

**EVALUATION OF THE LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMMES IN MAPOU AND
CAPE HAITIAN, HAITI**

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Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisations
CAMEXCA	Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.
CFW	Cash for Work
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CROS	Kòdinasyon Rejyonal Oganisasyon Sidès
MPMB	Mouvement Paysan Mapou Belle-Anse
MDPD	Mouvement Paysan pour le Developement de Pichon
OI	OXFAM International
OPADEP	Organisation Paysanne pour l'Avancement et le Developement de Pichon
OXFAM / OGB	OXFAM Great Britain
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Introduction

1.1 Main findings

The evaluation of livelihood projects in Mapou and Cape Haitian was part of a collective learning space that aimed at assessing how project objectives, accountability to stakeholders and expected results were achieved and, to learn more about cash for work and voucher programmes in Haiti.

Mapou livelihood programme initiated in June 2004 in response to floods in southern Haiti that had resulted in considerable loss of human lives, the destruction of houses, productive assets and infrastructures in the affected communities.

Oxfam's livelihood programme aimed at improving affected household food security and ensuring re-engagement in economic activities through the re-establishment of productive assets and access to markets. This was to be done through cash and voucher transfer mechanisms. The project expected to: (a) restore the agricultural and livestock assets and production capacity of 400 vulnerable farming households; (b) to re-establish the businesses and petty trade activities of 250 women (particularly female headed households) and (c) to ensure a cash income in 500 affected households through their participation in cash for work activities.

The cash and vouchers for work programme in Cape Haitian was in response to various events which most importantly included; the floods that affected the northeast of Haiti in December 2003 and the insecurity that followed the political turmoil that brought about the collapse of the Aristide regime. Cape Haitian is the second largest urban area in Haiti; it is a densely populated city with an unplanned sprawling urban development that is causing extreme environmental degradation. An Oxfam food security assessment in March 2004 stated that the situation did not require a humanitarian intervention. However, a substantial deterioration in household resources was noted, as was an increase in household vulnerability to food security. The main problem was one of food access rather than food availability, with the vulnerable population

affected by decreasing employment opportunities and consequently, purchasing power. As a result, a programme based on cash for work was developed and consisted of 10 weeks of drainage channel cleaning and waste removal for 2,000 beneficiaries, with one beneficiary per vulnerable household.

The projects were based on sound rationale and most of the assumptions made were realistic. However, unforeseen adverse climatic phenomenon affected crop production in Mapou, as an exceptional drought occurred during the main growing period. This resulted in complete crop failure.

The use of vouchers and fairs required a lot of planning and preparation, from the dissemination of information and sensitisation of participants to trader agreements. Participating communities were very satisfied with the fairs as they were able to decide what items they wished to purchase and so expressed a high ownership for the items purchased. Despite an initial lack of product diversification in the fairs, by the end of the project the items displayed for sale or for voucher exchange reflected recipients' priorities and preferences.

Although the vouchers and fairs were negatively affected by crop failure, they allowed farmers to partially re-establish their livestock assets. The goats purchased were healthy and the majority pregnant, thus increasing livestock number. It can be estimated that the economic value of their livestock assets would have doubled one year after the fair.

Women that received vouchers were able to restart their petty trade activities, carrying out a variety of businesses. Such activities covered more than half of household needs.

Cash for work activities gave participants decision-making power, as they chose how they wanted to spend their wage. This strongly enhanced their dignity and project acceptance and ownership. Activities were organised with the participation of local communities and to avoid diverting household time from essential livelihood/ productive activities, only a half-day was planned.

In order to avoid significant negative impacts on the local labour market and to develop self-targeting mechanisms in which only the most vulnerable and unemployed would participate in the project, the cash remuneration rate was slightly higher than the local market rate. Initially, project beneficiaries complained about the low payment rate that and this eventually led to a partial increase. The complaints were based on previous humanitarian aid experiences where they either received free food or were employed on a daily basis and paid for a full days work.

The project beneficiaries were particularly opposed to the distribution of rice as part of the cash for work remuneration, they wanted to make their own financial decisions and decide what food variety to purchase. The rationale behind distributing rice as part of the remuneration was to avoid cash diversion to non-food items and potential complications in household cash management. However, the project evaluation has not found any grounds for these fears; the beneficiaries have used the cash to cover their immediate household needs and there were no resulting conflicts or disagreements between household members.

The Cape Haitian project included support to vulnerable people unable to participate in labour intensive activities, such as the elderly and disabled. These vulnerable groups were not included in Mapou response. In addition, the two projects did not consider ways of providing support to households with demanding caring responsibilities, especially female-headed households with multiple young children.

The evaluation indicates that in both projects cash remuneration had a positive impact on household economy, indicating: improved access to food, payment of school fees and to a lesser degree debt repayment and support to commercial activities. The undertaken activities

that improved community infrastructure were selected via community consultation. They were environmentally friendly, feasible and had a positive impact on the local economy (road rehabilitation improved access to markets), and on the public health environment (clearance of draining canals avoids flooding in Cape Haitien and insect breeding sites). However, the impacts listed have been very short lived especially as the project activities were not complemented by a longer-term strategy to tackle underlying causes of food insecurity in these disaster-prone areas.

1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation of the livelihood projects in Mapou and Cape Haitien was part of a collective learning space that aimed at bringing together specific experiences from the Oxfam GB Humanitarian Scale-up in Haiti. The objectives of the evaluation included:

- To evaluate the impact of the Oxfam food security projects in Mapou and Cape Haitien and to examine how and if the project objectives, accountability to stakeholders and expected results were achieved. This would be done with reference to Oxfam GB annual impact reporting tool in emergencies responses.
- To contribute to the Learning Workshop on the Humanitarian Scale-up in Haiti by creating a space for learning in which concepts, experiences, and perspectives around humanitarian responses could be exchanged. This would foster a common regional reference for emergency project scale-up in the CAMEXCA¹ region.
- To contribute to the finalization of Oxfam Cash Transfer Guidelines, by providing a case study and lessons learned from the vouchers and cash for work experiences.
- To document successful experiences that would help Oxfam surmount donor reservations on cash transfer programmes in Haiti and in the Caribbean.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology included the following stages:

1. Reading key documents available (initial assessments, project proposal and final reports, interim or final evaluations), and preparation of the field visits (this included 2 days in Port au Prince).
2. Meeting with OGB Haitian team and partner organisations. Local partner CROS and local Community Based Committees were met during field trips in Mapou and Cape Haitien.
3. Field visits to Mapou and Cape Haitien. Two days field visits were conducted in the both project areas, with local partners in Mapou and Oxfam national staff in Cape Haitien accompanying the evaluation team. Unfortunately, it was not possible to meet or contact OGB project managers or officers for both projects. The field visits included meeting local partners, implementing committees, focus group discussions with key informants and household interviews.
4. Participating in the Learning Forum. Preliminary evaluation results were shared with OGB and OI staff in a day that was dedicated to a presentation of evaluation findings followed by an open debate between staff attending the Learning Forum.

¹ CAMEXCA – One of the Oxfam GB regions that includes Central American and Caribbean countries.

5. Preparation of the final report.

The limited time and resources available for field visits and most importantly, the failure in contacting relevant OI staff involved in project implementation restricted the evaluation methodology used. The evaluation findings are mainly based on secondary information, household and focus group discussions, observations and meetings with the local implementing partners. The overlap with the Learning Workshop provided the opportunity to share findings, experiences and ideas, but considerably limited the time and resources dedicated for the evaluation. A more in depth evaluation would require more time and experienced staff accompanying the evaluators to the field.

