


Oxfam Haiti allegations: How the scandal unfolded

21 February 2018

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The scandal has rocked the charity, which has apologised and promised to 'atone for the past'

Oxfam, one of the UK's biggest charities, has dominated the headlines in recent weeks following allegations its staff hired prostitutes while working overseas.

Since then, the story has continued to develop, with the Charity Commission launching a statutory inquiry - the most serious action it can take.

Oxfam - which has nearly 10,000 staff working in more than 90 countries - denies any cover-up.

Here is a summary of the events so far:

Friday 9 February

- The Times newspaper publishes a front page article under the headline: "Top Oxfam staff paid Haiti survivors for sex".
- The article alleges that **Oxfam covered up claims that senior staff working in Haiti** in the wake of the 2010 earthquake used prostitutes, some of whom may have been underage.



The Times broke the story on its front page

- Among the male staff accused of sexual misconduct is Oxfam's then-director of operations in Haiti, Roland Van Hauwermeiren. He is alleged to have used prostitutes at a villa rented for him by the charity.
- In a statement, **Oxfam denies claims of a cover-up**. It says the behaviour of its staff was "totally unacceptable".
- The charity says it uncovered the accusations in 2011 and immediately launched an internal investigation.
- According to Oxfam's own 2011 report, four members of staff were dismissed and three, including Mr Van Hauwermeiren, were allowed to resign before the end of the investigation. It says claims of underage girls being involved were unproven.

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Roland Van Hauwermeiren, who denies paying for sex

- Oxfam adds that **it had publicly announced the investigation at the time.**
- Culture Secretary Matt Hancock orders Oxfam to hand over all the evidence to the Charity Commission.

Saturday 10 February

- The Charity Commission **says it was not given full details** about the use of prostitutes by aid workers. It says it would have acted differently if it had known all the facts.
- In a fresh story, the Times says Oxfam did not warn other aid agencies about problem staff caught using prostitutes. It emerges that Mr Van Hauwermeiren went on to work elsewhere in the aid sector.
- Oxfam's chief executive, Mark Goldring, says the charity did "anything but" cover up the incident. But he admits the 2011 report released by the charity did not give details of the revelations, and only referred to them as "serious misconduct".



Oxfam GB's chief executive Mark Goldring and chair of trustees Caroline Thomson leave the Department for International Development

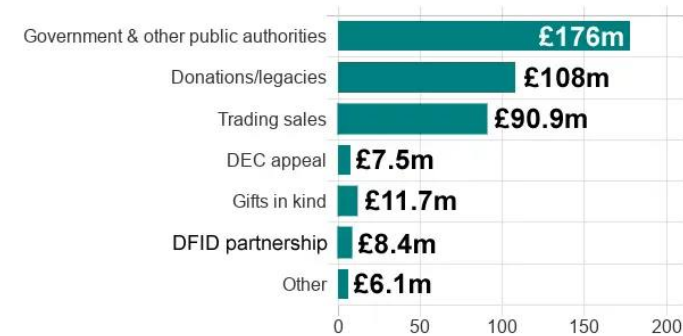
Sunday 11 February

- Oxfam **is hit with further allegations that staff on its mission to Chad,** also led by Mr Van Hauwermeiren, used prostitutes in 2006.
- The Sunday Times **also reports new claims** alleging more than 120 workers from UK charities were accused of sexual abuse in the past year.
- Meanwhile, Oxfam **announces new measures** for the prevention and handling of sexual abuse cases.

- Oxfam's chair of trustees, Caroline Thomson, says staff members had been coming forward with "concerns about how staff were recruited and vetted" following the recent media reports.
- International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt warns that ministers could cut off funding for Oxfam if it cannot account for the way it handled claims.

Where does Oxfam get its money from?

By source, total £408.6m



Source: Oxfam annual report 2016/17



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Monday 12 February

- Oxfam's deputy chief executive Penny Lawrence **resigns over the handling of the sex scandal**. She says she is "ashamed" and takes full responsibility.



Penny Lawrence, who resigned as deputy chief executive of the charity, said concerns were raised about staff behaviour in Chad and Haiti

- The Charity Commission, which regulates the industry, **opens a statutory inquiry into Oxfam** - the most serious action it can take. The watchdog says it has concerns that Oxfam "may not have fully and frankly disclosed" everything it knew about the claims.
- The European Commission, which gave €1.7m to Oxfam's Haiti programme in 2011, threatens it is ready to "cease funding any partner not living up to high ethical standards".

Tuesday 13 February

- The **president of Haiti, Jovenel Moise, condemns Oxfam** and says the actions were an "extremely serious violation of human dignity". A senior government source in Haiti **confirms an investigation will be launched** into foreign aid agencies operating there.



