An Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis Study
Liberia's Slow Onset Crisis

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EMMA

Josephine Gbarwea and two of her children, with some of the items she received during Oxfam's seeds and tools distribution in Bah Town, Grand Gedeh County, Liberia. Photo: Susan Sandars

There is no doubt that, for many international organisations, humanitarian interventions today are very different to those in the past. Not only has there been a growing recognition of the harm that some more traditional emergency responses can do to affected populations' coping strategies and livelihoods, but there has been an equal realisation of the central role that markets play in people's lives, through giving them access to basic needs, jobs and income generating opportunities.

In order to respond appropriately, however, with any intervention, it is essential that markets are analysed. The reasons for this are threefold. It is essential to have a sound understanding of the markets' capacities and blockages, so that agencies can avoid interventions that are potentially harmful to livelihoods and recovery while identifying ways in which the markets may effectively help deliver the humanitarian response. Market analysis will also highlight those activities that are needed to support the wider market systems to be able to meet the needs of the targeted beneficiaries in the emergency phase and possibly beyond.

Based on the need to develop a rapid market assessment tool to cover an identified methodological gap in market analysis in emergency contexts, Oxfam GB (OGB), the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Practical Action (PA), in consultation with a wide range of other agencies, undertook the development and piloting of the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) toolkit. The EMMA marked a significant departure from other emergency response market assessments, in that, based on the value chain analysis principles, EMMA uses a combination of existing tools, from seasonal calendars to market system maps, to offer a systemic view of market interactions, both demand and supply, from the infrastructural and institutional environment to inter-regional or cross border trade. It combines market analysis (market functionalities, potentials and constraints) and gap analysis (people's uncovered needs) to develop a response analysis to inform programming. The EMMA toolkit allows for a rapid understanding of market systems, as it promotes rough and ready 'good enough' analysis, and is designed to complement other assessments that provide data about household profiles and expenditures. The toolkit can bring clarity and purpose to programming; allow the disaster affected population to access the most appropriate responses and support market functions and environments to supply basic immediate needs while keeping an eye on future development and self sufficiency.

Map of Liberia's Districts

Shocking and widespread violence has forced hundreds of thousands of Ivorian families to flee from their homes, often able to carry nothing with them. Photo: Aubrey Wade

Background

Liberia has had a long history of political turmoil and economic instability. Between 1989 and 2003, Liberia was ravaged by two civil wars that left more than half of the population internally displaced and living as refugees. Communities were uprooted and much of the country's infrastructure was destroyed. Since 2003, Liberia has been on a road to recovery, but significant problems remain. Male literacy is 73% while for women this figure is only 41%. The country lacks running water or central electricity and has only 200 kilometres of paved road. 80% of Liberians live on less than $1 a day. During the civil war, OGB provided emergency support, with the arrival of peace, OGB made a strategic shift to put in place the long term development principles to allow people to return home and rebuild their lives.

In 2010, contested elections in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire, and the violence that ensued, forced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes. As of 7th of July 2011, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had counted a total of 153,000 refugees crossing the border into Liberia[i]. Many of these refugees found sanctuary in Grand Gedeh County, bordering Côte d'Ivoire to the west.

Grand Gedeh, in the southeast of Liberia, is one of the counties most affected by chronic food insecurity, with 42% of the population being food insecure[ii] and 43.4% of the population suffering from stunted growth. Grand Gedeh's agricultural production is low, as low level land cultivation is still relatively undeveloped, meaning that people rely on other sources of food and income. Traditionally, communities are able to harvest enough food to last for only four months each year, turning to both the markets, which provide 69% of food in the county, and the collection of wild food when these supplies run out.

From early March 2011, waves of refugees, fleeing the fighting and instability in Côte d'Ivoire, crossed the border into Grand Gedeh County, largely settling along the border and the main road. By July, refugees in this area numbered 74,000, with the majority of refugees (up to two thirds) hosted by communities. As many Ivorian families had hosted Liberian refugees during the Liberian war, many Liberian families were willing to host Ivoirians in return. Despite the predominance of refugees staying with host families, there were still significant numbers of refugees in camps.

