
A Critical Analysis of the Humanitarian Response Approach of Central American Women's Rights Organizations

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
BIOGRAPHY - MIA VUKOJEVIĆ	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 PROJECT BACKGROUND	5
2.1 <i>OXFAM CANADA'S APPROACH</i>	5
2.2 <i>THE ACTORS</i>	5
3 THE PROCESS	7
3.1 <i>OBJECTIVES</i>	7
3.2 <i>METHODOLOGY</i>	7
4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS	9
4.1 <i>IDENTIFICATION OF THE APPROACH</i>	9
4.2 <i>STRENGTHS</i>	12
4.3 <i>CHALLENGES</i>	14
5 RECOMMENDATIONS	15
5.1 <i>RECOMMENDATION FOR PARTNERS</i>	15
5.2 <i>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OXFAM CANADA</i>	17
6. PROPOSED INDICATORS	19
6.1 <i>WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION</i>	19
6.2 <i>PROGRESS IN THE STATUS OF WOMEN</i>	20
ANNEX 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE	21
ANNEX 2 QUESTIONS ADDRESSED	26

BIOGRAPHY - MIA VUKOJEVIĆ

Mia Vukojević has served as the Executive Director of the Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF) since October 2011. She has 14 years of management and fundraising experience in development organizations. Her professional career includes working for Oxfam Canada and Oxfam Great Britain, the European Union, the United Nations, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, serving on the Board of Directors of the Sphere Project, Geneva and on the Board of Trustees of BCIF.

During her eight years at Oxfam Canada, Mia managed the agencies' humanitarian programs including responses in Pakistan, Haiti, East Africa and Zimbabwe. She also administered the training of staff and partners in emergency preparedness, gender in emergencies, disaster prevention and management, and lead Oxfam's advocacy on humanitarian issues in Canada.

Mia has a Bachelor's degree (Honors) in European Integration and a Master's degree in Eastern European Studies from the faculty of Public Affairs and Policy Management at Carleton University, Ottawa. Her areas of expertise, in addition to fundraising and management, are strategic planning, gender and women's rights in humanitarian crises, and civil-military relations in humanitarian crises.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report documents the unique way women's organizations in Central America respond to humanitarian emergencies. Relying on feminist theory and practice, these organizations approach humanitarian action very differently from the mainstream humanitarian system. Their approach parallels closely the experience of women's organizations in other parts of the world, yet it is not well articulated in theory or literature. This paper seeks to systematize the approach, articulating its main features, strengths and challenges.

It contains recommendations for Oxfam Canada (OC) and the women's organizations involved¹, and proposes indicators that could be used to measure the effectiveness of such a feminist approach. Indicators include assessing the capacity of women's organizations to undertake humanitarian response and tracking changes in the status of women that may result.

This is not an evaluation, nor is it an exhaustive study. The analysis includes a review of documentation and interviews conducted in December 2012 and January 2013. Interviews were held with staff members of four OC partner organizations, with a number of OC's own staff, with three groups of beneficiaries in 2 countries (El Salvador and Guatemala), and representatives of one municipal government in El Salvador. The proposed indicators are largely drawn from Oxfam International's *Minimum Standards For the Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Rights In Emergencies* and Inter-agency Standing Committee's (IASC) gender in emergencies handbook, *Women, Girls, Boys And Men; Different Needs – Equal Opportunities*


The experience of these organizations merits further attention, for it holds important lessons for the broader humanitarian system.

¹ It is important to note that all of the organizations involved in this analysis are partner organizations of Oxfam Canada's women's rights programming.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 OXFAM CANADA'S APPROACH

Since its foundation, OC has been involved extensively in emergencies, reconstruction, and rehabilitation work. As a result of changing global dynamics, in its 2011 humanitarian policy statement, OC articulated its current approach to correspond to the organization's strategic direction, which includes a specific focus on women's rights and gender equality.



Women play diverse roles - particularly in times of crisis

OC recognizes the humanitarian imperative, seeks to be an effective channel for direct humanitarian assistance and an advocate for the rights of those affected by disasters, and is committed to good-quality programming. However, given that emergency situations tend to disproportionately disadvantage women, OC conducts its humanitarian work with a mandate to promote gender equality and women's rights. It believes in the importance of understanding and valuing the diverse roles played by women, particularly during times of crisis. It is committed to promoting gender equality by working with women in the planning and implementation of responses, and ensuring equal access to essential resources.

In late 2009, OC launched an initiative that aimed to drastically improve how the humanitarian system engages with women affected by disasters and conflict-related emergencies. Grounded in feminist theory and practice, this initiative envisioned emergency responses that not only meet the basic needs of women but also engage with women as leaders and agents of change, ultimately advancing gender equality and women's rights. One of the main claims of this approach is that, in order to achieve the above, humanitarian organizations² have to support the participation of women's organizations in humanitarian responses as they are seen as best placed of all actors to advance gender equality and women's rights.

Once the approach and strategies were established, OC committed itself to developing and implementing a humanitarian response model that explicitly promotes the rights of women and girls, women's leadership, and gender equality. This approach was based on OC's history of working with women's organizations in humanitarian crises in Central America.

2.2 THE ACTORS

The four organizations³ involved in this analysis were:

² This terms refers to both implementing humanitarian organizations and donor agencies

³ Five organizations were listed in the original Terms of Reference (ToR) – the four listed here and Sector de Mujeres. By the time the fieldwork commenced, Oxfam Canada had decided to not include Sector de Mujeres, as they were no longer doing humanitarian work.

Movimiento de Mujeres Trabajadoras y Desempleadas Maria Elena Cuadra (MEC), Nicaragua

The Movement of Working and Unemployed Women “Maria Elena Cuadra” (MEC) which was founded in May 1994, promotes and ensures the inclusion and full participation, on equal terms, of women in Nicaraguan society. The MEC actively promotes the improvement of the economic and social status of vulnerable and low-income women. The MEC also aims to influence public policy and legislation to improve the social status of women, who hold protagonist roles throughout the process. Some of the areas of work of the MEC are human and labor rights of women, violence against women, women's economic empowerment, and advocacy and awareness campaigns. Over recent years, the MEC has responded to various emergencies caused by hurricanes and other extreme weather events, taking action in sectors like Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) (rehabilitation of water systems and latrines, etc.), housing construction, Non-food items (NFIs), food delivery, and psychosocial support.

Asociación de Mujeres Madre Tierra (AMMT), Guatemala

Founded in 1993, the Women’s Association “Madre Tierra” (AMMT) works to strengthen the capacities of rural women in economic, social, political, legal, and cultural spheres. It aims to promote the equal participation of rural women who face impoverishment and to strengthen their capacity to influence local, regional, and national levels of decision-making in partnership with other organizations of rural women. AMMT works in 8 communities of the South Coast (Suchitepéquez and Escuintla) and has 446 women members. Specifically, they have had experience in WASH, food security, and livelihoods in emergencies sectors. The organization has a contingency plan and has developed expertise in damage assessment and needs assessment at the community level.

