

Oxfam's Global Leaders Empowered to Alleviate Poverty (LEAP)

Evaluation Highlights

Key finding: From 2011 to 2014, LEAP enabled Oxfam to make significant contributions to policies in favor of poverty reduction and enhancing global development. These achievements were facilitated by LEAP's support to substantially increase Oxfam's advocacy capacity in the South despite the challenging economic and political environments.

Global progress

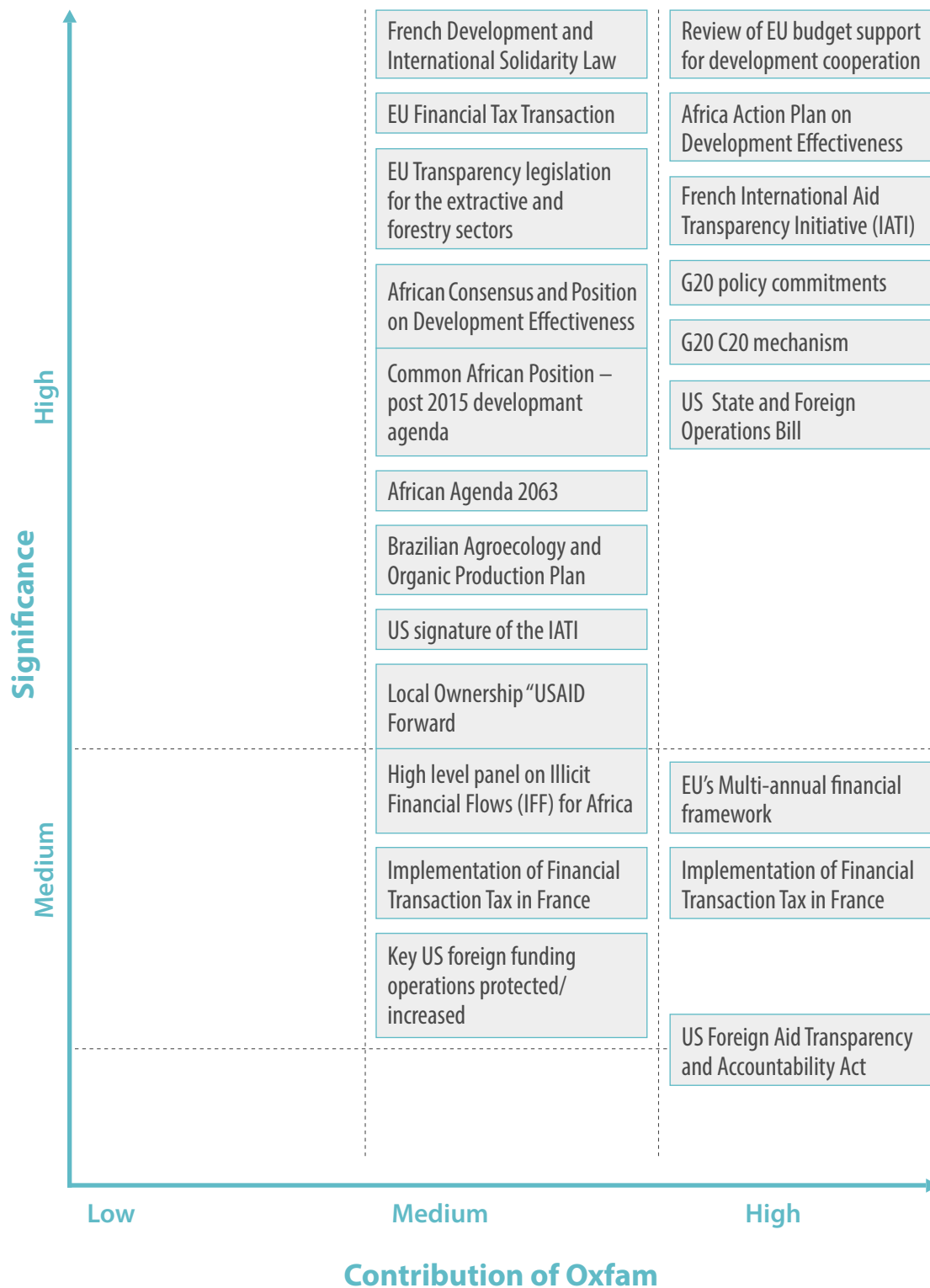


LEAP is a four-year Oxfam project launched in June 2011 and funded through a grant of US \$15.75 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The aim of LEAP is to promote political leadership for global development with the goal of delivering new commitments to reduce global poverty, especially more and better aid. LEAP cuts across existing Oxfam structures involving different affiliates and country offices and was organised around three strands:

- Strand I: Improving and making the case for aid to fight hunger and poverty
- Strand II: G20/BRICSAM leadership on global poverty
- Strand III: Making the US a global development leader



20 key policy outcomes and processes – LEAP's influence



"Oxfam has access to ministers and their staff and an understanding of the political context that gave us opportunities to influence"
CSO France

"In food security and in the early stages of cooperation development, I believe Oxfam has had an impact on the policies; it's focused on strengthening the networks of CSOs on these issues" CSO Brazil

Strand I: Improving and making the case for aid to fight hunger and poverty

- LEAP defended and maintained current EU aid budgets, notably on budget support, the development cooperation budget and influencing the decision to introduce a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT).
- In Spain, the focus was on increasing public awareness on development aid and putting pressure on the government not to decrease it further through creative tactics creating a new supporter group
- In France, LEAP has enabled Oxfam to reinforce its position as a key reference point on development aid and to accelerate several key policy outcomes
- In Japan, Oxfam and its civil society partners have increased their advocacy and coalition building with some incremental progress seen.
- At the Pan African level, LEAP has enabled Oxfam to be instrumental in increasing the voice of the African civil society and contributing to several key policies.

Creativity is an important element in a strategy to generate change. People are in a crisis and distracted from international issues. That is why the approach by Oxfam to target the public through arts is very interesting. It gives people a new perspective through different eyes.”
Stakeholder, Spain