As the crisis ensued, a growing number of villages were affected by the influx. Already limited resources were becoming increasingly strained, severely affecting the self-sufficiency, food security and the short to medium-term livelihoods of the host communities. Food and seed stocks were being depleted, meaning that, without assistance, many farmers would not be able to sow in time for the next

harvest. In the context of chronic vulnerability to food insecurity and the undue strain posed by the influx of refugees, the lean season was hitting early. Prior to OGB's interventions, food assistance had not been sufficient in quantity and in quality to meet the needs of refugees and little had been done to address the shortages faced by host communities.

Assessments prior to EMMA

In mid-March, Oxfam GB carried out a food security assessment in Grand Gedeh, which focused on assessing humanitarian needs, current prices and market capacities. This assessment aimed to ensure that appropriate responses were devised, based on evaluations of how the markets were reacting to the surge of refugees. The main findings were:

- food availability was limited and host families were resorting to coping strategies earlier than usual. Food consumption in the majority of households had already been affected, both in terms of the number of meals consumed and the type of food that was being consumed;
- markets were under strain from increased demand and, due to the majority of goods coming from Toulepleu in Côte d'Ivoire, restricted supplies. Prices for staple crops had risen by an average of 28% and palm oil had risen by 40%;
- there were very limited opportunities for income generation. The arrival of tens of thousands of refugees meant that competition for casual labour left many host families without traditional sources of money. Moreover, for the refugees, arriving with few assets and little, if any, local currency, there was little chance to purchase goods that they could then resell;
- limited coping strategies and the threats to livelihoods, meant that many more households in Grand Gedeh were becoming vulnerable to food insecurity. However, some refugees stated that they preferred to remain in the host communities and wanted to stay to farm for the next harvest;
- in Grand Gedeh, 90% of the refugees that had settled with hosts did not receive appropriate assistance in terms of critical food and non food items (NFIs). Equally, host families had not been supported, rendering the food security situation dire.

While the findings of this assessment were helpful in framing the needs of the host communities and the refugees and highlighting their plight, the level of analysis and detail about the markets of staple foods, namely imported rice, was insufficient. For the imported rice market, there was a need to understand the entire supply chain, from the capital Monrovia to the area of intervention (Grand Gedeh County). Previous market analysis had focused on prices and local availability but was missing the dynamic analysis that could indicate not only existing market capacity, but also projected market potential, due to either programme interventions or the changing context. A better understanding was needed about the functioning of this specific market chain, including the actors involved, the volumes traded and the capacity of the market to increase these volumes (and thus limit inflation risks) if the demand required. In this context, it was necessary to use a market-system approach.

The Use of EMMA in Liberia

Standard market tools usually focus on interviews with local traders and the monitoring of market prices in local physical market places, sometimes they analyse some of the linkages and dynamics between actors and their infrastructural and institutional environment. But because they usually do not look at value chains as a whole, these approaches miss a comprehensive picture and could, therefore, be insufficient or inaccurate in determining the capacity of the market to absorb the impact of cash-based interventions or provide necessary in-kind goods as well as identifying the potential impacts of different response options. In Liberia, while several studies already gave a good basic understanding of market functionality, the capacity of the market was unknown. This emphasised the need for an EMMA assessment to understand specific market systems in-depth and to use this analysis to design appropriate response options.

The use of the EMMA assessment was also felt to be appropriate as it:

- Presents a comprehensive and systemic analysis of market systems, highlighting the critical blockages, constraints and capacities of the markets analysed;
- Is ready-to-use and could therefore lead to direct project implementation by providing specific market/context response options and recommendations;
- Allows for a speedy assessment, due to the 'good enough' approach to analysis;
- Enables good communication of the tool through easily accessible information, especially the market maps;
- Had already been tested and used in emergency contexts (Haiti, Pakistan…);
- Had specialist trainers available.

A beneficiary registers at Oxfam's seeds and tools distribution in Bah town, Grand Gedeh County, Liberia. Photo Susan Sandars

The EMMA in Liberia

The EMMA market assessment was carried out in Liberia between the 12th and the 24th of April 2011, one month after the initial rapid assessment carried out by OGB in the affected areas. As a slow onset crisis, refugees were continuing to arrive at the time of the EMMA market assessment.