Asociación de Mujeres en Solidaridad (AMES), Guatemala

The Association of Women in Solidarity (AMES) is a women’s organization founded in 1996 that works with women and youth, with a focus on labor rights, sexual and reproductive rights, and violence against women. The organization works on these issues at local, regional, and national levels. In a recently developed strategic plan, AMES identified the following areas of work: institutional strengthening; empowerment (legal services and health, training, organization development); lobbying; and advocacy. AMES has a team of 19 women, 4 men and 60 voluntary promoters, and their experience in humanitarian work is primarily related to the health sector, the prevention of sexual violence in emergency shelters, food distribution and the distribution of items meeting women’s basic needs.

Organización de Mujeres Salvadoreñas para la Paz (ORMUSA), El Salvador

Founded in 1983, the Organization of Salvadoran Women for Peace (ORMUSA) is a feminist, non-partisan, and non-religious organization whose mission is to promote equality and the economic empowerment and social and political development of women. ORMUSA organizes its work in five programs: 1) human rights, labor and access to justice; 2) prevention of and attention to violence; 3) health, and sexual and reproductive rights; 4) support for local development processes; and 5) institutional development. ORMUSA has a team of 28 people and works with local women’s groups. In recent years, ORMUSA has responded to several emergencies caused by extreme weather events, taking action in the WASH and health sectors, delivery of food and NFI, and emotional health recovery.

3 THE PROCESS

3.1 OBJECTIVES

This critical analysis had the following **overall objective**:

Generate a critical reflection of the humanitarian response model, based on the analysis of the response approach, strategies, and experiences undertaken by women's organizations in Central America.

This critical analysis had the following **specific objectives**:

1. Identify and analyze approaches and response strategies specific to women's organizations.
2. Critically analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches and response strategies specific to women's organizations and make recommendations:
 - a. To Oxfam on how an approach through women's organizations can help improve the humanitarian response model.
 - b. To women's organizations on issues that can and should be improved.
3. Identify indicators to measure the implementation of gender and women's rights in humanitarian action programs and the progress in the situation and the status of women as a result of a humanitarian response.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

A number of different methods were used to inform the analysis within this document: a document review, meetings with OC staff in Managua, phone interviews with OC staff in the headquarters in Ottawa, meetings and interviews with the women's organizations involved, field visits, and group meetings with beneficiaries.

The following documents were reviewed:

Oxfam Documents

1. Oxfam Canada (2011). *Humanitarian Action Policy*
2. Oxfam Canada (2009). *Understanding The Landscape: A Stakeholder Analysis*
3. Oxfam Canada (2010). *Women's Rights In Emergency Response –Content Document*
4. Oxfam Canada (2010). *Literature Review - Feminist Analysis Of Humanitarian Assistance*
5. Oxfam Canada (2010). *Case Study - Partnership With ORMUSA: Hurricane Stan Emergency Response*
6. Oxfam Canada (2010). *Humanitarian Response and Women's Rights Strategy Document*
7. Oxfam Canada (2009). *Women's Rights In Humanitarian Response Theory Of Change*

8. Oxfam Canada (2010). *Monitoring And Evaluation Framework For The Pilots - Working Draft*
9. Oxfam Canada (2009). *Women's Rights And Emergency Response Think Shop Summary Report*
10. Oxfam International (2011). *Minimum Standards For the Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Rights In Emergencies*

Partner Documents⁴

1. Strategic plans of each partner involved;⁵
2. Information about staff involvement in emergency response work; and
3. Table listing all of the emergency responses each partner had engaged in during the period covered. Tables included information about the response, region, budget, sectors, beneficiaries, donors, and interagency coordination.

Global Documents

1. Inter Agency Standing Committee (2006). *Women, Girls, Boys And Men; Different Needs – Equal Opportunities*
2. Inter Agency Standing Committee (2008). *Policy Statement – Gender Equality In Humanitarian Action*
3. Inter Agency Standing Committee (2005). *Guidelines For Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings*
4. IASC Gender Markers (2012).
<http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/Gender%20Marker%20Overview%20FINAL.pdf>

The main element of this methodology was a highly participatory process of collecting the experiences, opinions, and reflections of the participating organizations and beneficiaries. Multiple staff from each of the women's organization were involved. This included representatives of:

- Movimiento de Mujeres Maria Elena Cuadra (MEC) in Nicaragua;
- Asociación de Mujeres Madre Tierra (AMMT) in Guatemala;
- Asociación de Mujeres en Solidaridad (AMES) in Guatemala; and
- Organización de Mujeres Salvadoreñas para la Paz (ORMUSA) in El Salvador.

Following meetings with staff members from the women's organizations, meetings with the beneficiaries of their humanitarian responses were organized in Caserío La Felicidad, Municipio San Antonio Sacatepéquez, Departamento de San Marcos in Guatemala and in Comunidad San Felipe, Municipio de San Pedro Masahuat, Departamento de La Paz in El Salvador (there were also representatives from Comunidad San Marino at these meetings). The author of this study attended a psychosocial workshop implemented by AMES for women victims of the earthquake in Aldea Santa Irene, San Antonio Sacatepéquez, Departamento de San Marcos, Guatemala and met municipal representatives of the municipality in San Pedro Masahuat, Departamento de La Paz, El Salvador.

⁴ Humanitarian policies/procedures were also requested but none of the partners had any.

⁵ AMMT's strategic plan was only available in hard copy. The document provided indicated that it was a 2005-2010 plan. The organization stated that following a review in 2008, the plan was extended to 2012.

4 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The four organizations considered in this analysis are independent organizations with completely independent strategies, missions, and areas of work. They work in three different countries yet share a common commitment to women's rights and to responding to humanitarian crises. While all of the organizations have been addressing humanitarian crises since their establishment, they all mentioned major humanitarian crises (hurricanes Mitch and Stan) as critical moments in shaping their understanding of, and approach to, humanitarian action.

Similar to OC, these organizations believe that the current incorporation of gender inclusive approaches in the humanitarian system is inconsistent and highly dependent on individual commitment. Although there are mandates, tools, and frameworks promoting a gender inclusive approach, they do not translate into systematic or meaningful implementation. In response to needs in the communities in which these organizations work and as reaction to such a system, they have all individually developed approaches that both meet the basic needs of the communities and engage with women as leaders and agents of change. These actors believe that this kind of approach ultimately leaves everyone in the community (women, men, girls and boys) better off and advances gender equality and women's rights.

4.1 IDENTIFICATION OF THE APPROACH

All four organizations involved in this analysis have a relatively similar approach to responding to emergencies. As is the case with OC, the approach to humanitarian work taken by the women's organizations is grounded in feminist theory and practice. Organizations are working towards an emergency response approach that not only meets the basic needs of communities but also engages with women as leaders and agents of change, ultimately advancing gender equality and women's rights.

