most of them casual day-wage workers, provide the labour without which the mine would not function.*

### CASE 3: ADVOCATING FOR FAIR TAXATION

#### Oxfam's CRAFT Tax Justice Alliance

Oxfam believes that developing countries' low tax base and unfair tax policies undermine democratic governance. This has motivated Oxfam Novib to join with the Capacity for Research and Advocacy for Fair Taxation (CRAFT) Alliance to influence tax policies in Uganda, Mali, Senegal, Nigeria, Niger, Tunisia, Egypt, Ghana and Bangladesh. The primary objective of the CRAFT project is to build the capacities of citizens and civil society in these countries to conduct research, advocacy and campaigning on tax-related issues, with the aim of promoting fair and equitable taxation.

The five main areas for action in the project are as follows:

Research to understand existing policy and trends in taxation and to help formulate a vision for what pro-poor and fairer taxation would look like in each country;

Training to increase the knowledge base of civil society, parliamentarians, journalists and others related to tax collection and evasion and avoidance issues;

Civic education to mobilise citizens and ensure there is social pressure to change tax policies and practices where these are ineffective and unjust;

Policy advocacy to lobby the state in a targeted fashion to change tax policies and practices and to participate in global policy networks;

Alliance building to gain strength and synergy within civil society both within countries and to enhance learning by linking up regionally and globally.

Under CRAFT, 14 baseline studies have been carried out across the countries involved on a range of tax issues. Tax justice trainings are well advanced and in five countries tax policy briefings exist which have been used to present basic positions to government.

In Uganda, Oxfam and its partner SEATINI held a two-day tax justice workshop with Members of Parliament and civil society activists, which provoked strong public debate around the issue of corporate tax incentives. In Senegal and Nigeria, partners organised on tax and engaged with politicians and the Ministry of Finance on tax reform issues.

Oxfam Novib is also involved in a critical dialogue with the Netherlands government on its role in enabling multinational companies to dodge taxes by establishing companies in the Netherlands and routing profits via these, thereby undermining the tax base in developing countries.

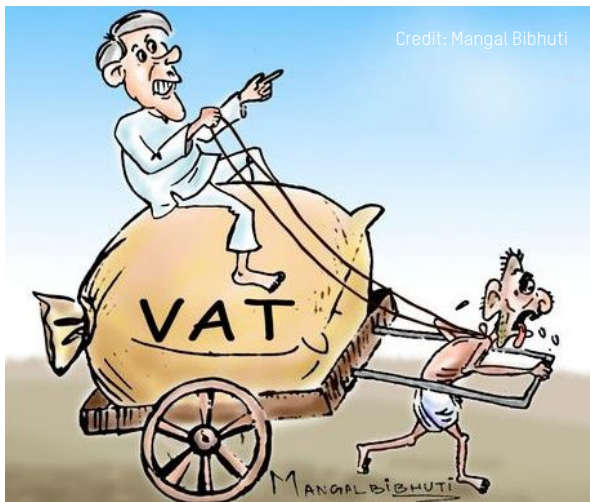
Visit: [www.maketaxfair.net](http://www.maketaxfair.net)

*In Bangladesh, Oxfam works together with the local lead organization SUPRO to promote tax justice.*

*On the 15th of September 2014, the National Income Tax Day in Bangladesh, a number of events were organized. Through the mobile campaign thousands of leaflets were distributed in various crowded spots in Dhaka city. Through the mobile campaign nearly 30,000 citizens have come to know about the tax justice campaign. In addition SUPRO used street drama to help people understand the link between Tax Justice and prosperity and progress for Bangladesh.*



# 3.3 RAISING PUBLIC RESOURCES: AID, DEBT AND FAIR TAXATION



## WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

The amount of money a government has at its disposal is key to the fight against inequality. This can come from three sources - borrowing money, aid from other countries and domestic taxation.

Debt is becoming an increasing problem once again for the poorest countries, who have borrowed significantly in recent years, in the absence of greater aid or tax revenues. The average for low- and lower middle-income countries is that they are now spending more than a quarter of their revenues paying their debts. This is money that could be spent on schools and hospitals.

As countries are running into economic trouble once again, the IMF has become increasingly important. In Ghana for example, they are spending over 30% of their budget on servicing their debt and are projected to do so for 30 years. The IMF has had a programme with Ghana in recent years, which sets out in detail how the economy should be run.

Aid is less and less important for many countries, but remains key to a significant number, especially in Africa. Even in otherwise wealthy countries, Aid can still be very important to particular sectors of the budget, and financing interventions that help fight inequality.

Aid is also declining in quality, and increasingly being used more to support the interests and companies of the donor country - sometimes tying governments into further expenditures they can ill afford.

Taxation raises revenue essential to fund basic service provision and national development goals. Tax is preferable to aid since it allows countries to determine their own national development path and become more accountable to their own citizens. The tax system can directly redistribute income via progressive public spending. Women in most societies are over-represented in the lowest quintiles of income distribution and bear the brunt of regressive taxation, which overburdens the poor.

While donors are focused on supporting the efficiency of tax collection and tax administration systems, few are looking at it from a tax equity perspective. It is known that the most prolific lobbying activities in the US, for example, are on budget and tax issues.<sup>18</sup> It is also highly visible in the tax systems and barriers to tax reform in developing countries: from Thailand to Rwanda where property tax reforms stall, and from Guatemala and Kenya to Pakistan where efforts to tax the income and assets of the wealthiest are continually resisted. This can directly undermine the public purse, where a reduction in the tax burden on wealthy individuals and companies results in less money for delivering essential services and infrastructure that would benefit poor and marginalised communities. Similar skewed public interests can be found in public budget allocations, procurement deals and other areas.

<sup>18</sup> Oxfam, January 2015, Wealth Having it All and Wanting More, Issue Briefing see: [oxf.am/ZiUw](http://oxf.am/ZiUw)



While national tax systems are of critical importance, it is impossible to ignore the impact of the international financial system, which allows corporations and the world's wealthiest individuals to hide profits and assets in tax havens. The cost of this practice to developing countries is increasingly being documented,<sup>19</sup> adding to an established body of policy research and advocacy at the international level, much of which is linked to the work of tax campaigners in developing countries.<sup>20</sup>

## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

The questions below, therefore, focus on building a tax equity analysis, rather than an analysis of the tax administration or the capacity of the revenue authority, though these are also important areas.

### Q. What is the level of government debt? How much of the government budget is being spent on repaying debts, and to who?

It is really important to have a good understanding of the debt situation of the country, and to analyse the cost of that borrowing and who the creditors are. These can be external creditors - for example when a country issues a bond on the global market in order to borrow money.

As recently as 2012 Zambia could borrow money in this way for lower interest rates than Spain, because so much money was being pushed towards poorer countries. Interest rates now are far higher than they are for Spain, causing huge cost. Ghana's most recent bond has an interest rate of 11.25%.

The money borrowed from abroad can be from the private sector or the international institutions such as the World Bank and IMF. It can also be from foreign governments, including BRIC countries. Often this can all be very secretive, so it is important to fight for this information.

Money can also be borrowed domestically, when the government issues treasury bonds, effectively borrowing money from its citizens. In some countries the interest rate on this borrowing is huge - 30% or more. Also confusingly, some countries allow foreigners to buy domestic debt, meaning this money is actually owed to people outside the country. Either way, it is the richest in the country who can afford to lend to government and who are making such a bumper return on their money, which in turn drives further inequality.

### Q. What can be done about debt?

Governments can act to reduce the cost of their debts. At one extreme they can threaten not to pay, but there is a lot more they can do before it comes to this, to reduce interest rates paid, for example on domestic debt.

You can work to lobby the IMF to review how sustainable the debt is in your country, and to help the government face down its creditors and argue for better terms. Some countries, like Ethiopia for example, have major limits on the level of interest on domestic debt, which is far less than neighbouring countries, proving this is possible.

### Q. What is the level of aid to the government? Where is it going?

It is important to understand who is giving aid to the country and what for, and in what ways. By far the best kind of aid is that which is given long term and predictably, and is counted in the government's budget - this is because it supports the national plans, rather than its own agenda.

Aid donors can be some of the most powerful people in the country. In a country like Malawi, the second most important person after the President is the head of the IMF, and the third is the head of DFID, the UK Aid department. What they do and agree can have profound impacts on inequality, both positively and negatively, and it is important to factor them into any power analysis or campaigning.

Oxfam has a significant global team working on aid, who can be contacted for further information and support.

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<sup>19</sup> See: Christian Aid, 2009, False Profits: Robbing the poor to keep the rich tax-free; Action Aid, 2010, Calling Time: Why SABMiller should stop dodging taxes in Africa [www.actionaid.org.uk/tax-justice/calling-time-the-research](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/tax-justice/calling-time-the-research); Alex Prats and Petr Jansky, 2013, Multinational Corporations and the Profit-shifting Lure of Tax Havens, Christian Aid Occasional Paper 9 [www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/CA-OP-9-multinational-corporations-tax-havens-March-2013.pdf](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/CA-OP-9-multinational-corporations-tax-havens-March-2013.pdf); Global Financial Integrity, 2014, Hiding in Plain Sight: Trade mis-invoicing and the impact of revenue loss in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda: 2002-2011 [gfintegrity.org/hiding/Hiding\\_In\\_Plain\\_Sight\\_Report-Final.pdf](http://gfintegrity.org/hiding/Hiding_In_Plain_Sight_Report-Final.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> For a comprehensive overview of tax work by CSOs and the evolving advocacy agenda at the international level see here: [www.transparency-initiative.org/reports/upcoming-report-launch-tax-and-development-a-scoping-study-of-funding-opportunities](http://www.transparency-initiative.org/reports/upcoming-report-launch-tax-and-development-a-scoping-study-of-funding-opportunities)

**Q. Is the level of tax collection increasing and enabling the government to fund better quality and coverage of essential services?**

It is important to understand the basics in terms of how the tax system is functioning. Annual reports from the tax authority, IMF country reports and Ministry of Finance budget speeches will all have relevant information. The ratio of tax revenue to GDP is considered a key indicator and developing countries will be working to increase this.<sup>21</sup> If tax revenue is increasing, it is useful to analyse how much the budget for social services is changing to link debates around economic and social inequalities. Budgetary needs can also be contrasted to fiscal losses (described later), and the tax increases sought via the tax reform agenda.

**Q. What is the level of trust in the tax system?**

A country's citizens must be willing to pay tax or large numbers will routinely try to evade paying tax of all kinds, thus weakening the entire tax system. A serious lack of trust that tax revenue will be used properly is an important element to take into account when developing strategies in programme work.

**Q. Is fiscal policy exacerbating income inequality in the country?**

While data exist in developed countries, little research has been conducted in developing countries on income inequality before and after taxes and transfers such as social security or social assistance benefits, though there are some exceptions.<sup>22</sup> Research is increasing in this area<sup>23</sup> but more needs to be done to answer this critical question.

**Q. What indirect taxes are in place? Are they designed to both protect the poor and tax wealthier citizens more heavily?**

Basic data on all tax types are available in revenue authority annual reports and can easily be compiled. Alternative sources of information also exist.<sup>24</sup> In-depth data analysis would help understand whether indirect taxation, such as sales, trade taxes and excise taxes, are weighing disproportionately on the poor. Taxes can be designed to avoid this, or levied on high luxury goods. It is crucial to be aware of the tax types and exemptions and rates in place, as well as any tax reform proposals.

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<sup>21</sup> It is commonly put forward by the IMF that 15% of GDP is an appropriate minimum benchmark for developing countries tax collection levels. (See: IMF, 2011, Revenue Mobilisation in Developing Countries, Fiscal Affairs Department). However, new research finds that many developing countries actually fall below this level. (See: Prichard, Wilson, Cobham, Alex and Goodall, Andrew, 2014, The ICTD Government Revenue Dataset, The International Centre for Tax and Development, Working Paper 19). By comparison most developed countries collect at least 35% of their GDP in tax. [www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2011/030811.pdf](http://www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2011/030811.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> For example, in Guatemala poverty after taxes and cash transfers is higher than (market) income poverty and the regressive sales taxes wipe out the benefits of the social protection system. See: Maynor Cabrera, Nora Lustig, Hicías Moran, October 2014, Fiscal Policy, Inequality and the Ethnic Divide in Guatemala, CEQ Working Paper No. 20 [www.ecineq.org/milano/WP/ECINEQ2014-343.pdf](http://www.ecineq.org/milano/WP/ECINEQ2014-343.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> The Commitment to Equity research project is a useful starting point. It is looking at a number of countries and publishing research around how progressive revenue collection and government spending is. They have published a series of papers covering Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay which can be found here: [www.commitmenttoequity.org](http://www.commitmenttoequity.org). Countries they are working on and where data should be available in future include: China, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ghana, Georgia, Honduras, India, Iran, Jordan, Nicaragua, Russia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tunisia and Venezuela.

<sup>24</sup> IMF country reports also provide this information or it can be found in the new database of the International Centre for Tax and Development (ICTD): [www.ictd.ac/en/about-ictd-government-revenue-dataset](http://www.ictd.ac/en/about-ictd-government-revenue-dataset)

**Q. What is the direct taxation picture? Where are the gaps and problems with enforcement that are causing fiscal losses?**

Direct taxes, such as personal and corporate income taxes, property taxes, capital gains taxes, and other wealth taxes such as inheritance tax, have the greatest potential to reduce income inequality.

The first area to look at is the scale of corporate income tax incentives and exemptions and the fiscal losses that result.<sup>25</sup> Incentives are typically overly generous, de-linked from any development strategy and routinely abused by firms. In the worst cases they are also shrouded in secrecy and used in a corrupt fashion. Other areas to look at are the levels of tax avoidance and evasion. The effective corporate income tax rate being paid will shed light on the corporate tax gap and the potential avoidance and evasion that is going on.<sup>26</sup> Thresholds for personal income tax (when people are eligible to pay income tax and the top marginal rates for the rich) should also be looked at.<sup>27</sup> The rates, levels of revenue collected and the trends of collection over time in these areas will all tell an important story, and can be linked to a political inequality analysis. Many countries do not have capital gains taxes, property taxes or inheritance taxes, and there is scope to campaign for these to be introduced or rates and levels of collection increased. The revenue authority is likely to have a lot of knowledge of gaps, losses and weaknesses in this area.

**Q. What is the status of wealth taxation and potential for reforms in this area?**

Wealth taxes include land and property taxes, capital gains tax and inheritance tax. These are often understudied areas. Oxfam India, with a partner, has specifically looked at reforms to wealth taxes in India.<sup>28</sup> As international tax transparency legislation improves, there will be more information available about the incomes and assets of the wealthy held in tax havens in the future.<sup>29</sup>

**Q. What is the content of the current tax reform agenda?**

It is very important to look at the package of tax reforms on the agenda, what the government (and elite) are proposing and also what donors are supporting. Equally important is what is absent: what is not being proposed and what is not being discussed? The key question is whether enough is being done to increase the taxation of corporations and wealthy individuals. Details on any tax reform package will be well covered in IMF country reports (as well as available from the Ministry of Finance budget speeches and revenue authority reports). Often tax reform benchmarks form part of country-level agreements with the IMF.

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<sup>25</sup> Incentives and exemptions for companies include, for example, tax holidays – when companies pay no income tax for a set period – or reduced corporate tax rates. These rules mean governments sacrifice large amounts of tax revenue they should be receiving. Estimates of these fiscal losses can be quantified by tax authorities and specialist researchers. The losses are often referred to as ‘tax expenditures’. If good practice is being followed, a tax expenditure statement should be made public with the annual budget each year so parliament and society can see how much revenue is being sacrificed due to exemptions and incentives laws. This is a key tax transparency measure.