The EMMA took a total of thirteen working days, including two days of training, eight days of data collection, and three days to finalize and disseminate the report.

The timeframe of the assessment was appropriate, in that it:

- was able to consider the humanitarian situation, which was beginning to stabilise, one month after the start of the influx of refugees. This relative stability allowed the team to evaluate the impact of refugees on local markets;
- was conducted before the rainy season in order to provide a good overview of the situation and which could, then, be used as a baseline. It also eased access to the area of intervention and remote areas;
- was conducted at an appropriate time in the Project Cycle Management (PCM). The EMMA was conducted at the initial stage of the programme and its results could therefore feed into the design of the project;
- An EMMA trainer and specialist was available at the time.

The EMMA team was comprised of thirteen staff members from two organizations: OGB with the lead and twelve predominantly national team members, and WFP VAM unit with one team member. The team was essentially comprised of field monitors, with only the lead having prior knowledge of EMMA. Training was provided at the beginning of the assessment (two days in Monrovia), with additional on-the-job training throughout the course of the assessment on various aspects of the toolkit.

In line with team capacity, two market systems were selected using various criteria[iii] and focused on the most widely shared and deeply felt needs that the OGB response was planning to address:

- **Imported rice** was analysed, as both the prime staple and preferred food item of the affected population, and as the essential commodity for immediate food security.
- **Agricultural labour** was selected as a critical factor for cultivation in the cropping season (essential for medium term food security).

The target population were the communities most affected by the influx of refugees from Côte d'Ivoire, including both those newly or chronically vulnerable households that were hosting refugees, and the new refugees themselves (in host communities and in transit camps), in Grand Gedeh County. Gender was mainstreamed in the selection of households. The target population were:

- **Vulnerable households in host communities:**
  - Small farmers (below two acres, few sources of income, focus on women heads of households)
  - Workers on rice production (men and women)
- **Refugees**
  - Refugees in host communities
  - Refugees in transit camps

The northern part of Grand Gedeh County was selected for Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods (EFSL) interventions for a number of reasons. Historically, OGB had worked in this region before, it was a vulnerable area affected by the influx of refugees and Grand Gedeh had limited humanitarian assistance planned at the time of the assessment. The geographic coverage of the EMMA assessment also included Zwedru – the capital of Grand Gedeh – and Monrovia as principle trading hubs.

Costs

In Liberia, the total budget was $18,237. This figure includes $13,522 of staff costs, mainly salaries and additional standard benefits. It should be noted that country staff costs were covered as part of the regular EFSL programme. This cost was not shared by other organisations. The specialist's salary was covered by Oxfam humanitarian capacity building funds. Besides salary and HR costs, the assessment required $5,074 to cover mainly transport costs (car rental) as well as venue and accomodation.

The costs can be broken down as shown in the table at the bottom of this page.

The country faced several challenges to prepare and implement the EMMA:

1. Lack of resources and limited capacity
As often is the case in emergencies, human resources and logistical capacity were limited as the humanitarian response was mobilising all existing resources in country.

2. Lack of expertise in market assessments and no previous knowledge of EMMA in country
The lack of prior knowledge – in country – of the EMMA methodology and its intended outputs increased the time required to establish the Terms of Reference and to ensure that EMMA could meet country needs.

3. Limited involvement of other actors in the EMMA assessment
Due to a lack of resources, capacity, market expertise, a limited awareness of the EMMA tool and conflicting NGO mandates, the involvement of other OGB teams as well as external actors was limited. In addition, at the time of the EMMA market assessment, several ministries and NGOs had simultaneously planned other food security and livelihood assessment in several counties including Grand Gedeh.

The EMMA Process in Liberia

Part of the ten step reiterative EMMA process is the selection of critical markets. Within this step, key analytical questions are devised that will then guide the investigation of each market chosen. This is to ensure that the changes, blockages, constraints and potential capacities of each system are analysed for appropriate and market sensitive responses.

