



The Oxfam-Monash Partnership continues by virtue of the support and vision of the Empowerment Charitable Trust. Through that work, the Partnership is able to achieve research outcomes that can deliver measurable benefits to communities; to connect the current and next generation of practitioners who will work to achieve those benefits; and to lobby and advocate for the policy and practice changes that would transform communities.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

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# OXFAM-MONASH PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2015–2016

Cover image: Mrs.K.H.Ranjanee and family member from Hambantota District, Sri Lanka, where Oxfam and Monash researchers have been working with women farmers to understand the barriers and enablers to their participation in sustainable livelihoods in Sri Lanka  
(Credit: Pavithra Jovan de Mello/Oxfam Aus)





Frida Varon (40) and her children from Tamboko village, who have been a part of the community-led mobilisation project to address gender-based violence that is the focus of research in the Solomon Islands  
(Credit: Hamish Pattison/OxfamNZ)

## INTRODUCTION

The Oxfam-Monash Partnership was established with the generous support of the Empowerment Charitable Trust to improve development practice and its outcomes for communities. More specifically, the Partnership aims to bring together the differing yet complementary resources of the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) and academic sectors, and combine these resources to achieve greater development impact than would otherwise be possible.

At the conclusion of the 2015 Memorandum of Agreement, the partnership undertook a period of collaborative and participatory reflection to refresh its joint vision and purpose. A new Memorandum of Agreement is attached to this report, which reflects the outcomes of this reflection process and outlines an ambitious collaborative research agenda, student engagement and practitioner development activities that will generate positive change for development communities around the world.

The purpose of this report is to:

1. **Confirm** the commitment of both parties to the Partnership to 2019 and to provide detail about those commitments via the Memorandum of Agreement and Statement of Strategic Intent;
2. **Highlight** the activities and outcomes of the Partnership's activities in 2015 and 2016; and
3. **Bring** the Oxfam-Monash Partnership reporting in line with the new Monash University financial year (January–December).





Image above: Oxfam at Monash students – Orientation Week, 2016 (Credit: Eleanor Jackson)

## REPORT ON PROJECT

The partnership continues to work to guiding principles that inform its strategic agenda and day to day operations.

These principles are:

**Equality** – mutual respect between members of the Partnership, irrespective of size, power and influence.

**Transparency** – dialogue on equal footing with an emphasis on early consultations and sharing of information.

**Action-research oriented approach** – outcome based and action oriented research that seeks to directly and indirectly improve the lives of people living in poverty.

**Responsible and ethical behaviour** – a commitment to accomplishing tasks responsibly and with integrity.

**Complementarity** – building on our comparative advantages and complementing each other's contributions and those of our stakeholders and networks.

**Sustainability** – undertaking our work in a manner that builds the sustainability of our respective and joint projects including sustainable change for those we seek to assist.

**Multipliers** – actively seeking opportunities to scale up and multiply the impact of our work including pursuing additional funding sources for the Partnership's work.

Our 2016-2019 Statement of Strategic Intent outlines our collective commitment to:

- > world-class research that makes a difference in people's lives;
- > connecting current and future practitioners with the evidence base to effect change; and
- > evidence-based advocacy for the systems, policies and practices to benefit communities.



Credit: Lisa Elford/OxfamAUS



RESEARCH

In 2015-2016, the Oxfam-Monash Partnership continued its program of quality research that increases the evidence base on impact which is in turn used to influence policy and practice in international development.



Oxfam Australia and Oxfam International staff at Monash's Gender, Peace and Security Forum, 2016.

Outcomes include:

**Confirmation of new thematic research priorities** which reflect the ongoing and emerging program needs of the communities and partners with which Oxfam works. These thematic priorities were developed in a participatory, cross-agency process drawing on Oxfam Australia's country engagement strategies, a key reflection of the research needs and agendas of in-country teams.