“CS has been successful to some extent in proposing concrete alternative solutions to a number of development issues. The success has been partly based on the trust and credibility of the international brand of Oxfam and other international NGOs and the level of interest and affinity of the Government to the issues at stake.” CSO Japan

Significance of change

Changes in EU influential on aid policy for six year budget cycle and potentially long-term on tax issues



Changes in France sets long-term standards/policies but could be overturned by future governments



Changes in Africa are long-term and potentially significant dependent upon implementation



Strand II: G20/BRICSAM leadership on global poverty

- LEAP created increased advocacy capacity in Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa allowing Oxfam and its CS partners to develop a more in-depth and coordinated dialogue with governments.
- G20 has made policy commitments that align themselves with Oxfam's advocacy "asks", notably in inequality, the post-2015 development agenda, financial issues, tax justice and food security.
- Oxfam has supported civil society organisations of these countries in reinforcing their place in national, regional and global policy fora, notably with the establishment of the C20, a formal CS engagement mechanism for the G20.
- Oxfam has also been active in establishing a more formal CS role for the annual BRICS summit, resulting in the gradual acceptance of a greater role for CS.
- LEAP created capacity to be agile in responding to external opportunities within BRICSAM.

"Oxfam has been quite strategic about its BRICSAM approach – getting in early and putting local people and actors forward" Academic

Significance of change

G20 commitments have moderate to high impact on governments



CS process significant in it is now a formal structure but it is too early to assess its influence on the G20.



Strand III: Making the US a global development leader

- Oxfam was seen as a one of the key players in supporting the Obama administration's priority of securing dedicated funds and commitment on food aid and smallholder agriculture.
- LEAP supported the commitment of the US to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Project and the Feed the Future initiative.
- Oxfam was credited with helping USAID reform efforts, notably holding the line on its ambitious goal 30% country ownership by 2015.
- Building bi-partisan support has been central to its strategy and crucial in, for example, beating back language in the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act that would have drastically limited the percentage of funds going to local organizations.
- With Oxfam's support, the US demonstrated a leadership role on development aid at the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and to a lesser degree in other multilateral high-level meetings.

