Generous Public Response to Crises Puts Oxfam Back in the Black

Monday 28 July, 2014

The public's willingness to dig deep in their pockets to help the victims of humanitarian crises during 2013-14 enabled Oxfam to recover from a fall in income and help almost 6 million people caught up in disasters.

Oxfam helped almost a million people in Syria and neighbouring countries during 2013-14 and half a million in the Philippines in just three months after the devastation wreaked by Typhoon Haiyan.

Oxfam's Annual Report released today reveals that income rose to £389.1m, up £21m or 6 per cent, reversing a 4.6 per cent fall during 2012-13. Oxfam's shop network bounced back from last year's fall in income, with net income up by 5 per cent to £23.5m.

This improved performance was due to the quality of donations received in response to humanitarian events, and also growth of donations made through Oxfam's partnerships with Sainsbury and Marks and Spencer, with 4.5millon items 'Shwopped' last year. Shops' performance helped off-set a small fall in regular giving.

Mark Goldring, Oxfam Chief Executive, said: “I am continually overwhelmed by the British public's response in times of need. It is clear that over the last year the combined efforts of hard working Oxfam staff, volunteers and the support of the public we have made a huge contribution to people in need, improving lives of those hit by disaster and those who have poor for generations.

“During my first year as Oxfam chief executive, I have been proud to see firsthand how public donations are helping, whether it be giving life saving hygiene kits to typhoon survivors, or providing clean water to half a million Syrians in desperate need.”

Andrew Horton, Oxfam's Trading Director, said: “We're delighted with the performance of Oxfam's shops in what remains a difficult economic environment for retailers.

“Donations are the lifeblood of Oxfam shops, and without the public's generosity we couldn't exist. In times of need the public are always there, dropping a bag at an Oxfam shop or donating to an emergency appeal. I am also constantly thankful to the work of our dedicated staff and volunteers, who keep the shops so vibrant.”

Public generosity was augmented by an increase in funding from institutional donors, despite a 10% fall in the amount Oxfam received from the UK Government.

Overall, during the year, Oxfam directly helped 11.2 million people in 52 countries, including:

- Giving 3.8m people improved access to clean water;
- Ensuring 1.4m have access to improved sanitation so protecting them from disease;
- Distributing food, cash or vouchers to 1.3m;
- Helping 400,000 people to improve their crops good or services;
- Assisting 200,000 women to increase the land and assets they own;
- Supporting 3,500 rural and small urban businesses.

In addition, Oxfam's campaigning and policy work helped improve the lives of tens of millions more.

Oxfam played a key role in a number of significant campaign successes celebrated during 2013-4, including the Arms Trade Treaty being agreed and signed by most of the leading countries within the UN. Also this year, the UK became the first G8 member to spend 0.7 per cent of national income on aid. Our Behind the Brands campaign persuaded Coca-Cola and Pepsi to adopt 'zero-tolerance' towards land-grabs throughout their supply chain - a major victory for smallholding farmers across the world.

Through Oxfam's 'Raising Her Voice' programme, an estimated one million marginalised women in 17 countries have been helped to fight for their rights and expand their influence in the home and outside.

Bob Humphreys, Oxfam finance director, said: “The generosity of our donors, both individual members of the public and institutions, means we are far better placed than this time last year to meet future

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challenges in our emergency, development and campaigning work. We hope they will continue to support us as we respond to looming famine in South Sudan, the crisis in Gaza and other humanitarian emergencies around the globe."

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