



Photo: Per Bergholdt Jensen

# EDUCATION FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

## OXFAM IBIS' THEMATIC PROFILE AND ADDED VALUE IN OXFAM

Oxfam IBIS works with active civil society partners at various levels to ensure inclusive quality education and active citizenship by promoting democratic governance, fair taxation and redistribution of revenues from natural resources in developing countries and fragile contexts.

Free quality education is a cornerstone in the fight against poverty and inequality, and it plays a key role in the development of social and economic justice, gender equality and sound democracies. It is a fundamental and enabling human right, paving the way for the realisation of other human rights. Similarly, inclusive and equitable quality education is one of the 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a driver to achieve the other 16 goals. Inequitable access to as well as poor quality and insufficient funding of education, combined with weak public education systems and rapidly growing privatisation of education, are the main obstacles to reaching the new SDG 4 (Ensuring inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunity for all) and to securing a sustainable world by 2030.

The purpose of this paper is to provide all Oxfam affiliates, Oxfam Country and Regional Programmes with a clear picture of Oxfam IBIS's added value and programmatic ambitions within Education for Active Citizenship. This is done by explaining the rationale for working with education, presenting objectives and ways of working, illustrated through cases, and elaborating on the links to Oxfam IBIS' work on Economic Justice. The paper also sets out Oxfam IBIS' Rights Based Approach, and its capacity and competencies in partnerships, gender equality and fragile contexts.

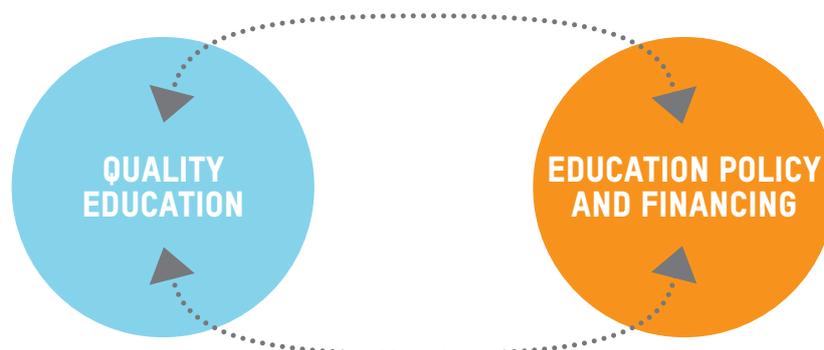
Education for Active Citizenship particularly adds value to OSP change goals 1 (Right to be Heard), 2 (Advancing Gender Justice) and 6 (Financing for Development and Universal Essential Services) in Oxfam Strategig Plan 2013-2019. However, the same work provides scope for contributing to goal 3 (Saving Lives). In the case of goal 1 and 2, education is considered a main driver for the realization of active citizenship, gender equality and democratic governance. Furthermore, Oxfam IBIS sees quality education as a prerequisite for engaging youth as agents of social change, which ranks as a top priority for Oxfam. In relation to goal 6, Oxfam IBIS can add value by strengthening the focus on access to and funding of quality public educational services for all.



## QUALITY EDUCATION A PRECONDITION FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- Quality education is a powerful socialising political instrument creating either 1) exclusion and oppression, when socialising learners into existing unequal power relations or 2) inclusion and empowerment, when preparing children, youth and adult learners to become active and responsible citizens, who are able to question prevailing social structures and take part in changing them.
- Quality education is transformative and is an important instrument in fighting inequality: Education is directly distributive as it brings virtual capital in the hands of the poor and the marginalized; 2) Education brings social mobility; and 3) Education catalyses political mobilization and active citizenship.
- Quality education has a special role in empowering girls, women and young people. Education interventions contribute to transforming unequal power structures into equitable social and political relations, where women and young people take the lead and participate in decision-making that affects their lives and their communities. Quality education can safeguard women and girls from oppression, gender-based violence, school-related and other sexual abuse, and exploitative and hazardous labour.

All Oxfam IBIS' work on Education for Active Citizenship conforms to two strategic lines of action: Quality education and Education policy & financing. These two lines of action are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. All activities related to quality education should feed into evidence-based advocacy. Likewise, the work with education policy and financing should result in concrete changes in quality education practices and learning outcomes.



### WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

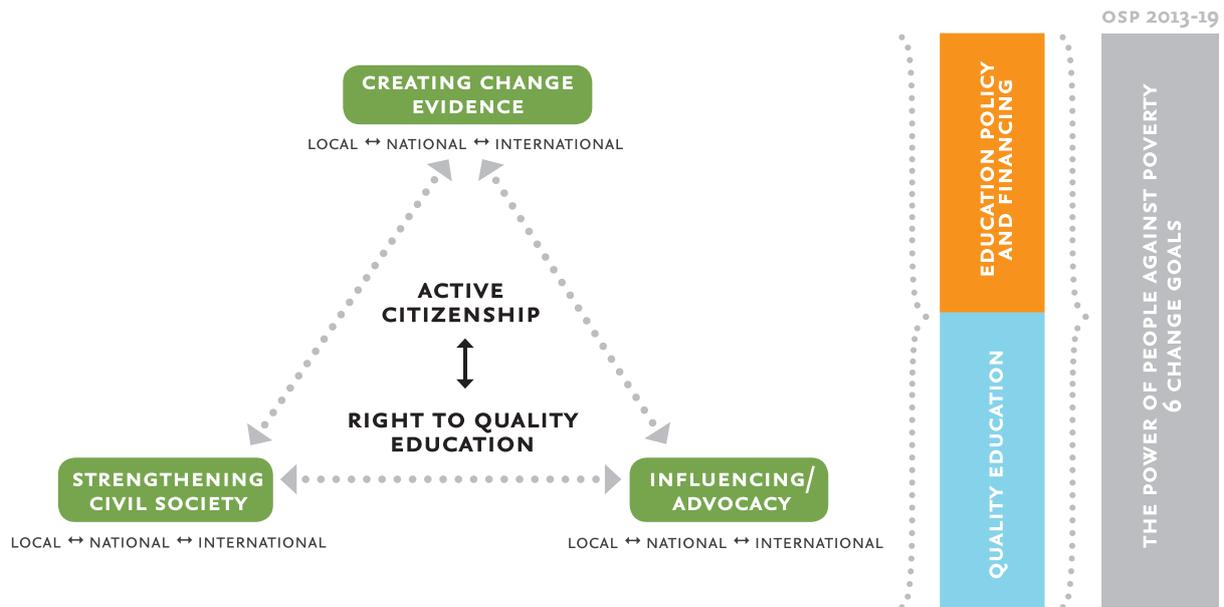
- The quality aspects of education are reinforced towards a transformative education where children, youth and adults develop attitudes, skills and knowledge to participate as active citizens in their society.

- Civil society participation and influencing work at the local, national and global levels, ensures that relevant policies for the fulfilment of right to public inclusive quality education are adopted, financed and delivered in practice, including in emergencies and fragility.

## THE RIGHT TO QUALITY EDUCATION FREE OF CHARGE IS PURSUED BY CIVIL SOCIETY, INFLUENCING POLITICAL PROCESSES AND DECISION-MAKING

States are obliged to deliver quality education to all their citizens in accordance with human rights principles. In their programme work Oxfam IBIS strategically supports people and civil society organisations (right holders) in becoming empowered to gain political influence and advance social justice by holding their local authorities, governments and donors (duty bearers) accountable. To achieve sustainable results, Oxfam IBIS applies the Change Triangle in its influencing work.

### ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AND RIGHT TO QUALITY EDUCATION



As demonstrated in the Change Triangle, programme work revolves around creating and/or collecting, analysing and documenting evidence, using it for the purposes of exerting influencing and conducting advocacy. Evidence takes the shape of research, data analysis and development of new models and approaches. It is collected at the local and national level, and is primarily used to influence decision-making at these levels. However, it should also feed into advocacy at the international level by providing documentation and examples in support of policy change. Likewise, policy work and campaigning at the international level should inform programme work at national and local levels. The Education Community of Practice and Influencing (ECPI) is comprised of representatives of different areas of Oxfam's work and geographical regions, including global advocacy and policy, national level programmes and influencing, global citizenship education, etc., ECPI spearheads Oxfam's work on education and inequality by enhancing the linkages between programme and influencing work (across national, regional and global levels; with gender programmes and campaigns (e.g. through the Even It Up, Rights in Crisis and Violence Against Women and Girls campaigns); with active citizenship work; and with interventions in emergencies and in conflict settings.