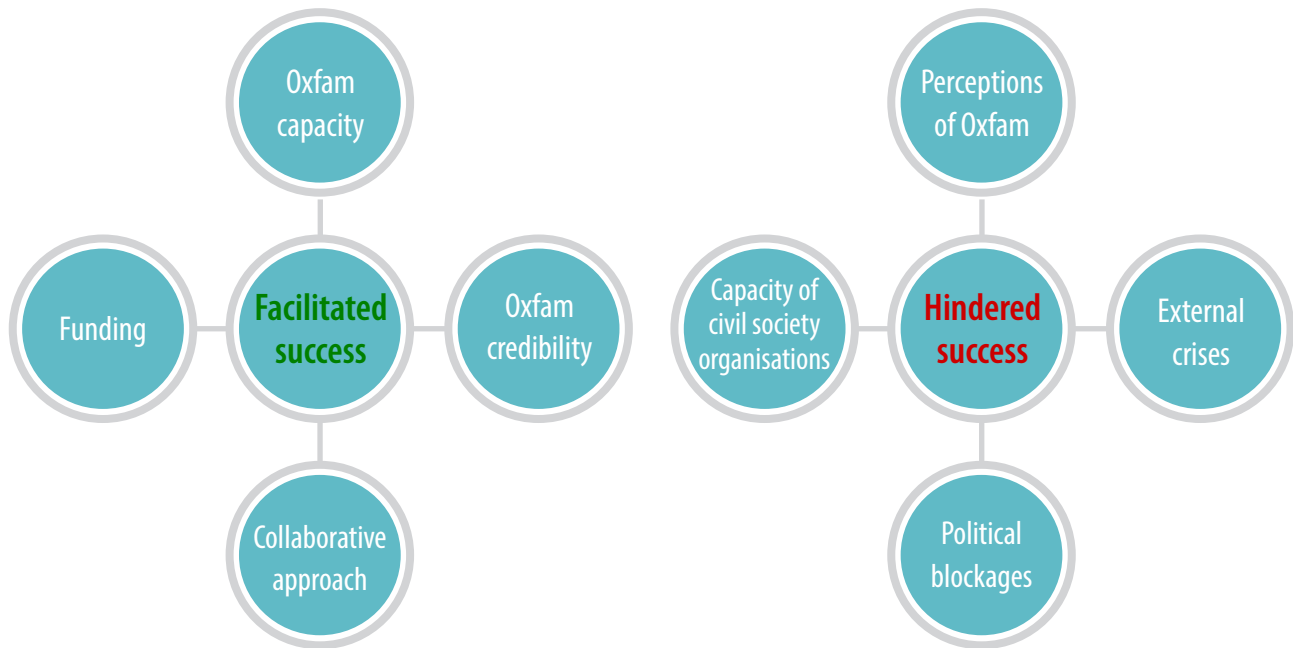
"Oxfam has technical expertise that gains the respect of policy experts in governments, but it is also willing to call government to task if it doesn't measure up." US foreign policy expert

Significance of change

Commitments secured for the medium term but could be overturned by Republican dominated Congress or Republican Administration.