One of the main features of the approach, referred to by the organizations as the "comprehensive approach,"⁶ is that it includes the full participation of community members and responds to issues facing whole communities, while ensuring that women and their needs are taken into consideration. An equally important aspect of the comprehensive approach is that it relies on women's leadership and the organizing of women in communities from the beginning of a response. Further, humanitarian response is dealt with as a part of the overall programming rather than as a separate piece of work. The provision of psychosocial support to those affected by the crisis, especially women and children, is also considered a critical part of the comprehensive approach.

"COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH"

⁶ The Spanish term is "enfoque integral."



Participation of crisis-affected



OC's partners included in this study respond predominantly to emergencies in communities in which they already have programs.⁷ Knowing the communities provides an already established network of women and other actors and the ability to efficiently assess the situation. As a result, they are better able to respond to the needs of those affected and ensure everyone's participation. The

participation of those affected by the crisis and the provision of assistance to whole communities are seen as critical and necessary elements of the comprehensive approach, without which the response is bound to have biases and limitations. When entering communities where they have not previously worked, the women's organizations involved in this study ensure that beneficiaries participate in their response right from the start.

A related feature of the comprehensive approach is the full **participation of women** in the communities from the beginning of the response. Recognizing the role that women already have in taking care of those in their immediate surroundings, the women's organizations that participated in this study, see the involvement of women in all elements of a response as absolutely critical. In communities where these organizations have already been working, women are already organized and actively participate in community disaster management planning and preparedness. In communities where organizations are newly established, they start by gathering interested women and supporting their participation in the response.



Participation of women



The distinct feature of the comprehensive approach is the element of **supporting the organizing and the leadership of women** in the communities. From this perspective, women are seen as more than just potential beneficiaries that need to be consulted, but rather as organized stakeholders with capacity and an important role in the response. This is significantly different than the mainstream humanitarian approach that, while recognizing the needs of women, sees the solution in gender mainstreaming. Ensuring that this leadership, potential, and role are recognized by community leaders, other responders, and stakeholders is seen as an integral part of the comprehensive approach.



Supporting women's leadership



⁷ This is likely true of other women's organizations involved in humanitarian action as well.

The organizations involved in the study all clearly identified that they approach humanitarian work with an understanding that their core women's rights work is part and parcel of responding to community needs. In this way, they are working from the perspective of, and capitalizing on, their strengths. In practice, this means that, regardless of the crisis, they will make sure they conduct or have conducted a gender analysis and work on gender-related issues. If they can, they design their response such that the assistance being provided is contributing to their overall attempts to **improve the position of women and work on women's rights** in the community. While some may criticize this rights-based approach as violating and in contradiction with one of the fundamental humanitarian principles – the principle of neutrality⁸ – such criticism would be an oversimplification of humanitarian work and the progress it has made over the last twenty years. Most mainstream humanitarian agencies have accepted the rights-based approach to humanitarian work and recognize that work on rights can be political and often entails work on power relationships among men and women and between citizens and the state. From the perspective of women's organizations, crises inevitably instigate change and they would rather use the opportunity to instigate change towards more gender just societies, rather than reinforcing inequalities.

Advancing women's rights

Humanitarian & Development work undivided

Working with communities in a way that links their core women's rights work and communities' needs also means that there is **no divide between humanitarian and development (and other) work**. Unlike mainstream humanitarian organizations, women's organizations claim that these are not separate pillars or streams of work. Rather the approach recognizes that communities may have different needs at different moments. A 'big picture'

view of community members lives must be recognized, looking at needs before, during and after the humanitarian crisis and action. This also means that women's organizations feel strongly about, and refuse to blindly follow, pressures from donors or the "system" to abandon or postpone normal areas of work and/or to fit into a narrow humanitarian framework often limited to four sectors (WASH, food security and nutrition, shelter and NFIs, and health - each of which is quite narrowly defined).

The final feature of the comprehensive approach is related to this last point about what is and what is not considered humanitarian action. The **provision of psychosocial support** to those affected by the crisis, and especially to women and children, is an absolutely critical element of the comprehensive approach highlighted by all interviewees. Each of the organizations was absolutely clear in stating that effective emergency response is impossible without providing psychosocial support. They argue that people suffering the shock of losing loved ones and their home, living in

Psychosocial support

⁸ This principle outlines that aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.

poor conditions, and suddenly depending on humanitarian assistance need more than just clean water and food. In addition, providing psychosocial support for women is a way to not only help women deal with the stress of being affected by a crisis but also support them in realizing their potential to self-organize and become aware of other issues in their community and surrounding communities. In emergencies, issues such as gender-based violence (GBV) are often difficult to identify and approach, and psychosocial support is one of the ways to identify and support victims of GBV. Once organized, women often continue working on issues affecting them and finding ways to manage difficult issues. From the perspective of these organizations, psychosocial support is an integral part of good humanitarian practice.

4.2 STRENGTHS

Several strengths are immediately apparent when looking at the comprehensive approach. Women are involved in consultations, assessment processes, and, often, decision-making related to the response. Consequently, the specific needs of women (such as those related to sexual and reproductive health, safety and GBV, housing, and water collection) are appropriately addressed. Numerous examples were heard in conversations with organizations and beneficiaries involved in this study. Following the response to Tropical Storm Stan in Guatemala, AMES discovered a previously unknown case of a whole family affected by HIV/AIDS and cases of family violence. Consequently, they were able to provide support. MEC discovered property rights issues during the Hurricane Mitch response and was able to address them as a result. Cases of family violence were identified in almost all responses and were consequently addressed.

In addition to, and because of, their involvement in the response, women often feel empowered to organize, participate in other activities in the community, and address other issues. At a meeting with beneficiaries in Comunidad San Felipe, Municipio de San Pedro Masahuat, Departamento de La Paz in El Salvador, women from the community talked about this as the greatest benefit. One woman said, "I have learned how to speak up, how to talk in public, and express my opinions." Another woman said, "Now we are strong and organized, and no one can ignore us."

This kind of approach and these strategies prevent the exacerbation of gender inequality, which is common in emergency situations. Very often, within mainstream emergency response practices, gender-blind resources, processes, and infrastructure are introduced, and they worsen gender inequality. It is still common to see unsafe water and sanitation infrastructure, income generation activities that exclude women or make their lives more difficult, and other inappropriate elements in humanitarian responses. Strategies within the comprehensive approach prevent that from happening and, in some cases, allow for progress to be made in terms of decreasing gender inequality. Consulting women on needs and appropriate responses is an absolute minimum. Involving women in the design and implementation is even better, and having women organized to lead the response alongside men ensures that progress in terms of achieving gender equality is made. While working on a housing project, MEC realized that there were issues of property rights for women. Being attuned to women's needs and lead by women, the organization worked on the issue until a solution was found. Rather than penalizing women because they did not own land, the problem was identified and funds found to procure land for women so that they could become

homeowners like men. MEC has since been working on advocating for all of the shelter programs to include the issue of property ownership with attention to women's right to own property.