The thematic priorities for 2016-2019 are:

- > **Gender equality** – promoting gender equality with the aim of improving women's lives, family wellbeing and community development outcomes.
- > **Climate change and resilience** – supporting communities to adapt to climate change and to build the capacity to anticipate, mitigate and respond to these changes.
- > **Migration** – understanding the migration-development nexus including regular, irregular and multiple migrations and their impact on communities.
- > **Development practice** – as the development community engages with the 2030 agenda, shaping development goals and milestones to support communities.

**A revised research matching process** that builds on lessons learned from the previous phase of the Partnership to foster successful research relationships. Previously, the Partnership operated on an open-call expression of interest process at fixed periods in the yearly calendar. While this process is still available, the Partnership has developed an additional staged approach which enables flexible engagement between Oxfam in-country teams, Oxfam Australia staff and Monash University academics.

Oxfam Australia has nominated thematic research champions for each priority area. These champions work with in-country teams to identify research needs and develop preliminary research concepts. These concepts are then used to undertake a whole-of-university search using research databases and faculty resources to identify Monash capacities in nominated areas.

From this search process, multi-faculty matching workshops are held to support interdisciplinary research teams to develop research questions together, identifying methodologies and avenues for involving communities as active agents in the design, delivery and analysis for research.

This rolling matching process has led to new and emerging project collaborations across multiple faculties in the areas of migration, mental health, desalination, climate finance, humanitarian remittances, water and natural resource management, gender-based violence, and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Handcrafts materials used by the Moris Hamutuk women group in Oecusse from Timor Leste (Alfred, Prado/OxfamAUS)



‘HAVING DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS FROM OXFAM GIVE UNIQUE INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE, WHICH I CAN IN TURN APPLY TO MY STUDIES, HELPS ME GROUND MY LEARNING AND REFLECT ON DEBATES IN ACADEMIA AND HOW THEY APPLY TO ‘THE REAL WORLD’.

SEAN, STUDENT OF MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE, MONASH UNIVERSITY’



RESEARCH continued

While some of these collaborations are at the early stage of identifying expertise and multi-faculty matching workshops, several projects have developed proposals and are progressing to funding and delivery stages. These include:

- > **Health and economic benefits of water-sensitive revitalisation in informal urban settlements**, a five year project to use the water sensitive cities approach to upgrade 24 informal urban settlements in the Asia-Pacific. The project brings together an interdisciplinary team of engineers, urban designers, economists, ecologists, public health experts, and social scientists with community to quantify the health, environmental, economic and social benefits of the approach. Oxfam in Indonesia, Fiji, Pacific and Australia are involved in the project together with five Monash faculties, led by the Monash Sustainable Development Institution in partnership with the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities as well as Stanford and Emory Universities. The project has been awarded GBP 10 million by the prestigious Wellcome Trust and will commence research in 2017.
- > **State of evidence – key issues in migration and displacement**, a three month secondary research collaboration to highlight the current evidence base with regards to three strategic issues for global migration: high-harm and high-volume migration pathways; gender and migration; and migration as a driver of development. These short papers will provide an integral evidence base for Oxfam’s global campaign on migration and are proposed as a first-step collaboration between the Border Crossing Observatory at Monash Arts and Oxfam Australia. The project has been awarded an AUD 30,000 seed funding grant from the Oxfam-Monash Partnership and will commence research in 2017.

- > **Let’s make our families safe**, a two year impact evaluation of the Safe Families program in Solomon Islands using a stepped wedge trial to measure the impact on attitudes and social norms that drive family and sexual violence in two provinces in the Solomon Islands. The project partners with the Oxfam Australia, Oxfam Solomon Islands, the Equality Institute, the London School of Tropical Health and Medicine, and the Jean Hailes Research Unit of Monash University. It is currently under consideration for funding by the World Bank Sexual Violence Research Initiative for USD 150,000.
- > **A water sensitive approach to climate resilience in Bangladesh**, a five year proposal to implement the water-sensitive cities approach in Khulna, the third largest city in Bangladesh. The project will measure the public health, environmental and behaviour change impacts of the approach and partners with Oxfam in Bangladesh and Australia, led by the Monash Sustainable Development Institute in partnership with the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities and Stanford University. The project is currently under consideration for funding by USAID for USD 15 million.

