

**GTF158: RAISING HER VOICE
PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT**

28th June 2013



1. Programme Identification Details

GTF Number	158
Short Title of Programme	Raising Her Voice: Promoting Poor Women's Participation in Governance
Name of Lead Institution	Oxfam GB
Start date	18 August 2008
End date:	30 th June 2013
Amount of DFID Funding:	£5 million
Summary of Programme:	Oxfam's Raising Her Voice (RHV) programme promotes the rights and capacity of poor women to engage effectively in governance at all levels through increased voice and influence and greater institutional accountability. The overall objective of the programme is to increase the participation of poor and marginalised women in public policy, budget-setting and decision-making. RHV is achieving this by supporting women's leadership; addressing attitudes and beliefs about the role of women in public decision-making through innovative media and communications strategies; networking, lobbying and advocacy; empowering and building the capacity of civil society organisations to work with public institutions and decision-making forums; and disseminating learning and best practice.
List all countries where activities have taken place	Armenia, Albania, Honduras, Guatemala, Chile, Bolivia, Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia (Papua And Aceh), Nigeria, Liberia, The Gambia, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, South Africa and 2 regional programmes 1) to domesticate the African Women's Rights Protocol and 2) promoting the rights of domestic workers in MERCOSUR member countries
List all implementing partners in each country	See annex.
Target groups- wider beneficiaries	This year the programme supported 295,723 poor and marginalised women to raise their voices - focussing on those most excluded from social, political and economic decision-making. Over the programme's 5 years, RHV has benefitted an estimated total of 1,009,358 women
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2. List of Acronyms

ANP	Awami National Party (Pakistan)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CDC	Community Discussion Class (Nepal)

GBV	Gender Based Violence
IFFI	Institute of Integral Female Education (RHV partner, Bolivia)
LAG	Local Action Group
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
PCR	Project Completion Report
PM	Programme Manager/Programme Management
RHV	Raising Her Voice
SOAWR	Solidarity for African Women's Rights Coalition
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
ToC	Theory of Change
WLG	Women Leader Groups (Pakistan)
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VFM	Value for Money

3. Summary of Activities and Achievements

In 2012-13, Oxfam project managers collectively reported that 27,725 individual women were closely involved in the more intensive, personal empowerment elements of Raising Her Voice governance and transparency work this last year. A further 295,723 women and 73, 930 men are estimated to have participated in and benefitted from actions calling for wider social and legislative changes. ***This brings the total estimated number of women benefitting from Raising Her Voice over the 5 years to 1,009,358.***

For practical purposes, this report refers throughout to 'women' - often without analysis of the specific nature of their exclusion in the context of the example given. However, because RHV projects have as their starting point the goal of raising the voices of the most excluded, projects have necessarily sought to represent and address the specific experience of women's marginalisation in those communities - be it ethnic, religious, economic or exclusion based on ability, sexuality, HIV status, perceived poverty and gender. In Nepal for example, women from minority and 'low caste' groups were deliberately brought into community decision making of 82 villages - with 127 *dalit* women (25% of total CDC membership) 213 *janajati* (49%) and 207 *Brahmin, Chhetri, Muslim, Madhesi* women (26%) taking up leadership positions for the very first time. Numerous other examples emerge elsewhere in the report. Readers are asked to bring an understanding of the context specific nature of women's exclusion into their reading of this report.

3.1 Period since last annual report: In this 5th and final GTF year the remaining 12 RHV projects have continued to support both dramatic changes to laws and policies that promote women's rights and a range of more clearly attributable and fundamentally important small steps towards changes in interpersonal power relations and increased accountability. Highlights from this final year's achievements are presented in line with the 3 broad spheres articulated in our Theory of Change which influence women's opportunities to participate in governance: the personal, political and social spheres. These include:

In the Personal sphere: A cohort of 27,725 women activists and leaders have been supported this year to contest leadership positions, lead local community actions against rights violations and hold local power holders to account. This includes training in Nigeria, Bolivia and Chile for 816 women candidates. Support in the personal sphere has given women activists and leaders the confidence, skills and access to influence important decision-making spaces and processes. In Tanzania for example, *'despite obstacles and challenges, women in RHV intervention areas spoke up loudly about their rights in the new Constitution....some of the RHV women Human Rights Monitors were even appointed members of the constitutional forums.'* The submissions on women's rights made by RHV partner the LHRC and informed by community consultations supported through this project are now being incorporated into the new draft constitution by Commissioners who *'have shown tremendous support and enthusiasm in picking up the recommendations on women's rights.'*

In the Social sphere: RHV partners and coalitions have invested significantly in creating greater public awareness & support for realising women's rights and work to change attitudes towards VAWG. Both are prerequisites for policy, legal and social reforms to protect women's access to justice in both formal and customary governance systems. This has included work with 5,621 men to develop understanding of and greater support for women's empowerment and the participation by 6,000 men and women in RHV activities to prevent VAWG. In the Gambia's Wassu county for example, 30 circumcisers publically abandoned their practice of FGM at a 'Dropping of the Knife' ceremony in response to long-standing pressure from RHV coalition allies.

In the Political sphere: RHV activists engaged with 6,885 local government officials and duty bearers this year in efforts to embed the gains made to date in improvements to local institutional accountability. The increasingly strategic activism demonstrated by so many RHV women leaders and their allies has resulted in powerful symbolic and concrete changes to the political 'rules of the game.' In the run-up to 2013 elections in Pakistan, *'in KP and FATA regions...where ANP party workers were found to have stopped their women from voting, the Women Leaders Group and Community Action Committee raised it with ANP leadership who consequently took action against those party leaders/workers who had stopped women from casting votes.'* Many project completion reports reflected on the increasingly unapologetic nature of calls for accountability as the confidence and influence of individual activists and community groups has matured over these 5 years.

The concrete human and economic impacts of increasing political and politicised calls for change are documented throughout RHV PCRs and final evaluations. In Bolivia for example, RHV partner IFFI contributed to pressure to reform 10 national laws and 5 municipal regulations to promote women's rights including provisions for the creation of special VAW courts included in new Judicial Body Law. Annual auditing of local government investments and performance by activists supported through RHV has resulted in increased investments in projects benefitting women in 5 of 6 target municipalities. In Pakistan, 73% of the 1,500 Women Leader Group (WLG) members report having secured investment for development schemes in their communities and 5,307 women were supported to access micro finance loans.

These achievements are particularly significant in a year that saw continued attacks on democratic and accountable governance systems and in particular to women's ability to access justice and participate in decision-making. RHV partners and Oxfam colleagues have played an important role in continuing to resist attempts to push back gains made. In South Africa for example, RHV partner POWA alongside myriad NGOs and CBOs successfully contested government proposals to reintroduce Traditional Courts. In Pakistan, members of 30 Women Leader Groups have played an important role in challenging the restrictions to and violations of women's freedoms and rights in the face of deep political conservatism and rising religious fundamentalisms.

In Honduras, in response to growing anger over rising levels of Femicide (1 killing every 15 hours) and continued police and State inaction (under 2% of cases investigated by police)¹, Femicide was classified as a crime in January 2013. RHV partners and coalition members held a mock tribunal in June this year, with judges and human rights lawyers presiding over selected cases in front of national press and streamed live online. The action aimed to name and shame the government of Honduras for its derogation of responsibility to investigate and bring to justice perpetrators of crimes against women, and its non-compliance with national and international law.

These achievements are equally significant in the context of declining and increasingly depoliticised funding for work on women's rights, particularly that of women's political participation: *'Observably, the human rights of women as a distinct discipline have not been prioritised in Liberia in the past 5 years by bilateral donors.... Thereby, in as much as donors advance the gender*

¹ <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/2013/06/we-will-not-allow-their-deaths-to-go-unpunished>

mainstreaming discourse in programming it does not effectively address the strategic needs of women.'