The comprehensive approach incorporates an understanding of the way that gender shapes experiences in emergencies. For example, being in the role of a mother or caregiver to the elderly impacts the mobility of women, their level of responsibility, as well as their needs in an emergency. This does not have to mean that women are excluded from productive or other activities, but rather that these activities need to be designed so that women caregivers can participate as well. The approach also acknowledges and responds to the specific vulnerabilities of women, without victimizing them and, therefore, works to keep women safe by fully understanding the risks and needs of women. Women's organizations recognize that when they are planning in emergencies they must consider the times and locations where activities are organized, alternative activities for children while women participate, safe spaces for women to talk about violence and other issues, etc. Countless such examples were presented during this analysis from all of the organizations. This complex understanding of the position, needs, and capacities of women is a unique strength of the approach, and, in general, its value for any particular emergency response cannot be overestimated.

An additional strength of this approach is that it utilizes the knowledge and expertise of women in the community - an often un-tapped resource that has great potential in emergency response. Women know who lives where along with the levels of risk and vulnerability. They often act practically and organize things in a timely manner. This was showcased in examples from communities visited in El Salvador. During the last floods in Comunidad San Felipe, Municipio de San Pedro Masahuat, Departamento de La Paz in El Salvador, the women efficiently organized that families vulnerable to flooding were moved to a shelter; they organized food, contacted municipal authorities to request specific needed assistance, and contacted ORMUSA for additional assistance. This same group compared this experience with their experience before Hurricane Stan, when they waited for the assistance to come. In the more recent situation, the women were already leading once the official response began. Now they have a seat in the municipal disaster management team, participate in contingency planning, and continue strengthening their women's group by working on empowerment and capacity building.

Additional strength results from this connectedness. Women's organizations predominantly respond to emergencies in communities in which they already have programs/engagement. This approach means that they already know the communities, have a network of women and other actors, and can efficiently and effectively assess and respond to the needs of those affected. This is a significant comparative advantage - not only are they fully integrated in the local government response system and have access to information, decision-makers, and assistance from the official sources, but, through their network of women, they also have access to information about the needs and capacities of women, men, boys, and girls.

When major emergencies occur, women's organizations need to respond in communities in which they did not previously work. In such cases, their approach either uses that crisis as an entry-point into a community (continuing to work there on women's rights issues post-emergency) or to have a clear exit strategy from the start. Their exit strategy includes organizing and empowering a group of women in the community to continue the work, including preparedness for future emergencies.

4.3 CHALLENGES

One of the major challenges of women's organizations' use of the approach relates to their capacity to scale-up the response very quickly when required. While this is not an issue in recurring emergencies of smaller or even medium sizes, major emergencies would likely be a problem. Due to the emphasis this comprehensive approach places on participation and inclusiveness, it requires time and capacities that cannot be acquired very quickly. When a major emergency strikes, the scale of needs will likely be beyond the capacity of the women's organizations or indeed of local organizations and local governments. Their approach would demand that the same process be followed in all of the affected communities and that women are engaged throughout. That kind of process requires skilled staff and volunteers, as well as time which is not always available to women's organizations.

This, in effect, means that there is currently insufficient capacity among the women's organizations to respond to a major emergency with a comprehensive approach. However, this is a systemic weakness than just one of women's organizations. They are perfectly clear on what their approach is, what it requires, and what the limits of each organization are. When asked, each organization was aware of the limitations of their capacity, in terms of the number of communities, number of staff they can mobilize, etc. Over time, if the comprehensive approach were to be applied by all organizations, there would be enough capacity in communities (amongst women and otherwise) so that even major emergencies would be less of a challenge.

Another weakness is the lack of technical capacity to provide assistance in compliance with humanitarian standards. It has only been since Hurricane Stan that interviewed organizations realized that they would have to approach humanitarian work strategically and develop certain expertise. Each one is now working to develop those capacities within the organization, but the majority of their staff is still not fully trained on Sphere and other standards that are considered the basics of good humanitarian practice. While these organizations are improving their technical capacity, given the scope of their agenda and lack of willingness of donors to support such institutional capacity-building, it is likely to take several more years to build technical expertise. Sustained investment in those capacities is required, and where this is present, the progress is clear. It has to be noted, however, that this weakness can be applied to all local organizations and, to an extent, even to the staff of international organizations.

Women's organizations in general⁹ are not well integrated into the mainstream humanitarian system – meaning inter-agency coordination mechanisms – which means it is a challenge to gain recognition at the national level as a significant player in emergency response at the national level by donors and the system itself. By contrast, coordination with entities at the local level is generally straightforward. In fact, women's organizations often do not even talk about their humanitarian work and are consequently not seen as significant actors even in situations when they are and should be. The global humanitarian community, in particular, tends to ignore or treat women's organizations as subcontractors. While this is a problem for most local organizations, women's organizations face more of a barrier, as they are sometimes seen as dealing with “soft

⁹ with the exception of ORMUSA in El Salvador, which is making significant progress in this respect

issues” and, by implication, as inadequately equipped to deal with general humanitarian issues. This, while partly a responsibility of other organizations, is also a responsibility of women’s organizations themselves, which have not been proactive enough in demanding a space within the mainstream humanitarian community and humanitarian mechanisms.

Women’s organizations generally rely more on qualitative indicators as ways of measuring their work. In the humanitarian field, where focus is often on quantitative data and fast data analysis, they find themselves ill equipped to produce what is required by donors in a timely manner. They struggle throughout — from the initial needs assessment stages, to distributions and beneficiaries’ lists, to developing indicators that are easy to monitor and allow them to demonstrate the results of their work. They struggle with breakdowns and updates that are often done manually and then entered into spreadsheets that are difficult to analyze. This creates an impression that they do not have the information or that they do not know enough about the beneficiaries and communities when it is actually an issue of data management.

Finally, access to resources for the response is a perennial problem. Seen as “women-only” organizations, they are often reduced to women-specific programs, GBV work, or the role of advisors to “real humanitarian organizations” regarding women’s needs or GBV. An Oxfam International report mapping gender-related work in 2010 showed an interesting “division of labor.”¹⁰ Donors mostly fund women’s organizations to work on violence against women, women’s leadership, etc., while they clearly favor mixed organizations to work on livelihoods, policy work, risk management, and humanitarian work. Additionally, all organizations participating in this study emphasized a lack of independent resources available for quick deployment as a real and immediate weakness. Waiting to secure funds to begin responding is not an option in a humanitarian crisis, but responding without easily and quickly accessible funds is extremely difficult.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 RECOMMENDATION FOR PARTNERS

1. *Clearly articulate and document their approach to humanitarian work*

The way women’s organizations approach humanitarian work and the strategies they employ are different than that of mainstream humanitarian organizations. While partners were able to clearly explain the approach in conversation, none had anything in writing. In fact, their strategic plans only briefly mention humanitarian work. The humanitarian community is a large group of organizations with significant amounts of vested interest in maintaining the system as it is – dominated by western agencies, gender blind, or at best gender insensitive. Any alternative view, if it is to have a chance, has to be well articulated and supported by evidence.