<sup>26</sup> The corporate tax gap is the difference between what corporations should pay and the amount actually paid. While the headline corporate tax rate may be 30% the effective tax rate – the amounts actually paid as a % of corporate profits – might be much lower. Large businesses might also have lower effective tax rates than small businesses, another example of inequitable taxation in practice.

<sup>27</sup> Christian Aid’s research looks at personal income tax in Africa and the various problems with personal income tax thresholds (eg. in Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa). See: Christian Aid, 2014, Africa Rising: inequalities and the essential role of fair taxation [www.christianaid.org.uk/images/Africa-tax-and-inequality-report-Feb2014.pdf](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/Africa-tax-and-inequality-report-Feb2014.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> See: CGBA and Oxfam India, 2013, Property Taxes Across G20 Countries: Can India Get it Right? This study looks at property taxes, taxation of financial assets in India and inheritance tax reforms [www.oxfamindia.org/sites/default/files/Working%20paper%202015.pdf](http://www.oxfamindia.org/sites/default/files/Working%20paper%202015.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> This refers to new automatic information exchange agreements and standards which the OECD is in the process of setting up for OECD members and as an international standard. For OECD countries it will be immediately relevant, as well as for larger, middle income countries with the capacity to take part in information exchange for tax purposes properly.

## OPTIONS FOR ACTION

Programmes can work to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to conduct research, advocacy and to campaign on debt, aid and tax-related issues. On tax specifically it is important to learn from the experience of Oxfam's CRAFT Alliance. [See Case 3 on page 19].

### For those starting out, Oxfam can:

**Introduce debt, aid and tax as issues to budget groups** or relevant economic policy think-tank partners or allies, or citizen participation groups. Materials are available from the CRAFT project. The Tax Advocacy Toolkit developed by Christian Aid is also an important resource. The global aid team can provide analysis of the aid situation for you, and Development Finance International, which is a key partner and ally of Oxfam can provide assistance on debt, aid and taxation.<sup>30</sup>

**Design a revenue project** to investigate and describe the country's revenue. This can identify where the country gets its money from and in what ways, looking at aid, debt and taxation. Regarding tax policies, research trends in revenue raising and analyse tax equity in personal income tax thresholds, corporate income tax incentives, avoidance and evasion, the VAT burden on the poor, and the effectiveness of wealth taxes such as capital gains and property taxes. A background paper is an essential tool to develop policy options and for first engagements with partners and relevant authorities.

### For those interested in training and awareness raising, Oxfam can:

**Embark on a training programme** for CSOs, grassroots organisations, parliamentarians and/or journalists interested in tax. Within the CRAFT project Oxfam has already developed 'make tax fair' training modules and a training of trainers approach.

**Engage in civic education on tax and use popular education and mobilisation** techniques to build citizen awareness of the fairness of the country's tax system, as well as to explore how revenues could more equitably be raised to support development goals.

**Conduct citizen surveys** looking at their understanding of the tax they pay and their trust in the tax system.

### For those ready for tax advocacy and campaign work, Oxfam can:

**Work with CSOs to develop key advocacy messages and detailed policy proposals** on debt, aid and tax and advocate around tax transparency measures in country, including corporate tax incentives and exemptions.

**Link both budget and tax work**, bringing a powerful additional angle to any tax campaign. In Ghana, Oxfam has successfully linked campaigning around oil revenue to social spending in its OIL4FOOD campaign. In the Dominican Republic, Oxfam has campaigned on 'tax for education'.

**Build national alliances and coalitions** to strengthen civil society voices in this area, as CRAFT is doing. ActionAid is already active in Asia while Christian Aid is heavily involved in Latin America. Both organisations are active in Africa. Small business associations, chambers of commerce and trade unions may also present partnership opportunities. See Box 5 for more information on regional and global actors.

**Support roundtables and taxpayer dialogues** between CSOs and governments to enable scrutiny of tax policy and proposed tax reforms and promote national dialogue. This is important to advance the principle of progressive tax reform.

**Be attentive and reactive to the tax reform agenda.** VAT reforms in Kenya and Malawi have served to galvanise civil society, and in Egypt, Oxfam's partner ECESR has engaged on the VAT reform angle. This is often an area where reactive campaigning is needed.

<sup>30</sup> Christian Aid Toolkit can be found here: [www.christianaid.org.uk/images/completetaxadvocacytoolkit.pdf](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/completetaxadvocacytoolkit.pdf)

**For those interested in more specialist research, Oxfam can:**

Partner with specialist researchers to look at economic inequality before and after taxes and transfers, look at the burden of different tax types on different groups and advocate to the government and national statistics office to properly calculate and publish data. Globally Oxfam has a partnership with the Commitment to Equity project who are world leaders in this area, and may well have done work on your country. You can check by looking at [www.commitmenttoequity.org](http://www.commitmenttoequity.org)

**Focus research on the taxation of a specific economic sector** such as tourism, banking and finance or telecommunications. Oxfam can also look at a particular value chain to investigate the different tax contributions of the different economic actors (farmers, traders, processors, exporters) compared to the profits made.

**Support research into specific cases of corporate tax dodging.** Tax Justice Network-UK and ActionAid support research in this area with ActionAid having conducted two studies focusing on Africa which have had large impacts.<sup>31</sup>

**Look at taxation and gender**, perhaps by establishing a new high-level institutional research partnership. This would need to look at how tax systems impact women and how tax policy could be used as a tool to redistribute unequal gender roles. These are largely unanswered questions.

**For those interested in engaging in regional and global tax justice alliances, you can consider:**

**Jubilee Debt Campaign** is a strong ally to contact on the issue of the growing debt problem, and to get support with analysis and recommendations on debt.

**Tax Justice Network-Africa (TJN-A)** was set up in 2007 to promote socially just and progressive tax systems across Africa and now has 23 members in 15 countries. TJN-A works mainly through research, capacity building and policy influencing and acts as a regional platform bringing together broad civil society expertise in this area. In countries such as Mali and Ivory Coast, TJN-A has close collaborations with the Publish What You Pay platforms.

**Red de Justicia Fiscal (RJF)** helps incorporate its 24 member organisations across 14 LAC countries into debates on international taxation issues. They support members, providing capacity building when funds are available and supporting members to build networks and do research and advocacy.

In Asia regional networks are more diffuse. However, CBGA India and **Jubilee South Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (JSAPMDD)** in the Philippines are important actors with regional influence.

**The Global Alliance for Tax Justice (GATJ)**, formed in March 2013, is a separate entity from the Tax Justice Network and fully based on the autonomous, regional tax justice networks. Each region has two members on the coordinating committee. Their overarching campaign theme is 'to make multinational corporations pay their fair share of taxes'. GATJ members combine national work on issues such as strengthening anti-avoidance measures and corporate income taxation reforms, with regional work on key issues like tax incentives and international-level lobbying of relevant actors.

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<sup>31</sup> Action Aid, 2010, Calling Time: Why SABMiller should stop dodging taxes in Africa [www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/doc\\_lib/calling\\_time\\_on\\_tax\\_avoidance.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/doc_lib/calling_time_on_tax_avoidance.pdf); Action Aid, 2013, Sweet Nothings: The human cost of a British sugar giant avoiding taxes in southern Africa [www.actionaid.org/](http://www.actionaid.org/)

# 3.4 RAISING PUBLIC RESOURCES: REVENUES FROM EXTRACTIVES INDUSTRIES

Credit: Cartoon Courtesy of Masoud Kipanya



## WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

A large body of research has shown that developing countries are losing out on taxes from extractives due to poor policy design, abusive tax dodging and the prevalence of corrupt practices and revenue mismanagement in the sector. Given its importance, it would be almost impossible to establish a progressive tax system without taxing this sector more effectively.

Revenue generated by the natural resource sectors in developing countries may already be the focus of a lot of research, but the revenue side may be less explored in places where CSO interventions have focused on abusive company practices affecting rights to land, food and clean water. Advances in transparency at the international level will create more data and new opportunities to explore in the future.

## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

### Q. What information is publicly available in relation to extractives taxation and how revenue is raised and spent?

Understanding production, prices, exports and the royalties and taxes paid to governments is critical to holding the government to account and investigating whether multinational companies are paying their fair share. It is important to know what information is available and what standards the government is complying with. The Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), an important voluntary standard, has driven increasing transparency in the extractives industry sector, but not all countries have signed up to this; the standards are voluntary and progress is in constant need of monitoring. In addition the EU and US have developed new legislation in this area, meaning extractives companies will be obliged to report more information on production, income and tax in countries where they operate.<sup>32</sup> This should aid research in this area.

### Q. How are the resources raised from the extractives sector being used?

It is important to ‘follow the money’, since extractives resources can sometimes be channeled into priority sectors like agriculture, ring-fenced for a particular sector like education or tied to the local area where extraction is happening. This can have a huge impact on the revenue available. Understanding how revenue is being allocated and conducting local-level budget monitoring is important.

### Q. Is the country receiving its fair share of income from its natural resource sector?

Natural resource revenues can include income from royalties paid as a percentage of the value of oil and minerals extracted or as income taxes charged on the profits of extractives companies. In some places, extractives companies may be required to pay windfall taxes, though developing countries struggle to introduce

these progressive measures. Analysis of royalties and total revenues received by developing countries often show small shares overall, far below international benchmarks.<sup>33</sup> Country comparisons are extremely important to evaluate whether a fair share is being received.

### Q. What are the current shortcomings of policies related to revenue-raising from extractives?

Policy design can dictate share of revenue captured by developing countries and therefore the following elements require close scrutiny: royalty rates and corporate income tax rates; tax incentives and exemptions reducing these rates and offering other benefits;<sup>34</sup> how production monitoring is occurring to ensure production levels reported are correct; how proper audits of the sector are being managed and generally the capacity of the state revenue authority to monitor the sector and particularly combat tax dodging by extractives companies. In some developing countries this analysis already exists,<sup>35</sup> though with varying degrees of comprehensiveness and quality. Ongoing monitoring is necessary given policy changes will occur and there are often failures in policy implementation.

### Q. Are there cases of abusive tax practices that need to be investigated?

Some multinational companies use tax dodging techniques and tax havens to artificially reduce the revenue they declare in the production country,<sup>36</sup> ultimately depriving governments of revenue. Some CSOs have looked closely at this area, assessing company reports and other information available to look at specific company tax and royalty contributions and also mapping the use of tax havens by extractives companies investing in their country. In Zambia, work by the Centre for Trade Policy Development (CTPD) has shown the extent of abusive tax practices and how CSOs are drawing attention to this.<sup>37</sup> This is an important contribution to the extractives taxation debate as it puts public pressure on companies to reform practices and also sheds light on the risk of tax evasion.

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<sup>32</sup> EU legislation relates to transparency in the extractives and forestry sector. There is similar legislation in the US (Dodd-Frank Act) for extractives but legal challenges from the oil sector have delayed full implementation of the Act.

<sup>33</sup> According to the IMF, for example, the effective tax rate in mining is typically 45%-65% of export value. See: Africa Progress Panel, 2013, Equity in Extractives: Stewarding Africa's natural resources for all, [www.africaprogresspanel.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/2013\\_APR\\_Equity\\_in\\_Extractives\\_25062013\\_ENG\\_HR.pdf](http://www.africaprogresspanel.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/2013_APR_Equity_in_Extractives_25062013_ENG_HR.pdf) Africa Progress Panel Report. For the oil sector it can often be higher.

<sup>34</sup> The tax incentives can be far-reaching and numerous, and can include reductions in, or simply very low, royalty and corporate income tax rates; exemptions from import duties and withholding taxes; and generous rules regarding capital allowances and the treatment of losses for tax purposes.

<sup>35</sup> For example studies have been produced in Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Honduras, Guatemala, Peru, Philippines and no doubt other developing countries as well.

## OPTIONS FOR ACTION

Since many INGOs and local and national CSOs have been working on these issues for years, country programmes will need to think through Oxfam's added value in this area.

**For those in countries where extractives work is less developed, Oxfam can:**

**Play a key role in preparing CSOs for action by supporting research and strengthening their capacity** to monitor natural resource sectors, conduct revenue monitoring or advocate for transparency legislation to ensure revenues are reported regularly.

**For those in countries where extractives work is more established, Oxfam can:**

**Add its voice to national coalitions** and support existing initiatives, including the EITI and PWYP<sup>36</sup>. Supporting national efforts to renegotiate contracts or strengthen legislation – by raising royalty rates or bringing in new windfall taxes – is important, especially given historical difficulties in this area.

**Contribute to established campaigns** by linking work on extractives taxation to how revenues are spent. The OIL4FOOD work in Ghana paired tax to social spending, providing powerful impetus to a campaign. This can help connect citizens to the importance and impact of their tax systems and deal with the very real corruption fears which often undermine tax work.

**Focus on data emerging as part of new EU transparency legislation** and apply new approaches such as digital tools, open data formats and data accessibility. Key actors in this area include Natural Resource Governance Institute, Global Witness, ONE Campaign and the Follow the Money network<sup>39</sup>.

**Conduct cross-country analysis to highlight differences in tax rates** and the weakness of some extractives taxation regimes, as well as to document and disseminate models of good practice.

**For those who see a need and opportunity to advocate directly to companies, Oxfam can:**

**Research and advocate around specific company contracts** signed between extractives companies and developing countries.

**Improve standards and practices** and work against corporate blockers of reform through direct advocacy and lobbying using Oxfam's WIN network and action at the headquarters of extractives companies. Oxfam in Niger used the programme to assess contributions of a French uranium company and worked with Oxfam France to make the company pay significantly more tax in Niger.

**Support research into corporate tax dodging by extractives companies.** Corporate tax avoidance and evasion are very powerful tools to support advocacy and campaigning, though country programmes will need support in this area from Oxfam's WIN network.

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<sup>36</sup> This refers to trade mispricing which takes place when companies manipulate the price of exports and imports to artificially depress profits and dodge tax. Companies can manipulate prices by selling the commodity in question at a low price to another part of the same multinational based in a tax haven. Once offshore (on paper at least) another part of the multinational will levy a charge for services and then sell the commodity on at a much higher price. All such deals between different parts of the same multinational are supposed to be charged at 'arms-length' (i.e. market) prices. In practice, multinationals can often charge themselves what they like. Essentially it means a company can appear to lose money – or to make very little profit – in the country it is operating in, while making money in secrecy jurisdictions where there is no real production and sales activity going on, and crucially no tax applied.

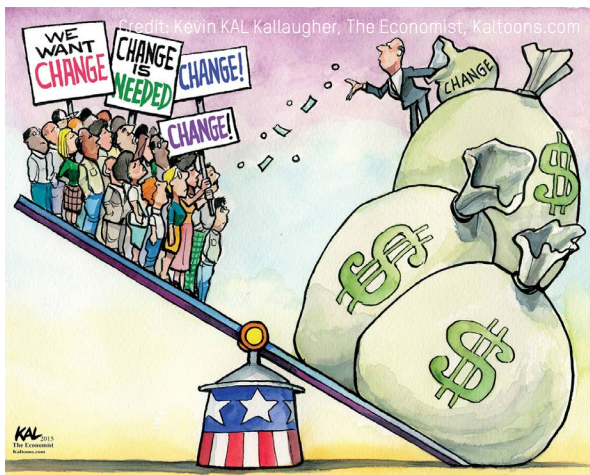
<sup>37</sup> See here for a summary of CTPD work and the issue of copper company tax dodging: [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmintdev/130/130we07.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmintdev/130/130we07.htm)

<sup>38</sup> EITI (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative) [eiti.org/eiti](http://eiti.org/eiti) PWYP (Publish What You Pay) [www.publishwhatyoupay.org](http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org)

<sup>39</sup> See here for some information on the vision of the Follow the Money Network: [docs.google.com/a/one.org/document/d/1mfEpoWrQaXXbx5tCML8sP3r1VmwHWXcCnvZ7H\\_9-aCl](https://docs.google.com/a/one.org/document/d/1mfEpoWrQaXXbx5tCML8sP3r1VmwHWXcCnvZ7H_9-aCl). The site has yet to be fully developed but there is information on sign up here: [followthemoney.net](http://followthemoney.net)



# 3.5 SPENDING PUBLIC RESOURCES ON PROGRESSIVE PUBLIC SERVICES



## WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

It is necessary for all governments to spend more on public services like education and health. Raising tax revenues enables them to do this. Evidence shows that increasing spending on public services is one of the most powerful weapons in the fight against inequality. A recent paper collating evidence from 13 developing countries found that health and education spending accounted for on average 69% of the total reduction in inequality .