Oxfam IBIS' impact is enhanced by linking influencing work across national, regional and global levels in line with Oxfam International's Worldwide Influencing Network (WIN) model. Accordingly, the main actor leading the global civil society education movement, namely the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and its chapters in Africa (ANCEFA) and Latin America (CLADE), are key partners in Oxfam IBIS' regional and global influencing work through the programme 'Education against Poverty and Inequality' (EAPI). This programme aims at supporting civil society partners in engaging in education reforms and fiscal policies related to key factors of marginalisation and inequality in education, e.g. through privatisation of education, utilising existing and new policy spaces.

Active, legitimate and organised civil society partners are crucial to bringing about the required changes. Oxfam IBIS supports civil society partners' advocacy for policy reforms and for increasing government revenues, including by ending capital flight, ensuring fair taxation of extractive industries and raising spending on e.g. public quality education.

### OXFAM IBIS' INFLUENCING WORK IN DENMARK

Oxfam IBIS influences and advocates for the Danish government to deliver sufficient and stable financing for education as part of ODA and humanitarian funding, including support for the Global Partnership for Education. Oxfam IBIS is the lead agency in the Danish Education Coalition and represents the Northern coalitions on the GCE board (for the second period running). Oxfam IBIS also advocates for the importance of strengthened global citizenship and sustainable development education (SDG target 4.7) in the Danish education system and has advocated for the right to quality education for 14 years as part of the Education For All Campaign. This campaign has produced the largest selection of global citizenship education materials for schools in Denmark.

### HOW OXFAM IBIS WORK WITH EDUCATION FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Education is an essentially political issue in which civil society has an important role to play. Piloting models and approaches that target and involve the most marginalised children, youth and adults and using empirical evidence gathered to influence formal education policies is considered an effective way of working. For quality education to live up to its transformative potential, it has to be relevant, conflict-sensitive and contextualised, leading learners (within formal or non-formal education) to know their rights and responsibilities, and thus enabling them to raise their voice, participate and organise. Oxfam IBIS works with a holistic approach to quality education that emphasises both technical and cognitive knowledge and skills, deals with attitudes and beliefs, and takes its starting point in learners' own experiences, culture, ethnicity and language.

#### GHANA

More than 15.000 children (50% girls) previously denied from access to quality education have entered formal education through the Wing School model developed by Oxfam IBIS and partners. The project supported 200 teachers with a formal training and strengthened the emerging civil society (parents, especially mothers) participation in School Management Committees. The Wing Schools were absorbed by government at project end.

Oxfam IBIS further supported civil society organisations at different levels, coming together in a joint advocacy alliance (CBE Alliance) in order to influence government policies and financing based on the evidence from the Wing School model.

This contributed to the formulation of a 'Complementary Basic Education' policy approved in parliament (in which the Wing Schools are highlighted).



*Photo: Lotte Ærsøe*

Likewise, the alliance influenced that international donors and the government has allocated substantial financing to the implementation of the new policy.

There is also a need to preserve education as a public good from a rights perspective (principles of non-discrimination, equality of opportunity, as well as social justice and equity). Civil society must advocate for stronger public education systems and resist privatisation that reduces education to a profit-making business.

The 'Privatisation of Education and Human Rights Consortium' (PEHRC), of which Oxfam is member, is contributing to developing a strong counter-narrative to the allure of privatisation.

In fragile situations, conflict-sensitive education and literacy for all age groups can play a vital role in creating equal opportunities strengthening communities' resilience and promoting normalcy. Opportunities for relevant education can help to prevent radicalization and migration, giving a second chance to young people and creating skills to resist shocks. Where no functional education system exists and civil society is not well-organised, Oxfam IBIS and partners may take on the temporary role of providing essential services for populations in need, guaranteeing rights in the midst of crisis. Education programmes create links to the humanitarian-development nexus and longer term development and involves local and national education authorities as soon as possible.

### SOUTH SUDAN

Oxfam IBIS was successful in adapting its approach to respond in an appropriate and conflict sensitive manner to the outbreak of crisis in December 2013. Oxfam IBIS implemented a two legged approach-including a timely emergency response and a more long term intervention.

As part of the emergency response Oxfam IBIS, in collaboration with other actors, supported the establishment of temporary learning spaces for 7700 children and youth (49% girls) in IDP camps and provided them with a much needed sense of normality, social interaction and basic learning.