2. *Continue improving the capacity to scale-up quickly*

¹⁰ Informe del Análisis del Mapeo de Género OXFAM en CAMEXCA y SAM; Febrero 2011

While they should not overextend themselves, women's organizations should consider the ways in which they will scale-up during major emergencies. One of the options would be to train all of their staff so that, once a large crisis is upon them, they can set up teams and scale up into new communities in a timely manner. This is not to suggest that during an emergency all staff participate in emergency response (and be taken away from the work they are already doing). Instead, it will give the organizations choices around a short-term surge in human resource needs and help them avoid overextension. Another option would be to coordinate with other humanitarian organizations to be assigned, in advance, specific communities where they could implement if required. This way they would become a part of the community contingency plans and would assist in scaling-up capacities.

3. *Continue developing technical skills related to humanitarian response*

Partners included in this study are already working on acquiring the technical skills required, and they should continue to develop and add to these skills. Because of the common stereotype that women's organizations are most capable in soft programming areas, they must work hard to prove that they can be technically as strong, or stronger, than mixed organizations. Thus, they should all have staff that are knowledgeable of humanitarian assessment techniques, technical standards, and similar topics (e.g., needs assessments, Sphere standards, and others). Given the cost associated with acquiring these skills, the partner organizations in this study take advantage of existing training and learning opportunities (for example trainings offered by Oxfam and/or through the humanitarian system at the national level).

4. *Adopt existing basic data management systems and develop related skills*

Data management is an area of weakness for all partner organizations involved in this study. Even basic beneficiary data with required breakdowns require appropriate tools and can take time to be compiled. In humanitarian work, data collection is absolutely mandatory and organizations will only be taken seriously by humanitarian agencies and donors if the required data can be collected and analyzed quickly. Partners should consider using existing data management tools in use by humanitarian agencies. Another option would be to replicate the capacity building process being undertaken with ORMUSA and to share this information with other partners.

5. *Develop Monitoring and Evaluation skills and systems*

An immediate investment is required in building capacity related to monitoring and evaluation. The development of basic indicators for humanitarian responses, the systematic monitoring of implementation, and the monitoring of the effect of an emergency and the associated response on women's rights and gender equality are all areas that need to be strengthened. While data management and technical skills can be built and associated issues resolved relatively quickly, monitoring and evaluation capacity will require more systematic effort and support.

6. *Integrate into the humanitarian response system in their countries*

Partners need to work on becoming a part of their respective countries' humanitarian system to ensure that they are recognized as actors. This will furthermore provide them with the opportunity to influence other actors. An excellent example of how powerful recognition can be is what ORMUSA has managed to do in communities in which they work. Over time, having worked with municipal and local authorities, ORMUSA's work - and in many cases their approach - have been recognized by the municipal emergency

response authorities. Efforts to integrate should be made at different levels – local, municipal, regional, and national – depending on each organization’s capacity.

7. Consider creating a small internal Emergency Response Fund (ERF)

Given the resource constraints and the need to be able to immediately respond to emergencies, partners should consider creating a small replenishable ERF. It could be as small as \$10,000 but should allow partners to start the activities quickly. The alternative would be to advocate that the regional women’s organizations/ networks creates a fund that would provide funds to women’s organizations responding to emergencies within 24 hours of an emergency striking.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OXFAM CANADA

Beyond general recommendations, there are two sets of additional recommendations for OC: what OC should do in an ideal situation and what should be done when resources for humanitarian work in Central America are severely limited.

General recommendation:

1. Continue supporting women’s organizations in humanitarian response

OC’s commitment to working on women’s rights in humanitarian crises is unique in its scope and potential. Its approach is clearly articulated and innovative. Further, its conviction that to seriously promote women’s rights in emergency situations, it is essential to work with women’s rights organizations holds a promise of a better humanitarian response system globally. Yet, OC’s commitment in terms of the resources it devotes to bringing this to fruition is not as obvious. One general recommendation to OC is that it continues supporting women’s organizations working in humanitarian response. It is currently one of the only international humanitarian organizations actively pursuing this agenda and should it stop, the topic of women’s rights in humanitarian action would likely disappear from the humanitarian agenda and the work would be reduced to mainstreaming gender in emergencies.

2. Reconsider the decision that limits its humanitarian response to WASH and EFSVL in order to uphold its commitment to women’s rights in emergencies

OC has, through its affiliation with Oxfam International, committed to focusing its humanitarian work on WASH and Emergency Food Security and Vulnerable Livelihoods (EFSVL) sectors. While understandable, this is in contradiction with its other institutional commitment to working on women’s rights in humanitarian crises. OC has as an essential strategy of supporting women’s organizations responding to emergencies. The comprehensive approach to emergency response employed by women’s organizations includes an emphasis on psychosocial support as an essential part of humanitarian response, giving it equal importance to WASH and EFSVL efforts. OC should either discuss this issue or make an exception when supporting the work of partners within this program on the basis of its innovative nature. The innovation argument seems reasonable given the investment OC has already made and Oxfam International’s commitment to working on women’s rights in emergencies. Special attention should be paid to ensuring that this element of the response is monitored and documented.

In ideal circumstances, Oxfam Canada should:

3. *Continue supporting women's organizations in Central America*

OC's long-term presence and partnerships, as well as reoccurring emergencies, make this region and these partners ideal for promoting OC's approach, as it is fully compatible with the comprehensive approach of women's organizations in the region. Unfortunately - due to reoccurring emergencies caused primarily by extreme weather events - there will be many opportunities to monitor and measure progress in terms of the capacity of partners and the effect this approach is having on women's lives. This, of course, does not preclude OC from supporting similar organizations in other parts of the world.

4. *Increase support to women's organizations working in humanitarian action in both scope and duration*

OC's support has been unique and valuable but insufficient. The specific support to women's organizations in further articulating their approach and promoting it with other humanitarian actors, as well as the support to build the capacity of women's organizations, should be continued, closely supported, and monitored. Ideally, at least three partners (one in each country) would be supported for at least another two years to see significant change in the capacity of the organizations. The assistance should also include significant support in terms of human resources – a full-time Oxfam position in the field for those two years and additional support from the headquarters in Ottawa and consultants when needed.