Preparations for and digesting of Final Evaluations have dominated this final year and 2012-13 saw significant OGB investment to support programme exchange and learning including the recruitment of a RHV Learning and Communications Officer. This has enabled us to support: a regional exchange between our 5 Latin American partners; 2 peer exchanges to Pakistan and Tanzania; documentation and webinars sharing RHV experience of addressing VAWG within governance programming (also presented at a DFID November 25th lunchtime talk); RHV blogs on Oxfam's Policy and Practice website; and in-depth case studies of project impact and process learning from RHV Honduras, Nigeria and Pakistan. Staff and partner surveys for the final evaluation demonstrated that these investments in learning have been valued hugely but all PCRs called on even more face to face exchange and learning. However, learning from RHV experience has already informed the design of a new Oxfam women's political participation programme in North Africa and the Middle East and 2 more are being developed in Southern Africa and Asia – the latter focussing on developing young women's political leadership. Numerous country projects are also building on our experience – in for example, Oxfam and partner preparations for upcoming and future elections in Chile, Pakistan, Albania and Nigeria.

3.2 For the entire duration of your programme:

One of the most significant characteristics of so many Raising Her Voice country projects is both the ***scale and depth of project impacts***. The final evaluation and the 2-page country summaries that accompany it² do an excellent job of capturing this quality and scale of the changes supported in more detail. The evaluation also provides useful reflections about common strategies for strengthening women's ability to influence public policy, attitudes and national, customary and traditional decision making practice and expenditure. It is simply not possible for this PCR to list all the achievements that our 17 country projects have contributed to over 5 years but the following summary gives a flavour of their richness and impact³ and provides additional analysis on how and why changes took place from the global coordination perspective.

In the Personal sphere: RHV projects have worked with individual and groups of women activists and leaders in target communities to support a deeper understanding of their rights and to develop and mature the skills, confidence and capacities to engage effectively with local governance systems and processes: *'real women's participation and leadership has to start with women internalising their own power as a constituency first.'* In the programme's last 3 years alone⁴ **17,948 women have participated in leadership training** by RHV partners and allies. A total of **10,134 women activists and leaders participated in formal and informal political processes** in the same period.

In several countries the participation of women in formal and informal decision-making structures has increased as a direct result. The dramatic increases in marginalised ethnic women's leadership in 82 RHV communities in Nepal detailed in last year's Annual Report are clear evidence of this but the impact has been equally significant elsewhere: In RHV project villages in Papua, Indonesia for example, where previously only male government officials attended village development planning meetings, women made up 44% of participants at project end. In La Esperanza in Honduras, women's participation in community councils has increased from 25% in 2006 to 61% in 2012.... *'After a rocky start, the women's audit committee on public budgetary transparency and expenditure gradually gained the*

There is a direct correlation between those projects working in the personal sphere and demonstrable shifts in power relations between men and women in target

² See <http://raisinghervoice.ning.com/>

³ Further detail about the 'Most Significant Results' of 4 RHV country projects will be provided to DFID in August as part of our collaboration with the GTF Fund's Learning Team.

⁴ Comparative data not available for Yrs 1 and 2

*trust of the men. They saw that the women, even though their level of literacy was limited, were actually asking good questions about the budget and following the money like bloodhounds. The women were gaining real power and influence.*⁵ In Armenia, RHV supported a 10% increase in the number of women standing for election in target communities (against a decline in national trends) with women elected to council positions in 3 of the 4 project areas. In Tanzania, RHV leadership trainings resulted in increased participation by young women of between 27-45% on school councils where none had been reported before.

Increases in the numbers of women participating in formal and informal decision-making spaces have been numerous and varied – with illustrative examples and cumulative analysis provided in more detail below. However, as the analysis in the Key Findings section concludes, the value of investments in the *quality* of women’s participation and leadership being supported by project activities has been equally if not more critical to project success and due attention must be paid to both aspects in future programming.

In the Social sphere: RHV partners in 7 countries have established and supported the work of **141 community activist groups** at various levels of decision-making. This includes 30x ‘50 Women Leader Groups’ in Pakistan, 3x regional Pressure Groups in the Gambia and 4 Women’s and 4 Youth ‘Self-Advocacy Groups’ in target communities in Armenia.

In addition, RHV partners have collaborated with and supported the work of over **1,005 coalition members**. This includes 42 members of the Pan Africa SOAWR coalition in 23 countries (a 27% increase on membership levels in 2008 when RHV began), 324 members of the national coalition to end VAWG in Nigeria which RHV funding helped to establish and 63 groups in 12 municipal networks in Honduras. **RHV coalitions are strongest in Africa** where a regional programming focus on legal reform – and small project budgets - have necessitated collaborative working for the strongest possible campaigning and advocacy.

With the exception of RHV Pakistan, all of the 10 projects that have supported strong national level legal/policy reform have also excelled at building strong and diverse national coalitions.

In the Political sphere: In the last 3 years, RHV PMs report **engagement with over 10,258 local government officials and 2,426 non-state actors** and formal **capacity building training for 680 duty bearers**. The results have been both practically and strategically powerful: *‘Our engagement in the political sphere has resulted in judges agreeing to cite the Protocol in their decisions, the MOCDGC coming on board to push for an anti-GBV Bill in line with the Protocol requirements and Parliamentarians understanding and referring to the Protocol in a more informed and open manner....this in turn has enabled the project and women’s rights organisations within Tanzania to engage with the Constitutional review process within a supportive and open atmosphere.’*

RHV partners and women activists have **monitored the performance of 413 duty bearers** since April 2010. Although **RHV Latin American partners lead the way in developing participatory and innovative social accountability initiatives**, 11 of the 17 RHV country projects have used social audits to evidence underinvestment in or poor quality of local services and map compliance with commitments to women’s rights. These include situational analyses of VAWG/GBV prevalence in Nigeria, Uganda and Tanzania and a political manifesto analysis in relation to FGM policy in the Gambia. Partners in both Chile and Bolivia carry out annual public surveys which have proven invaluable to shaping influential advocacy and campaigns that have both strong political legitimacy and high levels of public support. In Bolivia, for example the 8th Report on Gender Sensitive Local Planning gathered evidence from 47 municipalities in Cochabamba; mapping and ranking municipal budgets to enable comparisons of political will so that *‘the voice on the street and in the countryside is backed by the voice of academic authority.’*

⁵ <http://www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/?p=9962>

Elsewhere too, RHV partners and activists have carried out audits of 9 health centres and 3 hospitals (Guatemala), maternal health services in 3 target Districts (Uganda) and the implementation of the 2009 Domestic Violence Act within 4 key Ministries in Mozambique.

This combined work has helped to contribute to **governance processes that function more effectively and democratically** and **increased resource allocation to projects and services specifically benefitting women**. In Honduras for example, the final evaluation demonstrates increases in the number of municipal women's offices established and functioning effectively from 1 to 7 in 8 target municipalities. 5 municipalities now hold open public meetings – up from just 1 in 2008. Projects in Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Bolivia, Honduras, Guatemala, Albania and Armenia each report small but significant increases in local resourcing for projects and services specifically benefitting women. In Nepal, funds secured amounted to the equivalent of £40,000. Recent case studies from RHV in the Gambia, Honduras and Pakistan⁶ document the concrete impacts of these shifts in local government and community relationships in detail. In Bolivia, a Town Hall Ordinance requiring all municipal bodies to incorporate gender into planning processes has been adopted and gender sensitive indicators for local budgeting developed and adopted by the Ministry for Equal Opportunity in collaboration with and response to pressure from IFFI, RHV Women's Platform members and allies.

RHV initiatives have resulted in demonstrable **shifts in attitudes of service providers, formal and informal decision-makers**: *'Our understanding of the 2010 Women's Act has eased our work and enabled us to understand things both from the legal and gender perspective... which, over the period, has contributed to the improved professional standards of the police force. I am happy to note that we are better able to handle gender related offences now than 2 years before'*⁷. In Tanzania too, Gender Desks have been integrated into regional police offices and in Liberia, a Maputo Protocol Desk Office has been created within the Traditional Council of Liberia. In South Africa, Albania and Guatemala, these **relationships and commitments have been formalised in contracts, MoUs and agreements** with local government officials. In Guatemala for example, 11 agreements were signed with RHV community activists and health officials as a result of the auditing of local services.

