

VOICES

AUTUMN/WINTER '26

COURAGE IN FOCUS

“

We're building a better life for a better future.

”

In Indonesia, Pawan is helping communities prepare for disasters



04



Galmo is building a business and brighter future

08



Bounlerd is improving local access to water

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Matt is fundraising in memory of his sister, Lisa



OXFAM

WELCOME TO VOICES

Welcome to the latest edition of VOICES, your supporter magazine connecting you with new stories of impact from your global community.

In every edition, we share powerful voices from around the world with you, all sharing the same theme. This time, we’re exploring the theme of courage.

Each and every one of us has the potential to act bravely and do the right thing. Over the following pages, you’ll meet people who’ve acted bravely and learn what courage means to them. Whether it’s helping people to prepare to face disasters, like Pawan (opposite). Or making the bold decision to run a marathon in memory of a loved one, like Matt on **page 10**.

From all these stories, one thing is clear: courage needs action. And it can also lead to new opportunities, which was true for Esther on **page 6**, who defied cultural expectations and became an elected official in Malawi.

What courage looks like in your own life is yours to define. From signing a petition, to starting your own; to speaking up for what’s right, or encouraging others to do the same. We hope these stories strengthen your resolve to act boldly, create new opportunities and drive meaningful change.

Thank you for being a valued member of this global community. Your solidarity is powering more and more acts of bravery, kindness and compassion all over the world.

We hope you enjoy reading VOICES.

Yours,
Team VOICES

Cover: Pawan, Anticipatory Action Project
Manager at KONSEPSI, an Oxfam partner.
Cover image: Kyo Umareta/Oxfam

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Your voice matters and we want to know your thoughts. Please take two minutes to scan this QR code or visit the website to fill out the survey: oxfam.org.uk/voicessurvey



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Pawan stands near a sign marking a local evacuation route.
Kyo Umareta/Oxfam



When disaster struck,
I STAYED.”

In 2018, after a devastating earthquake struck his home in Lombok, Indonesia, activist Pawan’s perspective changed forever. Now, he devotes his time to preparing people for disasters, working alongside Oxfam and partners to save lives.

After the earthquake

On the night the earthquake struck, I made sure my loved ones were safe before travelling by motorbike to the most affected areas with my supplies.

In the darkness, I navigated damaged roads to reach isolated communities. The air was filled with cries for help. It was one of the most devastating experiences I’ve ever witnessed.

I stayed alongside affected communities for 165 days and met families who had lost almost everything, yet still shared food, comfort and hope with their neighbours. These experiences transformed the way I see the world, showing me the impact of disaster and people’s extraordinary resilience.



Working with local knowledge supports people to overcome disasters.
Aimee Han/Oxfam

Working alongside Oxfam

I now support communities to prepare for disasters through my work with KONSEPSI and partners, supported by Oxfam. Together, we have developed inclusive early warning systems and plans to adapt to climate change that are rooted in local knowledge.

Acting before disasters strike

Through our project ‘I CAN ACT’, we take an ‘anticipatory action’ approach: helping communities prepare for disasters before they happen and providing cash transfers so people can protect themselves when they do.

I’ve learned that, across villages at greater risk of disasters, traditions and cultural practices help people anticipate these events, by observing things like weather patterns and signs. My role isn’t to replace this knowledge, but to help connect it with science and policy.

Hope for the future

I believe that solutions to disasters and the climate crisis don’t just come from global policies, but from the strength of collective action and local leadership.

The climate crisis made recovering from the earthquake harder, with changing weather causing water shortages as well as flooding. But when communities are given the space to lead, they create solutions that are more inclusive, sustainable and grounded in the reality they face every day.

“These experiences transformed how I see the world.”

KONSEPSI

Konsorsium Untuk Studi dan Pengembangan Partisipasi
Consortiums for Study and Development of Participations

KONSEPSI

Oxfam partner Consortium for Study and Development of Participation (KONSEPSI) is a non-governmental organisation based in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia.

KONSEPSI works alongside communities, making a virtue of local knowledge and communication systems to help people prepare for disasters before they strike.



This is our life now, and we will **KEEP GOING.**

In Marsabit County, northern Kenya, pastoralist communities are living through a devastating cycle of drought and flooding, disrupting the grazing patterns their herds have relied on for generations.