2. Mapou food security programme.

2.1 Description of the food security programme

During the night of May 23rd 2004, it rained for 17 continuous hours. This caused large landslides of rocks and earth as well as floods in the southeast regions of Haiti. Human lives and livestock were also lost, houses and cultivated fields destroyed, intra community transportation infrastructure and networks severely damaged.

A week after the disaster, an Oxfam multidisciplinary assessment team visited the affected area to assess the severity of the humanitarian emergency and recommended specific responses. In June, based upon the assessment recommendations, Oxfam GB launched a public health and livelihood programme in the affected communities of Mapou, in the region of Belle-Anse.

The livelihood components, funded by the CIDA (through Oxfam Quebec), and the British Embassy aimed at saving lives and protecting the livelihoods of the flood-affected populations. The specific aim was to improve food security and ensure re-engagement of economic activities through re-establishing productive assets and market access. This would be done through cash and vouchers transfer mechanisms.

The project aimed to: (a) restore the agricultural and livestock assets and production capacity of 400 vulnerable farming households, (b) re-establish businesses and petty trader activities of 250 women, (particularly female headed households), and (c) provide a cash income to 500 affected households through their participation in cash for work activities.

The project targeted approximately 1,150 households (5,750 persons), with particular attention to female-headed households.

Brief introduction to the project activities

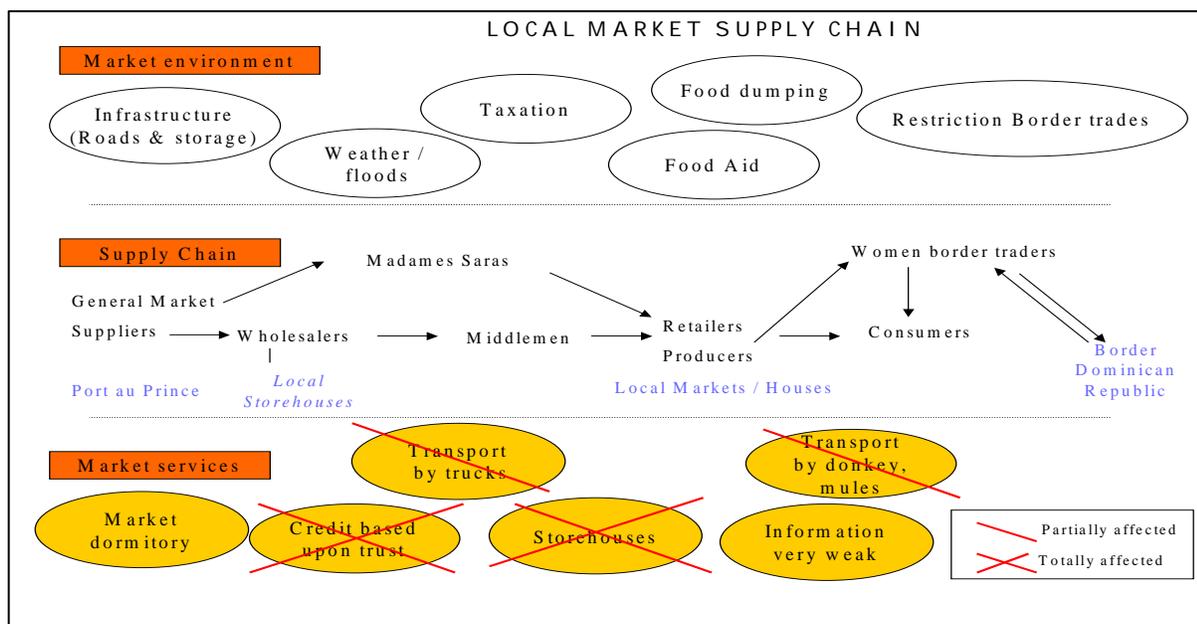
Seed and livestock vouchers and fairs: As the floods washed away crops prior to harvesting, with exception of few bean crops, farmers were unable to secure either a harvest or seed. In addition, the few crops harvested prior to the floods were lost during the flooding as was approximately 75 -90% of small livestock.

Oxfam provided 500 farmers with vouchers of a value of 4,550 Haitian Gourds², to purchase seeds and livestock from a range of vendors (farmers and small scale-traders) during a series of fairs organized in the affected communities. The main objective of the fairs was to re-establish productive assets and to allow farmers to sow the next season's crops. Simultaneously, the fairs intended on bringing together farmers and merchants from neighbouring villages, thus giving local farmers the opportunity to choose locally appropriate crop and livestock varieties.

Women's commercial activities: Wholesalers and middlemen usually travel between the central markets and local areas selling local products to petty traders, whom are mainly women known of as *Madames Saras*. Petty trade represent an important source of income for the most vulnerable households. Female traders also bought small quantities of goods from Port au Prince, the Dominican border or other local markets for sale. The following figure outlines the local market supply chain and shows that transport, storage facilities and access to credit were the main marketing components affected by the flooding. Lack of capital and access to credit were the main factors preventing vulnerable households from restarting their petty trade activities.

² 1 USD = ~ 35 Haitian Gourds

Figure 1: Local market supply chain



The project supported 250 women, providing them with vouchers worth 4,025 Haitian Gourds to re-establish their productive assets and restart their economic activities. The vouchers were exchanged for commodities in pre-selected local shops.

Cash for work: The floods destroyed the population’s main productive assets, local infrastructure and houses. The affected communities needed access to cash to respond to their immediate food needs and to either repay debts or secure other basic needs, such as paying school fees. The implemented cash-for-work activities aimed at improving food security and at supporting the livelihoods of the most vulnerable households, while providing employment opportunities through the rehabilitation of community structures, such as roads. The cash for work activities provided 500 recipients with a bi-weekly remuneration of 60 Haitian gourds (per half working day) over a two-month period.

2.2 Was the programme based upon sound analysis and realistic assumptions?

The evaluation briefly examined: project rationale, the preconditions and assumptions that were behind the decision to undertake this specific response.

Understanding local livelihoods: The project rationale was based upon the identification of affected population livelihoods in order to analyse the severity of food insecurity and address specific problems applicable to a livelihood group. The initial assessment found that local livelihoods integrated farming, livestock rearing and trading activities in an effort to manage and reduce risks of food insecurity. As result, the project combined a range of livelihood interventions and methodologies to restore the different productions systems and to stabilise incomes and food availability during the year. This approach was advantageous in identifying problems and specific responses for local livelihoods. The provision of cash to the most vulnerable households temporarily reduced the use of irreversible coping mechanisms, such as selling productive assets, seeking loans at unreasonably high interest rates, and migration either to urban areas or the Dominican Republic in search of employment.

Local seed and livestock insecurity was mainly due to lack of access and not to availability: Local seeds and livestock were available within reasonable proximity to the affected area and adequate amounts were displayed for sale during the fairs. This confirmed the appropriateness of organising vouchers and fairs to re-establish farmers productive assets.

Small traders had lost their assets and unable to access to credit: The programme targeted female petty traders due to their lost merchandise and as they lacked access to credit. In fact, a substantial amount of credit that was not paid back after the flooding seriously compromised trust existing amongst wholesalers, middlemen, small retailers and petty trade too. This had a knock-on effect on the entire market demand and supply chain.

Cash economy – food available in local markets: The post disaster initial assessment highlighted a continued reliance on a cash economy in the affected areas, and that a cash injection would boost the local economy. In this evaluation, it has become evident that the project beneficiaries had a particular preference for cash payments. Cash was mainly used to access food, pay schools fees, repay debts and in some instances restore productive assets. Initially, food availability was secured through a three month food distribution and successively as road conditions improved between local markets and Port au Prince, thus easing availability and mobility of primary goods. No inflation was observed in the local markets during the project period.

2.3 Programme Preconditions and Assumptions

A review of project assumptions and preconditions is summarised below. Though most of the assumptions made were realistic, the project was unable to foresee the negative impact of an unexpected drought on agricultural activities in the affected communities.

