



OXFAM CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE REPORT:

NO ONE IS SAFE FROM CORONAVIRUS UNTIL **EVERYONE** IS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | JUNE 2020



OXFAM

INTRODUCTION

This report describes some of the work that Oxfam International has done so far around the world in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Oxfam made its coronavirus response a global institutional priority on 18 March 2020, a few days after the World Health Organisation's formal declaration of pandemic. We are three months into a crisis and its repercussions and longevity are as yet unimaginable.

In that time, we have forged new and existing partnerships with 344 local civil society organisations across 62 countries. This network that includes all the work that Oxfam teams are implementing directly, is part of the fabric of how local communities themselves are responding in their own contexts and helping each other to adapt and survive.

Together, we have reached over 4.5m people to date. We aim to reach 14m people by raising €100m.

These people are among the most vulnerable because of poverty and the kinds of systemic inequalities including particularly gender inequality, injustices, conflict and marginalisation that they face daily – all of which the coronavirus crisis threatens to deepen and worsen in myriad ways.

This response is active in complex and fragile environments too, including in areas of conflict, in refugee and displacement camps, and with migrants and people already suffering from hunger and the climate crisis.

Our aim is to support these people in the communities where they live, helping them to bolster their own resilience, cope with their own strategies and resources and lead their own recover-

ies. Our network engages with the agency of the people we serve to help. Oxfam brings decades of humanitarian experience into this response including lessons and innovations from our work in other epidemics and crises.

So informed, and from this foundation, Oxfam is campaigning and amplifying people's voice on national and global stages. From the very beginning days of our response, we have gathered evidence and worked to influence and change the policies and behaviours of those in positions of political and economic power, so that no-one is left behind.

We are extremely grateful to all our public supporters across many countries and to our institutional donors, who have all generously entrusted us with the financial support necessary to empower this network of actors across countries and to help millions of people.

This report reflects our direct and network's work in supporting the empowerment of all these people and delivering them the help they need – but it is entirely yours. Thank you.

We have a long road ahead, but no-one is safe until everyone is safe.

Cover: Partner JAGO NARI distributes hygiene kits in Bangladesh while ensuring participants keep social distance in the process. The kits include 10 bars of soap, a kilo of detergent, 8 reusable sanitary pads, 50 disposable masks, information, and a bucket with lid and tap for washing hands. (Duke Ivn Amin/JAGO NARI)

Opposite: Anne Pandjikpo is filling her can for the first time at the new water point of the Elim Church in Bangui, Central African Republic. To help stop the spread of the coronavirus, our teams are on the ground and setting up 20 water points in the Central African capital so that nearly 100,000 people have access to clean water. (Aurelie Godet/Oxfam)



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GUAR



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



Oxfam

“Nur” (name changed to protect identity) is using the recently installed Contactless Handwashing Device in the Rohingya camp (Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh).

Like her, other Rohingya refugees have started using the machine to frequently wash their hands as a number of COVID-19 cases have now been confirmed in the world’s largest refugee camp.

Oxfam installed Contactless Handwashing Device which are activated with a foot peddle to avoid transmission of the virus from touching the soap. (Fabeha Monir/Oxfam)

OXFAM SNAPSHOT

With our partners, we have reached **4,457,211 people** since we began responding to the coronavirus crisis as a global priority on 18 March 2020.

Across the Oxfam confederation, **62 countries** have launched a fresh response or adapted our programmes to the impacts of the coronavirus.

We work with **344 partners** globally in collaborative response.

REGIONS AT A GLANCE:

- In **Asia**, we have reached **1,571,864** people.
- In **Horn of Africa, East and Central Africa**, we have reached **387,306** people.
- In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, we have reached **102,005** people.
- In the **Middle East and Northern Africa**, we have reached **1,493,310** people.
- In **Southern Africa**, we have reached **196,996** people.
- In **West Africa**, we have reached **368,212** people.
- In **Europe**, we have reached **1,669** people.

OUR DONORS

Our goal is to support **14 million affected people** through a **€100 million programme**.

As of 31 May 2020, we have raised **over €15 million** from institutional donors, and are close to securing **€25 million**.

Our supporters from all over have also contributed to raising over **€2 million** to directly support our response. Moreover, since coronavirus is currently affecting every aspect of our work and for the long-term, we are predominantly raising unrestricted income which will allow us the flexibility to spend it quickly and where it is needed.

All of this has helped us reach more than **4 million people**. But more are in need and we cannot do this without your help.