After losing entire herds, it takes huge courage to start again. But that’s what local leaders like Galmo and Mamo are doing. By working alongside Oxfam and partners, their community groups are using cash transfers to broaden their sources of income, so that they can withstand challenges ahead. These include growing crops, beekeeping and rearing and selling goats that will cope better in droughts.



Group member, Mamo, pictured herding goats in Turbi village.
Peter Irungu/Oxfam



Mamo, discussing their herd with another member of his group, Adam.
Peter Irungu/Oxfam

Mamo’s story

Mamo (pictured above) saw that the disabled community was not being sufficiently supported by existing services, so he became part of the Turbi Disability Group. Each member puts money into the collective pot each month to build trust, and they are working together to create a strong business.

“We formed this group to show that we matter: that we have rights, too. We thought that people with disabilities were a group that is not recognised. But we wrote a proposal and sent it to Oxfam partner Strategies for Northern Development (SND). They gave us a grant.

“We started the goat restocking business. We sold them and made a profit. Without the collaboration, we would have never achieved the successes that we were able to document. We are very happy with this project.”



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self-help groups in Marsabit County are using cash grants from Oxfam and Strategies for Northern Development to build income

Galmo’s story

Galmo (pictured right) is the chairperson of the Mifugo ni Mali Women’s Group. Alongside her group, she is part of a goat-rearing business. They have also been planting trees by nearby schools and plan to build a new hall they can rent out to host events.

“Oxfam and SND supported us with a cash grant. We chose keeping livestock as a business because it is our best option as pastoralist women. We used our grant to buy fifty more goats. We also used the money to buy sanitary towels, and books and pens for our children.

“With this business, we do not have to walk long distances. This is our life now, and we will keep going.”



80%
of the Marsabit population are pastoralist farmers and rear livestock to make a living



Galmo, chair of the Mifugo ni Mali Women’s Group.
Peter Irungu/Oxfam

READ THE REPORT

To learn more about how communities on the frontline of the climate crisis are building a brighter future, with the support of climate finance, read our report ‘Communities in Charge’. Scan the QR code or follow this link: oxfam.org.uk/voicescommunities



STRATEGIES FOR NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT
Oxfam partner Strategies for Northern Development (SND) works with pastoralist communities to help people build resilience to extreme climate shocks. Pastoralism is a long-standing traditional way of life, where people raise and rear livestock and live a nomadic lifestyle, often in places where it is difficult to grow crops.



AUSTRALIAN AID
Oxfam acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP).



Members of the Mifugo ni Mali Women’s Group, stand by their group’s goat pen.
Peter Irungu/Oxfam



Honourable Esther Jolobala is the member of parliament for Machinga East, Malawi.
Tavwana Chirwa/Oxfam

“This gave me confidence and STRENGTH.”

By following our own path, we can help make it easier for others to follow theirs. While women continue to be underrepresented in public office, Esther Jolobala followed her dream of becoming an elected member of parliament in Malawi. Now, she’s working in collaboration with Oxfam and partner, WOLREC, to support other women to get involved in politics. Read her interview here.

What made you want to go into politics?

The women in parliament are doing their level best to represent women and others frequently left out of policy discussions. I think we need more women in parliament because we are 52% of the population.

When I introduced the topic of going into politics to my family, everybody was laughing. Laughing because they

believed politics can only be done by retired people or well-to-do families.

What are some of the challenges women face?

Where I am from, few of us women managed to reach college level, because of the distances we were travelling to access primary and secondary education. So I asked myself, “What is it that I can do to support my community?”

How have you taken action in your role?

So far, one of the areas I have focused on has been to shorten the distances girls have to travel to school by opening up new primary schools and secondary schools.

I also supported laws that will allow the registration of land to be both for a woman and a man. A woman should not be removed from where she was living when her husband dies.

How have you been working with Oxfam?

Oxfam supported me to get knowledge and the confidence and strength to do my role.

With Oxfam, I have learned how we can engage our communities and make the best use of women’s forums. Together, we have managed to get champions from within our communities. A large number of women have shown interest. I feel that I should partner with Oxfam in trying to support aspiring women, so that we can change the narrative of just having men as members of parliament.



WOMEN'S LEGAL RESOURCES CENTRE (WOLREC)

THE WOLREC PARTNERSHIP
The Women’s Legal Resources Centre (WOLREC) is a Malawian non-governmental organisation dedicated to empowering women and girls by dismantling structural inequalities and increasing their access to legal, socio-political and economic justice.

Oxfam has been working alongside partners such as WOLREC in Malawi since 2017, focusing on increasing the representation of women across all levels of government.