Recipients either had the capacity to satisfy their immediate food needs until next harvest or would receive external support to do so: In the second week following the disaster, WFP distributed food to 5,000 households over a three-month period. The food assistance allowed project beneficiaries to meet their immediate food needs, and to allocate Oxfam livelihood support towards the re-establishment of their main productive assets.

Recipients had access to cultivable land and to means to breed livestock: In some cases seed and livestock voucher recipients did not have access to land or the means to breed livestock. This meant that they were obliged to either rent land or organise land or livestock share agreements, reducing the potential and planned impacts. To minimize this, beneficiary selection criteria should have not only focused on vulnerability, but also on the beneficiaries' ability to use seed and breed livestock and their access to land. Vulnerable recipients that did not satisfy these criteria could have been more successfully involved in other project activities, such as petty trade and cash for work.

Adverse climatic conditions would not affect agricultural production: An exceptional and unexpected dry period seriously affected agricultural production in the implementation area, causing crop failure in rain fed fields. Farmers did not blame the seed distribution timing or quality. The seed had been appropriately tested using germination and growth tests. This phenomenon was beyond programme control and affected project beneficiaries as most of the land available to targeted vulnerable households was rain fed. The programme was able to minimize negative impacts by integrating seed and livestock components, meaning that farmers that failed to harvest their crops were at least able to partially recover their livestock assets.

No outbreak of epidemics would occur and cause major livestock losses: This assumption was realistic and no outbreak of livestock disease occurred during the project implementation period. Additionally, no interviewed beneficiary appeared to have lost his or her livestock due to health problems.

No major problems related to cash management: Project cash payments were carried out on a bi-weekly basis in the premises of the local partners. Recipients confirmed that no problems or incidents occurred during and after cash distributions.

No inflation or currency devaluation during project implementation: According to project beneficiaries, staple food prices and basic costs of living increased considerably following the political uprising that occurred prior to the flooding. However, staple food prices remained stable after the disaster mainly because of wide scale food distributions. The projects provision of additional cash into the economy cannot be considered relevant in affecting local staple food market prices. However, it should be noted that livestock prices increased by 25% during the seed and livestock fairs. This rise in price was mainly due to opportunistic middlemen and vendors that saw these events as an opportunity to generate a substantial profit. This could have been minimised introducing price thresholds or by involving more directly the producers rather than the middlemen.

2.4 Community Based Targeting & Programme accountability

The initial humanitarian assessment incorporated recommendations to improve programme accountability, and the main points are summarized below:

Figure 2: Recommendations to improve programme accountability

- Create an understanding of assistance targeting criteria with the authorities
- State the standards that apply in humanitarian assistance work,
- Inform the beneficiaries of these standards, and their right to be heard
- Meaningfully involve beneficiaries in project planning, implementation, evaluation and reporting
- Demonstrate compliance with the standards that apply in their humanitarian assistance work through monitoring and reporting
- Enable beneficiaries and staff to make complaints and to seek redress in safety
- Implement these principles when working through partner agencies

The food security programme included some of these recommendations in its implementation strategy, especially those related to working with partners, building baselines to monitor project activities and impact, enhancing community participation and implementing the project activities in a progressive way.

Working with partners: Oxfam collaborated with the local partner KROS, a national NGO, and with three well-established local community based organisations: MPMB (Mouvement Paysan Mapou Belle-Anse), MPDP (Mouvement Paysan pour le Developpement de Pichon) and OPADEP (Organisation Paysanne pour l'Avancement et le Developement de Pichon). The programme was implemented through a local Committee made up of members of the three local CBOs. The committee had an advantage in accessing easily and quickly local communities, understanding specific vulnerabilities and facilitating local community project acceptance. Also, project beneficiaries expressed trust and confidence towards the implementing actors. Working with local partners has been an important step towards raising CBOs awareness in food security issues and building their project management capacity. Nevertheless, despite their enthusiasm and commitment to programme work, the 3 CBOs will require further capacity building and follow-up prior to being able to manage and deliver good quality programmes in the future.

Baselines: Despite being one of the programme activities, no baselines were conducted at the beginning of the project. In the absence of baseline data, it has not been possible to make best use of indicators that could measure the achievements and impact of the project. The baselines would have played an important role in revising project indicators but also in redefining or adjusting project activities.

Community consultation and participation: Project recipients were not sufficiently aware of project aims and targeting criteria. Most of the recipients were personally informed of project activities but they were not always aware of the beneficiary selection criteria. The initial phases of the project should have paid more attention to community sensitisation to improve transparency surrounding project aims and targeting criteria.

Despite this, the fairs represented a successful medium for enhancing beneficiary empowerment and project ownership. Beneficiaries expressed pleasure in being granted the opportunity to choose their own goods during the fairs. All the beneficiaries interviewed considered the goods purchased appropriate to their needs and as consequence there has been very low level of cash diversion.

Step by step, replicated process: The project was implemented in stages; commencing in a few communities and then, replicated in others. This approach was successful as it permitted the necessary early focus on the organization of the seed and livestock fairs that are tied to the agricultural calendar. Lessons learned from the first fairs were documented and appropriate measures were taken to improve planning and implementation in subsequent events. Also, the process allowed more time for local CBO capacity building.

2.5 Have the programme objectives and expected results been achieved?

The following section tries to measure the achievement of project objectives and expected results against the logical framework indicators. Each objective, expected result, and indicator has been given a score from 1 to 5; (1 = extremely successful, fully achieved, and 5 = extremely unsuccessful, non achievement).

Figure 3: Achievement of project objectives and expected results against the logical framework indicators

Expected results vs. indicators	Narrative	Score
Project Purpose. To improve food security and to ensure economic income of flood affected communities in Mapou, in particular women and vulnerable households, by re-establishing productive assets and access to market, through cash and vouchers transfer mechanisms		
Vulnerable households have enough income and produce to meet their food needs	The project contributes only partially to household food security; Trade activities and cash remuneration covered only part of household needs, while livestock partially re-established productive assets. At the same time, vulnerable households had access to other sources of income and that ensured the overall food security.	3

Levels of malnutrition maintain under control		<p>This indicator required information that was not collected by Oxfam or any other agency/ health institutions. As a consequence, it has not been possible to measure the impact of the project on the level of malnutrition on the targeted and / or entire population.</p> <p>Though it can be said that no visible increase in the level of malnutrition and no outbreaks of disease were observed during the project period, it is very difficult to attribute it to project impact. In fact, this indicator is not project specific and is influenced by other factors such as access to clean water, hygienic living environment, safe hygiene and health practices, access to and quality of food, etc.</p>	?
Reduction of distress coping strategies among the affected population		<p>The project activities contributed to an increase in the number of meals consumed, the school attendance rate, and in reducing the adoption of coping strategies such as selling productive assets and migration in search of labour.</p> <p>At the same time, due to the crop failure some farmers firmly announced their intention to migrate in search of work in the following months in case of additional crop failure.</p>	2
Expected Result 1. Vulnerable farming households restore their agricultural and livestock assets and their production capacity through the provision of seed and animal vouchers and the organisation of local fairs			3
Impact indicators	300 affected farmers have restored at least the 50% of their initial crop production	The main staple food crop harvest (maize and beans) failed due to an exceptional dry spell during the growing cycle. Farmers harvested very small amounts of grains, which were lower than the amount seeded. The failure of this component was due to factors beyond the programme's control.	5
	300 households have restored their livestock assets	Beneficiaries were able to purchase either two goats (the most common choice) or other livestock during the fairs. They were able to partially restore their pre-disaster livestock asset base. As most of the livestock purchased was pregnant, the beneficiaries have already doubled their number of livestock. In a year following the fair, one can estimate that the beneficiaries will have doubled the economic value of their livestock assets. All the recipients indicated an intention to breed the livestock and their offspring in order to re-establish their asset base.	2
Process indicators	Seed & livestock are obtained through existing in-country supply systems and satisfy farmers' preferences.	Local producers and middlemen supplied sufficient amounts of seed and livestock from neighbouring villages. The goods were local varieties and breeds, and reflected beneficiary preferences. Farmers were satisfied with the quality of the seed and livestock purchased.	1
	Timeliness: seeds fairs take place within seeding season (August)	The fairs were organised during the month of August in perfect time for the main sowing season of staple foods.	1
	400 farmers purchase seeds in the fairs events	400 farmers were able to purchase maize and beans seeds during the fairs.	1