In Liberia, these key analytical questions were formulated to specify the priority focus of the study and the specific programmatic questions to which the assessment was expected to answer, in order to contribute to the programme design. While opportunities of an inter-agency process were limited, this limited participation enabled OGB to shape the critical questions that EMMA works to answer. As a result, the key questions that OGB had concerning different intervention strategies and modalities were answered by the EMMA, and the recommended responses were then fed directly into the project design.

	Total costs in $
Staff	**7,200**
National Staff	2,130
International Staff	1,545
Staff Benefits	3,526
EMMA lead	**6, 322**
Flight, accommodation, salary, expenses, visas and permits	6,322
Logistics and Procurement	**4,594**
Car rental	2,560
Office Running Costs	**120**
Total	**18,237**

Translating Analysis into Programmes: The Imported Rice Market

Largely due to OGB's input, the critical questions guiding the EMMA assessment were as follows:

- Has there been any change in consumer demand as a result of the refugee influx?
- What is the capacity of the imported rice market system to supply the targeted vulnerable population?
- What are the main constraints affecting host communities and refugees to access imported rice?

Within these critical areas, lay further implied questions:

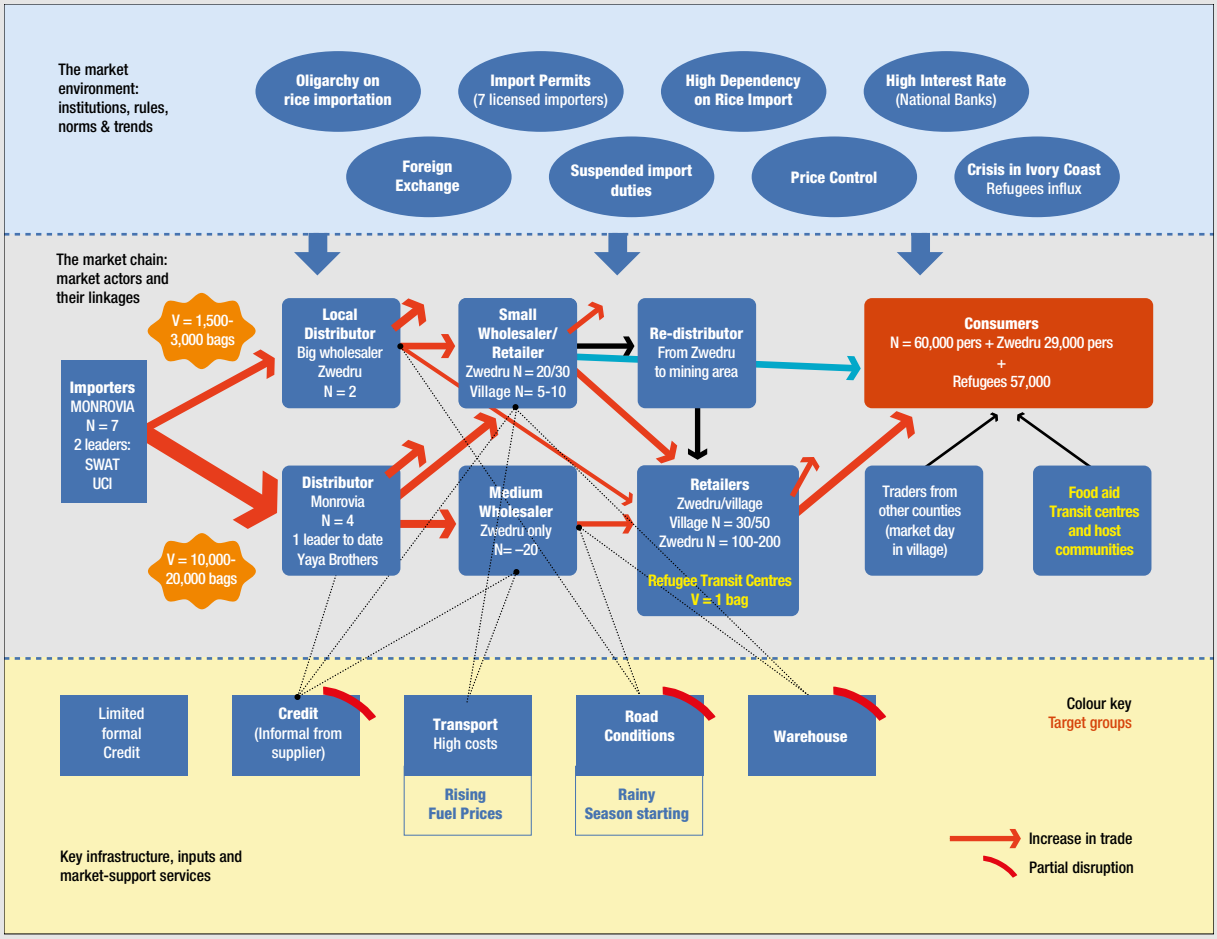
- Can people cover their basic food needs (through production, purchase, gifts, aid etc)? Thus, is there need for an intervention to support them accessing food?
- If there is need of an intervention to support people to access food, what is relevant and feasible (cash transfers or in-kind)? Is food sufficiently available in markets to allow for a cash/voucher programme or would there be a need to provide food in-kind? Or a combination of both?