Whilst the scale and range of impacts resulting from closer engagement and increased accountability of formal and informal governance structures and processes are clearly impressive, it must be emphasised again that **achievements in this area are closely related to long-term investment in the personal sphere**. RHV experience shows us that without dedicated investment in women's meaningful participation and leadership, improvements to the quality and resourcing of local services - and relationships between women activists and leaders, target communities and decision-makers - cannot be sustained. *"We need political education. Otherwise, once we manage to get into those spaces for dialogue and they start talking to us about things like municipal budgets, it's like jumping out of a plane with no parachute. If they are talking about infrastructure, I have to know about infrastructure. If they are talking about territorial rights, I have to know about territorial rights."*⁸

Overall RHV partners and coalitions have contributed to **10 national and provincial level laws to prevent and protect against various forms of VAWG**,⁹ **supported the development of 7 more draft laws** to prevent and protect against VAWG and contributed to **9 national and provincial level laws to protect and promote women's rights**. The latter include, in the Gambia, contributions to pressure for the passing of legislation domesticating comprehensive gender equality provisions contained in the Maputo Protocol – and in South Africa, Liberia and

⁶ All available at <http://raisinghervoice.ning.com/>

⁷ Police respondent, RHV Gambia Final Evaluation June 2013

⁸ Bertha Zapeta, from the indigenous Guatemalan organization Makatitlan, Full blog at <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/2012/08/indigenous-womens-participation-in-guatemala>

⁹ Including FGM (Uganda), domestic and sexual violence (Uganda, Nigeria, Mozambique, Pakistan) Femicide (Chile, Honduras), political violence (Bolivia) and Anti-women practices and acid crimes (Pakistan).

Nigeria RHV partners and coalitions have played key roles in shaping draft legislation that will in time, do the same. Elsewhere, RHV partners have informed constitutional review processes (Tanzania) and decentralisation Statutes (Bolivia and Pakistan) that will ensure that women's rights are embedded firmly in new legal and political frameworks. Partners and coalitions in Honduras and Pakistan have supported the passing of legislation to explicitly support and protect women's political representation in decision-making. In Chile, RHV partner Humanas has tracked a 20% increase in support for a gender quota amongst Chilean Senators from 40% in 2008 to 60% today and amongst MPs of 41% to 49% - evidencing the slow but steady impact of their work to create a more supportive environment for the future passing of legislation on women's representation.

Whilst the contribution of RHV projects is always hard to isolate, added rigour was applied to final evaluation processes in 4 countries through the use of process tracing methodologies to assess the level of RHV project contribution and impact. Our Pan Africa, Chile and Albania 'effectiveness reviews' all spoke to strong causal links between project interventions and policy/legal reform outcomes at national and local level.

2 of the 3 RHV partners with a strong legal/human rights specialism scored less well in supporting shifts in power relations and social accountability at community level.

4. Key Findings

4.1. Management response to Final Evaluation

Recommendation <i>(Abbreviated for reasons of space)</i>	Response
<p>8.1.1 The importance of a common Theory of Change (ToC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToC as starting point • Address the 3 spheres • Update ToC to incorporate learning from RHV • Validation of ToC for new projects • Promote ToC to relevant and senior staff 	<p>Since the design of RHV, Oxfam has a new programme framework (see 8.2.1 below) which requires this. In the case of follow-on work from RHV, we are starting from the theory of change, working across the three spheres, and, in addition, looking to explore the interconnections between the three spheres of the RHV model with the sphere of economic change, usually covered in Oxfam's livelihoods work. New work is being developed in the context of new Oxfam global change goals, especially on gender justice and active citizenship (the Right to be Heard), and in the light of new internal change goals designed to strengthen staff and organisational capacities in gender amongst others. The RHV change model is already being picked up by other parts of the organisation and incorporated into new programmes.</p>
<p>8.1.2 A long term approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception • Long term partnerships 	<p>We agree with these recommendations. New programming now incorporates longer inception periods to allow adequate involvement of and engagement with partners. A major SIDA-funded programme and DFID funded programme in Vietnam have already successfully done this. Oxfam is currently revising its partnership policy and longer term partnerships, with or without funding, including coalition partnerships, are an important aspect.</p>
<p>8.2.1 Greater coordination and facilitation capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater investment in coordination and support • Focus on fewer countries 	<p>These recommendations are already reflected in a more recent programme, My Rights My Voice, where we have limited the number of countries to 8, and have invested more on coordination, support and MEAL. Oxfam's 4-country AMAL programme in North Africa and the Middle East also has dedicated MEAL capacity built into the programme - which is enabling it to pilot some exciting participatory approaches to monitoring and assessing individual and collective project impact in very different country contexts. Follow-on work from RHV will also reflect these recommendations and experiences of colleagues and partners elsewhere.</p>
<p>8.2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam focus on building the capacity of its own staff to test and apply the theory, to provide support and networking, up to date knowledge and tools, access to spaces, contacts and relationships in the country and internationally. ... Again, this has implications for the split of funding, and we recommend that Oxfam invest a higher proportion of funding to its own staff capacity to add value 	<p>As an organisation Oxfam has made strong commitments to building staff capacities on both MEAL and Gender. Regional centres in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East/CIS provide an annual gender training programmes for a cohort of strategically selected staff in a wide range of roles - as well as strong gender components in a training programme for Oxfam campaigners. A new professional development training on How Change Happens is just being developed - which will include the RHV Pakistan experience as 1 of 4 focus case studies. The gender induction for all Oxfam GB staff is also currently being updated. Support from HR for initiatives like this has been critical to this progress within Oxfam, but engagement is not yet operating at a systems level as needs to be for more sustained improvements in staff capacity. In any ambitious new programme like RHV we will consider investing explicitly in the staff</p>

<p>to partners' work.</p> <p>8.1.2 (cont.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and evaluation systems should also recognize the need to evaluate progress in relation both to the short term objectives and goals, but also the longer term vision. <p>8.2.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The monitoring and evaluation framework should be based on regular opportunities for staff and partners to reflect, also with participating women, on progress, effective strategies and emerging opportunities. Where possible, opportunities for collective interpretation of findings should be made... The theory of change provides a basis for evaluation and understanding progress, and partners and staff should work together to identify appropriate measures of 'success' from the beginning, revisited throughout the relationship. While the implementation of activities cannot in itself be considered 'success', neither can this be evaluated only in relation to the wider goals of women's influence and power. Selecting relevant indicators in between the areas in direct control, and those which are completely outside of the sphere of influence of the project, requires facilitated collective analysis with different stakeholders, based on the theory of change. This will help to structure work to monitor and capture real changes and effectiveness of the work, and help stakeholders to feel more accountable to those indicators. 	<p>development needs related to that specific programme.</p> <p>We agree with these specific recommendations on M&E and learning, which are reflected in Oxfam GB's Programme Framework (published in 2010 – after RHV began):</p> <p>Oxfam requires that all programmes develop and are built from a coherent theory of change that expresses how we expect change will happen in the lives of women and men living in poverty. This defines what outcomes are necessary and sufficient to achieve our intended programme impact, and sets out the strategies we should employ and the assumptions we are making about how they will achieve the intended outcomes. The theory of change, and its underlying assumptions about how the programme will contribute to long term change in particular, should be tracked throughout the life of the programme and programme strategies adapted as required.</p> <p>A Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning plan must be developed at the start of a programme, building on the programme's theory of change to identify relevant outcome focused indicators, data collection strategy, data analysis and review (including Monitoring Reviews, see below), a budget, and clear responsibilities.</p> <p>Oxfam GB programme teams are required to hold Monitoring Reviews with implementing partners twice a year although some (including many RHV PMs in line with monitoring progress and compliance in line with DFID quarterly reporting requirements) may choose to hold them more frequently. These are opportunities for programme teams, partners, and sometimes community representatives, to come together to analyse monitoring data, review our risk analysis, see what they are telling us about our programmes and agree necessary changes to increase project efficiency and effectiveness.</p>
<p>8.2.3 It is worth emphasising that MEL activities and frameworks should explicitly seek to include women's voices. There is the</p>	<p>Programmes are strongly encouraged that a theory of change should be developed in collaboration with partners and with men and women living in poverty so that those most affected by the programme feel ownership of the development process. Further they are</p>