5. *Designate a certain portion of the Oxfam Canada Emergency Response Fund (ERF) to emergency responses that use the comprehensive approach*

Accessing available funds in the first hours of emergency is difficult for any organization. Local organizations do not have contingency or rapid response funds and must rely on donors. Acquiring such funds can take time and significantly slows down the response. Ensuring that funding is available in the first hours following an emergency will mean that women's organizations can launch responses immediately. This will also mean that they will be able to be competitive with other organizations, and it will give them a chance to prove that they are reliable humanitarian organizations rather than just advisors on gender issues. These funds should be disbursed using the existing mechanisms but with a focus on immediate disbursements to women's rights organizations responding to a humanitarian crisis.

Should the funding situation not allow the above recommendations to be implemented, at a minimum the following should be done by Oxfam Canada:

6. *Maintain its Women's Rights in Humanitarian Action position in Central America for another year*

In order to retain what has been done so far, OC should maintain its Women's Rights in Humanitarian Action position for another year. The major task of this position would be to support the capacity building work of ORMUSA. This staff member could also, within this year, support at least two more organizations in developing capacity building plans and priorities so that they can continue working on developing their humanitarian capacities with or without OC's support. Funding permitting, this would be a full-time position, but a part-time position focused on ORMUSA and the completion of the existing capacity building plan would be an absolute minimum.

7. Find a way to bring its capacity building work with ORMUSA to a full cycle

OC should continue supporting ORMUSA in developing its capacity for another year. This does not need to be resource heavy, as ORMUSA has already undergone a series of activities, but a small fund should be secured. This should include a follow-up capacity assessment, some capacity building activities, as well as support in the evaluation of ORMUSA's emergency response.

8. Try to bring in another humanitarian organization to support women's organizations in humanitarian response

Given the strategic significance of this work and difficulties with funding, OC should try to find a strategic partner within Oxfam International or outside the Oxfam family (possibly Action Aid). Not only would this ensure continued support to women's organizations, it would also broaden the alliance of supporters and would set the stage for easier dissemination of the results of the approach.

6. PROPOSED INDICATORS

The terms of reference for this analysis requested that two sets of indicators be proposed: those that would be used to measure progress in the implementation of the women's rights in humanitarian action program, and those measuring progress in the status of women as a result of humanitarian work.

6.1 WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The first set of indicators is focused on measuring the success of a program supporting women's rights organizations in humanitarian response and is, of course, dependent on the design of such a program. The following sets of indicators are designed assuming optimal circumstances for building the capacity of women's organizations. Should the support continue with a more limited scope, the indicators should be reconsidered and adjusted to correspond to the program. The outcomes were originally defined as follows:

Outcome 1 Strengthened capacity of women's organizations to implement humanitarian response programs using a comprehensive approach and satisfying minimum humanitarian standards.

Indicators suggested for this outcome are that organizations participating in the program:

- Carry out participatory gender analysis as a part of the overall humanitarian needs assessment and when defining community needs and priorities in emergency.
- Are accepted as Oxfam International partners in emergencies.
- Act as advisors and guide technical experts to ensure gender is incorporated in other agencies' responses.
- Negotiate independently with international organizations.
- Monitor both traditional humanitarian response indicators and indicators relating to women's rights/gender equality.

Outcome 2 The humanitarian response of women's organizations is effective according to traditional humanitarian criteria/indicators AND indicators relating to gender equality/the rights of girls and women.

Indicators suggested for this outcome are that:

- Women's organizations carry out humanitarian assistance programs in a timely manner and according to internationally recognized humanitarian standards.
- Assistance provided by women's organizations reaches all vulnerable members of the community (women and girls receive support relating to psychosocial needs, reproductive health, shelter, etc.).
- Women are consulted and participate in the assessment, response design, and implementation.
- There are no negative changes relating to the rights of women and girls as a result of the humanitarian response.

6.2 PROGRESS IN THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The following is a suggested outcome and the related indicators in relation to progress in the status of women as a result of humanitarian work:

Outcome 1 Identifiable progress in the status of women is achieved as a result of humanitarian work.

Indicators suggested for this outcome are that:

- Women have organized (formally or informally) in communities where they had not previously, following a humanitarian crisis and the work of humanitarian organizations.
- Community women's organizations (formal or informal) established following an emergency are recognized as actors in their communities during and following an emergency response.
- Concrete changes to women's lives and status are identified and attributed by women themselves to humanitarian response work
- Women identify a past emergency as a positive rather than negative turning point for the advancement of their rights and status.

ANNEX 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

TÉRMINOS DE REFERENCIA

Sistematización de la experiencia de respuesta a emergencias desde organizaciones de mujeres apoyada por Oxfam Canada en Guatemala, El Salvador y Nicaragua.

1. ANTECEDENTES

Oxfam Canada (OC) es una ONGI, comprometida con la construcción de soluciones duraderas a la pobreza global y la injusticia mediante la promoción de un cambio social que pase por la promoción y el respeto de los derechos de las mujeres y la igualdad de género.

OC apunta al fortalecimiento de capacidades de sus organizaciones socias, además de proporcionar recursos a las mismas para contribuir a la implementación de sus programas. En el caso de la acción humanitaria OC apoya la respuesta a emergencias de algunas de sus organizaciones socias.

Si de un lado OC apunta a promover la aplicación efectiva del enfoque de igualdad de género en la acción humanitaria, por otro lado tiene una apuesta específica en lo que se refiere a los derechos de las mujeres, es decir que apunta a apoyar procesos que contribuyan a generar cambios en las relaciones de poder entre mujeres, niñas hombres y niños. Esta apuesta se concreta, por ejemplo, en el apoyo al trabajo humanitario de las organizaciones de mujeres y en la inversión en procesos de fortalecimiento de capacidades de las mismas.

En el marco de este esfuerzo, OC ha decidido implementar además un proyecto piloto en Centroamérica que incluye, entre otras cosas, una sistematización de la experiencia de respuesta a emergencias de algunas de las organizaciones de mujeres que son sus contrapartes en la región.

2. ORGANIZACIONES INVOLUCRADAS

Nicaragua

Movimiento de Mujeres Maria Elena Cuadra – MEC –

El movimiento de Mujeres Trabajadoras y Desempleadas “Maria Elena Cuadra” - fundado en mayo de 1994 - es un movimiento de mujeres, autónomo, amplio, pluralista que impulsa y vela por la incorporación y participación plena, en condiciones de igualdad, de las mujeres en la sociedad nicaragüense. El MEC, se propone promover activamente la mejora de la condición económica y social de las mujeres en situación de vulnerabilidad y con bajos recursos, mediante el desarrollo de sus habilidades para el manejo de pequeños negocios y el trabajo en oficios no tradicionales, el aumento del conocimiento de sus derechos y deberes, la elevación de su autoestima y el logro de su empoderamiento. El MEC apunta además a incidir en las políticas públicas y en la legislación para mejorar el status social de las mujeres, contando con su propia participación como protagonistas. Algunos de los sectores de trabajo del MEC son: derechos humanos y laborales de las mujeres; violencia en contra de las mujeres;

empoderamiento económico de las mujeres; incidencia y campañas de sensibilización. En los municipios y comunidades donde trabaja, el MEC cuenta con un considerable tendido organizativo conformado por promotoras voluntarias.