Beyond the overall levels of spending, the way that money is spent is crucial too, and especially the policies about how the money is spent.

Oxfam believes that free public health and education services are a strong weapon in the fight against social and economic inequalities. Health user fees have caused financial catastrophe for millions around the world while education costs - even for private 'low-fee' schools - can easily mean families keep children out of school or in under-resourced, poor quality public schools.

Privatisation can create a vicious cycle of poorer quality services with less financial resources to sustain them. Investment in free, quality universal public services can relieve women of the burden of care and get girls into school, which has the additional, structural impact of giving girls and women far more opportunities over the

long term. Also, women often make up a large share of employees in the public sector, in their roles as nurses and teachers, meaning that investing in expanded public services is an investment in jobs for women.

The 'social inequality map' in your country must be fully understood, as this is the backdrop to which all essential services policy and programme work takes place. Ideally programmes will combine a thorough understanding of essential service provision (quality and coverage), with the full budget equity picture, budget monitoring and analysis through the lens of identity-based inequalities. It is also important to look closely at policy implementation and the reform agenda in this area, particularly if working towards a vision of universal service provision. This could involve fighting for the elimination of health use fees for example, as Oxfam has done successfully in a number of countries. Getting rid of fees can have a huge positive impact on both income and gender inequality.

## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

### Q. Where are gaps in social outcomes particularly high or growing?

Understanding gaps in key indicators of wellbeing, such as school attendance rates, provision of antenatal care, child and maternal mortality rates or access to water and sanitation is crucial. It's equally as important to know how these gaps relate to geography and where gaps are widening or narrowing. This is important analysis in which to situate advocacy on budget monitoring and essential services.

**Q. How close is the government to achieving the universal and free provision of essential services?**

It is important to explore how close your country is to achieving universal and free provision of essential services, to analyse the quality of services provided<sup>40</sup> and to look at budgetary needs and gaps. Costings in this area can be linked to work on tax and budget, particularly the tax reform agenda.

**Q. What forms of privatisation are on the agenda that contradict a vision of free, universal service provision?**

There are two ways in which privatisation is leading to greater inequality in poor countries. Large-scale public-private partnerships in health and education can do significant harm and end up being a major drain on the resources of government, as Oxfam demonstrated in Lesotho, where half the government health budget was being spent on one hospital (see box). More recently, the government of Liberia has said it will outsource all of its primary education to the private sector.

At the other end of the scale, proposals aimed at supporting the development of 'low-fee' private provision of basic services is an unhelpful step in the wrong direction. Private education excludes girls and the poorest and is not an answer. It is, therefore, important to monitor what reforms are on the policy agenda – particularly given donors are looking more at private models of service delivery. Analysis here can include looking at potential impact of privatisation on women.

**Q. What fees are in place for health and education? How are they being financed?**

Many countries still charge fees for accessing health services, which excludes huge numbers of the poorest people, and especially women and children. A number of other countries are seeking to replace fees with health insurance, but this too excludes the vast majority, especially those in the informal sector, again the majority women. Tax-based financing of free healthcare is by far the best option. Some countries such as Brazil have significantly scaled up their public health provision with great success.

Fees for primary school are now increasingly rare, but still exist in many countries. Fees for lower-secondary, upper-secondary and tertiary education are far more common, and again mean that the poorest and particularly women are often excluded, driving up inequality.

**Q. What are the national headlines in terms of budget equity? What are the key trends in relation to budget allocations?**

Programmes need to understand the overall allocations between sectors to evaluate whether priority areas are getting appropriate shares and how these are changing over time. For example, higher education may receive much higher budget allocations – for fewer and wealthier students – compared to pre-primary and primary levels.

**Q. How does investment in essential services take into account inequalities between groups and locations?**

It is important to investigate whether patterns of spending are correcting or worsening imbalances. There are tools to aid gender budget analysis. Spatial analysis of budgets can reveal how public spending skews resources towards the most advantaged parts of the country. This is likely to overlap with an analysis of how different groups are affected.<sup>41</sup>

**Q. What is the nature of the public response to the social inequalities that exist in your context?**

It is important to understand the extent of discriminatory social attitudes and beliefs. Is the true extent of the problem known and accepted? Is discrimination overtly part of the discourse or more hidden? This will determine the extent to which Oxfam programmes need to draw attention to different social inequalities and/or engage on active non-discrimination campaigns.

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<sup>40</sup> Ministries' annual reports and evaluations by key multilateral and bilateral donors are important sources of information on essential service provision effectiveness, quality, coverage and budgets. Any donor-funded public expenditure reviews for social sectors will also provide useful information.

<sup>41</sup> Budget analysis in Ghana, for example, has shown that the poorer northern regions received the lowest per pupil spending from the education budget. The northern regions have some of the countries most disadvantaged ethnic groups. For this data see, ISODEC-UNICEF, March 2010, Analysis of the 2010 National Budget and Economic Policy Statement of the Government of Ghana to Determine Gaps and Opportunities for Women and Children. [www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Ghana\\_BUDGET\\_ANALYSIS\\_2010\\_FINAL\\_Document.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Ghana_BUDGET_ANALYSIS_2010_FINAL_Document.pdf)

**Q. Are urban spatial inequalities relevant in your context? What information is available here?**

Spatial analysis can be extended beyond the urban vs. rural dichotomy to look at social inequalities and spending patterns within large cities. In Latin America, for example, analysis shows the region is not investing more resources in housing, water, sanitation and community infrastructure, despite the many problems in large cities in the region.<sup>42</sup> This is relevant in other countries and regions, particularly Asia, where urban spatial inequalities will likely gain even more prominence.

**Q. How does the budget equity analysis look in the context of decentralisation?**

In theory, decentralisation might bring decisions on spending closer to local needs. However, if local institutions are weak, there can be more corruption as fewer controls are in place. Decentralisation of public finances can also increase inequality between regions if the central government is not correctly adjusting financing formulas to take into account weaker local tax collections and higher poverty rates. Financing formulas for the regions in terms of administrative block grants as well as sectoral budget allocations such as for education and agriculture are also important areas for monitoring.

**Q. What are the shortcomings of the current social protection system?**

Social protection systems mitigate the worst effects of income inequality by providing a safety net for the most vulnerable, as well as counteracting identity-based inequalities by providing direct benefits for women and racial and ethnic minorities. The design and impact of social protection systems needs to be carefully evaluated with these inequalities in mind.

## OPTIONS FOR ACTION

A variety of budget monitoring tools and approaches are available, as profiled in Box 6. The essential services campaigns are a central component. While budget work features strongly in the current Oxfam Strategic Plan (2013-2019), there is also a general expectation that work in this area will be more strongly linked to tax going forward.

**For those interested in budget and essential services research and advocacy, Oxfam can:**

**Work to strengthen CSO capacity to conduct research, advocacy and campaigns** on the national budget and around essential services. Combining tax and spending work can be advantageous.

**Conduct national level budget analysis looking at sectoral trends** and how the budget benefits different groups and locations. Gender-sensitive budget analysis and advocacy can play a key part.

**Research key areas such as education financing across regions/districts** or the infrastructure and social sector budgets of large city administrations to highlight the impact of inequitable spending per capita on different groups and locations.

**Support local-level budget monitoring on efficiency, accountability and quality of service provision**, as well as corruption. Tools and experience exist here to use and learn from. Women's groups are important partners here.

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<sup>42</sup> ECLAC, 2014, Social Panorama of Latin America [repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37627/S1420728\\_en.pdf](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37627/S1420728_en.pdf)

For those working to counter privatisation trends, Oxfam can:

**Campaign to remove user fees for health and for secondary education, and resist the introduction of health insurance.** Researching this issue, monitoring the changing landscape and, where relevant, demonstrating the negative impacts of user fees. Key areas for attention include the percentage of people's income spent on fees; demonstrating decreasing access to services; and tracking increasing gaps in health outcomes for different groups. Researching gender inequality impacts may include looking at access of girls and women to services, nutritional impacts and any further impacts in terms of burden of care work, income levels and employment opportunities.

**Investigate the existence of public-private partnerships and their cost to government and campaign to stop them.** This should be contrasted against expenditure in other areas to inform equity debates.

For those interested in amplifying their work via campaigning and alliance building, Oxfam can:

**Support targeted policy and advocacy work** with governments and donors and build national alliances and coalitions to strengthen civil society around progressive expenditure and free, universal health and education provision.

**Encourage partners to join the Global Movement for Budget Transparency, Accountability and Participation (BTAP)** and the Make Budgets Public NOW campaign. Country programmes can also develop partnerships with specialists such as the IBP, using their tools and resources and linking up with their partners in-country.

## A SNAPSHOT OF OUR BUDGETING MONITORING WORK

Oxfam supports national-level budget analysis and advocacy, as well as district and local-level monitoring of budget expenditure by community groups. Access to information is vital and Oxfam aims to ensure citizens have access to information and the means to generate analysis that can be used to advocate for a better, more equitable budget.

**Oxfam's approach to budget work includes the following activities:**

Strengthening the capacity of CSOs by supporting them to monitor and analyse budget flows and participate in budget development and decision making processes.

Lobbying governments and international institutions to advocate for changes in transparency, accountability and budget decision making processes and budget allocations.

Raising awareness and conducting global and national campaigns around transparency, accountability and citizen participation in budget decision making and budget allocations.

Building influential alliances and movements on pro-poor budget allocation and citizen participation.

Increasingly Oxfam is combining work on budget and taxation. At least 18 country programmes have active projects in this area and Oxfam has trained 100 partner organisations. Country programmes have adopted many approaches and techniques, such as the Open Budget Index experience in Yemen; the budget tracking and social audit work in Mozambique; and the public budget hearings process in Brazil. In Uganda, Oxfam supported a large citizen anti-corruption campaign across 30 districts. Oxfam's partners are lobbying on a whole range of budget issues – from access to information, anti-corruption legislation and how budgets are being allocated to support marginalised groups.

#### **CASE 4: ADVOCATING AROUND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN HEALTH IN LESOTHO**

In Lesotho, the richest 10% of households account for more than half of total consumption. Spatial inequality is a major issue, with poverty 50% higher in rural areas compared to urban areas. Lesotho also has the world's third highest burden of HIV and AIDS and rising infant and maternal mortality rates.

Lesotho's Queen Mamohato Memorial Hospital is the first in Africa - and the first in a low-income country - to be designed, built, financed and operated under a public-private partnership (PPP) that was developed under the advice of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector investment arm of the World Bank Group. Negotiations took place in secret and little information was available throughout the process. Oxfam, with local partner the Lesotho Consumer Protection Association, researched and documented this experience, finding the following negative impacts: The new hospital is costing three times what the old public hospital would have cost today and is consuming more than half (51%) of the total government health budget.

Projections show there will be a 64% increase in government health spending over the next three years, with 83% of that increase due to spiralling costs under the PPP.

The PPP is diverting resources from primary and secondary healthcare in rural areas where mortality rates are rising and where three-quarters of the population live.

The increase in the health budget is also expected to have knock-on effects on other sectors, with agriculture and education both set to experience cuts in real terms in the period up to 2016/17.

Before the PPP was implemented, Lesotho was already spending too much on tertiary level, urban-based healthcare. Primary healthcare and rural areas were particularly losing out. The health PPP has dramatically exacerbated this inequitable trend by absorbing such a large share of the health budget. Unfortunately the government of Lesotho is locked into a disastrous and costly 18 year contract.

Despite these failings, the IFC continues to use Lesotho's PPP as success model for other countries to follow. Similar IFC-supported health PPPs are now well advanced in Nigeria and in the pipeline for Benin as well as being proposed in Turkey, Malaysia, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Chile and Peru. Oxfam continues to advocate on this issue and is monitoring health PPPs in other countries.

See Oxfam (2014) 'A Dangerous Diversion: Will the IFC's flagship PPP bankrupt Lesotho's Ministry of Health?'. <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-dangerous-diversion-will-the-ifcs-flagship-health-ppp-bankrupt-lesothos-minis-315183>

# 3.6 JOBS AND WAGES

## WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

Increasing wages paid to the working poor would directly reduce poverty and lessen income inequality. It would also create a virtuous cycle effect, stimulating local economies. However, most workers and producers, year-on-year, are faced with more precarious work and stagnant minimum wages and incomes. Shareholder pressure to prioritise profits combined with low levels of worker organising means workers' ability to demand higher wages are severely constrained. ILO data show wages are lagging behind productivity in many countries and share of income going to labour has decreased in nearly all ILO countries.<sup>44</sup>

Jobs traditionally done by women typically receive lower wages. Women are also often found working in jobs such as childcare or nursing and while women are likely to be teachers, school heads are likely to be men. In many countries there are also data showing wage discrimination between ethnic groups.

Wages, of course, are not the only factor. It is important overall for growth to occur in sectors where there are high concentrations of poor people earning (e.g. agriculture). The growth model matters enormously and debates about inclusive and more equitable development strategies are important.

## QUESTION TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

It is important to look closely at wage levels across sectors and industries as well as to understand the panorama with regard to worker organisation and wage setting processes. National economic development plans and job creation strategies are particularly important, as well as the situation of women and minority groups within this broad picture.

### Q. How does the minimum wage compare to a living wage in your country?

There is often existing research on wage levels at country level and what a living wage might be. In Asia, the Clean Clothes Campaign and the Asia Floor Wage Campaign provide figures on the gap between the minimum and living wage across selected countries.<sup>45</sup> They have also developed a methodology for calculating a living wage in Asia that could be adapted for other countries and regions.<sup>46</sup> Other organisations are working on new living wage benchmarks for rural South Africa, Malawi, Dominican Republic and Kenya.<sup>47</sup> Oxfam has documented wages of tea pluckers in India, Indonesia and Malawi,<sup>48</sup> conducted a living wage benchmarking study for Kenyan horticulture<sup>49</sup> and looked at wages as part of a larger piece of research into labour rights in Viet Nam.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> These are: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka. This information can be found here: [www.cleanclothes.org/livingwage/living-wage-versus-minimum-wage](http://www.cleanclothes.org/livingwage/living-wage-versus-minimum-wage)

<sup>46</sup> See here: [www.cleanclothes.org/livingwage/calculating-a-living-wage](http://www.cleanclothes.org/livingwage/calculating-a-living-wage)

<sup>47</sup> See here for information: [www.isealalliance.org/online-community/news/new-living-wage-benchmarks-point-the-way-forward](http://www.isealalliance.org/online-community/news/new-living-wage-benchmarks-point-the-way-forward)  
[www.utzcertified.org/en/newsroom/utz-in-the-news/26584779-new-living-wage-benchmark-for-kenya](http://www.utzcertified.org/en/newsroom/utz-in-the-news/26584779-new-living-wage-benchmark-for-kenya)

<sup>48</sup> See: Oxfam, December 2014, Steps Towards a Living Wage in Global Supply Chains, Issue Briefing for some information. Wages were found to be below the poverty line in India and below the extreme poverty line in Malawi, despite meeting the legal minimum and providing in-kind benefits see [www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/ib-steps-towards-living-wage-global-supply-chains-101214-en.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/ib-steps-towards-living-wage-global-supply-chains-101214-en.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> Others have also conducted research on this issue. In 2014 a living wage benchmarking study for Kenya horticulture was commissioned by six ISEAL members: Fairtrade, UTZ Certified, Sustainable Agriculture Network/Rainforest Alliance (SAN/RA), GoodWeave, Forest Stewardship Council and Social Accountability International. The findings found the gap between minimum wage and a living wage to be even larger than Oxfam's calculation, and that collective bargaining had taken cash wages only part of the way.