<p>tendency to focus on “numbers of women”, rather than “voices of women” and equally as important, analysis of by whom and to what effect women’s voices are heard.</p>	<p>encouraged wherever appropriate to include community representatives in Monitoring Reviews to support data analysis and review of progress.</p> <p>The Oxfam International Gender Justice group is currently developing stronger guidance for all Oxfam programmes on the use of participatory approaches to causal inference in M&E, in recognition that intervention participants have ‘agency’ and are key to ‘causing’ successful outcomes through their own actions and decisions. We hope further work in this area will support programme teams to ensure meaningful inclusion of women’s voices rather than simply gender disaggregated data.</p> <p>The RHV coordinator has also worked closely with members of the UK Gender and Development Network (GADN) in this last year to share experiences of evolving our M&E approaches and frameworks to enable us to better understand and measure the complex and often deeply personal changes in women’s lives. Learning from this process has been hugely helpful and will be used to inform future RHV programming.</p>
<p>8.2.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monitoring of value for money needs to be able to link outcomes to inputs and those to financial resources. It is important to build in ways to relate these elements together without losing the complexity and nuance of how change happens. Attention should be paid to developing a shared understanding amongst, and building capacity of, stakeholders who will need to make these connections. 	<p>Oxfam takes the Value for Money agenda very seriously and has invested heavily over the past 2 years to develop our organisational proposition, defining VfM as the relationship between <u>e</u>conomy, <u>e</u>fficiency, <u>e</u>ffectiveness, and <u>e</u>quity (4 E's). While we accept that more can be done in programmes like Raising Her Voice to make VfM assessments more feasible, we recognise the complex, hard to measure nature of the changes that such programmes work to influence, and are keen not to reduce VfM to efforts to monetise outcomes. Instead, we are supporting programmes to engage with the issue by making options appraisal at the design stage more explicit, and through ongoing processes of weighing up the cost/ value ratios at all stages of the programme cycles in relation to the 4 E's.</p> <p>This means ensuring that they adhere to newly introduced requirements that all programmes build from clear, coherent and well considered theories of change; include relevant, robust outcome indicators and use monitoring data to adapt and strengthen programme design in real time; and consider the potential for replication, scale-up and other multiplier strategies to increase the potential for additional benefits. This also means ensuring that the women we work with are at the heart of defining a project’s value and recognising that this may mean very different things in different contexts - and may change over time.</p> <p>For the RHV coordination team, the analysis provided in the final evaluation has been useful for our own articulation of the impact of RHV in VfM terms and will help us make the case for investments in future programming. Further VfM analysis is now being carried out in 4 countries for DFID’s ‘Most Significant Results’ initiative.</p>

4. Key Findings

4.2. Programme Management

MEAL: After an intensive reorganisation of our programme logframe to better reflect the theory of change proposed by Mid Term Evaluation, the final model has been very useful in helping us articulate the complex and interconnected changes that we're supporting in each sphere – and to better communicate the collective impact of our individual country projects. However, we know that the top-down approach required for the exercise was not conducive to supporting more participatory identification and development of project level indicators that reflect the complexities of changes in women's lives. This clearly should have been done from the outset (in some countries it was) but required time and investment in itself which this portfolio did not sufficiently have. *'First it should have been clearer in the beginning the theory of change that RHV uses and for the design of the project this should have been done by the institution that will carry out the project which did not occur in our case because indicators were developed by Oxfam.'* This is a learning point echoed in several final evaluations and firmly recognised by the RHV Coordination team and country PMs for our approach to – and greater confidence in – design of future programme monitoring frameworks.

Projects that were able to integrate more participatory processes in their initial design and subsequent review are clearly able to evidence greatest impact in changes in power relations between communities and targeted decision-makers

However, the RHV Coordination team also recognise the value of having had this opportunity mid-way through the 5 years to stand back and reflect on the cumulative experience of how change has happened and the opportunity to integrate this into our thinking in a way that would have been impossible had we not had the foundation of personal relationships and a culture of peer exchange created in the first 3 years.

A number of PCRs also reflected on the value that would have been gained from greater core investment in embedding MEAL skills and capacity more firmly within partner organisations.

Programme Management: The long-term nature of RHV funding has been hugely beneficial to project impact and sustainability – enabled Oxfam and partners to evolve work with 'beneficiaries' (and, critically, see the results of this evolution) in a way that shorter funding cycles would not have enabled us to do. *'We understand better now that women need to engage early on in the political spaces whether they are at rural areas or in urban centres....and they need some form of organised support that goes on for about 5-7 years.'*¹⁰ However, many PCRs reflected that funding should have been more flexible: *'it is important that resources are allocated according to the changes that the project experiences and that there is greater flexibility in the use of them especially in changes to the wider context in long-term projects.'* A number of partners with strong financial and operating systems also reflected that quarterly reporting and grant disbursements prevented the smooth delivery of planned activities whilst each tranche of funding was released. Greater flexibility and longer-term disbursement periods for partners with strong financial management systems should be considered in future programming.

Efforts to align annual RHV project reporting with the newly articulated ToC have paid dividends, with demonstrable improvements in the reflection and analysis provided. This has also enhanced the Coordinator's ability to monitor and support compliance. However, some PMs fed back that the changes in format had been frustrating and that the lists of questions that formed annual reporting guidelines were burdensome, diverting time and resources from project delivery.

Several PCRs reflected on the management challenges of supporting coalitions. In Uganda for example, where our RHV partner provided sub-grants to members for the delivery of particular activities, the structure was not felt to have been effective, with the PM proposing that Oxfam should have retained control of grant making in support of more effective financial transactions. In

¹⁰ Pan Africa PCR

South Africa in contrast, the ownership and control of funds by the coalition coordination structure themselves was felt to be a strength and contributed to higher levels of ownership amongst members. As with our RHV learning elsewhere, responding to the specificity of local contexts is critical – as is the flexibility, confidence and support to adapt PM strategies when necessary.

Of the 3 countries with no local Oxfam office, local partners in 2 (the Gambia and Chile) delivered conceptually/operationally strong projects with minimal remote support from Kenya/UK and Bolivia PMs respectively. In Mozambique however, the lack of local staff after the office closed in 2011 meant that, despite the best efforts of our South Africa PM (managing the project remotely), we were not able to provide the necessary support to turn the weaker engagement of partners around. This was exacerbated by the introduction in 2010 of a second local partner. In Liberia too, the sharing of already-limited financial and OGB resources between 2 local partners has resulted in a less successful collaboration.¹¹

For RHV Africa projects there is a direct correlation between the limited levels of financial investment provided and the relatively weaker conceptual/operational capacity and engagement with Oxfam of 4 of our 7 project partners (in Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Liberia – see footnote 11)

Managing Risk: RHV projects in 5 countries experienced significant macro level political changes in their projects lifetime with varying impacts on the operational ability of partners to deliver according to original plans and risk management strategies. This includes the 2009 coup in Honduras, 2 floods and the collapse of the local government system in Pakistan (the first ‘biblical’ floods in 2010 displaced 20 million Pakistanis) and the decision by the EU to postpone Albania’s candidate status on the path towards EU membership. RHV partners have demonstrated impressive resilience in their ability to absorb and respond to these changes – and have adapted with creativity, and real political acumen.