A lo largo de los últimos años el MEC ha respondido a varias emergencias ocasionadas por huracanes y otros fenómenos meteorológicos extremos llevando a cabo acciones en sectores como el WASH (rehabilitación de sistemas de agua y construcción de letrinas, entre otros), construcción de viviendas, NFI, entrega de alimentos y apoyo psicosocial.

El Salvador

Organización de Mujeres Salvadoreñas para la Paz – ORMUSA –

Fundada en 1983, ORMUSA es una organización feminista, apartidaria y no religiosa que tiene como misión la promoción de la igualdad, la equidad de género y el empoderamiento económico, social y político de las mujeres. ORMUSA organiza su trabajo en cuatro programas: derechos humanos, laborales y acceso a la justicia; atención a la violencia, salud y derechos sexuales y reproductivos; apoyo a procesos de desarrollo local y desarrollo institucional. En el marco de sus programas, ORMUSA lleva a cabo actividades como, por ejemplo: procesos de capacitación y organización de grupos de mujeres, facilitación de grupos de autoayuda, procesos de incidencia tanto a nivel local como a nivel nacional, capacitación a funcionarios públicos (sobre todo sobre el tema de violencia en contra de las mujeres), campañas de comunicación, servicios de asesoría legal y psicológica para mujeres, observatorios (sobre derechos laborales y violencia en contra de las mujeres).

ORMUSA cuenta con un equipo de alrededor de 28 personas y colabora en los territorios con grupos de mujeres que apoya en sus procesos organizativos y considera aliadas para diferentes acciones.

En lo que se refiere a la acción humanitaria, en los últimos años ORMUSA ha respondido a varias emergencias ocasionadas por fenómenos meteorológicos extremos llevando a cabo acciones en el sector WASH (instalación de tanques, entrega de agua, organización y capacitación de comités de agua, rehabilitación de letrinas), salud (brigadas medicas y entrega de medicamentos), entrega de alimentos y de NFI, recuperación de la salud emocional.

Guatemala

Asociación de Mujeres Madre Tierra¹¹ – AMMT –

Fundada en 1993, AMMT trabaja para el fortalecimiento de las mujeres rurales en los aspectos económico, social, político, jurídico y cultural y apunta a promover la participación con equidad de las mujeres rurales para enfrentar los procesos de empobrecimiento y de fortalecer sus capacidades para incidir a nivel local, regional y nacional, en alianza con otras organizaciones de mujeres rurales.

¹¹ Se sugiere tener también una reunión con algunas representantes de la Alianza de Mujeres Rurales (AMR) que reúne Madre Tierra y otra organización, Mamá Maquín.

Las principales áreas de trabajo de la organización son: producción comunitaria (tiendas de consumo, panaderías, agricultura, ganadería); sensibilización para la salud, educación y capacitación y organización (en la que se promueve la participación de las y los jóvenes). AMMT trabaja en 8 comunidades de la Costa Sur (Suchitepéquez y Escuintla) y cuenta con 446 mujeres socias. Madre Tierra se ha convertido en un referente importante para las mujeres rurales de varias organizaciones sobre todo a partir del aporte que ha dado durante los últimos años a través de la escuela metodológica dirigida a mujeres mayas y campesinas.

AMMT ha tenido experiencia de respuestas en los sectores de agua, saneamiento y promoción de la higiene (WASH) y en seguridad alimentaria y medio de vida en emergencia. La organización dispone de un plan de contingencia (pendiente de actualización, ha desarrollado experiencia en evaluación de daños y necesidades a nivel comunitario y algunas de sus lideresas han participado en procesos de capacitación en WASH facilitados por Oxfam en Guatemala.

Asociación de Mujeres en Solidaridad – AMES-

AMES es una organización de mujeres fundada en 1996, que trabaja con mujeres y con jóvenes. Entre sus temas de trabajo AMES tiene los derechos laborales, los derechos sexuales y reproductivos y la violencia en contra de las mujeres. La organización trabaja estos temas de manera integral, tanto a nivel comunitario como a nivel nacional y regional. En el plan estratégico elaborados recientemente, AMES identifica los siguientes ejes de trabajo: a) fortalecimiento institucional; b) empoderamiento (servicios de asesoría legal y en salud, capacitación, formación, organización); cabildeo e incidencia, en el marco de su participación en redes y alianzas.

El equipo de AMES está compuesto por 23 personas – 19 mujeres y 4 hombres - de las cuales 5 trabajan en la clínica. La organización cuenta además con 60 promotoras voluntarias.

AMES ha tenido experiencia en respuesta humanitaria, particularmente en el sector de salud y en la prevención de la violencia sexual en los albergues. Han dado respuesta en las comunidades donde normalmente llevan a cabo procesos de formación y organización de mujeres. Oxfam apoya AMES desde el 1997.

Sector de Mujeres (pendiente confirmar el interés de la organización a participar en el proceso).

El Sector de Mujeres surgió en 1994 - en el marco del proceso de negociación para la firma de los Acuerdos de Paz – inicialmente como un espacio de coordinación de organizaciones de mujeres del departamento de Guatemala, aunque pronto se volvió una red nacional, que aglutina organizaciones sociales de mujeres y mixtas, feministas y no feministas. El Sector de Mujeres tiene su forma de organizativa de coordinación colectiva nacional, pues en su membrecía hay organizaciones, comités, centros de investigación, y ONGs de mujeres o de organizaciones mixtas de diversos departamentos del país. El Sector de Mujeres, como la expresión del movimiento de mujeres, que cuestiona las relaciones de poder derivadas los sistemas de opresión, promoviendo prácticas democráticas. Actualmente el Sector cuenta con 33 organizaciones miembros procedentes de nueve departamentos de Guatemala.

El Sector ha tenido experiencia de respuesta humanitaria, llevando a cabo procesos de recuperación de la salud emocional de las mujeres.

3. ALCANCE Y OBJETIVOS DE LA SISTEMATIZACIÓN

La sistematización se enfoca en la experiencia de respuesta humanitaria de las organizaciones mencionadas arriba en el periodo 1998 -2012.

Muchas de las organizaciones contrapartes de Oxfam Canada comenzaron a responder a situaciones de emergencia en ocasión del huracán Mitch, que en 1998 provocó ingentes daños en Centroamérica. En los 14 años que pretende abarcar la sistematización, ha habido otros fenómenos meteorológicos extremos que han afectado casi toda Centroamérica y a los que las organizaciones en las que se enfoca dicha sistematización han dado respuesta como el huracán Stan (2005), el Félix (2007), el Ida (2009) y la tormenta tropical Agatha (2010), para terminar con la más reciente depresión tropical 12E (2011). A la par de esto, se han generado emergencias a partir de terremotos (por ejemplo en El Salvador en 2001), y erupciones volcánicas.