Through the analysis of this critical market, the EMMA found that though...

1. Some of the larger market actors had the capacity to respond to the increased demand caused by the influx of the refugees...
Market analysis showed that these traders had the capacity to respond to the increase in consumption of rice caused by the influx of refugees. Importers and distributers in Monrovia and distributers and big wholesalers in Zwedru had the capacity (capital, credit opportunities, storage facilities and transport facilities) to meet the estimated additional need of 100 to 200 metric tonnes per month.

2. Local small wholesalers and retailers did not.
The capacity of small wholesalers and retailers in villages to expand to meet the additional demands was much more limited. At this level, traders had limited access to capital (credit), storage and transportation. While these actors could increase their supply within a two to three week time frame, this would be only in limited amounts (from 10 to 15% of their current capacity).

Emergency Affected Imported Rice Market-System Map



Thomas Gayeplu, one of Oxfam's Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods Team leaders with beneficiaries. Photo: Susan Sanders

Taking into account existing market-system capabilities, OGB assessed the viability of innovative programmes targeting refugees and host communities, such as cash-based interventions, local procurement and other forms of support to market actors (e.g. traders).

On the basis of the market analysis, the EMMA concluded that…

- Cash transfers in Zwedru town were possible as traders had the capacity to increase their supplies to meet the estimated needs.
- Pure cash transfers were not possible outside of Zwedru town, as suppliers did not have the capacity to expand sufficiently.
- Moreover, outside of Zwedru, pure food distribution would undermine traders activities and income.

In terms of programming, the analysis recommended that…

- A combination of cash transfer and direct in-kind distribution should be considered to support local markets without overloading them and risking inflation.
- In parallel, support to build local actors' capacity (in capital and transport) would allow for the progressive adaptation of the market, maintain a certain stability in prices and allow a direct supply of rice to the population.

The Added Value of EMMA in Liberia: From Analysis to Responses

While the EMMA has been instrumental in the development of the comprehensive, rapid, response oriented and understandable analysis, the major contribution of EMMA was its ability to provide strong and practical programmatic recommendations that were translated directly to final decision making on response options and to direct operational output.

With the support of other complementary needs assessments, the design of the first phase responses was directly influenced by EMMA's analysis and response recommendations. Although, an additional feasibility study was required to determine the most appropriate and effective cash transfer modality, EMMA provided clear intervention options, with further information on the key risks and assumptions and the likely effect on the target group of any recommended response.

In terms of operational impact, the EMMA survey shaped the OGB emergency and recovery interventions in Grand Gedeh. These interventions, funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) were:

- **Fifteen days of rice purchased and distributed as seed-protection rations, together with a previously planned distribution of seeds and tools to affected host communities two weeks after the assessment. As the EMMA findings had indicated that the market had the capacity to cater to beneficiary needs, the rice was procured in Zwedru.** (There was not enough capacity in the village markets to use cash, vouchers or traders as delivery instruments. The in-kind delivery of food was designed to protect the seeds that were distributed alongside the food, as a means to strengthen rice production);
- **Unconditional cash grants worth $ 40 were distributed to those refugees living in host communities to cover basic refugee needs and complement the existing humanitarian assistance programmes;**
- **Unconditional cash grants worth $ 72 were distributed to vulnerable households (HH) in host communities used as a seed-protection ration. This grant was envisaged to be used to cover both food and agricultural labour cost.**

The distribution of these unconditional cash grants was organised six weeks after the end of the assessment as a pilot project.