Esther chats with school children at a local primary school.
Tavwana Chirwa/Oxfam

LEARN MORE

To learn more about our work on gender injustice, scan the QR code or follow this link: oxfam.org.uk/voicesgenderjustice



Rania stands in front of her tent in a makeshift camp, Gaza City.
Hassona Aljerjawie/Alef Multimedia/Oxfam



Community initiatives began TO GROW.”

In Gaza, almost the entire population of 2.1 million people has been forcibly displaced. The Israeli military’s bombardment continues despite the ceasefire, and the entry of aid and vital equipment is almost entirely blocked.

Rania, who holds two degrees, was forced to flee her home with her family and now lives in a camp. To help restore a sense of safety and dignity, Oxfam partners are improving the camp’s water and hygiene facilities.

Losing our home

Displacement is an extremely painful experience. From the moment I left my home, I lost my privacy. I began to feel as if I was living in the street.

Life at the camp

Life is incredibly difficult. Providing water was a daily struggle. Diseases spread. Skin infections increased. I suffered like any mother with her children. The situation in the camp began to improve when Oxfam and partners worked with us.

Working with Oxfam

We worked together and community initiatives began to grow. Oxfam partners ran workshops about the dangers of suspicious and explosive objects, and psychosocial support sessions. These sessions eased the fear and anxiety.

Improving water access

A submersible pump was installed for the camp’s well. Water became readily available. We were able to have a bathroom inside the tent. This made a huge difference for me and my daughters, in terms of cleanliness and privacy. But as long as the drone keeps hovering above us and we live in tents, life will remain very difficult.

Hoping for peace

Our lives will become normal and dignified when reconstruction begins, when the war truly stops, when there is real safety. When you can move freely. When you can go and return in peace.



Rania’s child washes her hands at an Oxfam handwashing station.
Hassona Aljerjawie/Alef Multimedia/Oxfam



AISHA
The Association for Woman and Child Protection (AISHA) is an independent Palestinian women’s organisation, dedicated to women’s economic empowerment and gender equality. AISHA provides psychosocial support to women and children in Gaza.



PARC
Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC) works with Palestinian farmers and people who live in rural areas to support them with humanitarian relief and to build strong community networks and resources.

LEARN MORE

To find out more about the situation in Gaza, our response and how you can take action, scan the QR code or follow this link: oxfam.org.uk/voicesgaza





There have been a lot of CHANGES.

In the village of Nampot, Laos, a lack of access to clean water was seriously affecting people’s ability to live their lives. Bounlerd could see how much this was impacting his community, and took action. As a locally elected grant leader, he worked with Oxfam and partners to build a water system that would supply his entire village, all year round. This is his story.

Bounlerd sits in front of his community water tank, built using a grant from Oxfam’s livelihood projects.
Rachel Schaevitz/Oxfam



Surrounded by mountains, the village of Nampot is extremely remote and accessible by one unpaved road.
Rachel Schaevitz/Oxfam

Life in Nampot

My name is Bounlerd, I’m 30 years old and I’m currently living in Nampot village. Since I’ve lived here, there have been a lot of changes and developments.

Most families in the village make their living from rice and crop cultivation, and by raising livestock such as buffaloes, cows, ducks and chickens. These are the main sources of livelihood here.

From what I’ve seen, many households are still living in difficult conditions and struggling to make a living.

Representing my community

One day, Oxfam partner Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU) visited our village to share some information and carry out the selection process for becoming part of a committee to help address local challenges.

As for how I became a committee member, the LFTU led the selection process, I put myself forward and there was a vote. I’m very glad that the villagers have trust in me. So far, my main duties included handling finances and accounting, as well as supervising activities overall. This is how I got involved with helping to improve the village’s water system, with the support of a grant from Oxfam.

Fixing water challenges

The village wanted to upgrade the water supply system as it wasn’t sufficient to meet everyone’s needs.

The water from the village source is very clean, but it’s not enough to supply everyone. Previously,

during the dry season, villagers had to go to a stream quite far away to get water. Some villagers even had to use their vehicles and bring containers to fetch water for their households. That’s why we needed the grant support.

Working with Oxfam

With the support of Oxfam, the 64 million LAK grant (approximately £2,000) was used to buy pipes, steel, cement and wooden planks to build a water reservoir for storing and channelling water to the tank. This is to improve water storage so that we have enough water during the dry season.

The improvement makes life easier because we can use the water for watering our gardens, doing laundry, bathing and drinking.