No se pretende reconstruir la historia de todas las emergencias ocurridas a lo largo de los últimos 14 años en Centroamérica, sino investigar sobre algunas de las experiencias desarrolladas por las organizaciones de mujeres sujetas de esta sistematización a lo largo de este periodo.

La sistematización tiene el siguiente **objetivo general**:

Generar una reflexión crítica sobre los modelos de respuesta humanitaria, a partir del análisis del enfoque de respuesta, de las estrategias y de las experiencias llevadas a cabo por organizaciones de mujeres en Centroamérica.

La sistematización tiene los siguientes **objetivos específicos**:

- a. Identificar e analizar enfoques y estrategias de respuesta propios de las organizaciones de mujeres¹².
- b. Hacer un análisis crítico sobre fortalezas y debilidades de los enfoques y estrategias de respuesta propios de las organizaciones de mujeres y hacer recomendaciones:
 - a. A Oxfam, sobre como el enfoque de las organizaciones de mujeres puedan contribuir a mejorar el modelo de respuesta humanitaria
 - b. A las organizaciones de mujeres sobre aspectos que pueden y deben mejorarse

¹² Se sugiere que podría ser importante el análisis sobre algunos aspectos específicos como, por ejemplo, participación de la población afectada, promoción de liderazgo de las mujeres, sostenibilidad de las acciones, vínculo trabajo humanitario – trabajo de desarrollo, inclusión del enfoque de gestión del riesgo, coordinación con otros actores, protección, etc.

- c. Identificar algunos indicadores que permitan medir la aplicación del enfoque de género y derechos de las mujeres en la acción humanitaria y avances en la situación y condición de las mujeres como consecuencia de una respuesta humanitaria.

4. METODOLOGIA PROPUESTA Y CRONOGRAMA

Se pretende llevar a cabo un proceso altamente participativo que permita recoger la experiencia, las opiniones y las reflexiones de las organizaciones participantes y de la población beneficiaria.

Para este fin, se propone llevar a cabo por lo menos las siguientes actividades:

- a) Revisión de documentos relevantes
- b) Reuniones y entrevistas las organizaciones involucradas
- c) Visitas de campo que incluyan intercambios con la población beneficiaria
- d) Entrevistas con el personal de Oxfam

Oxfam Canada espera tener lista la versión final de la sistematización a lo más tardar la segunda semana de febrero de 2013.

5. PRODUCTOS ESPERADOS

- a) Una propuesta metodológica a entregarse en los primeros días de la consultoría que incluya listado de documentos a consultarse y guías de preguntas para reuniones con las organizaciones y/o otros actores.
- b) Un documento de sistematización redactado en inglés (no mayor de 25 páginas, más anexos) que incluya una propuesta de indicadores (ver objetivo específico c).

6. FORMA DE PAGO PROPUESTA

El pago de la consultoría se hará siguiendo la programación siguiente:

50% a la firma del contrato

50% con la aprobación del documento final

7. CAPACIDADES REQUERIDAS

- Amplia experiencia de trabajo en acción humanitaria
- Experiencia en el uso de metodología de investigación cuantitativa y cualitativa y en el diseño y conducción de procesos de sistematización
- Experiencia en la elaboración de indicadores con perspectiva de género
- Compromiso con los derechos de las mujeres
- Conocimiento de la región centroamericana
- Excelentes capacidades de redacción

ANNEX 2 QUESTIONS ADDRESSED

For Oxfam staff

Discuss OC's approach to emergencies and its humanitarian strategy as described in the policy documents, in particular as it relates to gender/WR in emergencies. What do you think about those?

Describe/discuss OC's experiences in applying those in practice. Do they work? How hard/difficult are those policies to implement in practice?

Can you reflect on how being a part of OI has influenced what OC is doing in terms of gender/WR in emergencies? Also, how has the process of integrating Oxfams within the countries influenced this?

Has there been much communications/exchange with other humanitarian agencies, and how does OC's approach influence that?

Is there fundamental difference in what OC is doing between the period before Oxfam decided to focus on WR/GE and since?

Can you give me a couple of examples of good practice/value added in OC's approach? For beneficiaries? For partners? For Oxfam?

Can you give me a couple of examples of issues/weaknesses of such approach? For beneficiaries? For partners? For Oxfam?

What is Oxfam's assessment of its partners' capacities/needs at this point in time if OC is to press with implementation of its strategy?

Have you had any attempts to measure the impact of its approach to emergency responses on partners? Have you had any attempts to measure the impact of emergency responses of its partners on women affected?

Any recommendations for changes?

For partners (used to guide Interviewer)

Discuss approach/response strategies to emergencies including the way they see the link between the development and humanitarian work (even if partners don't have a policy/strategy, they will likely have a position on it).

Confirm my understanding of their level of experience and capacity.

Discuss their take on global humanitarian system in general and on humanitarian INGOs they have had a chance to work with.

Discuss their take on OC's approach to emergencies? In theory? In practice? Is it, and how it is fundamentally different than that of their own? And how is it fundamentally different than that of the global humanitarian system?

Ask for examples of good practice/value added in OC's and/or their approach. For beneficiaries? For them as an organization?

Ask for examples of issues/weaknesses of such/those approach? For beneficiaries? For them as an organization?

Ask if they had any attempts to measure the impact of their emergency responses on women affected?

What is their assessment of their own capacities/needs at this point in time? Where do they see themselves moving/developing in terms of emergency response? What kinds of support would be useful to them in achieving those goals?

Any recommendations for changes?

For groups of beneficiaries (used to guide Interviewer)

Intro - Explain who we are and what it is that we are trying to do (improve how organizations help people like them... learn about good and bad examples...)

Ask about their emergency (to acknowledge and give them opportunity to tell what happened to their particular community). Also, ask if their community has been affected by emergencies before.

Ask about the level of organization within the community. Discuss their capacity to respond and if they had any capacity building.

What was the impact of the emergencies on relationships in the community? Were there any groups especially affected? Which groups? How?

Ask about help they received. Which organizations provided this help? What kind of help? Was it what they needed? Were they asked what they needed? How did that look like?

Were there any differences between the organizations that were responding? Who came? Foreigners/locals? Did they speak the language? Were they men/women? Who did they talk to? Were they involved in decision-making?

Whose needs were prioritized? Was response addressing those? (It is on purpose to ask this question a bit after the questions about who was affected.)

What was missing/wrong? Has anyone asked them that during the response? Or after? Have they had a chance to complain?

(I am hoping this will come through, but if it doesn't we can prompt them.) What was different about _____'s (partner name) response and that of the others?

What would they like _____ (partner name) to have done differently?