<sup>50</sup> See report published by Oxfam February 2013 [policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/labour-rights-in-unilevers-supply-chain-from-compliance-to-good-practice-an-oxf-267532](http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/labour-rights-in-unilevers-supply-chain-from-compliance-to-good-practice-an-oxf-267532) <sup>44</sup> For a review of evidence see: ILO, 2015, Global Wage Report 2014/15: Wages and Income Inequality. It noted that data comparing wages and labour productivity trends is generally much better in developed than developing countries [www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_324678.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/@publ/documents/publication/wcms_324678.pdf)

**Q. What is the process for setting the minimum wage and how is it effectively enforced?**

Governments should have inclusive minimum-wage setting processes, with workers being able to participate and negotiate. The Ministry of Labour's activities, budget and commitment to the enforcement of the minimum wage can also be explored.

**Q. What is the level of worker organisation and do collective bargaining agreements or structured wage negotiations exist in important sectors/industries?**

Recent IMF research found a strong link between the erosion of unions and the rise of income inequality,<sup>51</sup> therefore it is important to explore legislation and practices that are relevant to workers' rights to unionise and strike. It is also critical to look at the ability of trade unions to negotiate collective bargaining agreements and to see in which sectors/industries these exist and what impact they are having on workers' wages.

**Q. What is the pattern of women's employment and what are the prevalent terms and conditions in occupations dominated by women workers?**

Women often work in low-paid jobs and suffer poorer terms and conditions than men in employment. It is important to understand the sectors and occupations in which women find employment, the terms and conditions they are offered and the extent of women workers' organisation.

**Q. What are the wage gaps between different groups? What is the public perception of discriminatory wages?**

Research in Latin America in 2014 found very significant impacts to reducing poverty and inequality through closing both the labour force participation and gender wage gaps.<sup>52</sup> Wage discrimination may be tacitly accepted in different sectors and levels within society, particularly with migrant workers and domestic workers. Exploring attitudes toward wage levels is important.

**Q. How equitable is the national economic development strategy?**

A properly designed and implemented growth model can enable inclusive, more equitable growth. A focus on agricultural growth matters. A strategy focused on capital intensive sectors such as extractives, rather than strong job creation for the low-skilled, is also likely to cement inequalities. Infrastructure investment will be determined by these economic priorities and can also fail to meet equity benchmarks. The national economic development plan and private sector development strategies are important here.

**OPTIONS FOR ACTION**

It is possible to look at minimum and living wage issues across a number of sectors/industries and to support worker organising. These interventions can target women workers and/or workers from minority groups and can also directly challenge wage discrimination. Policy and advocacy work around the growth model and private sector development is also possible, but should be limited to specific areas where Oxfam has hands-on experience, such as the garment sector or smallholder agriculture.

**For those interested in research and advocacy around wages and incomes, Oxfam can:**

**Explore the living wage with the private and public sectors, ensure the living wage benchmark is credibly researched** using a recognised methodology and push for voluntary adoption of the living wage within priority sub-sectors and industries. If credible benchmarks already exist, Oxfam can work with others to promote their understanding and implementation.

**Push for public policy debate on minimum and maximum wages** with the Ministries of Labour, Trade and Industry and Agriculture (as relevant) in coordination with private sector actors, key CSOs and trade unions so that a mandated minimum can become enforceable.

<sup>51</sup> Jaumotte, Florence and Osorio Buitron, Carolina, March 2015, Power From the People, Finance and Development, IMF [www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2015/03/pdf/jaumotte.pdf](http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2015/03/pdf/jaumotte.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> ECLAC, 2014, Social Panorama of Latin America [repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37627/S1420728\\_en.pdf](http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37627/S1420728_en.pdf)

**Identify a private sector ally and champion to make the business case for increasing wages,**<sup>53</sup> highlighting the effect of higher wages on purchasing power and the local economy. Oxfam has policies, guidelines and recommendations regarding corporate behaviour.<sup>54</sup>

**Examine Oxfam's own wage policies** in-country looking at all staff pay in relation to a living wage benchmark, especially since Oxfam is an accredited Living Wage Employer in the UK.

**For those able to work directly with workers' organisations to promote workers' rights, Oxfam can:**

**Strengthen workers' organisations and trade unions,** particularly those representing women or vulnerable workers, to improve their capacity for collective bargaining.

**Support the formalisation of jobs** where workers are engaged in supply chains but unprotected by formal contracts that would improve wage levels, workers' terms and conditions, and government revenue through payroll taxes or social security contributions.

**For those seeking to improve service provision and investment in smallholder agriculture, Oxfam can:**

**Focus on investment in agriculture, conducting budget analysis** and advocacy with partners in the sector. Oxfam has already developed an index to evaluate budget transparency, accountability and participation for small-scale producers in LAC.<sup>55</sup> Budget analysis in this area requires data that differentiate small producers and large agribusinesses, but often this information is not available. Oxfam can also support participatory agricultural budgeting work at municipal/district levels.

## **CASE 5: ADVOCATING FOR A LIVING WAGE IN THE TEA INDUSTRY IN MALAWI**

Oxfam documented wage levels in Malawi's tea industry in 2011 in collaboration with the UK-based Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP). A follow-up 'living wage benchmarking' study took place in 2014.

Plantation owners belonging to the Tea Association of Malawi (TAML), the Malawi government, international buyers (representing 50 per cent of Malawi tea purchases by volume) and certification organisations have now formed a coalition led by ETP, Oxfam and IDH to discuss the findings of the report and how a living wage could be implemented. The German development agency GIZ has joined the coalition, with a focus on a 'living income' for smallholder farmers.

Work on strengthening unions has also been started, with support from Fairtrade International, the Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union and input from global union federation IUF. Coalition members are currently negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding to work towards payment of a living wage for Malawi tea pluckers, based on the Anker benchmark, by 2020. Progress will be validated by a credible third party.

**Facilitate poor producers in accessing mainstream financial services** by working with financial services providers to promote investment in services for the poor. Oxfam also needs to build the capacity of poor producers - particularly women - to access financial services from the formal sector on fair and equitable terms. Important activities include surveying credit needs and conducting profitability analysis for each sector to assess maximum affordable interest rates and making the business case to private sector actors to expand and improve service provision. Oxfam has experience in this area in Sri Lanka.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> These can include: increased retention levels, reduced recruitment and training costs, higher employee motivation and better quality and productivity at work as a result.

<sup>54</sup> See: Oxfam, December 2014, Steps Towards a Living Wage in Global Supply Chains, Issue Briefing [www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/ib-steps-towards-living-wage-global-supply-chains-101214-en.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/ib-steps-towards-living-wage-global-supply-chains-101214-en.pdf)

<sup>55</sup> See Oxfam, July 2013, Blind Budgets: Budget Transparency for Small-Scale Producers, Briefing Note, which presents a Budgetary Transparency Index for Small Scale Family Farming and recommends key areas to look at for this work. [www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/blind\\_budgets\\_budget\\_transparency\\_and\\_public\\_spending\\_for\\_small-scale\\_producers\\_2.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/blind_budgets_budget_transparency_and_public_spending_for_small-scale_producers_2.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> The Sri Lanka experience is documented here. See: Oxfam, April 2011, Bridging the Gap: Building a financial services system that services poor people in Sri Lanka, Programme Insights [policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/bridging-the-gap-building-a-financial-services-system-that-serves-poor-people-i-136102](http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/bridging-the-gap-building-a-financial-services-system-that-serves-poor-people-i-136102)



## 3.7 ACCESS TO PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES: LAND AND CAPITAL



### WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

Concentration of land ownership contributes to high income inequalities and other negative impacts.<sup>57</sup> It is the biggest source of wealth inequality in most developing countries. In Latin America for example 1% of farmers own more productive land than the rest of the farmers put together. Yet land reforms have stalled across developing countries and the role of redistributive land reform has largely been sidelined and ignored since the 1980s. At the same time smallholder agriculture is generally a neglected sector. Spending in the agriculture sector is often inequitable and inadequate to meet smallholder needs.

A new era of land concentration is underway, with rising and volatile food prices driving speculation by investors increasingly buying up large tracts of land. Increasing biofuels production expansion of large agribusinesses are compounding the problem. Oxfam has documented land grabs in a large number of countries (see Box 10). Most large-scale land deals occur in countries where there is poor protection of rural land rights, resulting in evictions of poor farmers. Women are particularly vulnerable as they are less likely to have land titles.

<sup>57</sup> Some articles on relationship between land concentration and other factors such as income inequality: [www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/policy\\_library/data/impact\\_inequality\\_rural\\_markets/\\_res/id=sa\\_File1/land%20ownership%20inequality.pdf](http://www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/policy_library/data/impact_inequality_rural_markets/_res/id=sa_File1/land%20ownership%20inequality.pdf)

## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

Country programmes can determine the state of equitable access and rights to land to assess whether land reform is an appropriate addition to their work.

### **Q. What are the trends with regard to land concentration in the country and what is the status of national redistributive land reform debates?**

The scale of land concentration and unequal patterns of land ownership are a key area for analysis. Primary research through programme work might be necessary, although information is available from agricultural censuses and data on women's land ownership may also be available. It is important to understand whether redistributive land reform is still on the political agenda and what the government, large donors and CSOs are already doing in order to assess what approach may be feasible. Increasing urbanisation and living conditions of the poor in urban areas is a new area of work, but one to watch if urban land reform movements emerge – or can be supported to emerge – from among the urban poor.

### **Q. Is there increasing land concentration as a result of large land deals? What information is available, including on the World Bank's activity?**

It is important to monitor land deals and whether these are concentrating land in the hands of foreign or domestic investors. It is also relevant to explore who is supporting investors. The World Bank is often a source of finance and an important policy advisor to governments and standard setter for investors. Oxfam is already very active on this issue and is a co-signatory to three formal land-related complaints to the World Bank, one in Indonesia and two in Uganda.

### **Q. What is the status of land regularisation programmes?**

In some countries land registries are simply not supported. They do not have up to date information and lack of transparency about land ownership and land tenure generally. This is an area which technology has made more straightforward due to the use of hand held GPS devices to map land and property. Particular attention should be paid to security of tenure for women.

### **Q. What is the situation with regard to women's land ownership and their control over income from crops?**

The new FAO gender and land rights database, in Table 1, provides some useful information for a number of countries. National surveys and the agricultural census may also be relevant. Oxfam may also have its own knowledge of how many men compared to women have certified land rights as a result of its community-level interventions. Attitudes toward women and their ability to own or control land are important. In some countries women are still unable to inherit land and property; in others, inheritance legislation is poorly implemented.

### **Q. Are there overlaps that can be explored between tax and land debates and interventions?**

If large land deals are taking place with foreign investors, it is advisable to look at whether these are being promoted by offering tax exemptions and incentives. This is poor practice for achieving tax equity and revenue-raising. Countries involved in land regularisation programmes and formal land tenure mappings can use the information as the basis for land value and property tax systems, two generally under-explored areas.

### **Q. What is the situation with regard to public spending on smallholder agriculture?**

Lack of budget transparency is often a problem here, since agriculture budgets rarely show the support given to large agribusinesses compared to small farmers. However, this is a critical area to investigate since it can give rise to and perpetuate social and economic inequalities.

### **Q. What access do smallholder farmers have to financial services?**

Most smallholder farmers have few or no assets and financial services are often inaccessible to poor and marginalised communities. Men and women's situations may differ even further in this regard. Exploration of the offers available from mainstream financial services and an understanding of the barriers to accessing these services are important to explore.

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<sup>58</sup> In Tanzania research in one community where communal land certification was done found that women got certified rights to only 1% of the land.

Where an Oxfam partner had done the same communal land certification, but given a lot of attention to ensuring women got their land rights registered, the result was a 30-fold improvement in the amount of land that women had certified rights to. This is a positive change, but still a substantial inequality. [Information provided directly by Marc Wegerif in Tanzania].

<sup>59</sup> Christian Aid, July 2013, Who is Benefiting? The Social and Economic Impact of Three Large-Scale Land Investments in Sierra Leone: A cost-benefit analysis [www.christianaid.org.uk/images/who-is-benefitting-Sierra-Leone-report.pdf](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/who-is-benefitting-Sierra-Leone-report.pdf)

## OPTIONS FOR ACTION

Oxfam has a long track record of livelihoods programming that addresses land issues and supports smallholder farmers, including women farmers. In the extremely difficult area of redistributive land reform and worsening land concentration trends, Oxfam programmes can call attention to the problem with the biggest coalition of voices possible – an important contribution in difficult domestic contexts.

**For those striving to keep redistributive land reform on the agenda, Oxfam can:**

**Highlight the issue of land inequality through its research, advocacy and campaigning** with partners, while simultaneously exploring feasible options to reduce land ownership concentration. This would include primary research and monitoring land ownership patterns. Land inequalities – and their intractability – could be a key part of ‘national inequality conversations.

**Advocate for more transparent and efficient systems for recording land ownership** and for more secure land rights for the poor and marginalised, particularly women farmers. Work here can include looking in detail at the functioning of land registries and donor support for their operations and improvement. Oxfam can also support specialist CSOs to provide access to legal aid for the poor during land disputes.

**Advocate for land distribution programmes, as well as monitoring and advocating for women’s ownership** within these. Part of this effort could include preparing a costing for land acquisition by the government. This would allow Oxfam to be reactive in times of emergency.<sup>60</sup>

**For those looking for new approaches to land work, Oxfam can:**

**Emphasise the political economy of land reform by applying its analysis of power and elite interests to land ownership** patterns and trends. Oxfam can also use new tools that will be forthcoming in relation to political capture<sup>61</sup> specifically in relation to the land question. Specialist research partnerships may be necessary here.

**Link land and tax by looking at land value and property tax angles in combination with work on land tenure** registers and systems. This could be a key part of work on land concentration, given the principle that the tax system should be used as a tool to reduce land inequalities (taxing large landowners and large agribusinesses/investors) effectively.

**For those working in contexts where land grabs are a problem, Oxfam can:**

Expose bad practices, track land grabs,<sup>62</sup> work with communities on compensation deals, monitor investors’ practices and impacts and help build transparency by sharing information about land deals, including whether the investor is meeting standards regarding free, prior and informed consent.

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<sup>60</sup> It is now widely accepted by the international community that land issues should be tackled at the beginning of a crisis response and that action should address pre-existing inequalities.

<sup>61</sup> Oxfam is working with a US university on a special political inequality research project, creating a detailed model to analyse the issue of elite capture (forthcoming)

<sup>62</sup> Oxfam already has a lot of experience here. Another important resource is Land Matrix. See: [landmatrix.org](http://landmatrix.org). This is an international site that holds data on transnational land deals concerning over 200 hectares.

## A SNAPSHOT OF OXFAM'S WORK ON LAND

All over the world, Oxfam is working alongside communities to help them secure land rights. In Pakistan Oxfam worked to put land rights at the heart of recovery and reconstruction after the flood emergency in 2010-11. In Thailand, Oxfam supports the Northern Development Foundation to help protect and promote people's land rights, which are under threat from private companies and landlords. In India, Oxfam works directly with women's organisations to strengthen their land rights.

In parts of Africa, Oxfam's research highlighted unequal impacts of land-grabbing on women and brought women together to share their stories of resistance. Oxfam is working with partners to illustrate the impoverishment of rural women in Honduras, where only eight per cent of the 2.2 million women in rural areas own land.

Oxfam is increasingly working on the issue of land grabbing, advocating that the World Bank freeze its own land investments and review its policies and practice to prevent land-grabbing. Part of this work includes three formal land-related complaints to the World Bank, one in Indonesia and two in Uganda.