	Number of vendors (farmers, small scale traders) selling seeds in the fairs	342 suppliers, both producers and middlemen participated in the fairs and displayed their goods for sale. The high number of suppliers (almost the as beneficiaries) indicated success in the dissemination of information and organisation of the fairs. Nevertheless, it is felt that the majority of suppliers were middlemen and that the project didn't succeed to pro-actively involve neighbouring producers.	3
	Number and type of crop varieties displayed and exchanged during the seed fairs	Bean and maize seed were the only varieties on sale in the fairs. Whilst promoting the fairs, Oxfam and partners indicated that only beans and maize seeds would be exchanged. This reduced the opportunity to have other crop varieties displayed and exchanged during the fairs. Inviting beneficiaries to participate in subsequent fairs solved an initial lack of beans seed quantity. An oversight in project planning at the proposal stage was the inclusion of agricultural tool suppliers at the fairs.	4
	90% of seeds bought in the fairs are sowed by farmers	Farmers sowed the majority of seeds purchased. In some cases, 10% - 20% of bean seeds were donated to relatives or neighbours. The consumption of seeds was rare and only in negligible amounts.	1
	400 farmers purchase livestock during fairs events - at least 25% are women head of family	400 beneficiary households received a voucher and were able to purchase livestock in the fairs. Of this, 193 beneficiaries were women, but the evaluation was not able to estimate the number of women headed households benefiting from this activity.	1
	Number and livestock species displayed and exchanged in the fairs	Of the small livestock animals for sale in the fairs, goats dominated, and only few pigs, cows and donkeys were present.	3
	Livestock sold are healthy and satisfy farmers preferences	The livestock sold in the fairs, (mainly goats), were healthy and satisfied farmer preferences and needs.	1
	Number of fairs organised and number of vendor selling livestock	200 local breeders and suppliers were selling livestock in the two fairs organised in Pichon and Mapou. The presence of many middlemen has been identified as the main cause of an increase in livestock price during the fairs.	3
	Distance farmers have to walk to reach the fairs	The majority of beneficiaries had to walk for less than 3 hours to reach the fairs (an acceptable distance).	2
Expected result 2. Women, particularly head of family, restore their business and petty trades activities through the provision of income generation packages			
Impact indicators	250 women able to restart their business activities	250 women restarted their petty trade activities, and at the moment of the evaluation were able to continue these activities that represented an important portion of household income. (In most of the cases they covered more than half of the households needs)	1
	Volume of business beneficiaries are able to manage	Although the volume of business that beneficiaries were able to manage has not been measured during the evaluation, several beneficiaries considered the value of vouchers not sufficient for the activity they wanted.	3
Process indicators	250 of productive packages distributed	250 women beneficiaries received a voucher of \$115, to purchase goods from local shops that were used as starting capital in petty trade activities.	1

	Number and type of business activities supported	The business activities undertaken have been almost exclusively limited to the selling food items. Oxfam staff identified local suppliers where women traders could purchase goods. The women were advised to purchase food items as this was considered more suitable. This, however, did not always reflect beneficiary preferences and at the time of the evaluation, commercial activities had diversified as some beneficiaries had sold their initial goods and started new activities such as the selling spices, and clothes.	3
Expected result 3. Economic income ensured to 200 affected households through their participation in cash for work schemes			
Impact indicator	500 men and women involved in CFW activities receive a remuneration adequate to their needs	<p>The cash remuneration provided households with only a part of their needs. CFW participants worked half days, from 7am to 10am, leaving them time to invest livelihood activities. Nevertheless, this created some discontent among the beneficiaries who would have preferred to work full time and to receive a higher remuneration.</p> <p>The weekly cash remuneration was sufficient to provide an average household with three meals a day. In addition, beneficiaries were able to access food from other sources, and cash was also spent on other expenses such school fees, clothes, or purchasing productive assets.</p>	2
Process indicators	Percentage of the affected population is involved in cash of work activities	The cash for work project reached only a small portion of the affected population, 500 out of the more than 7,500 households directly affected by the disaster. In addition, no other agency has been engaged in significant livelihood support interventions. As consequence the small number of beneficiaries limited the impact of the project on the local economy and livelihoods.	4
	500 CFW beneficiaries receive timely and regular remuneration on a weekly basis	500 beneficiaries received their cash remuneration on a regular bi-weekly basis and, no incident, problem of diversion or use of cash has been observed.	1
<u>Expected result 3-bis.</u> The wider communities benefited from the public work schemes that could include constructions of reservoirs, rehabilitation of access roads and other small-scale projects selected by the same communities			
	CFW projects are selected by the communities	Cash for work activities were identified and selected with community participation. Road rehabilitation was considered a priority for communities located near Pichon area, and the communities around Mapou identified land management as the most important. Due to reasons of feasibility, Oxfam GB and partners decided to implement only road rehabilitation work. To improve community project acceptance, different activities in more than one community should have been planned. This would have also reduced the distance to areas of work and increase the local relevance of the work undertaken.	2
	CFW projects are feasible and environmentally friendly	The project was environmentally sound, since the road rehabilitation did not produce any change in the local environment and local materials were used. To ensure project feasibility, Oxfam GB and partners were obliged to reject some activities proposed by the communities and focus on those that could be completed with the resources available and within the project time framework.	1

	The CFW community projects are completed by the end of the project	The rehabilitation was completed at the end of the project and it was possible to provide supplementary work to cement the steepest parts of the road.	1
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2.6 Analysis of the specific impact behind organising Fairs and Vouchers events.

This section analyses the specific impact expected by implementing a vouchers and fairs event:

The beneficiaries were able to choose the crop varieties and livestock they wanted. Though Oxfam and the implementing partners tended to recommend particular crop and livestock varieties to beneficiaries, and advise the optimal amount to purchase during the fairs, the recipients were able to make their own choice and fulfil their expectations. For example, although Oxfam advised beneficiaries to purchase goats, they made their own choice and some of them purchased other livestock such as pigs and calves. Choice was not only related to the affordability of the animal but also the variety they were familiar with and ease of breeding.

The programme optimised timing and minimised costs. The organisation of fairs required substantial preparation over a short period of time. As local partners were new to this approach, the Oxfam team had to provide guidance notes and build their capacity in a short period of time. The fairs were organised in time for the sowing period, allowing a good germination rate. The programme did not transport purchased seeds and livestock, thus contributing to reduce project costs. However, the livestock price inflation observed during the fairs should also be considered as it reduced programme costs/effectiveness, an aspect that has not been analysed in this evaluation.

Beneficiaries had a more “active” role; they do not just “receive” the goods. This was reflected in the high beneficiary project acceptance and the strong ownership of the goods purchased during the fairs. At the time of the evaluation, the beneficiaries still maintained and bred their livestock, were conducting commercial activities and the majority of seeds purchased were used appropriately.

