**Associated British Foods re Oxfam Behind the Brands 2015 scorecard**

1 April 2015

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre invited Associated British Foods to respond to the following items:

* “How do your favourite foods rank now? Latest Behind the Brands scores revealed”, Oxfam, 31 Mar 2015, <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/2015/03/how-do-your-favourite-foods-rank-now>
* “Unilever takes top spot on Oxfam’s Behind the Brands Scorecard Big food companies improve policies but need implementation”, Oxfam, 31 Mar 2015, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressreleases/2015-03-31/unilever-takes-top-spot-oxfams-behind-brands-scorecard>
* “Walking the Talk: Food and beverage companies slowly start turning policy into practice in Oxfam’s Behind the Brands campaign”, Oxfam, 31 Mar 2015, <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/walking-the-talk-food-and-beverage-companies-slowly-start-turning-policy-into-p-347104>

Associated British Foods provided the following response:

“We are disappointed to be positioned at the bottom of the table. As Oxfam knows, we do not have the same business model as most of the other companies featured on the scorecard. So sadly the survey can never reflect the breadth and depth of our work. We have pointed this out to Oxfam many times.

By allowing our individual businesses to make decisions and trusting our people to make the right choices, we don’t present the outside world with the same kind of policy and target-driven culture that many other companies on your list adopt. We believe this enables us to run a more ethical business that positively contributes to the communities in which we operate.

We also recognise that we can always do better and continue to develop plans to further improve our activities in the areas you highlight.

In relation to your campaign on community land rights, we note Oxfam recognises the good work from Illovo ([http://www.illovosugar.co.za/UserContent/Documents/Announcements/Illovo-Launches-Group-Guidelines-on-Land-and-Land\_Rights.pdf](https://mailx.exchange.datagate.net/owa/redir.aspx?C=K6Rhvf5YaUmWuEtZszrkZb0EED_rP9II0B7pX-2MJrQyfdyE1JBcNHeJybwrRvxBJjo7UIaEQc0.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.illovosugar.co.za%2fUserContent%2fDocuments%2fAnnouncements%2fIllovo-Launches-Group-Guidelines-on-Land-and-Land_Rights.pdf) ) but Oxfam’s campaign does not currently appear to recognise our group commitment to land rights which exists in the form of the following Land Acquisition clause in our Supplier Code of Conduct:

‘We adhere to the principle of free, prior and informed consent of all communities when acquiring land. The rights of communities and traditional peoples to maintain access to land and natural resources will be recognised and respected.’

Associated British Foods is committed to being responsible for our people, to being a responsible steward for the environment, to promoting good health and to being a responsible neighbour.  We look forward to continuing the dialogue about how these commitments are realised in the world.”