In Cambodia, Oxfam has researched the negative impact of large land concessions on the food security of local populations, especially women. Oxfam has also researched land-grabbing in Uganda, Indonesia, Guatemala, Honduras and South Sudan as well as Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal and Tanzania. More recently in Colombia, Oxfam challenged the legality of farming giant Cargill's land acquisitions.

## 3.8 TACKLING GENDER INEQUALITIES



Credit: Alberto Barreto

### WHY IS THIS ISSUE RELEVANT FOR YOUR WORK?

Gender inequality forms the backdrop upon which other inequalities are transposed and refers to the economic, social and power inequalities between men and women. Women face a much more restricted set of choices and opportunities in their lives than men, including their sexual and reproductive health choices and control over household income and assets.

At the same time, growing economic inequality has been shown to make gender inequality worse. Countries with greater and growing gaps between rich and poor are the ones that perform worst in closing the gap between women and men.

On virtually every global measure women are more economically excluded than men.<sup>63</sup> The global wage gap between men and women remains stubbornly high.<sup>64</sup> Country-level studies have also shown that the gender distribution of wealth, including land and access to credit, is far more unequal than income. Even when women are employed, their burden of work at home rarely shrinks.

Levels of domestic violence within the household are also high in many countries, and not only for the poorest women. Unequal treatment of girls early on – and roles learned by boys and girls within the home – deeply affect girls' life chances. The situation of women and girls is worse when their gender identity intersects with other types of inequalities and marginalisation based on race, ethnicity or other factors.

<sup>63</sup> World Bank, 2014, Gender at Work: A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs [www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/GenderAtWork\\_web.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/GenderAtWork_web.pdf)

<sup>64</sup> On average, women are paid 10 to 30% less than men for comparable work, across all regions and sectors. See: UN Women, 2011-2012 Progress of the World's Women Factsheet [www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2011/progressoftheworldswomen-2011-en.pdf](http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2011/progressoftheworldswomen-2011-en.pdf)

## CASE 6: STRENGTHENING WOMEN WORKERS' RIGHTS IN THE STRAWBERRY SECTOR IN MOROCCO

Strawberry production in Morocco employs around 20,000 women. Oxfam, with its NGO partners, identified a range of serious labour issues, including verbal violence and harassment by supervisors, dangerous transport to the fields, poor health and safety standards, non-compliance with the minimum wage and working hour legislation and even some cases of child labour. Oxfam also found a lack of awareness by workers, growers and labour providers alike about labour rights.

Since 2011, Oxfam has been implementing a workers' rights programme with several NGO partners. Strawberry pickers also formed the Al Karama Women's Association. Oxfam Morocco worked with Oxfam UK to raise the issue with retailers and the Better Strawberries Group was formed in 2012 comprising six UK supermarkets, their UK suppliers, Oxfam and the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI). The group convened multi-stakeholder meetings in Morocco involving government agencies, Oxfam's partners and international buyers as well as Moroccan growers.

### Positive results achieved through this work include:

In 2013, 70 per cent more workers were registered for social security, which entitles a woman worker with two children to up to 40 per cent more income due to government contributions.

The Moroccan government has welcomed the approach and now sends Social Security staff to support workers registering for this benefit.

70% of the pack houses/processing factories for which Oxfam has information, are ensuring payment of the minimum wage.

Women know their rights and increasingly refuse a job that does not pay the minimum wage.

More workers say they are on contracts, enabling them to predict their work patterns and income. An association of transport providers has also been formed.

Growers in Morocco are more aware of the importance of healthy labour relations and some report higher productivity and a more stable workforce.

The role of women workers has grown through training on leadership, communication, and other topics, allowing them to take concerns to local authorities and foreign companies.

Continue Reading: [policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/women-strawberry-workers-in-morocco-accessing-rights-to-secure-and-decent-work-334766](https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/women-strawberry-workers-in-morocco-accessing-rights-to-secure-and-decent-work-334766)

## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR TEAM AND PARTNERS

Tackling gender inequality demands a holistic, comprehensive strategy, based on an awareness of social norms, attitudes and beliefs that sustain gender inequality. It is vital to explore how women exercise their rights, voice and participation in public and private forums. The policy framework to reduce economic inequalities suffered by women and the design and coverage of public health, education and social protection systems are important areas to explore.

### Q. What is the status of gender inequality within the household?

The key drivers of gender inequality are the deep rooted social attitudes and beliefs that view women as inferior, less competent or less valuable than men. It is important to fully explore gender inequality within the household and how this impacts decision making, the division of labour and domestic violence. Perceptions of a father's role is also key.<sup>65</sup> Oxfam programmes will already have a wealth of knowledge in this area to aid their analysis.

### Q. How large is the burden of unpaid care work on women?

The burden of unpaid care work on women directly affects a women's education and training, employment and earnings, mobility, leisure time, personal care and sleep, health and well-being, political and community participation and participation in any development initiatives. Oxfam has developed its own methodologies for measurement here under its WE-care programme – the 'rapid care assessment' methodology.

### Q. How can the current social protection system be improved to meet women's needs effectively?

Providing an effective social protection floor is critical for girls and women. Cash transfer and public works programmes need to be effectively designed to address these realities and directly tackle gender inequality.<sup>66</sup>

### Q. Where does the current provision of essential services need to be improved to meet women's needs effectively?

In addition to programme experience, there are good data sources available to present a clear picture of the 'social inequality map', including the DHS analysis of progress for women over time in areas such as maternal mortality, fertility rates, access to contraception, female malnutrition, HIV incidence and knowledge and testing. Analysis in this area is important to complement gender budgeting efforts to assess where and why women's needs are not being met.

### Q. Where are women lagging behind in the economic sphere and what can be done?

It is important to look at women's participation in paid employment, what types of jobs give women employment, the gender wage gaps that exist – both as a result of occupational segregation and more generally – and whether gaps are narrowing. National surveys may provide useful data. It is also important to look at inheritance and land rights issues for women. The new FAO Gender and Land Rights database offers some information and interesting tools for this type of assessment.

### Q. Where are women lagging behind in the political sphere and what can be done?

Globally there has been some progress with regard to women's political empowerment. Some of this is due to the careful development and implementation of quotas within political systems. However, regions including Asia and the Arab states lag behind.<sup>67</sup>

### Q. What is the situation with regard to violence against women? How big is the problem and how effective is the response?

While increasingly there are good data on some aspects of gender inequality, data related to violence against women are weak and measurement is often abysmal. More attention is greatly needed in this area. Legislation must also be examined, looking for areas that can be strengthened. The content and resourcing of national strategies for prevention and treatment should also be considered.

<sup>65</sup> Research has shown that a father's participation in domestic duties or childcare, and equitable decision making in the childhood home can all reduce the likelihood of violence. See: Bridges to Adulthood: Understanding the Lifelong Influence of Men's Childhood Experiences of Violence, ICRW and Promundo, 2012 [www.icrw.org/publications/bridges-adulthood](http://www.icrw.org/publications/bridges-adulthood)

<sup>66</sup> Large donors who are active here include UNICEF, DFID and the World Bank and often analysis of this kind will be available. Ministries in charge of social protection will also publish an annual report detailing the nature of the programmes and often who benefits and by how much. This can also help inform analysis of social protection programmes.

<sup>67</sup> Oxfam, January 2015, Asia at a Crossroads: Why the Region Must Address Inequality Now, Briefing Note <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/asia-at-a-crossroads-why-the-region-must-address-inequality-now-338447>

## OPTIONS FOR ACTION

Oxfam's experience from the Raising Her Voice (RHV) programme [see Case 7] shows that the most comprehensive and successful gender inequality programming will work at the personal level, as well as within economic, social and political spheres. This can be done with some stand-alone programming but also by embedding strategies to address gender inequality across all programme interventions.

**For those working to transform gender inequality, Oxfam can:**

**Work to develop women's agency by developing their understanding of their own self-worth** and their awareness of their rights. Work in this area may be combined with a practical entry-point, such as women's literacy projects, but the aim is always to educate women more broadly and to provide the tools and confidence to ensure greater participation in political and public life.

**Work to positively influence social norms**, promoting attitudinal and behaviour changes by directly challenging norms and practices that exclude women. Ideally, all Oxfam interventions would integrate gender inequality and social norms programming. At the household and community level, tools and participatory methodologies to stimulate discussion jointly with women and men are available for replication. This work can be combined with broader behaviour change communication strategies to target wider society. Role models are also useful.

**Focus more on the issue of masculinities and positive fatherhood to complement work that empowers women** and as a component of long-term violence prevention work. Programmes in this area in Southern Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean are particularly active. Many tools exist within Oxfam but also from Men Care and Men Engage<sup>68</sup>.

**Support women's participation at decision making levels, mentor and promote female role models** and develop strong women leaders.

**Scale up the innovative WE-care programme.**<sup>69</sup> It is working with multi-stakeholder initiatives to recognise care work as work; reduce the length/intensity of care work hours and redistribute the responsibility and costs of care. A 'rapid care assessment' methodology has been developed and can be replicated to collect data on the burden of care within your country.

**Support economic empowerment by looking at employment policies that create decent jobs for women;** advocate for childcare and transport options that help women in the workplace; analyse wage levels for women; build capacity within women workers organisations to negotiate fair wages; and generally campaign to end the gender wage gap.

**Support women's rights to land.** Legislation in this area can be promoted and monitored to ensure effective implementation. Oxfam also has broad experience of working with women in agriculture, supporting women's enterprise development initiatives and supporting women workers within agricultural supply chains.

**Conduct research and advocacy around the design and scale up of national social protection systems** to ensure women's rights are at the centre. This can include conducting specific gender analysis of social protection systems to draw attention to flaws in design and gaps in coverage.<sup>70</sup>

**Ensure gender inequality is central to essential services campaigns** and budget work by linking analysis of poor service provision to the impact on women's rights and social inequalities suffered by women. This implies working with women's organisations to ensure women are involved in monitoring the quality of local service provision, tracking local budgets and involved at higher levels in national gender budgeting efforts.

**Work to reduce violence against women by promoting legislation,** supporting efforts to improve data collection and integrating approaches to address violence against women in all good governance programming. Learning and guidance on how to do effective work in this are available.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> For more on the Men Care and Men Engage please visit: [men-care.org](http://men-care.org)

<sup>69</sup> For more information please see: [policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/oxfams-we-care-initiative-an-overview-555515](http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/oxfams-we-care-initiative-an-overview-555515)

<sup>70</sup> There are a number of relevant areas to look at, including, for example: ensuring cash transfers target female-headed households; including forms of child grants as part of the social protection system; ensuring the design of the public works system is gender-sensitive (i.e. not just including construction works and also providing childcare options for women workers). Payments for women's work and cash transfers should also go directly into women's hands (rather, than for example, heads of household bank accounts). Conditional cash transfer schemes can also help close gender gaps in education.

<sup>71</sup> See Oxfam, Strengthening Governance Programming Through Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls: Learning from Oxfam's Raising Her Voice Programme at: [bit.ly/19isxWl](http://bit.ly/19isxWl)



## CASE 7: THE RAISING HER VOICE PROGRAMME

From 2008–2013, Oxfam’s Raising Her Voice (RHV) programme worked to create more effective governance systems by ensuring women’s voices influence decisions about services, investments, policies and legal frameworks at community, national and regional levels. RHV projects supported tens of thousands of women activists and leaders who have successfully advocated for more public money that is better spent and for improved local services. More than one million marginalised women in 17 countries are estimated to have benefited from increased activism, leading to increased voice and influence, more effective engagement with decision makers and greater institutional accountability.

Fundamentally a political programme, RHV focused on three spheres: the personal sphere (working on the empowerment of women as the bedrock of the change process); the social here (working to develop collective action and voice to reach greater levels of influence) and the political sphere (working for change in legal frameworks, power structures and the accessibility of decision makers). By supporting the development of women’s confidence, skills, voice and influence, RHV projects have helped to unlock significant economic advantages for marginalised women.

The RHV theory of change has now been revised to demonstrate more clearly how the four spheres intersect. RHV’s achievements are built on a strong foundation of individual and collective activism.

### Key lessons include:

**Future investments in women’s empowerment programming should explicitly support change in the personal sphere.** This does not require immense levels of funding, as partners and coalitions have demonstrated impressive immediate and long-term strategic gains for women with relatively low levels of project investment;

**Future programmes should consider the critical importance of women’s organisations, coalitions and networks for nurturing, protecting and sustaining individual activism** - and their potential to hold those in power to account. This is particularly urgent in a context where funding for women’s organisations is declining and where religious fundamentalism and economic crises are already eroding women’s rights and freedoms;

**Change in women’s abilities to participate in, influence and lead the decisions that affect their lives takes time.** Funded projects should be conceived as stepping stones on a path towards a well designed, longer-term process of change.



# SECTION 4

## SUPPORT MATERIALS

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# 4.1 MEASURING INEQUALITY: WHERE TO FIND DATA

## What you will find in this section...

For each data source this section tells you where you can find the data, what the dataset measures, some tips on use, why it is a useful data set and some of the key limitations you need to know about before use

These data sets can be broadly grouped into three areas: finding data on gender inequality; finding data on economic and social inequality and finding data on economic and political inequality. Simply click through to access the resources you would like to navigate.

### 1. Finding data on gender inequality

- Gender Inequality Index (GII)
- Global Gender Gap Index
- Gender and Land Rights Database
- WomanStats Project

### 2. Finding data on economic and social inequality

- Gini index and income shares
- The Palma Ratio
- Global Wealth Databook
- Household Surveys
- World Bank Living Standards Measurement Survey
- Agricultural Census Data
- Demographic and Health Surveys
- World Top Incomes Database
- Human Development Index (HDI) and Inequality adjusted HDI (IHDI)

### 3. Finding data on economic and political inequality

- Afrobarometer, Latinobarómetro and Asia Barometer Surveys
- Global Corruption Barometer, Transparency International
- World Values Survey (WVS)

## FINDING DATA ON GENDER INEQUALITY

**Data Source:** Gender Inequality Index (GII)  
Part of the HDI, UNDP  
[hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii](http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii)

**What it measures:** The GII measures three aspects of gender inequality: reproductive health measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status expressed as labour market participation. Measures are combined to create an index with countries given an overall score and then ranked.

**Tips on use:** The data can be downloaded as a spreadsheet here: [hdr.undp.org/en/data](http://hdr.undp.org/en/data). Tables also includes all data related to the Gender Development Index (GDI), which measures gender gaps on the basis

of countries' achievements in the Human Development Index (HDI), which shows results for women and men with regard to life expectancy, years of schooling and estimated GNI per capita. You can click on the link below to be taken to the full table in online format:

[hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-4-gender-inequality-index](http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-4-gender-inequality-index)

**Why is it useful?** This source is useful to see trends of your country over time on this mix of measures. You can also compare your country on these specific measures to other countries and see how your country ranks overall.

**Limitations:** A high level of female representation in parliament is not indicative of high levels of participation by women at other levels and in other spaces. These are not included. There is also nothing on incomes included in this index nor does it take into account the burden of unpaid care work and time use issues.

**Data Source:** Global Gender Gap Index  
World Economic Forum  
[reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/part-1/the-global-gender-gap-index-results-in-2014/](http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/part-1/the-global-gender-gap-index-results-in-2014/)

**What it measures:** This index has four categories which include a number of different measures where female and male attainment are compared: Economic Participation and Opportunity measuring for example: labour force participation, wage equality for similar work; Educational Attainment measuring for example: literacy rates and enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education; Health and Survival which measures the sex ratio at birth and life expectancy; and Political Empowerment which measures women in parliament and women in ministerial positions, for example.