Factors influencing success



Strategies and tactics

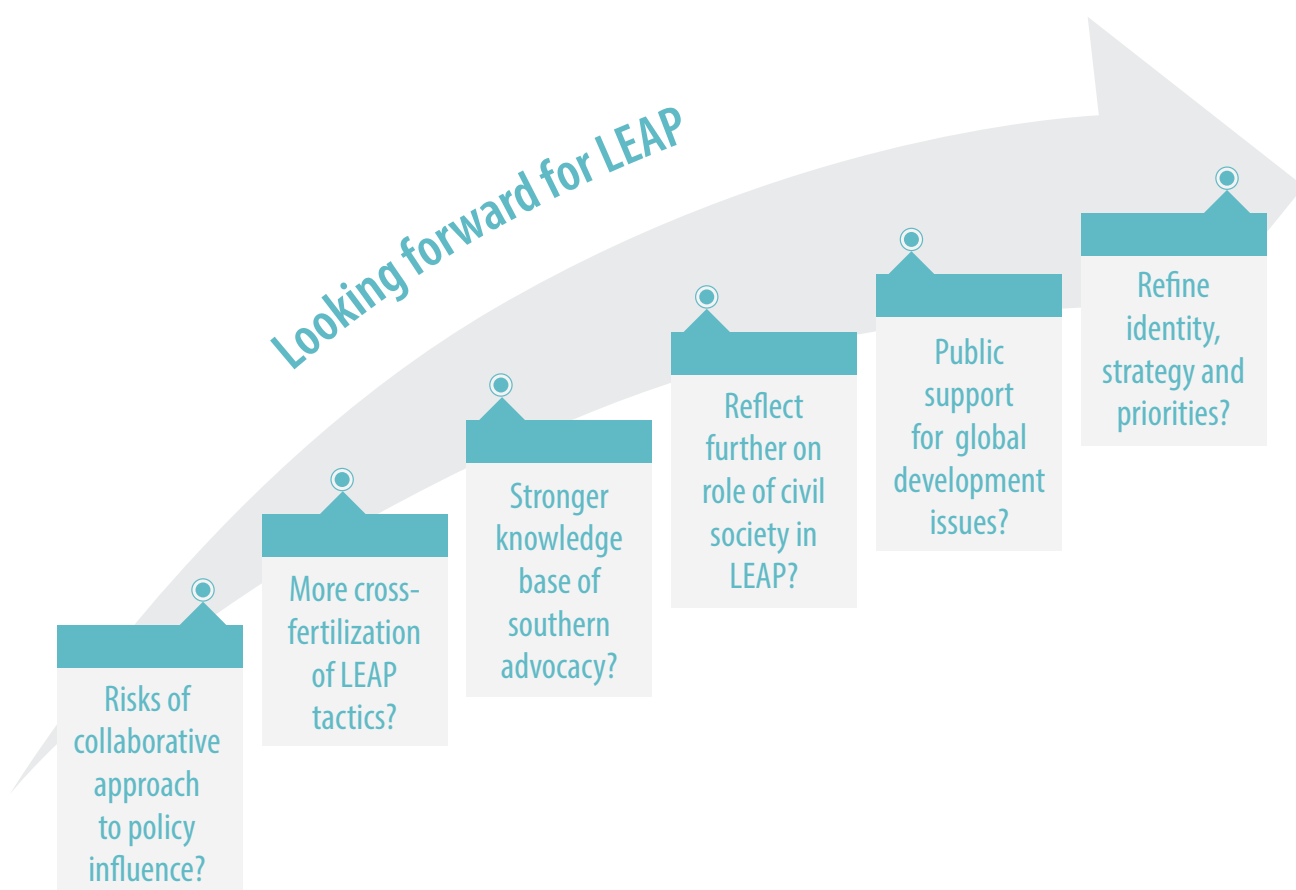
Effective strategies and tactics

- Collaborative approach with CS partners and actors
- Coordinated approach within Oxfam for policy influence
- Collaborative approach for policy influence
- Facilitating South to North and South to South exchanges
- Adapted messages

Less Effective strategies and tactics

- Strategies that proved ineffective over time, e.g. focusing on events and less so on the processes
- Strategic use of social media
- Exchange of success stories between initiatives

Overall conclusion: Funding provided by LEAP allowed Oxfam to contribute towards significant policy progress that is expected to eventually reduce poverty and enhance global development.



These highlights are drawn from the 2014 LEAP evaluation. The evaluation was conducted by the evaluation consultancy, Owl RE. Eight consultants worked for a total of three months to conduct the evaluation. Interviews were conducted with 50 Oxfam staff and 87 external stakeholders, mainly from Brazil, France, Spain, South Africa and USA in addition to the Pan African and European Union institutions. This was complemented by additional research in Haiti, India and Mexico.