The pathway leading to a night-time candle vigil as a part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in the Solomon Islands (Credit: OxfamAUS)



Continued outcomes from previous Partnership-supported research activities including:

- > A final report for **Facilitating Rural Women’s Participation and Recognition in Sustainable Livelihoods in Post-war Sri Lanka** with exiting initiatives for policy and practice research translation. This multi-region research identified barriers and enablers to women’s participation with key findings including conflict, ill-health and disabilities, gender norms around social reproduction, domestic violence, climate factors such as drought and flood, disruptions from wildlife, unsustainable/unavailable markets, high costs of inputs or underpayment, political patronage, and restricted mobility. The barriers prevented participation in agricultural livelihoods. Enablers included support for social reproductive tasks such as childcare, land and asset access, training, and participation in collectives. Some factors such as access to financial capital both enabled and hindered production. At the centre of this research is a comprehensive evidence base with regards to the impact of gender-blind agricultural policies at the national and regional level.
- At end of 2016, the report and findings were being translated into Sinhalese and Tamil for further community feedback in Sri Lanka in January 2017. These initiatives build on the policy “caravans” (travelling commissions on women’s agricultural participation) of early 2016 which shared the initial research findings to a broad range of policy stakeholders in order to lobby for increased gender analysis in Sri Lanka’s agricultural policies and programs.
- > Finalising the report for **Gender Analysis of Savings and Loans Groups in Timor Leste** with proposals for a practitioner guide to distill lessons learned.

Key findings and recommendations were made with regards to hybrid/indigenous adaptations to microfinance models; policies and strategies to build self-resilience in program communities; literacy and numeracy fundamentals for successful program implementation; and considerations of gender mix for empowerment outcomes. Preliminary findings from the research supported a major change in program design during 2016 for microfinance programs in Timor Leste. Oxfam Timor Leste transitioned from the methodology studied in this research (a savings and loan approach based on an Indonesian micro-finance model) to the ‘Savings for Change’ methodology which answers some of the research’s key findings with regards to literacy and numeracy requirements and other program fundamentals.

At the end of 2016, the project was successful in obtaining funding from the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia to hold a 2017 workshop on Women’s Empowerment, Microfinance and Aid in the Asia Pacific: a workshop of policy relevant findings and innovative methods to build on this research initiative.

- > Further publications from earlier research projects include a further referred journal article stemming from Gender Impacts of Climate Variability in Bangladesh (2010-2014); the release of a learning guide, Facilitating Civic Engagement Through Consultation, based on the Developing a People’s Policy for Health in South Africa project (2010-2014); and development of three further policy briefs based on the Steering Multi-level Accountability Systems from the Ground Up in Cambodia project (2011-2014) for in-country lobbying and advocacy.



## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

In 2015-2016, the Oxfam-Monash Partnership demonstrated its commitment to providing students – future development practitioners – with opportunities to develop professional skills through internship, teaching and engagement activities including;

**Placement of four Monash student interns and volunteers** with Oxfam programs and teams, focused on issues of migration, gender, and climate change and resilience.

**Award of the Oxfam-Monash Partnership Award for Research Impact** to George Kennedy, a Master of International Development Practice student with the highest achieving research thesis in 2016.

Support to Monash student activities as a sponsor/mentor including:

- > **Global Hunger Hack**, marketing support to this initiative to bring together STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) students and entrepreneurship initiatives around global food sustainability.
- > **Sustain Me**, ongoing mentoring and networking support to recycling application development of Sustain Me, the 2013 winner of the Oxfam-Monash Innovators program.
- > **Oxfam at Monash** students group, providing network and linkages to the Ethical Partnerships & Fair Trade Advisor and Labour Rights Advocacy Lead Fair Trade as a mentor and resource for Oxfam at Monash's fair trade activism.