In a context where WFP couldn't immediately provide food as seed-protection rations, the EMMA assessment found both the immediate need for these rations and provided immediate solutions. EMMA was able to give additional implementation information - contacts with potential suppliers, answers from suppliers on potential intervention requirements and so forth. It allowed for the rapid purchase of rice, only two weeks after the end of the assessment, thereby ensuring the success of the agricultural support to affected host communities. Critically, the EMMA allowed a broader response than originally planned, devising a response for host communities as well as for refugees.

The response analysis component helped define the type of intervention, and rank the most appropriate interventions according to the overall needs, the environment, the potential impacts and OGB's capacity. The responses also supported a combined approach, implementing food aid responses (for example seed-protection rations) and cash-based programmes. These cash-based programmes helped beneficiaries meet their needs according to their priorities and supported local traders. In this way, where markets are able to function to some extent, sensitively designed and capacity aware cash based approaches can uphold the humanitarian principle to 'do no harm' while also laying the foundations for more sustainable livelihood options.

Key Successes

EMMA's analysis fed directly into OGB's programme responses. As a result, a combination of seeds, tools, a seed protection food ration and a one-off cash grant were given to vulnerable households and refugees in host communities. In a context where the food versus cash debate rages, the EMMA re-grounded OGB's thinking and enabled them to intervene in a progressive and suitable manner. This combination of direct food assistance, livelihoods support and agricultural inputs was not only suitable, but widely heralded in Liberia as innovative and of good quality.

OGB's Mid Term Review from September 2011 states that *"The quality and scale of the EFSL activities was seen by external actors and by beneficiaries as being appropriate and high quality. In comparison to the needs and the activities of other actors, the response was appropriate and of good quality"*[iv].

The review concludes that:

- the assessments were timely, appropriate and gave a good basis to inform programme design;
- while the targeting of beneficiaries was challenging, the targeting criteria for communities was clear, well defined and shared with other actors in the sector;
- procurement of seeds and tools was carried out in a timely way, inputs were of good quality and perceived to be thus by the beneficiaries;
- OGB has been the only actor to use cash transfers. Organisations, such as the FAO commended OGB on their innovative approach to combining seed rations and cash programming, which was seen to be a highly appropriate response. The Mid Term Review states that the use of cash *"was made possible because of early planning of an EMMA assessment although the tool was not known and had never been implemented in the region beforehand"*[v].

The EMMA contributed to the appropriate selection and combination of response modalities, as well as widen the range of options.

Bags of seeds and tools are unloaded prior to the Oxfam seeds and tools distribution in Bah Town, Grand Gedeh County, Liberia Susan Sandars

Martha Jokoka, a 50 year old farmer in Tuzon, Grand Gedeh County, is hosting three refugees. Martha is a beneficiary of Oxfam's seeds and tools distribution. Photo: Susan Sanders

An OGB post-distribution monitoring report for the DFID project, for July and August 2011, found that :

- At least 70% of beneficiaries sowed the distributed seeds. Of these, the vast majority have fully sowed them, with the remaining minority partially sowing them (keeping the remaining seeds for the next planting season). The rate of use shows that the response was appropriate in that it addressed the needs of beneficiairies.
- Over 95% of the beneficiaries are using the tools distributed as part of the programme, frequently lending them to refugees for their use. Again, this number indicates that the programme response was well designed and suitable for the context.
- There were no significant difficulties with the distribution process nor were there any major challenges for the beneficiaries, regarding the seeds or tools, post distribution.
- The cash grants were found to be instrumental in supporting vulnerable households to meet their essential food and non-food needs. Data from the post-distribution monitoring processes revealed that the top three uses of the cash grants were food, construction/ shelter and clothing.
- Unconditional cash grants were provided to 1,087 households in the host communities ($72 per HH) and 2,452 refugee households ($40 per HH). The amount given to the refugee households was less, as they received direct food aid from WFP implemented by Caritas.