Recipients did not access a wide range of seed varieties and livestock. The varieties of seed and livestock exchanged were the most familiar to the local farmers. However, the fairs failed to display a wide variety of seed and livestock varieties, with the main products available for purchase being maize and beans seeds and goats. The programme did not intend to limit the range of products traded in the fairs, but during the promotion of the fairs, Oxfam and partners specifically indicated which items should be exchanged. This could have refrained producers and traders from bringing to the fair a variety of products, therefore reducing beneficiary choice and their exposure to new crop and livestock varieties.

The fairs produced a limited opportunity for non-official seed and livestock suppliers to sell their goods and did not succeed in promoting a space for information sharing amongst farmers. As most of the traders were middlemen and not farmers themselves, who had brought the goods from neighbouring villages, they were not able to provide adequate information about the products. This also created a level of distrust between the beneficiaries and the suppliers.

Livestock price inflation during the fairs. During the fair, seed prices remained fixed whilst those for livestock were negotiable and increased. This price inflation reached 25-30% above normal prices and was probably due trader expectation of high profits.

To reduce the recurrence of such incidences and related negative impacts, an improved dissemination of information to neighbouring communities should be planned, local producers should be invited to sell their products in the fairs, perhaps facilitating the transport, and wide range of products made available for sale.

To reduce the risk of vouchers being misused and directly exchanged for cash by the recipients, the project registered each trader. Additionally a fixed quota for traders could have been introduced to avoid powerful middlemen getting a monopoly on the sale of goods.

2.7 Analysis of the cash for work activities.

It was not possible to evaluate the impact of the project on the local economy, but we can assume that the project due to its limited number of beneficiaries, (compared to the total affected population) and its short implementation duration, did not significantly alter the local economy. However, the completed road rehabilitation work had a high impact on the local communities, allowing easier communication, access and transportation of goods between villages and to markets. The local communities had expressed a high priority for these activities and a degree of satisfaction with the activities executed.

The cash for work programme provided recipients with the opportunity to choose how they wanted to spend their wages. This brought about a high degree of satisfaction amongst the project beneficiaries that were able to use the cash earned to cover their primary needs. Cash payments were used primarily to access food, and secondly for the payment of school fees and purchasing of clothes. The cash for work project coincided with start of the Haiti school season that is a major households expense. A few beneficiaries were also in a position to invest in productive assets, such as goats, or to repay outstanding debts.

The absence of baseline data and the limited time period available for project evaluation did not allow a quantitative analysis on the impact of the project (i.e.: cash injection) on participating household food security (numbers of meals and quality of food intake). Participating households were allowed time to engage in their traditional livelihood activities as the cash for work activities were planned for the early morning. Additionally, the evaluation discovered that to a certain degree project activities clashed with those of the household. This was especially the case in female-headed households that tended to rely on petty trade activities, an early morning market based activity. However, this livelihood group coped with this difficulty with the assistance of family members or relatives.

The project did not include any specific support for vulnerable groups, such as elderly and disabled people, that were not able to participate in labour intensive activities. The initial assessment and lack of baselines failed to identify and estimate the size of this vulnerable group that could have been targeted through the provision of cash grants or the nomination of a replacement who could have participated on their behalf.

The evaluation found that participation in cash for work activities strongly enhanced project beneficiary dignity. Initially project beneficiaries voiced some discontent over the remuneration amounts that were being planned, as they were considered lower than those available in the local labour market. In addition, other food insecure households had received free relief goods on other projects.

The daily wage was calculated on the basis of local market un-skilled labour rates at the time of project planning. This was estimated at 80 Gourdes per working day, and Oxfam decided to pay 60 Gourdes per half working day. One of the most important reasons behind this remuneration rate was the need to avoid any negative disruption of the local labour market. Secondly, as the project was targeting a limited number of affected households, by maintaining the payment rate at the same level as that of the local labour market, self-targeting in favour of the most vulnerable was achieved. However, the daily payment rate was lower in value than the cost of a full meal for an average sized household. The CFW participants brought this to the attention of the Oxfam team who in response slightly increased the payment rate during the second phase of the project. Most of the recipients would have preferred working a full day for a higher salary,

but this could have seriously interfered with the time necessary to invest in traditional livelihoods (farming activities, animal breeding and commerce). When remuneration rates were calculated, the cost of the minimum food basket and household capacity to access other sources of food or income should have been considered. In fact, the CFW participants can be excluded by other relief projects, such as general food distributions, so the project should have ensured they are able to meet their household basic food and non-food needs.

Some of the women participating considered the cash for work activities as physically demanding, and it is advisable to consider additional activities or differentiate tasks in order to facilitate and maintain female involvement in project activities. Female household heads had to rely on help from relatives or neighbours to look after their children during the project working hours. The project beneficiaries, due to the existing strong social network in these rural areas did not identify employing community care providers as a major need, but it should be considered in other circumstances.

The cash for work programme looked highly cost-effective. The cash for work activities provided 500 households with a bi-weekly wage for a period of two months without the need to resort to high project implementation costs. The cash for work activities required limited logistical support, they did not incur any transportation costs for goods and no agreements / contract with suppliers (except for the tools and transportation of concrete for the road rehabilitation).

The evaluation tried to analyse the perceived fears and risks related to CFW activities. Decisions on how to spend earned cash were taken jointly by both husband and wife, and women interviewed did not mention being restricted in deciding how to spend their money. No cases of stealing were reported during or after the cash distribution, and recipients did not feel insecure in the process of receiving, handling or managing money. The partner organisation distributed the cash payments on a fortnightly basis from their local premises, so that recipients did not have to walk large distances nor expose themselves to any potential security risk.

The CFW activities were selected in a participatory manner with the involved communities. Project recipients considered road rehabilitation as a priority. Although this was a first priority for the communities located near Pichon area, the communities around Mapou considered land management as the most important work to be carried out. Oxfam GB and partners decided to implement only road rehabilitation work for project feasibility reasons. To improve project acceptance in all involved communities, different activities in more than one community should have been planned. This would have also reduced the distance between working places and increased the local relevance of project work undertaken.

The project was environmentally sound, since the road rehabilitation work did not produce any change in the local environment and used locally available materials. To ensure project feasibility, Oxfam GB and partner were obliged to reject some activities proposed by the communities and focus on the one that could have been completed with the resources available and within the project time framework

By the end of the project, the planned road rehabilitation work was completed, and it was possible to provide supplementary work cementing the steepest parts of the road.

3. Cape Hatien Food Security Programme³.

3.1 Description of the project

In December 2003, Oxfam GB initiated public health and food security interventions in response to floods in Cape Haitien. At the beginning of 2004 political turmoil across the country led to widespread insecurity and anti-government demonstrations that caused looting, the destruction of local infrastructures and eventually the collapse of the Aristide Government. As a consequence of this political crisis, Oxfam GB had to suspend its relief operations in Cape Haitian until the security situation was re-stabilised with the deployment of UN military troops.

In March 2005 a food security assessment identified a significant deterioration in household purchasing power and a related increase in household vulnerability to food insecurity. The assessment recommended a food security response consisting of cash/ vouchers for work activities in six of the poorest urban zones of Cape Haitian. The project aimed at increasing household food security and providing cash to the most vulnerable and affected households. Simultaneously the project intended to reduce flooding and health risks through labour-intensive preventative works.

The programme consisted of 10 weeks of drainage channel cleaning and waste-removal for 2,000 beneficiaries, with one beneficiary per vulnerable household. The rate of pay was 50 Haitian gourdes per beneficiary for a half-day's work. Each beneficiary worked for five half-days (four hours/ day) from Monday to Friday for the duration of the project. Each beneficiary earned a total of 250 gourdes per week, paid partly in cash (120 gourdes) and in rice vouchers (130 gourdes). Rice is a staple food in Haiti and sharp price increases in response to the context meant that poor families could not afford to eat it on a daily basis.