**Tips on use:** For the full report and all appendices with data and country profiles go to this page: [reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014](http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014) and click on 'Save as PDF.' The main presentation of data can be found at the link in the first column of this table. Here you can find links to tables which give global rankings. If you are interested in seeing raw data

used to calculate the gender ratio and scoring for your country, they are in Appendix E here: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/part-1/appendix-e-rankings-by-indicator-2014/> Follow the link at the bottom of this page to the full PDF table with all countries' information included in tables E1-E14. If you are interested in tracking change over time then click on this link:

<http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/part-1/tracking-the-gender-gap-over-time/> The tables presented in Appendix B show trends from 2006.

**Why is it useful?** This source is useful to see trends of your country over time on this mix of measures. Dimensions covered are broader than those in the GII. This includes wage gaps, for example, and political participation measures are wider. You can also compare your country on these specific measures to other countries and see how your country ranks overall.

**Limitations:** As above, measures do not go so far as to include local government participation and there is nothing on the burden of care work and time use issues.

**Data Source:** Gender and Land Rights Database, FAO  
[www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/en](http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/en)

**What it measures:** This FAO site includes country profiles which look at women's property and use rights in law. It presents a legislation assessment tool which gives benchmarks for good practice in relation to gender equitable land tenure systems: [www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/legislation-assessment-tool/en](http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/legislation-assessment-tool/en).

**Tips on use:** On this page there is a link to country assessments. This database also provides statistics related to 5 key areas including the % of women who own land and the % of household land area owned by women. For data click on the statistics tab on the homepage or follow this link: [www.fao.org/gender-](http://www.fao.org/gender-)

[landrights-database/data-map/statistics/en](http://landrights-database/data-map/statistics/en) and choose an indicator of interest. A definition of each indicator is automatically given, which is important given the complexity of this area. There is a map below and a list of countries with their statistics for each indicator.

**Why is it useful?** This source can help you identify gender inequalities in relation to land ownership. Additional tools on the site help you identify gender inequality in legal frameworks and target areas where reform is needed.

**Limitations:** The coverage of the database is limited. For certain indicators data might only be available for a handful of countries. LAC countries covered include Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and African countries covered include Ethiopia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda.

**Data Source:** WomanStats Project  
[womanstats.org/firsttimeusers.html](http://womanstats.org/firsttimeusers.html)

**What it measures:** The WomanStats Project attempts to bring together all data on women in one place. It collects data on 175 countries and has more than 350 variables that include laws, statistics and practices within countries. The categories covered include: Physical Security (e.g. health, domestic violence); Economic Security (e.g. employment, earning gaps, daily labour hours); Legal Security (e.g. land, voting); Security in the Community (e.g. dress code, prostitution); Security in the Family (e.g. Family law, violence); Security for Maternity (e.g. post- and ante-natal care, mortality ratios); Security through Voice; Security through Community Investment in Women (literacy rates, education); Women's Security in the State (asylum, differential treatment under law). Data are taken from CEDAW reports, DHS survey data, UN Statistics, UNDP, World Bank, etc.

**Tips on use:** You then need to register for an account which is a very quick process. You can then click on the left to View Data. Before viewing data for your

country you will need to click on the Codebook (the link is given at the top in the instructions section). There are more than 350 variables, organised under the main categories, and each is coded. Then you can view data by variable for your country. Or you can choose to Download Data (link on the left). When downloading you can choose either a country or a variable and download a package in Excel format. Be sure to check the timeframe of the data since data will be listed for a range of years. Care should be taken to ensure statistics being used, and information about laws for example, are the most up to date.

**Why is it useful?** You can use these data to do cross-country comparisons by looking at variables across all countries. For some variables related to attitudes, practices and law – as well as statistics – this could help tell interesting stories.

**Limitations:** The comprehensiveness of data is an issue. Since data are recorded for each country across multiple years, you can suffer data overload. For health data, going directly to the DHS (see Table 1) is easier, as information is much more clearly presented.

## FINDING DATA ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY

**Data Source:** Gini index and income shares (see below for the other place to locate Gini data) World Income Inequality Database (WIID), UNU-WIDER  
[www.wider.unu.edu/research/WIID-3a/en\\_GB/database](http://www.wider.unu.edu/research/WIID-3a/en_GB/database)

**What it measures:** This database provided by the United Nations University gives estimates of the Gini coefficient and incomes shares. The Gini is the most well-known measure of income inequality. It is also complex, measuring in a cumulative fashion the % of income (for the poorest 20%, then 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%). The distribution of income is then plotted on a graph and compared to the 'line of equality' and the distance from that line is the extent of inequality in a given country. It is expressed as a measure between 0 and 1 or a number between 1 and 100. A smaller Gini is preferable and a rise in the Gini implies rising income inequality in country. This dataset also gives income shares by decile (10%), data that are taken from national surveys. It was revised and updated in 2014.

**Tips on use:** It is generally considered the most correct source, when compared to the World Bank dataset. It should be used as first preference for income share and Gini data. This site is also easier to use than the World Bank site and data can be located faster.

Click on the link at the top of this box and it will take you to the page with the database. Click on the Download link on the left. This will download an Excel file with all country information for all years on record presented simply on one datasheet. Column E gives the Gini coefficient. Column F explains what this is based on (e.g. income/consumption data or, for example, gross earnings data). Column K makes clear if the Gini coefficient is based on national data (All) or is in reference to only urban or rural areas. It is important to check these columns to ensure you know what Gini you are citing and - if you are comparing across time or countries - to make sure you are comparing the same type of data. The other columns give information on the income shares per decile (per 10% of the population: D1-D10) and per quintile (per 20% share of the population: Q1-Q5). You can also email the database manager if you have questions.

**Why is it useful?** You can use this data to construct a picture of changing income inequality in your country over time (including compared to other countries in your region). While the change in the Gini coefficient itself may not be the most illustrative indicator, you can use this data source to find out the changing share of national income held by different population groups.

**Limitations:** The Gini under-estimates the income of the very rich, who are not well represented in household surveys. The growing and rapid concentration at the top end that would have a big impact on the Gini measure is typically not captured. Magnitudes of error are thought to be large. The Gini measure is also overly sensitive to the middle of the distribution, though this is the area which changes least. Overall it does not capture change in income inequality very well. It is also a very complex measure and not intuitively understood.

**\*PLEASE NOTE \*Gini index and income shares data from the World Bank** accessed here:

[data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI](http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI)

There is some discrepancy between this dataset and UNU-WIDER described above. Decile data from the World Bank source is considered less correct.

**To access WB data:** Click on the link iabove and the page will show current Gini coefficients in table form for all countries. You can download data in tables. To do this for the Gini measure click on 'Download Data' (top right) and choose excel option in dropdown menu. This will give you an excel table with the Gini coefficient for every country in every year recorded. To access data on income shares (e.g. income share held by the highest 10% and income share held by the lowest 10% or 20% and second lowest 20% etc.) go to the link on the left and click on the options list on the left hand side. Again you can choose to download data in excel format giving income shares for all countries in all recorded years.

**Data Source:** The Palma Ratio  
Alex Cobham and Andy Sumner

[oxfamblogs.org/wp2p/on-inequality-lets-do-the-palma-because-the-gini-is-so-last-century](https://oxfamblogs.org/wp2p/on-inequality-lets-do-the-palma-because-the-gini-is-so-last-century)

**What it measures:** The Palma ratio is a measure which contrasts the income of the richest to the poorest. It was proposed by two UK academics in March 2013. The link above includes a blog on this, which contains a link to the academic paper. The Palma does not rely on a separate data source. It uses data already gathered and reported in datasets compiled by UNU-WIDER or the World Bank. A second version of the Palma has also been proposed to compare the income share of the top 5% against the poorest 40%. This additional ratio captures income concentration in a smaller elite group. When calculating the Palma ratio it is better to use the UNU-Wider dataset, as it has more correct decile data. The Human Development Report of the UNDP has now adopted the Palma as an official measure of economic inequality. Its HDI data tables include a calculation of the Palma since 2014.

**Tips on use:** You can calculate the Palma ratio from the datasets. For example, Colombia in 2010: income share of the bottom 40% of the population = 10.8%; income share of the richest decile = 43.8%. This corresponds to a Palma ratio of 4: the share of the richest 10% was four times greater than the income share of the bottom 40%. While some have proposed contrasting the 20% bottom vs. 20% top income shares, this is not an ideal measure: Oxfam is not interested in something smaller than the 40% share at the bottom, nor something bigger than the 10% at the top. The 10% share of the richest is also the easiest to find data on. (However, it is good to

also track the top 5% as an additional – not alternative – measure if you can get this data for your country). You can use the Palma measure to track change, looking at the trends of income concentration over past decades. If you are comparing countries on the basis of their Palma, you will not get the same ranking as comparing them on the Gini. Also if you use the original Palma formulation (10%/40%) you may get different country rankings from a comparison based on Palma v.2 (5%/40%). This is not a shortcoming, but users of this data should be aware of how using different approaches can affect results of their analysis.

**Why is it useful?** The Palma is more meaningful for policymakers as it demonstrates much more clearly the problem of income inequality. For example, in 2010 both Portugal and Sierra Leone had a Gini coefficient of 34.4. However, their Palmas of 1.38 and 1.73 position them more than 20 ranks apart from each other on a global ranking. As the measure is much more understandable and illustrative of the problem it is more useful for crafting killer facts and key messages for influencing purposes. Palma v.2 is also useful because of the extraordinary concentration of income within the top 10% of the population.

**Limitations:** There has been some critique that using this measure to present information on income inequality means ignoring what happens to the middle 50%. However, this is a minor limitation given research shows that the middle 50% of the population have very stable shares of national income in any given country over time. It is what happens to the richest and the poorest that is subject to most change and which matters most in public policy terms.

**Data Source:** Global Wealth Databook  
Credit Suisse  
[www.credit-suisse.com/uk/en/news-and-expertise/research/credit-suisse-research-institute/publications.html](http://www.credit-suisse.com/uk/en/news-and-expertise/research/credit-suisse-research-institute/publications.html)

**What it measures:** This Databook records household wealth in almost all countries in the world. It is published annually by Credit Suisse and seeks to capture net wealth taking into account all assets and debt. Assets include non-financial assets, such as land and property, as well as financial assets which are particularly relevant for the wealthiest households. The Databook provides measurements of overall wealth per country as well as looking in depth at the pattern of distribution of that wealth within countries.

**Tips on use:** The most recent Databook (2014) can be downloaded in PDF version from the link above. This site also provides some prior data (e.g. back to 2000) for some categories to allow for trend analysis. Section 3 provides a breakdown of wealth distribution in each country (e.g. % adults with over US\$1m; number of adults with over US\$1m; number of high net worth individuals in different categories).

Section 4 provides information on wealth inequality, presenting the share of the top decile (wealthiest 10%) and top percentile (wealthiest 1%) in some developing countries and across regions. Data are presented from 2000 to 2014 to allow trend analysis. In all sections regional data are presented.

**Why is it useful?** This is a useful source to create media messages. You can calculate the number of USD millionaires in your country (or those between US\$100,000 and US\$1m) and see how these change over time. Certain countries can also see how many high net worth individuals they have. This data can also be used in research on wealth inequality trends and in tax research when comparing the number of high net worth individuals with those registered as such with the tax authority.

**Limitations:** Because data come from household surveys in the majority of countries, wealthier households are less likely to be captured. Also there is likely to be an under-reporting of financial assets in rich households, which may lead to an under-estimation of wealth at the top end of the distribution here. However, this source still provides the best basis for estimation of global wealth inequality that currently exists.



**Data Source:** Household Surveys  
National Statistics Institutes

World Bank Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS):  
[iresearch.worldbank.org/lsms/lsmssurveyFinder.htm](http://iresearch.worldbank.org/lsms/lsmssurveyFinder.htm)

**What it measures:** National household surveys occur normally every 2-5 years. These surveys provide data on income and consumption, wages and employment. Depending on the country they often have large agriculture components and may also have additional modules on education. These sources provide important information on economic and social inequalities. They will report on, for example, overall differences in income and wage gaps (between men and women and also in some countries between racial and ethnic groups). They also report on labour market participation rates and occupation-specific differences in earnings. Data will also cover living standards (e.g. housing, water and sanitation, electricity) and often issues such as literacy and educational attainment. Data will normally be sex-disaggregated, as well as by age, location and income level.

Demographic and Health Surveys (for more on DHS see below), national census data and any special surveys (e.g. on access to finance, agricultural censuses etc.) can be found under the Publications tab on your national statistics institute site. All copies of the most recent and older national household/living conditions surveys should be held here. Access to the full datasets can normally be arranged for those doing specialist analysis using raw statistical data.

**Tips on use:** A useful 'central' place to go for living standards data is the World Bank. It houses the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), a household survey programme that the World Bank supports with national statistical offices. This programme is not active in all countries however. The link in the first column provides a list of all types of household surveys and countries covered. The World Bank also includes Integrated Surveys on Agriculture. These are available for eight countries in sub-Saharan Africa and are focused on agricultural data (though not land ownership).

**Why is it useful?** This is the best source to look for the most up to date information on poverty and income inequality trends, as well as wage gaps, employment trends etc. It can be useful for communications and media work when preparing a response to key findings in the national household survey.

**Limitations:** This is a nationally representative survey. Depending on the indicator and how data are collected it is often not representative at district levels, so will not give a detailed picture of progress and differences at the more local level. As these surveys are now well established, and multilateral and bilateral donors have supported capacity building in this area for many years, the quality of these surveys is normally high. However, this is not the case in every country and limitations, in terms of the quality of the data and analysis, will depend on the capacity of the national statistics office.

**Data Source:** Agricultural Census Data  
National Statistical Institutes  
World Census of Agriculture (WCA) Food and  
Agriculture Organisation (FAO):  
[www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/en](http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/en)

**What it measures:** Agricultural census data are important as they will often be the only source of data to measure land inequality. The national agricultural census should give the number of land holdings per land size (e.g. 1 hectare, 2-5 hectares etc. up to over 200 hectares). It may also disaggregate information on land holdings by gender in some cases. It is best to look for this data directly with the national statistical institute in country. However the World Census of Agriculture, managed by the FAO, provides one central source for all agricultural census data, including when surveys are pending. Once every 10 years the FAO also publishes all countries survey results.

**Tips on use:** At the link above you can find information on the current WCA. Beside the map there is a link to download information on the current status of agricultural censuses. This Excel table gives the date of the census of each country that will form part of the upcoming world census covering 2006 to 2015. This will indicate when your country's last census was

done or whether a census is pending. The new WCA will contribute important cross-country information once released. The most recent WCA covered all censuses carried out between 1996 and 2005. The link provides several reports (listed on the left hand side), including one with results per country. Alternatively you can download the results in table format in Excel for each indicator. Search for the relevant indicator here: [www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/wca-2000/ess-wca2000-tables/en](http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/wca-2000/ess-wca2000-tables/en). The key indicator for land concentration is called: Number and Area of Holdings Classified by Land Size.

**Why is it useful?** The FAO source provides internationally comparable data. You can compare your country to others and see what information your agricultural census has compared to others. You can also check trends over time by looking at older WCAs and therefore see land concentration trends over time, if there are sufficient data for your country. A specific indicator has been created to look at change in the distribution of number and area of holdings since the 1970s, which can be found here: [www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/wca-2000/ess-wca2000-tables/en](http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/wca-2000/ess-wca2000-tables/en)

**Limitations:** Country coverage, however, is even smaller on this indicator than others.

**Data Source:** Human Development Index (HDI) and Inequality adjusted HDI (IHDI) UNDP  
[hdr.undp.org/en/data](http://hdr.undp.org/en/data)

**What it measures:** The HDI measures human development by scoring countries on three main dimensions: health (life expectancy), education (years of education) and standard of living (gross national income per capita). Scoring across these three dimensions results in a country's HDI ranking. The Inequality Adjusted HDI takes into account not only the average achievements of a country on health, education and income, but also how those achievements are distributed among its population. It is calculated by 'discounting' each dimension's average value according to its level of inequality. The difference between the IHDI and HDI is the human development cost of inequality, also termed the loss to human development due to inequality.