The EMMA report was disseminated to other actors and presented at sector meetings at local and national levels. Despite the lack of involvement of other NGOs in the EMMA process, recommendations from the report were included in a food security briefing paper written by OGB and co-signed by other partners (including NRC, Solidarités, Action Aid and Action Contre la Faim) in order to increase humanitarian assistance and consider alternative food security interventions other than food aid. Donors and UN agencies have been willing to meet NGOs to discuss the food security briefing paper. Furthermore, OGB has been advocating for the uptake of market support interventions in the FAO coordination meetings and during the Consolidated Appeals Process Workshop in Monrovia for CAP 2012.

OGB engaged in field level advocacy. The EMMA report was well known in Grand Gedeh in particular and in Liberia as a whole, and has influenced the programme directions and decisions of other NGOs. The OGB office has been frequently visited by other actors, to discuss the findings of the report. However, while the report is generally well known, the interpretation by other agencies has, at times, been problematic as explained below.

Lessons Learnt

Many people, representing many agencies, did not have the time to fully read and digest the EMMA methodology, findings and response recommendations. Certainly, there has been a tendency to use the EMMA work as a justification for cash based initiatives, or to see the assessment as

a cash feasibility study, without a full and systemic understanding of the constraints and possible harm that these interventions may have. Indeed, in Grand Gedeh, where there has been a shortage of labour as a key agricultural input, there have been interventions that have exacerbated these difficulties.

Cash for Work programmes are increasingly being planned and funded in Grand Gedeh. These programmes are designed with good intentions but, at times, insufficient analysis. This lack of overall market analysis increases the risk that these programmes may take labour away from this vital sector at a time where well designed programmes could link those seeking work with those needing labour. Moreover, the exchange of labour for cash is in itself problematic, in that beneficiaries of these programmes may be given cash that outstrips what the markets can offer. Frequently, these beneficiaries must then travel long distances to major trading hubs, such as Zwedru town, to use their money, thereby incurring large transport costs. OGB has been meeting NGOs in coordination meetings to try to address these issues and to establish ways that other programmes will not undermine the work that OGB is doing.

Furthermore, OGB could have used the results of EMMA's analysis of agricultural labour markets more productively and effectively. The EMMA produced very compelling evidence that showed that viable households were those that either have sufficient labour or have access to agricultural labour markets. Households traditionally used less land and produced less than was available or possible due to labour constraints.

The influx of the refugees, in this sense, could be seen as a major opportunity to boost the agricultural labour force and increase production and, therefore, self sufficiency.

The one-off cash grant given to the vulnerable households in host communities was intended to meet immediate food and non-food needs and was succesful at supporting this objective. However, in terms of supporting initiatives that strengthen livelihoods into the medium and longer term, OGB could have taken the opportunity to more directly address the ability of vulnerable households to engage agricultural labour. While, this would have required additional resources – with the cash grant needed for agricultural labour alone estimated to be at $60 for the period of March to September – this could have been very effective in helping vulnerable households recover their productive means in advance of the production season.

Due to staff capacity, the choice of critical markets was restricted to the two selected. In hindsight, OGB believes that further analysis of the key agricultural input markets could have been extremely useful in assessing the best means to deliver the seeds and tools distributed as part of the emergency response. During the first two phases of the project, seeds and tools were given in-kind. A full analysis of market capacity could have led to the development of a voucher programme that could have brought more agricultural inputs to the local market, thereby increasing the access of the general population to seeds and tools.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Adapted to the Liberia context and to slow onset crisis Limited number of critical markets selected which kept the study at a reasonable size based on the resources available Only one agency participating: easy process of defining critical markets and key leading questions, tailored to NGO's need and directly feeding project design Conducted at opportune time while project was still being designed Accessible tool for non-market experts Results used directly in the design of the project and in advocacy messages EMMA results to be used as a baseline and contribute to monitoring and evaluation tools	While there is a strong analytical and technical capacity of the country team, there was neither the time nor the human resources to do follow up assessments or to broaden the market analysis to complementary markets. Additional household interviews required in order to further analyse markets for services No external participation, thereby lessening the advocacy impact. Did not initiate directly a common understanding of the situation and a joint coordination of the response. Lack of inclusion of cash feasibility study in the EMMA methodology EMMA timing and resources depend on the availability of existing background information and market systems structure. Assessment would require more time if secondary information was limited
Opportunities	**Threats**
Trained staff and potential to replicate in other countries EMMA to be applied to other critical markets Potential to be used as a preparedness tool	"Good enough" approach can lead to wrong evaluation if team lacks strong analytical capacities Erroneous selection of critical markets or key analytical questions can lead to misleading results Interrelated market dynamics are not taken into account in the EMMA market assessment