Providing practice insights from Oxfam programs through guest lectures and workshops to post-graduate students of:

- > Gender and development
- > Project planning and management in international development
- > Responding to international disasters and humanitarian crises.

**Development of a digital interactives collaborative subject** between Oxfam and Monash Art Design & Architecture involving journalism an interactive design students in Semester 2, 2017.



## PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT

In 2015-2016, the Oxfam-Monash Partnership continued its work to connect development practitioners and policy makers with the evidence base to effect change. The Partnership participated in a range of practitioner and public events that showcased the Oxfam-Monash Partnership's research and enabled practitioners to develop and share their practice.

Activities included:

**Influencing and partnership with civil society**, a cross-agency professional development presentation on the issues of partnership with civil society, particularly in the context of working with local actors to identify change and achieve policy change. Speakers included Roselyn Nyatsanza, Oxfam Zimbabwe Securing Rights Program Coordinator; Justin McCaul, Oxfam Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program Manager; Stacey Sawchuk, ActionAid Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor; and Samanthi J. Gunawardana, Faculty of Arts, Monash University.

**Monash disaster resilience initiative – progressing community-based** resilience, Elsa Carnaby, Oxfam Disaster Risk Reduction and Livelihoods Advisor, was a key contributor to this interactive forum for community members, community-based organisations and the emergency preparedness and management community, including State and local government, emergency services, recovery organisations, community leaders, university academics and students. Co-presented by the Monash Accident Research Centre, this one day forum coincided with the launch of Resilient Melbourne, the city's first resilience strategy.

**Gender, Peace and Security, from Policy to Practice: realising women, peace and security in Asia Pacific.** Kim Henderson, Head of Gender Justice, Oxfam International, delivered this presentation on gender and the Sustainable Development Goals in the context of UNSCR1325 on women, peace and security which was the focus of this two day collaborative and interactive workshop that brought together members of civil society, academic researchers, policymakers from states and international organisations, and representatives from military and police services to focus on this problem and search for solutions, with particular focus upon the Asia Pacific.

**Research for development impact network conference steering committee**, the Oxfam-Monash Partnership lead, together with the course coordinator for the Master of Development Practice, is an active member of the Research for Development Impact Network conference committee and shapes this key national conference agenda; nominating key speakers and invitees and developing program activities in Partnering for Impact on Sustainable Development.

Monash intern at Oxfam Australia, Melissa O'Reilly, signing the mural for the Women's Human Rights Defenders Tribute as a part of the AWID global conference in Brazil.  
(Credit: Siphokazi Mthathi/Oxfam South Africa)

## GOVERNANCE

In 2015-2016, the Oxfam-Monash Partnership strengthened its systems and policies to ensure they are fit for purpose and able to deliver against the Partnership's vision and mission. Activities include:

**Consolidation of governance arrangements** within the Monash Sustainable Development Institute, able to evaluate and set strategic agenda;

- > Establishment of an Operations Committee with accompanying Terms of Reference for the Operations and Governance Committees
- > Development and agreement of a new Memorandum of Agreement 2016-2019 in line with both organisations strategic plans
- > Development of a Statement of Strategic Intent which builds on the existing platform of collaboration since 2010 and sets out measures for success, proposed activities, and a framework for monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Refreshed website and branding to bring the Oxfam-Monash collateral inline with the new Monash University branding and to position information with the Monash Sustainable Development Institute.

**Fair trade positioning at two campuses**, the Oxfam concessions at Monash's Clayton and Berwick campuses continue to promote the sale of Oxfam fair trade items and are often featured in Oxfam at Monash student activities, showcasing the labour rights issues for workers and farmers in developing countries.

In kind contributions for the same period: \$257,666.  
In kind contributions to date: \$2,202,084.