**Tips on use:** For the general HDI and inequality adjusted HDI, follow this link: [hdr.undp.org/en/data](http://hdr.undp.org/en/data) and click on

the tab 'download all data by indicator and country'. The spreadsheet contains general HDI data in Table 1 and 2 and inequality adjusted HDI data in Table 3. Or simply click on the tab 'Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index' to be taken straight to the table with all country results in an online format. For those interested in the multidimensional poverty index it is presented on Table 6 in the same excel file.

**Why is it useful?** The HDI is useful to compare countries, particularly those which have similar income levels but very different development outcomes. The inequality adjusted HDI provides a good illustration of the impact of social and economic inequalities on development outcomes. You can calculate the loss to human development due to inequality overall and for each dimension measured.

**Limitations:** While assigning one number to rank a country can be useful for advocacy it also has limitations. This source provides little detailed country-level data.

**Data Source:** Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)

[dhsprogram.com/Data](https://dhsprogram.com/Data)

**What it measures:** The DHS is a standard survey applied across most developing countries with standard model questionnaires. It provides high quality data which can be used to compare progress in one country across time and also to compare progress across countries. The DHS gives data on marriage, education levels, fertility, family planning, maternal and child health (including mortality and child immunisation), maternal and child nutrition, malaria and HIV/AIDs. Some countries include additional modules on domestic violence, women's status, child labour or female genital mutilation, for example. For some countries survey data stretch back to the 1980s (e.g. Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala) and for others data are more recent (e.g. Ethiopia since 2000).

**Tips on use:** Apart from the full DHS reports themselves the websites hosts other publications. At this link you can find publications by country:

[dhsprogram.com/publications/index.cfm](https://dhsprogram.com/publications/index.cfm) It is worth checking here for 'trend' reports as some of these will analyse social inequalities and how gaps are widening or narrowing between groups in relation to certain areas. There is a full list of all demographic and health surveys by country here: [dhsprogram.com/What-We-](https://dhsprogram.com/What-We-)

[Do/survey-search.cfm?pgtype=main&SrvyTp=country](https://dhsprogram.com/survey-search.cfm?pgtype=main&SrvyTp=country). Scroll down the list to your country and you will see a list of all the Standard DHS surveys and the years they were conducted. Select 'Final Report' for the full copy of the DHS report. Surveys will generally also be published on the websites of national statistical institutes in-country. Although possible to download datasets, it is not necessary unless you want to do statistical analysis with raw data. The Final Reports will give all the information a country programme would need. Data are often disaggregated by sex, location (urban, rural), income level (per quintile: 20%) and sometimes educational level of the mother. DHS Final Reports will often compare new data to prior reports showing you trends over time. If they don't, you can go back and find this information easily by downloading earlier DHS reports from the website.

**Why is it useful?** These country surveys provide important information on social inequalities. You can track the difference in outcomes for different groups in many important areas, particularly related to public health. This knowledge can feed into influencing work and provide powerful evidence on where social and spatial inequalities are particularly high and/or worsening.

**Limitations:** The quality of surveys in this area is considered strong.

**Data Source:** World Top Incomes Database Paris School of Economics

[topincomes.parisschoolofeconomics.eu](https://topincomes.parisschoolofeconomics.eu)

**What it measures:** The database provides a mix of recent and historical data on top incomes shares: e.g. top 10%, top 5%, top 1%, top 0.01%. It also provides some figures for the average income of these groups. It is based on country studies that use income tax records. This means that findings are underestimated as it is based on tax data and the rich are known to understate their taxable income and to use tax avoidance and evasion measures, including hiding assets offshore. This means that income inequality is much worse in reality.

**Tips on use:** By selecting 'The Database' tab you can select the country you are interested in, time period and variable (e.g. income share of top 1%). You can also select the Country Information tab for a summary of the most recent country data.

**Why is it useful?** Developing countries covered are: Argentina, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mauritius, South Africa and Uruguay. Data is given up to 2011 in some cases. Historical data coverage differs per country (e.g. India from the 1920s and China from the mid-1980s). Countries under study, but with no data as yet, include: Bangladesh, Botswana, Myanmar, Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. This source gives a useful viewpoint on income inequality as it is possible to see the share of the richest members of society and this is broken down further than in other sources (e.g. it is possible to see not just the top 10% but also the top 1% and 0.01%). This could provide some 'killer facts' for influencing work.

**Limitations:** There is little developing country data. For some developing countries data is not up to date (e.g. India, Indonesia, Argentina). Note that data also underestimates income inequality in reality.

## FINDING DATA ON POLITICAL INEQUALITY

**Data Source:** Afrobarometer, Latinobarómetro and Asia Barometer Surveys

[www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)

[www.latinobarometro.org/lat.jsp](http://www.latinobarometro.org/lat.jsp)

[www.asiabarometer.org/en/surveys](http://www.asiabarometer.org/en/surveys)

**What it measures:** These are large public opinion surveys which are conducted on a regular basis across Africa and Latin America. (The Asia equivalent found at the link to the left appears to have been discontinued in 2008). They look at a wide range of topics including democracy, governance and participation. The Africa surveys provide data on voter participation as well as citizen participation in public activities (e.g. attending a community meeting, contacting a government official). The African surveys also provide information on gender norms and attitudes regarding women's leadership. Data are disaggregated by sex and also by location (urban-rural), not by income levels or according to ethnicity. In Latin America, surveys ask about democracy, governance, tax, as well as the perception of political capture and fairness in relation to income distribution.

**Tips on use:** For Africa you can find information here on what countries are covered and for what survey data exist by year: <http://www.afrobarometer.org/survey-and-methods/countries-and-rounds>. Searching for information by country is the easiest method. A summary

of results per country for each survey round is available on the country publications page. You can also find the whole questionnaire applied in each country and search for the questions you want to track results for over time. The data can be downloaded but are in an unusual format and might not be easily accessible. You can also contact the organisation directly to request data. For Latinobarometro data you need to pay to access the full data package. Annual reports are published with findings for each country. There is no disaggregation by location or gender to enable analysis from these perspectives.

**Why is it useful?** Given the paucity of data related to political and participation inequalities this is a useful and unique source. The Africa version is particularly useful, given it has some data on local-level participation issues and there is very open access to data.

**Limitations:** The disaggregation of data is a big limitation which hampers analysis of horizontal (identity-based) inequalities and how these intersect with political and participation inequalities. You will also be limited by the nature of the questions included in the survey. These are often generally related to issues of governance, democracy and corruption and not as detailed in the area of political capture, political participation and citizen participation more generally.

**Data Source:** Global Corruption Barometer, Transparency International  
[www.transparency.org/research/gcb/overview](http://www.transparency.org/research/gcb/overview)

**What it measures:** This global survey takes place every two years. It covers 107 countries and seeks to measure people's direct experiences with bribery as well as capturing their views on corruption in the main institutions in their country. Information is provided on a global and country level in areas such as: whether the level of corruption is increasing or decreasing; the per cent of people who rate institutions such as political parties, the judiciary, police, media, parliament or the health and education system as corrupt or extremely corrupt; the per cent of people who have recently paid a bribe.

**Tips on use:** Click the link above and it will take you to the site. The report years are listed on the left. Click on the year you want and this will give you options – e.g. to download the Report or to go in and look at National Results. The full report gives a useful summary of the global picture. It also includes tables in Appendix 3 of the specific results in each country for two main areas: how people rate different institutions in terms of corruption and the per cent of respondents who paid a bribe. For those working on inequality-related issues like public service provision, having access to data on bribery and public service

provision could potentially be relevant. The National Results page is here: [www.transparency.org/gcb2013/country/?country=afghanistan](http://www.transparency.org/gcb2013/country/?country=afghanistan). Select your country and it will give a visual with a short country overview including what per cent think corruption is increasing, decreasing etc. By clicking on the In Detail tab you can download all of the background data to see the answers to the full questionnaire.

**Why is it useful?** Given the hidden nature of corruption and its relevance to inequality it is useful to have a source of survey information in this area. It allows some exploration of issues such as political capture. You can also compare your country to others and see how results are changing over time. (The first Global Corruption Barometer was published in 2003). The bi-annual release of the report provides a media opportunity to highlight the theme of corruption, particularly important if perceptions are that corruption is strongly rising.

**Limitations:** The survey is limited by the nature of the questionnaire. It also, relies on perception rather than evidence as a measurement. This must be borne in mind when using the results. There is also little detail on how corruption affects various groups differently (e.g. men vs women; non-minority vs minority groups) so it does not help investigate these inequality angles. The impact of corruption on economic inequality – that is how the burden of paying bribes affects, proportionately, the poor compared to the rich – is not explored.

**Data Source:** World Values Survey (WVS)  
[www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp)

**What it measures:** The World Values Survey (WVS) is carried out by a global network of social scientists. It has been applied since 1981, with its questionnaire being updated and with countries being added. The survey is applied in 'waves' with country results presented across six time periods. The most recent covers 2010-2014. In this period, 60 country surveys have been collected. The survey questionnaire is extensive, covering many areas relevant to how societies are organised, what people value and their attitudes toward other people and different institutions. For example, the survey asks about qualities people feel children should be encouraged to learn, what people's personal goals are, how important different things are to their lives. There are also extensive questions about religion and religious beliefs, as well as questions related to discrimination of all kinds. The survey also includes a strong focus on governance-related issues: trust, the characteristics of democracy, the fairness of elections and bias in the media.

**Tips on use:** Click on the link iabove. For full access to country information in report form, choose the Documentation/Download tab and then choose your country of interest. There you can look at the questionnaire used and the results (under the tab called Codebook). This gives the detailed results for your country. Otherwise follow the link on the left and go to Online Analysis here:  
[www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSOnline.jsp](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSOnline.jsp)

Click on the time period of interest (e.g. 2010-2014), then select the country or countries of interest Scroll down the questions asked and click where you want to see results. A table will be given. Using the 'cross by' button above the table you can cross the results with sex, age, level of income and other factors.

**Why is it useful?** It explores identity-based inequalities from various angles. The question of gender equality is prominent in many different questions. Results are also given for men and women and for young and old in the full country reports which is useful. Political capture is explored from various different angles. The question 'can the rich buy elections' is asked. There is also a question on whether respondents see taxation of the rich and subsidies for the poor as an essential characteristic of democracy. As the questions are extensive it is worth reviewing the list you are interested in before collating data.

**Limitations:** The main limitation is in coverage. The 2010-2014 'wave' covers only 60 countries. Nine are in Latin America and the Caribbean, 10 are in Africa and 22 in Asia. Some developed countries are also included. For example, the only African countries covered are: Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Libya, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, Zimbabwe.

# 4.2 CONDUCTING A WORKSHOP ON INEQUALITY

Workshops on inequality could involve staff, partners, relevant allies, thought leaders and women's rights organisations and/or gender advisors. Ideally, workshops could focus on analysis but also give space for review of programme strategies, design and activities. A suggested format for the workshop is presented here but does not seek to be prescriptive.

## Suggested objectives and workshop approach

**Objective 1: To better understand what inequality looks like in your country.** First, explore and analyse evidence on inequality in your country by starting with the data, the 'social inequality map' and all relevant information on inequality. This is an opportunity to discuss the credibility and limitations of data sources both in terms of what data can reveal and what is missing.

**Options** for how to manage this session/day of work include:

- Using the data sources provided in this guide, Oxfam staff could construct a picture of inequality or commission some basic data collection to produce a simple inequality data report before the workshop.
- Invite specialist researchers, think-tanks, thought leaders and/or activists to present to Oxfam staff and partners. It is important to ensure that invitees are well briefed to talk about 'what the inequalities look like' and how inequality trends are changing using data and evidence.
- Use this session as a 'live' learning exercise for all staff to learn about measuring inequality and the use of data. Participants could choose a few data sources, then work in groups to explore data online before sharing findings with the wider group. This could help build confidence around accessing data sources.
- Draw on people's own experiences in life. How many participants went to private schools? How rich or humble is their backgrounds? To what extent has that shaped their opportunities in life?
- Evaluate the data and evidence available, particularly through a discussion on what data/information are still missing.

**Objective 2: To explore the main drivers of inequality in your country.** Exploring the drivers of inequality can be related to discriminatory social attitudes and beliefs but will also concentrate heavily on policy drivers. Aim to look externally at the country context to stimulate discussion and explore issues here.

**Options** to approach this include:

- Conduct a participatory session with staff and partners to explore the drivers of inequalities via brainstorming or group work. Many drivers will be identified for each category of inequality and these can be visually presented together. This will allow for a discussion of overlaps (where, for example, the national budget is coming up under economic, social, gender categories etc). Attendees could potentially establish a ranking of the most important in terms of their impact on inequality.

**Objective 3: To assess how the country programme is currently tackling inequality.** This session aims to discuss current work in the context of the various types and drivers of inequality. It may be best addressed by staff and partners only, rather than with external speakers or others. It is important to identify where Oxfam work on inequality is strong, what gaps there might be and where programmes could strengthen their interventions.

**Options** to explore this include:

- Staff presentations on current work that answer the following key questions: What types of inequality are your programme of work addressing?; How are you addressing the main drivers?; Are your interventions directly addressing the main policy drivers enough (or only in a related sense)?; Can you identify gaps or areas you would like to strengthen?
- Staff and partners can do the same exercise but together in groups. They can be given the same questions and some time to explore this together, before coming back and presenting to the wider group.
- Staff and partners can then take time to reflect together on where interventions are strongest/weakest and whether there are any large strategic gaps or smaller areas for improvement. This is important to set the stage for the final session/day which looks in more detail at what the Oxfam country programme can do to scale up and/or adapt their work.

**Objective 4: To explore what more the country programme could do.** Discussion should take place both at the specific project/programme level but also at the more strategic level. At a minimum, some consensus should be established on areas where Oxfam should do more. Ideally some level of action planning on how to take work forward should also occur.

**Options** include:

- Organise group work to develop a plan of action. For example, a group might look specifically at how to strengthen existing work in areas such as gender inequality or land. Another group might look at how to develop entirely new work (e.g. on tax). The guide's research questions and ideas for action in different areas can be reviewed by staff to inform thinking on how to improve research and evidence or what types of intervention might be considered. Groups could be given concrete tasks, such as developing a Terms of Reference for research on a particular topic.
- Conduct this as a session/day to review in full the guide. This can be done in addition to, or instead of, the first option here. This would allow staff and partners to review the headline recommendations and discuss strategic opportunities such as the development of an inequality tracking tool, promoting a national conversation on inequality via annual events, work with the media, strategic research partnerships, etc.
- Choose two to three leading recommendations and develop these with concrete action plans. Using group work, decide on your key activities and what these will look like, who will be involved and how, what is needed to prepare for this, timing and budget implications.

Finally it is important to note that this suggested workshop design only provides some basic options. Country programmes can easily adapt these ideas or take a different approach, depending on the level of existing programming and the areas they would like to explore. The most critical thing is for country programmes to make a strong commitment to understanding what inequality looks like, analysing its main drivers and exploring how best these may be tackled through a wide variety of programming interventions and new initiatives that the team can jointly take forward.



# 4.3 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR OXFAM POLICY AND RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS ON INEQUALITY

As part of a campaign and advocacy strategy, you might decide to publish a policy paper or to carry out research and publish the results. But before starting to plan a publication, decide what kind of formats and channels will have the best results for the particular context and objectives. For example, a social media campaign, series of blogs or a high profile event might have more impact.

Examples of country reports on inequality can be found for Malawi [www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/rr-inequality-in-malawi-261115-en.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/rr-inequality-in-malawi-261115-en.pdf), Mexico [is.cuni.cz/studium/predmety/index.php?do=download&did=113954&kod=JMM591](http://is.cuni.cz/studium/predmety/index.php?do=download&did=113954&kod=JMM591) Vietnam, <http://oxf.am/ZLuU> and Indonesia, <http://oxf.am/ZbM5> among others.