In global solidarity, let us all play our part to reduce the spread of coronavirus and help each other through.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD BY ENGAGING AND PROTECTING COMMUNITIES

A vital intervention to help prevent the spread of the virus is by ensuring that communities have the right information and that people can feed-back on it. We have complemented this with programs to provide soap and hygiene items to people, and by installing handwashing stations and water points in many settings around the world, including urban areas and health care centres.

We have installed “contactless” handwashing stations in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh and also in Zimbabwe. We are using social media and radio broadcasts including in Pakistan and Iraq to spread information on how people can prevent the spread.

Other initiatives include supporting popular artists to create viral videos, as has happened in Kenya, and conducting door-to-door messaging, for instance as is happening in Chad. We are covering the costs of Water ATMs which allow people to “withdraw” water in Kenya. In the Philippines, our partner PRRM has ensured that communities living in lockdown have had access to hardware and materials to build their own handwashing facilities.

In countries like Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of Congo, our community partners have been tracking rumours among local people – monitoring their fears and perceptions – in order to adjust the activities according to what the communities are perceiving as fact or threat.

We are scaling up our protection programming throughout community networks to ensure that people are able to stay safe and have their rights respected, even as governments put difficult restriction measures in place to respond to the virus.

These kinds of programs include, for instance, giving out cash for people in Burkina Faso to travel to health services, or in Lebanon where we have helped people to get legal papers they need before they can access services. We have distributed food and hygiene vouchers for people

living in Occupied Palestine Territory and created “COVID Hotlines” along with the Ministry of Health in Somaliland.

For people who have no choice but to have to leave their homes, we are for instance giving information and bus tickets along the routes that migrants are travelling in the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. Our work together also includes carrying out advocacy to call for people’s rights to be protected as a priority.

We have helped to build these interventions based on our knowledge of what has worked – and what has not – in previous public health emergencies, particularly from our work in West Africa during the Ebola crisis (2014–15). Bolstered with this kind of knowledge and experience, running through all these activities is our commitment to community-based approaches. We know from experience and evaluation that these kinds of responses are more effective when they are built with meaningful community involvement. Two-way flows of information is essential in building trust and inclusion.

These activities would not have been possible without the support of donors such as UNICEF and UNHCR for water and handwashing facilities; IOM in funding contactless washing points; DANIDA and Irish Aid for providing hygiene materials; messaging supported by ECHO and MACP; and our supporters who enabled us to respond quickly in our public health prevention and protection efforts.

*If the disease is real,
we old people are going
to die because only the
rich are being treated.”*

- Community Perceptions Tracker
in Burkina Faso

SOCIAL PROTECTION AS THE BRACE AGAINST THE HUNGER AND ECONOMIC CRISIS

Among all the complexity, one thing that is certain is that the food and livelihoods crisis now ahead of us will have a longer impact than the immediate public health one – and will well possibly be even deadlier. Oxfam is providing cash and in-kind food assistance to those who need it in more than 15 countries around the world, including for refugees, displaced people and vulnerable families including in South Sudan and Central African Republic.

This major intervention has been supported by donors including ECHO, WFP, DFID and DFAT. We are also partnering with small-scale food producers to amplify their voices in the call for global action on the looming food crises.

We are working with governments to ensure that social protection systems can be maintained and scaled up, for instance in Nepal and Kenya, as well as with local civil society organisations to push for more and better social protection mechanisms that ensure a permanent safety net for those who need it, for instance in countries like Vietnam and Cambodia. We believe that social responses that are responsive to shocks such as coronavirus should be scaled up massively, to mitigate the likely unprecedented humanitarian needs ahead.

- ▼ Women from a community in Quezon City, Philippines line up to enter a market as the local government strictly imposes social distancing in public places. They also received flyers from IDEALS and Oxfam containing relevant information about COVID-19 and essential tips on how to cope with the enhanced community quarantine. (IDEALS)



WOMEN AND GIRLS AT THE HEART OF AN INCLUSIVE RESPONSE

Gender-based violence has become its own horrific pandemic, with women and girls particularly at heightened risk of abuse given the restrictions on movement and, for many, their escape. Oxfam is attempting to link vulnerable women to support services via outreach, campaigning and awareness-raising initiatives.

Our networks are working with youth groups in Bangladesh, for instance, to spread information to women, and in Iraq via leaflets with messages on where to access services against gender-based violence. Oxfam's partner Jordanian Women's Union helped to support their social workers continue their services via mobile phones. In Afghanistan, Oxfam is supporting the Organisation for Human Welfare to increase their number of hotlines to cope with the surge in demand.