President Jovenel Moise condemned "sexual predator" staff exploiting "needy people in their moment of greatest vulnerability"

Wednesday 14 February

- Actress Minnie Driver **becomes the first famous face to cut ties with Oxfam**. In a statement Ms Driver, who stepped down from her role as a celebrity ambassador for the charity, said she was "nothing short of horrified" by the allegations.

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- Meanwhile, a former colleague of Roland Van Hauwermeiren [tells the IRIN news website](#) that he was investigated by British health charity Merlin after allegations of using prostitutes in Liberia in 2004, before he was employed by Oxfam. The Charity Commission [says it is looking into these reports](#).
- Oxfam confirms that more than 1,200 people [cancelled their direct debit payments to the charity](#) on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday after the first reports of the scandal emerged.

Thursday 15 February

- The former Oxfam director at the centre of the accusations, Roland Van Hauwermeiren, 68, [denies paying for sex but admits some "mistakes"](#). In [an open letter to Belgian media in Dutch](#), he denies that a reception he hosted was, as alleged by the Times, a sex party.
- Archbishop Desmond Tutu steps down from his role as ambassador for Oxfam.

Friday 16 February

- Oxfam [announces it is setting up an independent commission](#) of leading women's rights experts to carry out a review of working culture and practices. It will also create a global database of referees to stop dishonest or unreliable references and triple its safeguarding budget.
- The charity's international executive director Winnie Byanyima [promises the charity would "do justice" and](#)

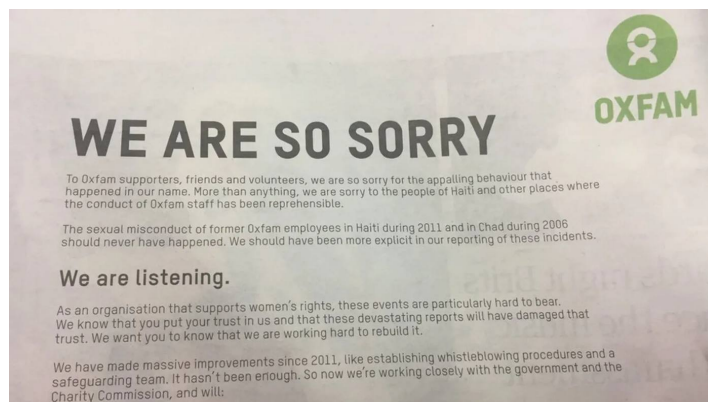
"atone for the past". She is the most senior Oxfam executive to speak on the issue.

- Oxfam **agrees to stop bidding for UK government funding** until it can show it meets the "high standards" required, ministers say. International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt says the charity has "a long way to go" before regaining public trust.
- Meanwhile, chief executive for Oxfam GB, Mark Goldring, **tells the Guardian he believes attacks on the charity** are "out of proportion to the level of culpability".

Saturday 17 February

- Oxfam apologises in a full page advertisement in the Guardian.

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The ad was paid for by supporters rather than the charity

- Meanwhile, another charity - Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) - **comes under scrutiny as the president of Haiti** calls for an investigation into the activities of aid agencies working in his country. Jovenel Moïse, asks why MSF had repatriated 17 of its staff members. MSF said it takes seriously any reports of misconduct.

Sunday 18 February

- In a separate story relating to alleged sexual misconduct in the charity sector, the husband of murdered MP Jo Cox, **Brendan Cox, quits two charities set up in her memory.** Mr Cox denies assaulting a woman in her 30s at Harvard University in 2015 but admits "inappropriate" behaviour while working for Save the Children.

Monday 19 February

- **Oxfam publishes a redacted version of its 2011 internal report into alleged abuse by staff.** It will present the original report to the government in Haiti.
- The **report reveals that three of the men accused of sexual misconduct** physically threatened witnesses during the charity's 2011 investigation.

Tuesday 20 February

- Oxfam boss Mark Goldring and two other senior executives **are hauled in front of MPs.** The International Development Committee hears that around 7,000 people have cancelled donations to the charity. Mr Goldring apologises for the damage done and says 26 claims of sexual misconduct have been made since the scandal broke.

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Mark Goldring: 'We are sorry for the damage done to Haiti and the wider aid efforts'

- Save the Children chief executive Kevin Watkins also gives evidence and says his charity investigated 53 allegations in 2016. He says the Oxfam scandal has been a "wake up call" for the sector.
- Meanwhile, a former chief executive of Save the Children, Justin Forsyth, **makes headlines over three claims of inappropriate behaviour** he received before leaving the charity. He says he has "apologised unreservedly" to the three workers.

Oxfam suspects 'threatened' witnesses
How will the Haiti scandal affect Oxfam?
Reality Check: How much UK charity money goes to Oxfam?