In Albania for example, recognition in 2012 that EU candidacy status would not be agreed in the project’s lifetime - ending hopes for the formal establishments of Local Action Group (LAG) structures in the medium term - resulted in a creative shift in strategy. Oxfam and partners organised public launches of the LAGs which promoted achievements so far. The resulting ‘Razma Declaration’ set out a shared vision for the future of the LAGs within Albania’s rural development process... *‘calling on local government offices at the regional and commune level to follow transparent and open budgetary processes in order to increase accountability.’* New LAGs have since been established based on the RHV LAG model but frustratingly, these lack the same principles of strong women’s and community participation and ownership. In post-coup Honduras, RHV partners and Oxfam developed parallel ‘visible and invisible’ strategies for campaigning to increase women’s participation in decision-making. The 2012 Electoral Law committing to 50% women’s political representation by 2016 was a direct result of these revised, more strategic approaches of engagement by the wider women’s movement and RHV partners.

There is no clear correlation between fragile states and the conceptual/operational capacity or sustainability of RHV projects. Whilst hugely constrained by the operational realities and risks posed by extremely difficult project contexts in Pakistan, Honduras, Nepal, Indonesia or Guatemala, RHV partners have delivered impressive results and are amongst some of the strongest in the portfolio. Only in Liberia did the weak CSO landscape correlate with weaker RHV partner capacity and project delivery

In Pakistan, Women Leaders Group (WLG) members in flood affected areas *‘emerged as a strong group of volunteers...putting forward immediate interventions to limit further loss of human*

¹¹ A reflection on broad trends over 5 years but not true of *all* projects at *all* times. For example, The Ugandan RHV Coalition was a strong vibrant voice in support of national policy and legal reform during the project’s first 3 years. Campaign momentum ebbed in the 4th year linked to a shift in strategic direction within the coalition’s host organisation.

life....and delivery of emergency food, medical supplies and other assistance to those in need. After the flood, WLGs campaigned and advocated with the political leadership for an equitable reconstruction phase....identifying priorities and strategies. They also monitored relief efforts through frequent visits to the respective camps.' WLG data about those affected was also used by government and INGOs to inform the formal humanitarian response.

Whilst PMs and partners recognised the value of RHV programme flexibility in supporting logframe revisions and the time taken to re-strategise and renegotiate following political and environmental shocks, they called for even greater flexibility built into budgets to enable more timely responsiveness and additional funding ready to be made available if necessary. The significant impact of political changes in both Pakistan and Honduras for example meant that existing budgets were stretched tight and both would have benefitted immensely from small but strategic investment for discrete activities.

4.3. Programme Results and Impact:

In this section we assess *how* and *why* the changes supported through work in each of the 3 'spheres' of influence in women's lives have been important - and how future programming can learn from and build on these experiences.

Above all else, RHV experience shows that to be effective, women's participation and leadership in governance systems and processes needs to be meaningful. Participation in itself – in quantitative terms only - is not enough. Instead, women activists and leaders, networks and coalitions must be in the right spaces with the best possible knowledge, confidence, skills and evidence to engage and influence decision-making. This is not just a prerequisite for effective and sustainable governance and gender equality programming and for the realisation of DFID's Capability, Accountability and Responsiveness framework but for any and all work meaningfully seeking to reduce poverty.

The Personal Sphere: What's Worked and Why?

RHV projects have had greatest impact in the personal sphere where they have invested in ***supporting a core group of activists and leaders to develop skills over time*** rather than one-off or generic rights or leadership trainings. *'We avoided the issue of seeing the training as a one-off thing, considering it to be of critical importance to women's empowerment.'* Women's Forum member, the Gambia. Many projects have formalised this in new initiatives to embed and mature women's skills, confidence and analysis. In Honduras for example a year-long Facilitator School for Feminist Reflection for community leaders was established in June 2012 and in Guatemala, accredited political leadership training for community women is now offered in collaboration with a national University. In Bolivia, 496 women leaders were trained annually at IFFI's Adela Zamudio Citizenship School. This has enabled women activists and leaders to increase their ability to meaningfully influence decision-making structures and processes.

However, several evaluations (including *all* of the 5 projects funded for 3 rather than 5 years) noted that further support was still required to embed and sustain individual capacity. In Honduras for example, despite demonstrable improvements in local services and changes in attitudes amongst decision-makers....*'the challenge of helping women to occupy the most important positions within these organisations still remains'*

The Personal is Political...maturing political analysis is critical for influencing decisions:

As the knowledge, skills and experience of the many thousands of women activists and leaders with whom RHV has worked over the last 5 years has grown and matured, reports from many countries reflect a growing confidence and politicisation in the way women are engaging with power holders and the efficacy with which they are able to influence and hold them to account. For example, instead of monitoring expenditure of the 2% of municipal budget allocated to women, members of local women's networks in Honduras are now re-focussing monitoring on

the *entirety* of the municipal budget – looking more strategically, and more politically, at the way local resources are allocated and spent. This includes RHV network members - in partnership with citizen transparency commissions and the social audit network - taking their analysis of municipal budgets to the Supreme Court of Auditors to support the monitoring of the 2% of national-to-local government budget earmarked for women when it carries out its audit of national Mayor's Offices.

Pre-election campaigns in Nigeria, Mozambique and Pakistan employed 'Vote for the Domestic Violence Bill or We Won't Vote for You' slogans to promote legal reform and expressed the sheer frustration of women activists faced with continued impunity for rights violations and lack of political attention from decision-makers. RHV campaigns also evidence a growing confidence related to the awareness (by women and decision-makers alike) of the very real potential power of women voters as a more educated, politically aware voting block. In Chile, all of the candidates for this year's Presidential elections are including responses to the women's movement's demands in their manifesto pledges. In Honduras too, the success of the 2012 Electoral Reform Law and commitments to increase women's representation to 50% by 2016 is understood to be an effort by government to attract women's votes. In both South Africa and Honduras, RHV women's networks have signed agreements with newly elected local councillors to ensure that representatives deliver on a list of clearly articulated commitments made on priority issues.

In Pakistan too, the national Women's Manifesto delivered to all parties provided an unapologetic list of demands ranging from a minimum of 50% women's political representation in legislative structures, for the election commission to take steps to suspend elections in constituencies where women are prevented from voting; to the efficient use of Departmental government and Islamic funds *'for women's self reliance beyond mere welfare/charity.'* In the run up to the recent Parliamentary elections in May 2013 the Electoral Commission published gender disaggregated lists of registered voters for the first time ever enabling WLG members to take action against parties in Districts where women's registration was less than 10% as per manifesto demands. The next phase of RHV in Pakistan will involve Women Leader Groups forming closer relationships with newly elected representatives in order to both support and hold them to account on delivery of women's demands for the duration of their term in office.

Making the invisible, visible: RHV coalition members in Nigeria also reflected on the powerful impact that the use of graphic images of women survivors of violence had had in the long-running campaign to promote the passing of the Prevention of Violence against Persons Bill. The Act was passed into law after 10 years of lobbying in March 2013. Oxfam staff raised concerns about the use of graphic images in 2011 but the strategy was agreed locally to be effective.... *'making it everybody's business'* and provoked public reactions and critically, political actions where previously there had been none. The debate about the ethical use of such images continues in Oxfam but the decision by coalition members reflects an interesting shift towards a more unapologetic articulation of the brutal realities of the violence that so many women in Nigeria experience.

The Social Sphere: What's Worked and Why?

Getting the entry point right to avoid backlash matters...and can still evolve to work more explicitly on women's political participation: Many PCR's reflected on the challenges of community level work and advocacy on contentious deeply personal issues and demonstrate a range of different strategies to introduce concepts in effective ways to mitigate resistance and backlash. Projects in Nepal, Indonesia, Albania and Armenia deliberately introduced community level work in the framework of rural development programming –and were less explicit about goals around women's participation and leadership. In Tanzania too, the PM reflected on the value of *'repackaging the Protocol into acceptable components' in the face of 'a politically unpopular Protocol with contentious clauses.'* However, over the 5 years PMs and partners in each of these countries except Albania, have described how increasing confidence amongst

women coalitions, activists and leaders has seen demands for greater accountability articulated more politically and within an explicitly women's rights framework.