We are also maintaining and expanding our support to local women's rights organisations in countries like the Philippines, and campaigning for a more just and equitable system to emerge from this crisis in line with the feminist values that underpin all our work. We are helping to invest in local capacity and supporting locally led responses in countries like Indonesia, to complement the work of governments in the coronavirus response.

We are able to respond in a broad range of coronavirus-response activities specifically focused on gender justice because of support from donors like GAC, SDC, UNDP, Start Network, IKEA Foundation, and MoFA Netherlands.

"This virus is really dangerous. I have never seen such a disease in my lifetime, but in our community, poverty is another disease, it is as dangerous as this virus and if people continue staying home this way, a lot of families could die because of hunger."

- Female community member, 33,
Shahristan, Afghanistan

THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS IS ESPECIALLY CHALLENGING

Travel restrictions and closed borders are limiting humanitarian access, including for local organisations. Supply chains have been disrupted. Funding has been slow especially as governments have had to concentrate inside their own borders. All this has demanded a shift to new technologies to reach people remotely but that needs to be paid for and tailored according to different contexts. In closed societies, extra effort needs to be made to reach women and girls where men usually speak for them.

These challenges reflect the need to improve the global humanitarian system and should not serve as a deterrent to respond. Oxfam's partnership network has worked in innovative ways to minimise disruptions and maximise impact; Oxfam has worked with other agencies to lobby the UN with some success for more flexible funding and to prioritise locally-led and more safely protected responses.

- ▼ With the generous support of Global Affairs Canada, Oxfam in Iraq has been able to provide essential support to health facilities and vulnerable families in Mosul. As in other governorates, Oxfam teams have been working closely with the local Directorate of Health as well as other local authorities, to support the COVID-19 response. (Emily Gale/Oxfam)



ADVOCATING FOR OUR LEADERS TO PUT THE INTERESTS OF PEOPLE FIRST

How governments, companies and institutions respond to this crisis right now profoundly dictates people's experience of the coronavirus crisis, and what will follow.

Informed by our networked program in 62 countries, and complemented by our own evidence and research, Oxfam is working to influence the policies and behaviours of those in positions of political and economic power, so that no-one is pushed behind. The challenge and threats are huge. Some of the data that sets out the task before us:

- Coronavirus could kill 40m people.
- It could push half a billion people into poverty – as Oxfam reported.ⁱ
- Up to 200 million people could lose their jobs with women and informal workers hardest hit.ⁱⁱ
- At least 130 million more people could face worsening food insecurity, pushing that total toward a billion hungry people.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Gender-based violence is resurging across the globe.
- Authoritarian governments have utilised lockdown restrictions to close their borders to asylum seekers and stifle dissent with brutal and sometimes militarized force.

Using its program evidence and research, Oxfam has published a five-point global health and emergency response plan, titled in a report called "How To Confront The Coronavirus Catastrophe", calling for huge investments into community-based prevention and free universal health care. Oxfam also published a paper focused on an economic rescue plan for all, titled "Dignity Not Destitution".

Oxfam lobbied for a future vaccine to be a free global public good which has been supported by over 150 current and former world leaders and influencers.

We worked with researchers including from King's College London and the Australian National University to show that half a billion people could be pushed into poverty as a result of coronavirus.

With others we lobbied G20 governments and the international finance institutions on the issue of debt cancellation, special drawing rights and overseas aid which is needed by poor countries and communities to keep afloat – gaining progress, but far from enough what is needed, as world leaders agreed to a bilateral debt relief.

With campaign partners in #IMatter, Oxfam published its support for a global ceasefire.

These are some of the major areas of action to influence global policy, that has also been covered in global and national media around the world in recent months. All this work continues. Our work is also taking place looking to the world that is already being built in the wake of coronavirus. We could rebuild much the same system, with all its structural inequalities, discriminations and exploitations – or something better, especially for the ones who need it most.

ⁱ 4 A. Sumner, C. Hoy and E. Ortiz-Juarez. (2020). *UNU-WIDER Working Paper: Estimates of the Impact of COVID-19 on Global Poverty* <https://doi.org/10.35188/UNU-WIDER/2020/800-9>

ⁱⁱ UN News. (2020, April 8). *COVID-19: impact could cause equivalent of 195 million jobs, says ILO Chief.* <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/04/1061322>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.fsinplatform.org/global-report-food-crisis-2020>

Oxfam's global response to COVID-19 is only possible thanks to the solidarity of many individuals, partner organizations, and institutional donors.



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Kudakwashe sorting and arranging soap, aqua tabs, and SBCC material for the team in Zimbabwe. (Tavonga Chikwaya/Oxfam)