Terms of reference are designed to help get agreement on target audiences, policy objectives and content of a publication. They are also a planning tool and can help to test the schedule and resourcing of the project. The example below outlines a plan for an Oxfam country report on inequality.

INFORMATION REQUIRED	TO BE COMPLETED
Commissioning manager:	[XXX]
Author:	[XXX]
Project manager:	[XXX]
Media lead:	
Working title:	Country name: Inequality Report
Type of paper: <i>e.g. Briefing Paper, Briefing Note, Research Report, etc.</i>	Research Report/ Briefing Note
Oxfam campaign: <i>e.g. Rights in Crisis</i>	Inequality
Publishing partners: <i>Please list any partners or allies for co-branded papers</i>	[Potential for academic/research partnership]

INFORMATION REQUIRED	TO BE COMPLETED
<p>Expected length (number of pages and word count):</p>	<p>15 pages, 7000 words</p> <p>Long reports can have less impact and will take longer to produce.</p>
<p><b>Purpose</b>  <i>Why is this being commissioned, and why now? How does it contribute to the campaign strategy?</i></p>	<p>This paper is being commissioned because Oxfam recognizes that within-country economic inequality is an important and growing concern in the countries in which we work, particularly in terms of Oxfam’s goals to eradicate poverty and empower people. This was articulated in Oxfam’s globally focused Even It Up report, published in October 2014 and is the rationale behind the 5-10 year global campaign on reducing within-country economic inequality around the world.</p> <p>It is necessary to have a good understanding of how economic inequality manifests itself at the individual country level before committing to, designing and implementing national campaigns and programmes that can effectively address it.</p> <p>The purpose of this paper is therefore to identify economic inequality trends, drivers, intersections, consequences and policy interventions that are relevant at the national level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To generate knowledge on national inequality dynamics and an overall view on national policies as they relate to inequality and shared prosperity</li> <li>• To identify how inequality dynamics relate to and affect Oxfam’s current programme effectiveness and the realization of the Country Strategy.</li> <li>• To provide evidence that can be used to position Oxfam as a thought leader on the inequality debate in the country and potentially pave the way for the development of an inequality campaign strategy that is rooted in the country context.</li> <li>• To provide a process and content base to build relationships and alliances with civil society organizations, academia and opinion leaders engaged in the national inequality debate (public investment in social policy, fiscal justice and good governance).</li> <li>• Provide killer facts to illustrate the gap between the rich and the rest and the causes and the consequences of economic inequality, particularly with respect to poverty reduction.</li> </ul>

INFORMATION REQUIRED	TO BE COMPLETED
<p><b>Audience</b>  <i>For whom is it being written? Who are we trying to influence? What kind of tone/style will the paper adopt? Please list primary and secondary audiences. What are your plans to launch to these audiences? Which are the key target countries?</i></p>	<p>Primary audience: Politicians and Media in the country, decision makers.</p> <p>Secondary audience: CSOs in the country campaigning or working on inequality specifics (gender or women’s rights, migrants’ rights, etc) and emerging civil society movements, researchers and academics working on inequality, fiscal justice and other associated issues. Oxfam country and regional office staff, particularly those responsible for developing the country strategies specifically to incorporate an understanding of a) inequality, b) its drivers and c) how Oxfam’s programme tackles these drivers. Oxfam country and regional staff responsible for programme design and those that would potentially be responsible for designing a national/regional inequality campaign.</p>
<p><b>Proposition</b>  <i>What is the paper’s core argument and policy recommendation(s)? Include specific gender/women’s rights points here if possible. What impact will this have on poverty? (Summarize in one paragraph).</i></p>	<p><b>This paper will offer a snapshot of inequality in country x, showing how it has grown/shrunk/stayed the same over recent years, how market fundamentalism and political capture have contributed to these trends, what can be done to tackle inequality, especially in terms of labour rights, taxation and public services, and how the picture of economic inequality intersects with other inequalities in the country and especially gender inequality</b></p> <p><b>This paper will provide evidence and identify key programme and policy areas for future intervention. To do this, it will answer the following research questions:</b></p> <p><b>A short, clear executive summary is essential, with headline killer facts on the scale of economic inequality in the country.</b></p> <p><b>1 – To what extent is extreme and rising economic inequality evident in country and likely to be a problem for the country’s development progress?</b>  Existing global research finds that inequality is rising around the world, with detrimental effects on the fight against poverty and the economy and society more broadly. However the extent and trends of economic inequality vary considerably between countries. This paper will identify the extent to which extreme and rising inequality is, or looks set to be a concern in this country. This will include analysis of income and wealth inequality, inequalities in other important areas (health, employment, crime etc) and opportunities (access to healthcare and education, access to justice etc). It will identify how the extent and trends are likely to impact on inclusive and sustainable growth, poverty reduction and social stability and other social outcomes in the medium to long term. Paper will look at the best possible data sources, latest household survey, any available data on top incomes. Killer facts will be generated, including if possible projections of growth/ poverty dynamics (how many people would be no longer poor if inequality was tackled as opposed to if inequality was not, at the same rate of economic growth), comparisons to levels of extreme poverty.</p>

INFORMATION REQUIRED	TO BE COMPLETED
	<p><b>Examples:</b></p> <p>Vietnam’s 210 super-rich earn more than enough in one year to lift 3.2 million people out of poverty and end extreme poverty in Vietnam.</p> <p>This study modelled the link between inequality, growth and poverty in Malawi over the next five years. In 2015, 8 million people – 50 percent of the country’s population – live in poverty. Yet if inequality continues to rise as it has in recent years, by 2020 1.5 million more Malawians will be poor. Even if inequality stays broadly at the level it is now, there will still be 400,000 additional people living in poverty in Malawi by 2024.</p> <p><b>2 – What are the main drivers of economic inequality in country? What is the role of market fundamentalism/ neoliberalism? What is the role of political capture?</b></p> <p>Research will analyse the role of the two main drivers of the inequality crisis identified globally, market fundamentalism/ neo-liberalism, and the role of political capture. This could include the role of structural adjustment policies in driving the growth in inequality, and analysing the influence of elites on capturing economic and political power in a country, preferably identifying examples of extreme wealth, naming individuals wherever possible.</p> <p><b>3 – What is the interaction between economic inequality and other inequalities including gender, ethnicity, geography.</b></p> <p>Marginalisation and social exclusion of groups keep people trapped at the bottom of the income distribution while others prosper. As such, this research will also explore the extent of horizontal inequalities including gender, ethnicity and geography and how these relate to vertical inequality.</p> <p><b>4 – What policies are in place in country that reinforce/perpetuate or reduce inequalities?</b></p> <p>As we know, rising inequality is not inevitable and therefore this report will not only establish the state of the economic distribution in the country, but will also identifies evidence of the policies that either perpetuate or reduce inequalities and the extent to which they are being implemented. This will start from an analysis of the pervading development narrative, including the growth model and any industrial and macroeconomic policies being pursued, set within the national development context. The focus of the policy analysis will include but not be limited to reviewing the incidence of tax policies and the tax infrastructure more broadly, progressivity of public spending, particularly looking at public service provision and social protection mechanisms and the regulatory framework particularly for work and wages.</p> <p><b>5 – What opportunities (limitations) are there for progressive policy making in country?</b></p> <p>Finally the report will include and analysis of the space and direction of policy making and the potential for progressive policy making at the local and national level. It will include an analysis of the role and stated objectives of different political parties/fractions, the CSOs/NGOs and the private sector. This section will particularly focus on inequalities within the policy making space and inequalities of power, including aspects of democratization, voice, accountability, rule of law and political capture. It will also look at the extent to which there are barriers to inclusive policy making through underlying issues of security and conflict.</p>

INFORMATION REQUIRED	TO BE COMPLETED
<p><b>Contents</b>  <i>List the contents of the paper in detail, including estimated page extents for each section.</i>  <i>Include <b>killer facts</b> where possible, and identify how you will incorporate gender justice issues.</i></p>	<p>This paper must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide insight into the inequality dynamics in country in order to enable Oxfam’s work to take this into account in future planning and programming.</li> <li>• Articulate the damaging impact of extreme and rising inequalities where these exist or how a progressive approach to development is beneficial for society and a model for other countries</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for Oxfam to engage at the local and/or national level for programming/campaigning solutions that effectively reduce inequalities and sustain a more egalitarian development path.</li> </ul> <p>Contents will follow the structure of the research questions outlined above:</p> <p><b>Section 1: The facts about inequality in country (1500 words)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale of economic inequality and inequalities of other outcome and opportunity measures</li> <li>• Trends and trajectories for the distribution of income and wealth</li> <li>• Impact of inequality on poverty, social mobility, growth and social stability, particularly conflict, crime and security in the medium to long term</li> <li>• Comparison to other countries at similar income levels- how does this country compare?</li> <li>• Killer facts needed on scale of the problem.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section 2: Drivers of inequality (1500 words)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of marginalization and exclusion based on gender (drawing on analysis of unpaid care work were available), ethnicity, geography and other horizontal inequalities</li> <li>• Extent to which access to productive resources and opportunities for gainful employment are restricted and unevenly distributed</li> <li>• Links to neoliberalism/ market fundamentalism/ structural adjustment and its influence</li> <li>• Links to political capture by elites and its influence</li> <li>• Illustrating examples/stories case studies: examples of excluded groups, the economic, social and political barriers they face and their resulting position on the income distribution, examples of extreme wealth, naming names wherever possible</li> </ul> <p><b>Section 3: Oxfam’s work in the context of inequality (1000)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent are there structural barriers and existing inequality dynamics limiting the effectiveness of Oxfam’s work to empower people and eradicate poverty?</li> <li>• How do Oxfam’s programmes and campaigns effectively challenge the distribution of power and resources at the local and national level for the better?</li> <li>• Examples of Oxfam projects that are most relevant to challenging within country inequalities</li> </ul>

INFORMATION REQUIRED	TO BE COMPLETED
	<p><b>Section 4: Inequality is not inevitable: Policy choices and implementation (1500)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth and development model being pursued</li> <li>• Policies on access to productive resources</li> <li>• Policies on work, wages- need to pay a living wage.</li> <li>• Incidence of taxation- look at damaging impact of VAT on poor, lack of taxation of the rich, tax breaks for companies- doesn't need to be this way.</li> <li>• Progressivity of public spending, including public service provision and social protection- look at issues like user fees, privatisation of services, private schooling.</li> <li>• Killer facts on tax incidence/public spending choices</li> </ul> <p><b>Section 5: Space for progressive policy making (1000)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping role and objectives of policy actors, including political parties/fractions, NGOs and private sector</li> <li>• Inequalities of power generally in society and specifically in political processes and decision making (CSO space vs economic elites)</li> <li>• Opportunities - Identify progressive/regressive leaders and narratives to tap into</li> <li>• Challenges - Potential for social divides and conflict to restrict inclusive policy making space and evidence of political capture (lack of checks and balances)</li> </ul> <p><b>Conclusion (500)</b></p> <p>Identify opportunities for Oxfam's work to better work in the context of the inequalities evident of the countries and to pursue policies and policy making spaces that have the potential to reduce inequalities</p> <p>Total words: 7000</p>
<p><b>Web content</b></p> <p><i>How will this briefing paper be used and shared online? Will it be suitable for support by any of the following materials:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Blog</i></li> <li>• <i>Video material</i></li> <li>• <i>PowerPoint presentation</i></li> </ul>	<p>This paper should provide enough material to develop local advocacy needs (i.e., one-pagers, mini-case studies, infographics, score cards, videos, life stories of ordinary Mexican people living under extreme inequality etc.).</p>
<p><b>Programme connections</b></p> <p><i>How will the paper link policy to Oxfam's programme experience? Which countries will be involved?</i></p>	<p>It will be designed to provide appropriate content for the countries overall strategy and for specific country programmes that address inequalities at the local and national level.</p>

INFORMATION REQUIRED	TO BE COMPLETED
<p><b>Gender</b>  <i>How does this paper/report incorporate gender justice and women's rights into its argument? Please include information on this if appropriate in the 'Contents' and 'Proposition' sections.</i>  <i>How does the paper look at either the power relations between men and women, or the disproportionate impact of unjust policy on women as they relate to the issue in question? What existing research will it draw on?</i></p>	<p>This paper will illuminate the ways in which economic inequality intersects with other inequalities, specially gender inequality, and other social inequalities, creating traps of disadvantage for the few.  The report will build a case for tackling economic inequality with an approach that recognizes gendered roles, women's rights and aims at a more equal distribution of paid and unpaid work between men and women, access to productive assets and power to influence, particularly at the policy level.  This will draw on existing work analyzing unpaid care work, under the WeCare project.</p>
<p><b>Sensitivities</b>  <i>What are the risks in publishing this paper?</i>  <i>(E.g. risk to staff security or to the programme; risk to Oxfam's reputation; risk to Oxfam's identity; quality of product and content; consistency with plans and priorities.)</i></p>	<p>Tone should be balanced and evidence –based. We will rely on strong quantitative analysis and concrete recommendations.  Mindful of national sensitivities.</p>
<p><b>Translation requirements</b>  <i>Specify whether the full text needs translating into Oxfam's core languages (French, Spanish, English). List any other languages needed, explain how they will be used, and confirm that there are funds allocated for this.</i>  <b>Please note:</b> <i>if the full text is to be translated, all language versions should publish together.</i></p>	<p>XXX</p>
<p><b>Libel check</b>  <i>Will this paper require a libel check by a legal expert? (for example if company names are mentioned and there is a libel risk)</i></p>	<p>XXX</p>

## PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

N <sup>o</sup>	TOPIC	THIS SECTION WILL BE DRAWN UP BY THE PROJECT MANAGER	WORKING DAYS ALLOCATED
1	First draft due by:		
2	<p><b>Comments required from:</b>  <i>Please list names and groups, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A gender advisor</i></li> <li>• <i>Legal team if a libel check is needed</i></li> </ul> <p><i>If your paper contains new policy, the commissioning manager should clear it with the Policy Sign-Off Group (PSG).</i></p>		
3	Comments due by:		
4	Revisions by author:		
5	Final draft due by:		
6	<p><b>Edit:</b>  <i>(1 day per 4000 words)</i></p>		
7	Author accepts/rejects edits:		
8	<p><b>Sign-off: regional and affiliate</b>  <i>Allow 5 days</i></p>		
9	Revisions by author in line with Regional and Affiliate sign-off comments		
10	<p><b>Sign-off: OI</b>  <i>5 days min.</i></p>		



Nº	TOPIC	THIS SECTION WILL BE DRAWN UP BY THE PROJECT MANAGER	WORKING DAYS ALLOCATED
11	Revisions by author in line with OI sign-off comments:		
12	Translation of final signed-off text: <i>1 day per 1000 words</i>		
13	Preparation of final PDFs etc: <i>At least 2 full working days are needed to prepare papers for online publishing and produce the final PDFs</i>		
14	<p><b>Publication date:</b> <i>Mention any specific pegs or events, and whether an embargo will be in place.</i></p> <p><i>If there is no specific external hook, what flexibility is there around the publication date?</i></p> <p><b>Please note:</b> <i>final files are needed by media and web teams at least 3 working days before the embargo date.</i></p>		
15	<p><b>Distribution</b> <i>List here any <b>specific</b> distribution requirements (both electronic and hard copy) for this particular paper (e.g. to specific targets, policy/media specialists, listserves, networks etc).</i></p> <p><i>All OI papers have a standard distribution procedure which will be automatically followed, and which includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Authoring affiliate website/ intranet</i></li> <li><i>• OI website</i></li> <li><i>• Sumus</i></li> <li><i>• External contacts (general)</i></li> </ul>		

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