Women's organisations and coalitions have long known not only the **value but the necessity of varied and strategic alliances** outside of the women's movement. However these are not always easy to establish and take time and resources to develop with the intended levels of influence. RHV partners have excelled at creative and unusual alliances and have demonstrated that the doing this well can pay real dividends. These have included both important collaborations around shared political visions and more politically strategic alliances.

RHV Bolivia, MARCOSUR, South Africa and Nepal projects are powerful examples of deliberate efforts to ground projects in a more inclusive approach that aimed to fundamentally shift the way that national women's movements approached participation and leadership. In Bolivia this saw the deliberate bringing together of the indigenous and (mostly urban, more educated) women's movement to explore and articulate common experiences of exclusion – and shared approaches to challenging this. As a result, Cochabamba's draft Departmental Autonomy Statute includes 48 of the Women's Platform's joint demands. In South Africa the multi-sectoral approach incorporating analysis and action on the way in which women experience HIV and AIDS, GBV and poverty has changed the very way that POWA and coalition members work.

Where RHV partners working are women's organisations this appears to be a strong predictor for projects that have succeeded in supporting deeper changes in power relations (in 5 of 8 projects) as is the correlation with projects that have worked through more formal 'pressure group' structures at community level (4 of 8).

Looking at how change does and doesn't happen in women's lives through these inclusive multi-sectoral approaches has provided Oxfam, our partners and the women with whom we work with **a valuable prism for understanding the complexity of factors** influencing individual and collective ability to effect change. In turn, this has enabled our partners to conceive and design more effective, influential strategies to challenge the systems, structures and power relations that perpetuate women's exclusion from decision-making spaces.

RHV partners, activists and coalitions in many countries have worked hard to develop important support from male allies to achieve project aims. In Pakistan and Nepal for example, partners have 'rewarded' male supporters, for example by securing media coverage recognising their contributions and inviting them to meetings with other influential members of the community. In the last 3 years alone, RHV activists have collaborated closely **with 34,568 men on a range of initiatives to promote women's empowerment and political voice**. In Pakistan, although Aurat Foundation does not work with individual religious leaders, it has developed relationships with progressive religious scholars to build understanding and dialogue around positive calls for gender equality in religious texts. Quotes throughout this report and the final evaluation show the breadth and depth of these collaborations – and the practical and strategic impacts that result.

RHV partners have also created innovative alliances to 'nudge' forward progress in more unusual places. In Bolivia for example, RHV partner IFFI created media awards presenting cockroach 'anti-awards' to media outlets or brands that used sexist and offensive advertising and recognising those using positive language and images. The campaign call for an end to sexist advertising was adopted locally by Cercado municipal regulation in 2011 and the National Advertising Awards, sponsored by commercial firms also now include a category for gender sensitive reporting.

As well as providing a vital accountability tool, RHV partner and coalitions have used **audits and analysis to inform and strengthen internal strategies, influence and effectiveness**. For example in Uganda where *'the momentum to domesticate the (2010) DV Act are still relatively*

hot' a CEDOVIP study on the economic costs of domestic violence has helped to move forward discussions with key Ministries about delivery commitments and resourcing. It has also helped lay the ground for the introduction of a new Sexual Offences Bill – redrafted in this last project year by leading VAWG organisations and members of the RHV coalition and the Ugandan Law Reform Commission. Whilst our Pan African SOAWR campaign partner reflected back on their success in increasing ratifications by AU member States of the African Women's Rights ('Maputo') Protocol from 23 in 2008 to 34 today, they have also looked afresh at ways to increase pressure on non-compliant states. A 2012 compliance mapping exercise has given SOAWR a greater understanding of the administrative, political and bottlenecks and barriers to the first step towards implementation of this comprehensive women's rights framework and helped focus strategies to address them. This has informed SOAWR's shift away from a 1-partner-per-country membership model to a broader coordinated coalition membership at country level so as to increase the pool of skills, contacts and influences in each – and to broaden public and political pressure for State implementation of commitments made.

The SOAWR campaign has provided an invaluable legal framework for RHV projects at country level - with the Pan Africa evaluation finding 'some correlation between countries where RHV was present and countries where clear national coalitions focused on the Protocol were in place or emerging.' 4 of 8 States piloting the innovative collaboration between SOAWR/UN Women on the 'Multi Sectoral Approach to Implementing the Maputo Protocol' (requiring buy-in and resources from national governments) are also countries with active RHV supported local coalitions¹². *'The space provided by SOAWR to lobby at the AU level has facilitated access to influential people at the African Union, as well as from AU member states. Coalition members highlighted access to decision makers, support to attend AU Summits, joint meetings with AU delegates and SOAWR missions to countries as particularly helpful.'*¹³ As a result, the campaign continues to attract significant political support from AU legal unit and from strategic individuals. Malawian President Joyce Banda for example will host a high-profile SOAWR event at the next AU session celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Maputo Protocol. RHV colleagues in Asia have reflected on the added value for Pan Africa partners of being connected to a shared regional campaign and are interested in exploring possibilities for more formal joint advocacy presented through interstate forums such as ASEAN and SAARC.

Campaigning with generosity can generate valuable mutual gains: RHV partners have evidenced immense creativity and generosity in their approaches to building broad and effective coalitions and have as a result secured impressive concrete gains for women. For example, Humanas' communication materials for the Chilean 'More Women in Power' campaign (video, website, radio platform, campaign stickers and badges) were deliberately unbranded so that they could be widely used not only by women candidates in 2012 local elections¹⁴ but by prospective leaders in Universities, unions and the private sector. Women and particularly young women have been prominent leaders of Chile's recent student, indigenous and workers movement actions to hold the government to account - and helping to redraw their movement's political agendas in more representative ways. The combined momentum of these collaborations has presented decision makers with unprecedented pressure to take women's contributions seriously.

The Political Sphere: What's Worked and Why?

One of the significant ways in which RHV partners and coalitions have challenged the 'rules of the game' is by ***bringing excluded women's voices directly into decision-making spaces*** from which they are usually absent. At local level, this has been established as a deliberate part of making democratic governance spaces more accountable, as in Honduras for example, where open meetings are now being held in 5 municipalities. In more 'removed' national and regional decision-making spaces and processes RHV partners and coalitions have brought women's

¹² The Gambia, South Africa, Uganda and Kenya where the SOAWR secretariat is based

¹³ Pan Africa Effectiveness Review 2013

¹⁴ The <http://www.masmujeresalpoder.cl/> website has received over 40,000 visits

voices to high-level fora to ensure that policy discussions cannot ignore women's lived realities. Institutions and decision makers have expressed real impatience with the strategy of bringing 'token' women's voices into policy for a but not only has this had powerful policy impacts – the AU Peace and Security Council for example has institutionalised annual Special Sessions focusing specifically on women's experiences of violence in conflict following powerful contributions from women survivors of violence at the 2010 meeting facilitated by SOAWR, but the act itself is a deliberately political one. With it, our partners are modelling a different kind of decision-making which reassigns value to personal experience and the impacts of decisions on individual lives. *'This reminds us of the necessity to ensure that we explore, expose and name the violations and oppressions that lock women from freedoms and from justice and strengthen the likelihood of real change.'*¹⁵ Without deliberate attention to the potential impacts in women's complex personal spheres of experience decision-making at all levels will continue to be necessarily flawed, sustaining inefficiencies, unaccountability and inequalities.