Beneficiaries collected their cash and in rice payments from 50 local shops that had been contracted by the project. Each shop received a 1,400 gourdes weekly service payment, equivalent to 2\$ US per beneficiary payment.

3.2 Analysis of the project rationale and assumptions

Markets and traders were able to assure local food availability. The initial assessment highlighted the main problem as one of food accessibility rather than availability. Although at a macro level Haiti is a net importer of food to cover production deficits and population needs, the local markets in Cape Haitian were well stocked and wholesalers reported relatively full warehouses. Despite this availability of food, the combined effects of inflation and unemployment meant that the most vulnerable households had poor food access. Considering this context, it was decided to support household purchasing power and to stimulate local economy through the provision of cash.

No inflation of staple foods was expected during the project implementation. A two-month port blockage resulted in an increase in staple food prices by 20-30%. However, at the time of the Oxfam assessment, prices were returning to normal levels and in the following months, staple food prices remained stable and there was no inflation or food shortages reported.

Payments were made in cash and in kind. The initial food security assessment recommended partial payment in vouchers (for rice) sufficient for household consumption of two rice meals per week and to avoid or minimise cash diversion from essential food goods. It has not been possible to find a strong justification behind this assumption. Staple foods were available in local

³ A food security survey was carried out at the end of the project to assess the immediate impact of the project activities. This report include most of the survey findings.

markets and project participants were in a position to make their own decisions with regards the satisfaction of their food needs. Furthermore, during project monitoring and evaluation no mismanagement or cash diversion was observed at a household level. In addition, it does not appear that receiving cash rather than rice would have disadvantaged women.

The beneficiaries were dissatisfied with this payment method and as they would have preferred to receive the whole payment in cash. Their main reasons were:

- The need for cash in order to meet other living costs, such as school fee payments and the purchasing of books and uniforms for the start of the new school year,
- Their preference to purchase their own food, to have a choice of a variety of foods and to make their own financial decisions. The contracted shops supplied rice of a good quality that was vitamin enriched, but more expensive (12 Gourdes/goblet) than that sold in the local market (11 Gourdes/ goblet),
- Some of the project participants felt humiliated receiving small amounts of rice from the shops, they felt like beggars, and did not want to “purchase” rice from pre-determined shops that were themselves benefiting from their participation in the project and profits made from the sale of their goods.

Secure systems for the distribution of cash were available and in place both for the implementing agency that relied on a bank or shop systems for the distribution of cash and for the project participants that had access to markets and shops to purchase their goods.

3.3 Community Based Approach and involvement of the beneficiaries.

Although Oxfam GB decided to be fully operational due to a lack of local NGO with sufficient capacity in the area of implementation, the main project activities were implemented through community-based committees, called Local Civil Protection Committees. These committees had previously received training from Oxfam in emergency preparedness and response. The committees played an extremely key role in the identification of project participants, raising awareness on project objectives, identifying project activities and local shops, and in facilitating conflict resolution when required.

Beneficiary selection criteria were based upon vulnerability and the area of intervention included very poor areas affected by the flooding in December 2003. These areas had very poor health and hygiene levels, numerous female-headed households, households with a high number of children and those that exhibited serious asset depletion. The number of beneficiaries per zone was calculated based on: (a) the size of the zone, (b) the amount of channel cleaning and waste removal work required, and (c) the number of households in possession of food cards from previous WFP / Oxfam food distributions (that had been suspended after the political crisis).

The project participants were aware of Oxfam's project objectives and selection criteria. Nevertheless, the selection process was not very successful, as most of the households in the targeted communities were considered vulnerable and participated in the cash for work activities. However, the low salary level on offer ended up being the most important beneficiary selection factor as not all the beneficiaries who were already in possession of food ration cards wanted to take part in the cash for work project, they preferred to be involved in other activities.

Project recipients and community committees were informed of the food security objectives of the project, and were provided with an explanation sheet in Creole. They were consulted on the type of work to be undertaken as well as the payment system. Although beneficiaries seemed to accept the system at the time of inscription, it soon became apparent that they were unhappy to receive part of their payment in rice. These concerns were promptly taken into consideration,

and a two-day meeting was arranged with the relevant communities to discuss and analyse problem causes and solutions.

These problems were unforeseen considering the very high level of community awareness and sensitisation of project objectives and payment methods. The Oxfam final report attributes this to the fact that communities were used to either payment in cash for labour or receiving free food distributions from aid agencies. In addition, the receipt of payment through community shops was also new and a cause of great concern for the participants.

For households with a high number of vulnerable people who were unable to work as they were either: elderly, sick, handicapped, pregnant or single nursing mothers, a representative of the household (a relative or more able bodied member of the household), could participate on their behalf. In instances where no household representative could be found, the household was given the cash and vouchers without needing to work. This occurred in 67 of the targeted 2,000 households.

3.4 Analysis of the impact of the cash for work activities.

Improved environmental living conditions and reduced risk to floods from a clearance of drainage canals and removal of standing waste. This had a significant short-term impact on saving lives and protecting vulnerable population livelihoods as flooding during the heavy September rains provoked by Tropical Storm Jeanne was prevented.

Unfortunately the impact was short lived, as five months following project completion the draining canals were back to their previous state: full of stagnant water and waste. Despite the fact that the project had raised awareness on the importance of channel clearance for a clean and healthy living environment, the communities had not maintained the canals.

Cash and rice payments had an impact on household food security and economic status. The food security survey completed at the end of the project, (120 households were interviewed) indicated that around 20% of sampled households had increased their daily meal consumption frequency from one to two meals per day, and the number of families eating three meals per day remained stable. The surveyed participants had used their earned cash to meet a variety of needs. Of surveyed households: 68% purchased food, 53% water, 38% hygienic items, 37% met transport costs, 30% paid school fees, 28% met health costs, 23% bought clothes, 3% repaid debts, and 2% invested in commercial activities.

During this evaluation, project participants commented that the cash payments had had a positive impact on their livelihood. This was as they had been able to access food and pay school fees, and to a lesser degree, repay debts and invest in commercial activities. The post-implementation survey also indicated that project participants had reduced their need for loans, or that loans were taken to invest in economic activities (petty trade, commerce) or to meet school costs rather than for the purchase of staple foods or to pay for basic needs. Of the surveyed households, 13% were able to repay debts with money earned from the project and 3% had reduced their need to beg.

Household cash management and expenditure contributed towards the food security of all household members with no differences between women and men. By the end of the project household food expenditure was back to the pre-crisis level, with 97% of the sample household spending around 2,000 gourds a month on food. The rice voucher value represented only a quarter of monthly food expenditure, thus explaining why 68% of the households used the cash payments to purchase additional food.

Both men and women made expenditure decisions, jointly although usually the women were responsible for purchasing the food items.

All interviewed households had spent their cash immediately after having received it, and admitted not being able to make any savings.

3.5 Appropriateness of the project activities.

Project beneficiaries greatly appreciated the activities implemented for a number of reasons, the cash they received gave them the household economic support that was needed, and the social aspect of the activities was important to them. The communities were very aware of the value gained from the cleaning activities that improved their local health environment. All beneficiaries considered their dignity had been enhanced through participating in the cash for work activities.

The project was gender balanced, with both women and men equally involved and motivated to participate. Some women reported that the project gave them their first opportunity to earn cash. Also, some women considered the activity quite hard as working in the drainage canals exposed them to an unhealthy environment. Project tasks did not differentiate tasks or activities between male or female participants. In Cape Haitian pregnant women were included as beneficiaries that did not need to work, as the risks of being involved in labour-intensive work were considered. The project did not consider the possibility of providing children care facilities that would have been required by female-headed households that were involved in the cash for work activities.