Next Steps in Liberia

Learning from the first phase of the project has been taken on board. Cash grants have now been designed that give $60 to vulnerable host HH to meet the need for agricultural labour alone. Even with the additional money given, this represents only 70% of households' labour requirements. The distribution of seeds and tools has also been extended to refugee households. While it is probably too late for further analysis of the key agricultural input markets to effect the procurement process, this analysis would be invaluable when the annual hunger gap hits. The Liberian programme team is working towards transitioning to longer term developmental work and this DFID funded livelihoods project has been extended.

EMMA also contributed to the development of an exit strategy by developing a series of phased recommendations, those that addressed immediate needs and those that supported host communities and refugees to develop sources of income so that they are able to meet some of these needs themselves. For example, small retailers selling small quantities of food or "cups of rice" lacked credit opportunities to increase their business. In recognition of this, EMMA recommended further interventions that supported small retailers in accessing micro-credit to build capacity in the markets for longer term sustainability. It is still too early to know how far those recommendations were taken into account in the recovery programme.

The use of the EMMA in Liberia was instrumental in shaping the programme's direction and ability to reach the affected host community and refugee households. It is clear that EMMA has created a lot of interest from other organisations in the field and that OGB has been able to develop innovative and potentially more sustainable programming. However, there is still work to do, on using the EMMA to, if not it's full, then to a 'fuller' potential. Moreover, it is critical that OGB captures the lessons learnt that can increase the effectiveness of this tool. The shape that this takes, whether as a practical briefing paper that succinctly addresses the main concepts, findings and recommendations of EMMAs, or something else, is not yet known.

The plight of the refugees and host communities is not over. However, EMMA has been a solid first step in the implementation of programmes that address their needs.

Acronyms

CBI	Cash Based Interventions
DFID	Department for International Development
EFSL	Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GOL	Government of Liberia
HH	Households
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OGB	Oxfam Great Britain
PA	Practical Action
PCM	Project Cycle Management
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme

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Endnotes

i UNHCR (2011) 'More Ivorian refugees move into Liberia's camps', UNHCR, 21st July 2011http://www.unhcr.org.uk/news-and-views/news-list/news-detail/article/more-ivorian-refugees-move-into-liberias-camps.html (last accessed December 2011)

ii These figures are according to the last food security and nutrition survey carried out by WFP, UNICEF and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) in October 2010

iii Ranking criteria: 1/ Relation to urgent need, 2/ market system affected by emergency, 3/ fitting to agency mandate, 4/ seasonal factors and appropriateness of the timing, 5/ consistence with Government and donors plans, 6/ feasibility

iv OGB, (September 2011), 'Mid Term Review of Oxfam GB Humanitarian Response to the influx of Ivorian Refugees in Liberia', Oxfam, Oxford pg 18-19.

v Ibid, pg 19

A local trader in Grand Gedeh, Liberia. Photo: Oxfam

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Front cover: By July 2011, more than 74,000 Ivorian refugees had fled into eastern Liberia. Less than 10% of these were living in refugee camps, instead they stayed with Liberian host communities. Food assistance was then urgently needed for both refugees living in host communities and host communities themselves. However if food aid alone was given, it could have damaged local markets, created dependency and discouraged people from growing their own food. In order to avoid this and still ensure that people in need had enough to eat in the following months, Oxfam started distributing seeds and tools in Liberia's Grand Gedeh County. Photo Susan Sandars