Strategies that address the 'missing middle' between community or local governance and sub-national or national level governance structures have proven particularly effective. The Pakistan strategy of deliberately targeting well-connected, literate and articulate women leaders as an entry point has been *'politically astute and culturally sensitive. It would have been extremely difficult for an NGO, even a home-grown one, to have direct contact with the most marginalized women in a way that would have enabled such sustained political activism and strategic influence. The WLGs have proven to be an effective model of linking community, district and provincial level political decision-making. AF provides a bridge to national policy and legislative fora.'*¹⁶ Conversely, evaluations of projects like Nepal and Honduras that had focussed on community level change recognised the importance in future of *'stepping up to the national level which involves funding participation channels for rural women in national projects.'*¹⁷

A number of projects reflected on the power of women, local partners and male champions and allies **using their personal networks and social capital to secure political support for project aims.** *'Gambia is a small country....the reality is that between us, network members are related to a lot of influential politicians and journalists. When we need to get support for a campaign or legal reform we can talk to them easily....'* Albania's evaluation also reflected on the value of these personal relationships: *'People here are connected – by blood- we have cousins in the other villages....that also helped with the work and building trust. That's been an advantage for the LAG approach, compared to other programmes. They didn't know how things work here'*¹⁸ Although these networks of influence are clearly not the sole preserve of men, and may look quite different for women, they have presented similar political gains. That these personal contacts are grounded in shared goal of women's equality and representation however is equally important. The Pakistan project for example deliberately invested in work with Women Leader Group members to build inclusive and representative relationships with less educated women members of Community Action Committees - acknowledging that no matter how well-connected they were, to be effective, women leaders *had* to be grounded in local realities.

What we would have done differently?

The omission of the economic sphere from the RHV Theory of Change (ToC) was a deliberate move to focus programme learning on the subtler shifts requires in women's personal, social and political spheres in order to strengthen governance and increase transparency. It was also developed as a counter to Oxfam's traditionally strong, and often exclusive, focus on a livelihoods and markets systems approach to women's empowerment. The value of this is recognised and valued by numerous RHV partners and must not be underestimated. Oxfam is moving steadily

¹⁵ South Africa PCR

¹⁶ The Politics of our Lives: The Raising Her Voice in Pakistan Experience - <http://raisinghervoice.ning.com/>

¹⁷ RHV Honduras Case Study – produced as part of the programme's final evaluation – see RHV link above

¹⁸ Local Government respondent, Albania Final Evaluation

towards a more holistic understanding of how change happens with regard to inequality (including gender inequality), shifting power relations and complexity in its programming and the RHV ToC has been a useful part of that evolution.

However, the deliberate omission has also been problematic (in the same way that a singular focus on the economic sphere ignores the critical importance of women's experiences in the other 3 'spheres' of her life). Being more explicit about the very real significance of changes in the economic sphere on women's lives – and how this intersects with changes in each of the other 3 – would have been helpful to the way projects evolved. We should have recognised more explicitly the impact of financial autonomy upon the ability of individual women to participate in RHV activities, their ability to take up positions of community or political leadership and on functioning and sustainability of RHV coalitions and networks once project funding comes to an end. Whilst our partners have found creative ways to address these constraints (see below), we consider this an important lesson, one which the RHV team are using to inform conceptual thinking and the design of future gender, governance and livelihoods programming in Oxfam.

4.4 Sustainability:

As this report and our final evaluation clearly demonstrate, our 45 Raising Her Voice partners and over 1,000 coalition allies have together, contributed to significant and numerous concrete gains for over a million women. The approaches taken to ensure from the outset that these are sustained once formal funding ends are equally varied. In South Africa for example, our partner POWA deliberately developed partnerships with community and national organisations whose understanding of the intersections between HIV and AIDS, GBV and poverty it felt was strategically important to broaden out. In Honduras, the establishment of local community groups was done with significant attention – and resources - to building women's collective agency: *'This methodology requires more time and resources. Organising a group is not the same thing as providing training to women to enable them to organise the group. However, this is a project innovation that helps to build their capacities, allowing them to help to ensure the continuity of their organisation.'*¹⁹

There is no indication that a shorter funding timescale necessarily predicates for less powerful project impact. All 5 of the RHV projects that received funding for just 3.5 years scored well for their ability to impact on power relations and hold local decision-makers to account. ***However, all 5 project completion reports reflected on the need for further investment to build on early successes and sustain project impact.***

Many thousand trained facilitators, human rights monitors and community action group members in all 17 projects will continue to draw on new skills, confidence and the considerable social and political capital created by RHV projects to defend women's rights and support other women to participate in, influence and monitor decision-making in targeted structures and institutions. For some, where RHV engagement with local decision-making has resulted in increased investment in initiatives benefitting women – like in 12 villages in Papua, Indonesia where £4,000-8,300 is now made available annually per village - there is a strong economic incentive for sustaining participation in new governance spaces and processes. Whilst the project achievements documented in this report resulting from closer engagement with and increased accountability and effectiveness of governance structures are clearly impressive, it must be emphasised again that the sustainability of achievements in this area are closely related to long-term investment in the personal sphere.

'Pakistan is a difficult place to be female – I have hope, we have hope, we have to have hope. I am hopeful that the challenges I have faced, that my children will not. I am hopeful that the successes I have achieved will inspire my children. I think they are more confident because of my actions.' Haseen Mussarat, RHV Women's Leader, Sindh Province

¹⁹ Álvaro Padilla, ASONOG

PCRs and evaluations all recognised the critical importance that RHV community groups, coalitions and networks have played in supporting the resilience of individual activism and voice. RHV coalitions and networks have developed a range of effective strategies to maintain their collective activism, campaigning and the very existence of these important *'stepping stones out of (women's) current exclusion from the local political and social arena'* and respond to the challenge of funding in creative ways: In Honduras for example national women's coalition members each make a small contribution to sustain the coordination function and core operating costs. In Pakistan, WLG members develop annual action plans which include identification and mobilisation of local and institutional resources in support of local casework and campaigns. More structured analysis and documentation of these sustainability strategies would be hugely beneficial to Oxfam and future RHV programming.

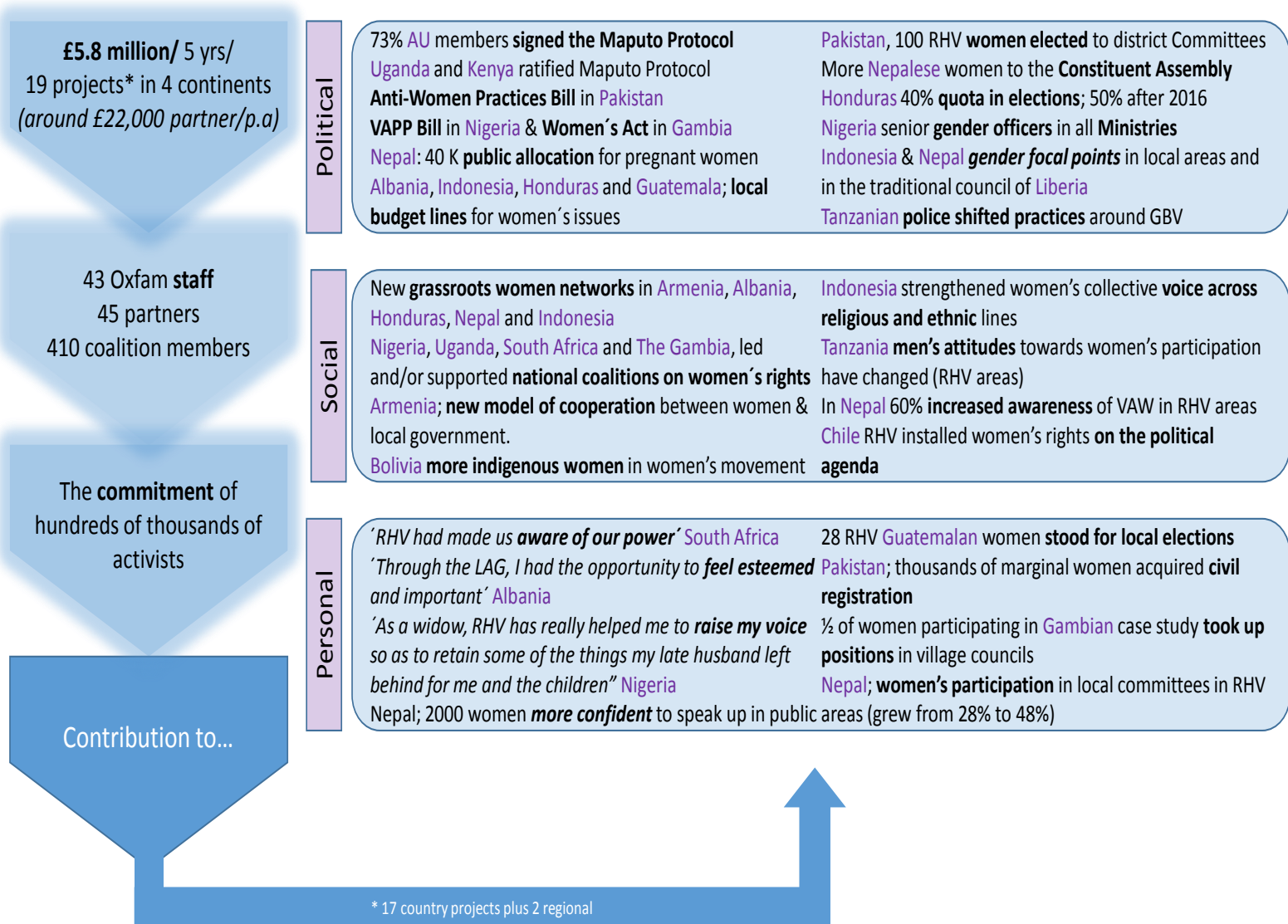
However, recognising the undeniable value of secure (and long-term) project funding, Oxfam has also continued to seek funds for the evolution of existing and development of RHV country, regional and global programmes. RHV staff together developed proposals with a total value of over £30million. Funding for continuation of projects in Honduras (3 years, 50%), Nepal (3 year RHV/livelihoods hybrid project, 100%) and in Pakistan for post-election support to new women leaders (1 year, 100%) has already been secured. RHV's positive relationship with Oxfam's 'Lawyers Circle' supporters also developed further in 2012-13 with £24,000 equivalent *pro bono* support from one legal foundation to carry out comparative research which has since been used to inform submissions to Tanzania's Constitutional Review process. The Circle members have also committed to support 2013 coalition coordination costs in Tanzania, Pan Africa and Uganda.