Procedures in place to provide safe, secure working environment. Promoters received training from the Red Cross on the use of gloves, first aid treatments and how to prevent tetanus infections and the spread of HIV/AIDS. A number of injuries occurred throughout the project, ranging from minor cuts to more serious injuries requiring stitches and x-rays. All injured persons received immediate treatment from either community nurses or the hospital. All first aid treatment was paid for by the project.

Measures to avoid diversion and / or insecurity. Initially security in the zone was of great concern. Whilst registering beneficiaries in the first week of the project, community discussions occurred to defuse conflict situations.

The use of local shops as distribution points and the limited number of beneficiaries for each shop (maximum 20 per shop) further reduced security risks. Project recipients did not encounter problems in receiving, transporting or handling cash payments. No cases of stealing were mentioned in focus group discussions and households interviews.

Comparing food distribution with cash for work in an urban context. Cape Haitian is the second largest town in Haiti and is overpopulated. The town's insecurity could have deterred the distribution of goods or cash distributions. In response to the floods that occurred prior to this intervention Oxfam undertook a food distribution with the support of WFP. Quantities of rice, oil and peas, and soap from Oxfam were distributed. The distribution proved unwieldy, a WFP truck was looted and there was insecurity at distribution points. The organisation's neutrality had been compromised and as a result the programme was cancelled. In this context it seems that the CFW project was more secure and easier to manage, due to the presence of a good delivery system, the local shops,

Type and level of remuneration

The payment rate was set at 50 gourds per half-day of work, a rate slightly higher than the minimum wage, 74 gourds for a day's light labour. The reason for maintaining the wages at these levels was to minimise any negative impact on local labour market and to avoid diverting labour from other non-project related activities. In addition, by setting the remuneration slightly above the market rate was instrumental to self-targeting the most vulnerable households. This allowed the project to focus on the most vulnerable households.

The beneficiaries perceived the payment rate as too low and they did not want to receive rice as part of their payment. In addition, project participants would have preferred to work an entire day and receive the full payment of 100 gourds to cover additional needs. These complaints were related to previous aid agency experiences in receiving free food or being employed as labourers and receiving a full days wage (Oxfam ECHO programme). The cash payment alone did not cover vulnerable household food needs. The amount of rice distributed covered enough cereals for two meals per week for an average family of 6-7 members. This can be contrasted to previous food distributions that supplied a family's minimum food requirement.

Oxfam monitors were able to identify this dissatisfaction and in doing so, organised a two-day meeting to discuss and analyse the causes of discontent and identify potential project adjustments. Exactly halfway through the project implementation period, the beneficiary payments were increased by 30 gourds a day and the value of rice stayed at 100 gourds. This payment increase was justified by the end of the project when households required an additional cash boost to invest in their livelihood activities and as the new school year was due to begin and expenses related to this were looming.

The project did not alter the length of the working day (6 to 10am); this remained at a half-day so as not to interfere normal household livelihood activities, a decision that was reached with the community.

Agreements made with local shops stipulated the variety of rice that could be exchanged with the vouchers. This variety, "Lucky", was the highest quality vitamin enhanced imported rice whose price remained constant throughout the project, at 12 gourdes per goblet (the local measure of 520 grams). Each beneficiary household received 8.5 goblets for 100 gourdes, therefore receiving 4,420 grams of rice per week.

The payments were done through local shops.

The final report considered the organisation of the payroll through a voucher system with 52 community shops as successful because of the following reasons:

- The involvement of the community shops instilled a greater sense of community spirit, enabling small businesses to participate in community life,
- The distributed cash provided "cash boost" to small business and the local economy in general that would not have been achieved if a bank had been used,
- The shops reduced the risk of non-payment as the shops are community based,
- There were fewer security risks as the shops were allocated 20 beneficiaries per week and as consequence managed small quantities of cash,
- The use of the shops reduced potential logistical difficulties of distributing cash and rice separately.

The distribution system required close monitoring on payroll day to minimise any problems related to rice quantity and quality or the voucher system. This required a payroll systems manager with high computer literacy and attention to detail. The manager entered quickly daily work attendance data to meet payment deadlines and to prepare payment vouchers, and to compare actual voucher-based payments with advances given to shops. Careful trader identification was essential, to ensure their literacy and numeric skills, reliability and capacity. Payments were made regularly and promptly, on a bi-weekly basis.

One of the main weaknesses of this approach was the reward given to the shops (2\$ US per beneficiary payment) that was considered as too high, especially when compared with beneficiary payments. Bank cash payments in would have been cheaper at around 0.6 US

per beneficiary payment. Beneficiaries were suspicious of this payment and thought that the shops were profiting from their work and money.

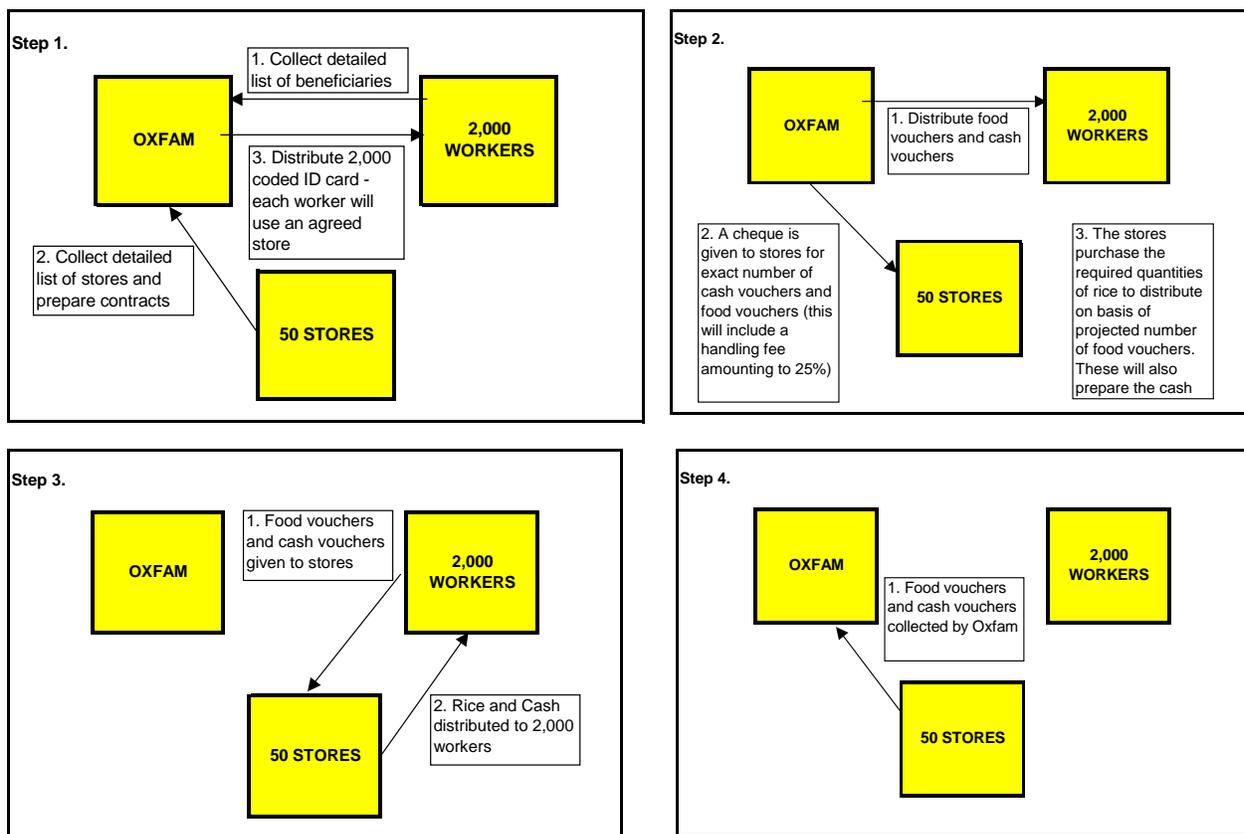
3.6 Sustainability of the intervention

This evaluation indicates that the impact of the project was short lived. Canal clearing saved peoples lives by preventing floods during the heavy rains in September 2005, but they were filled with waste and stagnant water at the time of the evaluation. Strategies to continue supporting and consolidating the community committees should have been considered.