Where a more long term approach was possible Oxfam IBIS focussed its support on strengthened education management and provision of access to functional literacy/income generating activities for 1329 youth (62% female).



Photo: Pernille Bændtsen

### PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Oxfam IBIS works in partnership with civil society at the local, national and global level. Oxfam IBIS has a strong track record of partnering up with and linking together multiple types and levels of civil society organisations: CBOs/NGOs, women/youth organisations, indigenous peoples' organisations, research institutions and think tanks, coalitions/networks, media organisations, trade unions, etc. Oxfam IBIS supports civil society in working together horizontally and vertically towards a common objective, applying different technical, organisational or influencing skills, aimed at bringing about concrete results and genuine social change. Oxfam IBIS is strongly committed to Oxfam's Partnership Principles and will play an active role, both within Oxfam and along with partners, in continuing to develop the partnership approach based on a culture of mutuality and joint engagement for change.

Moreover, Oxfam IBIS and partners work to develop the capacity of emerging civil society (with special focus on women's/young people's participation), e.g. through School Management Committees (SMCs) and Groups of Mothers. This includes creating space for participation of civil society in education governance at local and national levels, as well as in monitoring of budget allocation/spending, policy implementation, gender equity, etc. and utilize the interface between the state and civil society to dialogue, analyse, influence and negotiate the fulfilment of rights.

## OXFAM IBIS' ADDED VALUE TO OXFAM

Oxfam IBIS has long-standing experience of developing educational programmes for marginalised people in cooperation with civil society organisations in Africa and Latin America and is recognised nationally and internationally as a leading organisation in the field of education. Oxfam IBIS will add value to Oxfam's understanding of education and to the articulation of education as a strong component under the aegis of the Oxfam Strategic Plan as a means of fostering active citizenship and democratisation.

### HOW OXFAM IBIS WILL ADD VALUE TO OXFAM

- Document and share Oxfam IBIS' track record in quality education, youth empowerment etc.
- Use Oxfam IBIS' ongoing programmes and influencing work to showcase education in the wider Oxfam.
- Pro-actively dialogue with and promote the capacity and services of Oxfam IBIS in Oxfam (Oxfam North/South affiliates and country programmes) and map the interests of affiliates and country/re-regional programmes in education.
- Contribute to One Country Strategies (OPSs), Country Operation Models (OCMs) and programme work as requested.
- Participate in and contribute to Oxfam Education policy work, connecting with programme staff to secure linkages and favour the Oxfam goal of achieving WIN.
- Contribute actively to Oxfam campaigns (e.g. Even it up, Rights in Crisis (RIC), Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV))
- Support and learn from Oxfam education programme initiatives (single- or multi-country) outside Oxfam IBIS' countries of cooperation.
- Participate in global networks and promote partnerships with relevant education stakeholders.
- Share the Oxfam IBIS "Education in Fragile Situations" approach with Oxfam affiliates/country offices.
- Be the driver of the education network in Denmark, organising people with professional or voluntary interest in education.
- Collaborate with interested affiliates and country offices on fundraising for education.

### KEY CAPACITY AND RESOURCES

- A strong education team that spans country-level programme work as well as advocacy and campaigning at the national/regional/global levels (professional depth and policy influence /advocacy).
- The fact that Oxfam IBIS is recognised as a leading education organisation gives access to a unique network of relations and contacts (to civil society platforms, donors, decision makers, etc.), expanding the scope for exerting influence.
- Experience of working with civil society organisations/networks within education at various levels.
- Experience of working with innovative models for quality education linked to advocacy, including setting the agenda.
- Experience of and methods for targeting a wide range of groups (children, young people, women) in a host of areas (active citizenship, social and economic inequality).
- Oxfam IBIS' Education Team at HQ consists of 7 staff, and programmes have around 20 education staff.

### CONCEPT PAPERS DEFINING OXFAM IBIS' UNDERSTANDING AND APPROACH

- Quality Education
- Transformative Education
- Educator Professional Development
- Youth Education and Training
- Mother Tongue-Bilingual Education
- Education in Fragile Situations
- Education and Gender Equality

All concept papers can be found at [www.oxfamibis.org/education](http://www.oxfamibis.org/education)

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