Based on the experience of the 5 projects that finished early in 2011-12, the likelihood that partnerships and achievements will be sustained in the 12 projects where DFID funding finished this year is high. Collaboration between Oxfam and RHV partners in 4 of the 5 early-ending project countries continues in some form. In Armenia and Nepal this is with direct funded support from Oxfam, and in Albania and Guatemala in continued joint engagement with government. In Indonesia, Oxfam was no longer able as an INGO to work in either Papua or Aceh but funding for a RHV project has since been secured for the development of work on women's political participation in Sulawesi.

4.5. Value for Money:

'RHV has contributed to a nation-wide grassroots level social capital which has every potential to multiply for the good of millions of women inflicted with slavery-like situations in the remote rural areas of Pakistan. The investments in their leadership development hold a decisive promise from an unaccounted subject...to become part of decision-making processes across all levels of political and administrative hierarchies. The legislative and administrative changes that RHV has been able to bring about are something which had never existed'

The Raising Her Voice programme is able to demonstrate impressive achievements with regard to both the scale and depth of project impacts. This is as true of our collective achievements across the programme as it is in many of the individual country projects - 8 of the projects are able to evidence shifts in power relations between men and women and between communities and local decision-makers and fundamental improvements to the quality of services and allocation of resources. RHV in Nepal for example, on a budget of £445,261 over just 3.5 years has evidenced deep transformations in women's agency, elected leadership, support for women experiencing VAWG, improvements in community services and in the attitudes of local officials. An estimated 89,000 community members are benefitting from women's increased leadership and agency in 82 target villages. The value for money graphic provided by our global evaluators captures the flavour of the combined RHV qualitative and quantitative impacts effectively.



Every single one of the 17 RHV projects benefited from significant additional project co-financing or staff time investment from Oxfam country offices. This is particularly true of our 7 African projects where original RHV budgets failed to include staff time for project management, anticipating that the local partner's membership of the regional SOAWR coalition would be sufficient for supporting project delivery and grant management. In Pakistan in-kind contributions from Aurat Foundation (£61,161) and Oxfam (£150,000) were estimated to have added an additional 47% of value to the original project budget.

Limited funding levels for RHV Africa projects relative to the scale of the projects' ambition has meant that RHV has often had to rely on partners being able to mainstream programme aims into other workstreams. The significant success of projects in Nigeria, South Africa, the Gambia and Tanzania for example, despite limited funds (average annual budgets of around £40,000 each) has relied heavily of the selection of local partners with a strong presence and reputation 'to put weight behind the RHV message.' In Nigeria for example, RHV partner WRAPA has gained UN partner status and is also now part of a local DFID consortia continuing work on VAWG.

Many projects reflected on their ability to influence strategic media partners as a particular feature of VFM programming with regard to relative investments in relation to the remarkable impacts on changing public attitudes regarding women's rights to participate equally that this engagement had delivered. In Nigeria, Tanzania and the Gambia for example where targeted journalists and editors have become members of RHV supported coalitions, media support has increased noticeably. By engaging the media as a strategic partner rather than a target audience

– and with robustly evidenced arguments – RHV projects have secured coverage that would have been impossible to create with project funds alone. Perhaps the best example of this is the strategic partnership between the SOAWR coalition and FAHAMU (member of the SOAWR steering group) and producer of the weekly pan-African Pambazuka news, one of the largest and most influential web forums for social justice in Africa reaching over 26,000 subscribers. Pambazuka news includes regular features and many special editions on progress being made on the implementation of the Maputo Protocol and has helped significantly to promote the Protocol as a critical framework for women’s rights promotion with other actors calling for greater social accountability and justice. In Liberia, South Africa and Mozambique pre-recorded radio shows (delivered to stations on CDs) were all found to have had longer shelf lives than live shows - and in the context of projects with limited funding, demonstrated particularly good VFM.

5. Recommendations:

For KPMG/DFID:

- KPMG/DFID should review annual reporting formats to reduce the quantity of requests for information on different thematic and process areas in favour of questions supporting greater quality of analysis. A creative approach to grouping grantee reporting guidelines by thematic area - enabling them to focus on areas of expertise and impact could also be beneficial.

For Oxfam:

- Oxfam should resource a piece of work to review and document effective sustainability strategies used by RHV projects and coalitions in more depth. The review should outline more coherent approaches and practical proposals to inform future project design.

For Oxfam and DFID:

- Oxfam and DFID must ensure that future investment in women’s empowerment programming is explicit about supporting change in the personal sphere – and that support for this is developed both in standalone programming and mainstreamed governance programming. As RHV experience shows, this does not require immense levels of funding. Partners and coalitions have demonstrated impressive concrete and strategic gains for women with relatively low levels of project investment.
- Oxfam and DFID must recognise that strategies to enhance women’s power analysis, political and social capital are prerequisites for effectively influencing decision-making. *‘We would have done of general less mass mobilisations and would have identified right from the beginning key spaces and decision-makers to target and to support grassroots women movements to target.’* Tanzania PCR
- Both organisations would do well to consider the relative value for money represented by investment in long-term training of a core cohort of activists over one-off ‘empowerment’ trainings;
- Oxfam and DFID should consider the critical importance of women’s organisations, coalitions and networks for nurturing, protecting and sustaining individual activism - and their powerful and catalytic potential to hold power-holders to account. This is particularly urgent in a context where funding for women’s organisations is declining whilst becoming increasingly de-politicised;
- Future programming must recognise that change in women’s abilities to participate, influence and lead the decisions that affect their lives takes time. Funded projects should be conceived as stepping stones that form part of a well thought through longer-term process of change;
- Project design must therefore include sufficient time for the development by individual project and collective monitoring frameworks that find context specific ways of identifying and articulating change – both the above points require inception periods of a year;
- Future programming should also be more explicit about the inter-relation between the personal, social and political spheres with the economic sphere;
- Identified risks should be reviewed more regularly in projects in fragile contexts – and more flexible funding mechanisms built into core programme budgets in order to support the necessary changes.