The final project report mentions that the efficiency and effectiveness of the project have been greater if in addition to being cleaned, the canals were concreted over and covered with metal grills. These activities were requested by the communities but unfortunately were outside the possibilities of the project.

Cash payments had a short-term objective, and were used as such, to provide immediate needs. Very few participating households were in a position to increase their productive assets. With reference to the most vulnerable beneficiaries, long-term food security benefits and economic stability would be available through participating in an economic activity for a longer duration or appropriate credit schemes.

In Mapou, there was no plan to support or consolidate local committees in implementing and delivering good quality programmes in the future, or to design development interventions to tackle long-term chronic food security vulnerability and environmental risks.



4. Conclusions

Project Assumptions: The projects were based on realistic assumptions, the markets were functioning, were well organised and food was locally available. Seeds and livestock were available and within reasonable proximity to the affected area and were displayed in adequate quantities in the fairs.

The Mapou project was not able to foresee a drought that caused crop failure. This adverse climatic phenomenon was beyond project control but its impact was minimised by integrating different project components, the provision of livestock and seeds.

Baselines: Cash and voucher interventions require strong monitoring systems to evaluate the use of the cash distributed and the impact on the local economy and household livelihood. While the Cape Haitian project was able to establish baselines and analyse changes in the food security and livelihood context in the targeted population, this did not happen in the Mapou project. Consequently it was difficult to analyse intervention impact.

Implementing Partners: In both projects Oxfam GB collaborated with and built the capacities of local committees and community based organisations. Working with local partners facilitated access to local communities, understanding specific vulnerabilities and building trust amongst project participants. While in Cape Haitian Oxfam GB was able to continue strengthening and consolidating the local committees, in Mapou there has not been a strategy to continue building capacities and support partners in managing and delivering good quality interventions in the future.

Project participant choice and empowerment: The projects demonstrated that beneficiaries accepted the project and were very pleased to be able to make their own cash expenditure decisions based on their own priorities and needs. This aspect not only increased project ownership, but also permitted participants a more active role.

In the Cape Haitian project the inclusion of rice as part of the CFW payment resulted in complaints, as beneficiaries preferred purchasing their own food, having a choice of a variety of foods and making their own financial decisions.

Project staff in Mapou recommended particular goods that were considered “more suitable” for commercial activities to participating women traders. However, these goods did not always reflect or represent their preferences or priorities. By the end of the project some of the women traders were buying and selling petty trade that reflected their own preferences.

Project cost-effectiveness: The cash and voucher project minimised operational costs as no transportation, storage and distribution costs were incurred. However, these projects could have been planned and managed better to reduce price inflation (during the fairs) and high financial rewards for local shops. These additional costs could have been saved, further reducing operational costs.

The projects were gender balanced: Women actively participated in project activities and had the opportunity to re-establish their petty trade activities or to earn a wage by participating in CFW activities.

Impact: The vouchers and fairs were negatively affected by crop failure, but farmers were able partially re-establish their livestock assets. The project participants were able to purchase the livestock they were looking for (mainly a couple of goats), and had by the time of the evaluation had already doubled their livestock number.

Cash for work and vouchers for female petty traders had a positive impact on the household economy as food access improved, school fees were paid, and to a lesser degree, debts repaid

and commercial activities invested in. Completed public activities were selected via community consultation, were environmentally friendly and had a positive impact on the local economy as they improved access to local markets. The cleaning of drainage canals improved the public health environment and prevented floods in the rainy season. However, as there was no project continuation or long-term strategy to tackle the underlying causes of food insecurity in these disaster-prone areas, the impact was mainly short lived.

5. Recommendations.

- ❑ It is always recommended to gather baseline data at the beginning of the project. Such information is essential for monitoring and evaluating programme achievements, but also for facilitating any project adjustments.
- ❑ In Mapou, the initial assumptions should have envisaged the possibility to support livelihoods through the provision of cash grants instead of organising fairs and vouchers systems, or cash for work activities. The feasibility of including a cash grant component should have been taken into consideration during the food security assessment stage.
- ❑ The seed and livestock vouchers and fairs gave farmers an opportunity to choose the varieties and quantities they wanted to purchase. The fairs are considered as very successful, they were timely, empowered participants, and boosted the local economy. When and where appropriate, fairs should be replicated in the future. Organising fairs should try and incorporate indigenous seed and animal varieties more, and use them as spaces for information exchange amongst farmers and producers.
- ❑ To reduce negative consequences of price inflation during the fairs, it is recommended to invite more producers, disseminate promotional information better and encourage a wider range of products for sale. It could be possible to introduce a fixed price range for goods in order to avoid powerful middlemen monopolising the sale of some goods.
- ❑ Greater community awareness of project objectives and activities prior to implementation is necessary, especially in Mapou. This could have reduced the number of beneficiary complaints and helped the implementing agency to better understand beneficiary preferences and make needed adjustments more promptly
- ❑ Establishing payment rates for cash for work activities has been a key issue that created discontent among the participating population. Fixing rates at a value close to that of the local labour market was an important step taken to avoid a disruption of local labour rates or diversion of beneficiary time from livelihood activities. It also represented the means towards developing a self-selection process of the most vulnerable population. At the same time, the payment value only met half household basic food needs. It is important to know at the beginning of the project how vulnerable households are satisfying their immediate basic needs, and eventually to consider possible additional actions to cover them.
- ❑ The system of using local shops to deliver cash and in kind payments was successful and it should be replicated in similar contexts. However, the financial reward provided to the shops was considered too high and it should be more cautiously calculated in the future.
- ❑ Cash for work programmes should consider supporting vulnerable groups that are unable to work, as was done in the Cape Haitian project. In addition, they should consider providing child caring facilities or hiring care providers especially when a large number of women are participating.

- The humanitarian programmes in Haiti should include clear exit strategies that consider how Oxfam can continue supporting and consolidating local community committees and ensuring long-term sustainability to the project activities.

Annex 1. Places visited and people met:

Date	Activities	Village / Sector
11/02/05	Meeting with Oxfam GB staff	Port au Prince
12/02/05	Observations, key informants & household interviews.	Naroche (Mapou)
12/02/05	Observations, key informants & household interviews.	Grand Fond (Mapou)
13/02/05	Observations, key informants & household interviews.	Coral Saint Julian (Pichon)
13/02/05	Observations, key informants & household interviews.	Na Platon (Pichon)
13/02/05	Observations, key informants & household interviews.	Sentier (Pichon)
13/02/05	Observations, key informants & household interviews.	Bois Tombe' (Pichon)
13/02/05	Meeting with representatives of local partners (MDPD, OPADEP, MPMB)	Mapou
13/02/05	Meeting with KROS representative	Thiotte
15/02/05	Meeting with Oxfam staff in Cape Haitian	Cape Haitian
15/02/05	Observations, Focus Group Discussion & Household interviews	Shada (Cape Haitian)
16/02/05	Observations, Focus Group Discussion & Household interviews	Bas Aviation 1 (Cape Haitian)
16/02/05	Observations, Focus Group Discussion & Household interviews	Conassa (Cape Haitian)
17/02/05	Presentation of the first findings in the Oxfam Regional Learning Forum	Cape Haitian