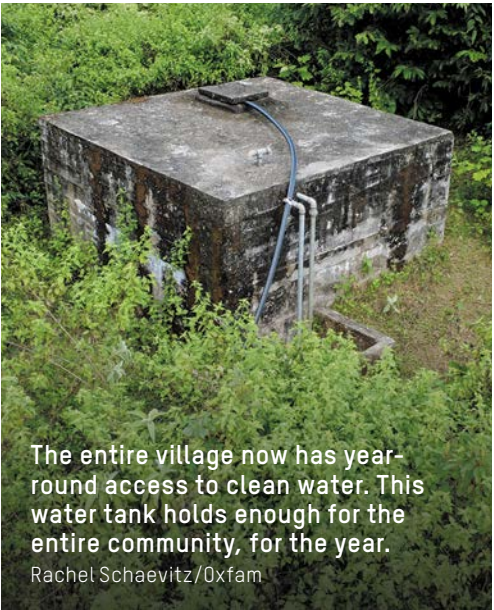
Improvements for everybody

I’m very glad and proud that I was involved in the project. Everyone in the village is very happy with the improved water supply system and making it more convenient. When villagers have better access to water, they have more time for crop or rice cultivation and raising livestock.

Future steps

In the future, I’d like to see better road access to the village since the current condition isn’t good. I also hope we can have an open area for gatherings and events, because our village doesn’t have an open area to hold community events. It would be nice if we had a communal area or even a shared fish pond for the village.

“I’m very glad and proud that I was involved.”



The entire village now has year-round access to clean water. This water tank holds enough for the entire community, for the year.
Rachel Schaevitz/Oxfam



LAO FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS
Oxfam worked with local partner the Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU) to deliver this project. The LFTU is Laos’ sole trade union organisation, and works by training community grant leaders, such as Bounlerd, to manage projects and take key decisions that benefit entire communities.



Lisa’s memory LIVES ON.”

When Matt lost his sister, Lisa, to cancer in 2023, he wanted to do something powerful to celebrate her life. They had grown up together in Tanzania, which Matt says made them think about the world in a certain way. This experience inspired him to raise money for Oxfam in her memory – so he decided to run a marathon.

Remembering my sister

Lisa was 11 months older than me and we were incredibly close – like twins. She was an incredible, larger-than-life person. Everyone who knew her loved her.

Raising money for Oxfam is a way to carry on Lisa’s legacy. We won’t forget her and I don’t want anyone else to forget her, either. She is cool and she is brilliant. And her meaning lives on.

Running the marathon

The run I did for Oxfam was the first stand-alone marathon I’d ever done. But it’s pretty typical for me to go straight in at the deep end.

The idea of the big pink fairy came from a photo of her, when she’d gone to a rugby cup final match dressed like that. I thought, “I’ll run like that as well.”



The support from the crowd was incredible. People laughed, smiled and made comments. I stopped and spent some time at each Oxfam support station.

Choosing Oxfam

Oxfam’s work feels close to home, and Lisa would have been there every step of the way, supporting my choice. Providing basic necessities like water is so important. The difference that water makes is unbelievable. I saw that when I was a child in Tanzania. No one should have to walk that far for something that simple. We have to get the basics like water right.

My next challenge

For my next challenge, I want to fly to southern Spain, run to another airport about fifty miles away, then fly back – all in one day. The money for that, I’ll give to Oxfam. There are so many charities, but it is a great one, and it does good things. I can only support charities I believe in.

I know that Lisa would have been so proud of our family for raising money for important causes.

**GIVE OR SUPPORT IN
MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE**

A gift in memory of your loved one is a meaningful way to celebrate the life they led and the values they held dear. If you’d like to learn more, scan the QR code or follow this link:
oxfam.org.uk/voicesinmemory



Matt wants to keep the memory of his sister alive.
Andy Aitchison



Matt dressed as a pink fairy to run the marathon, in honour of his sister Lisa.
Andy Aitchison

Kripa felts one of the designs for the new Bagpuss range.
Bhim Dangol/Oxfam



Our workplace is really ENCOURAGING.”

Artisans like Kripa (pictured above), who work with our partner, Hatale, have been busy creating felt items for a new Sourced by Oxfam product range. We’re delighted to share that Bagpuss, the classic British animated children’s character, will be getting his own line!

Every product included in our Sourced by Oxfam range meets the highest ethical and sustainable standards. Hatale (meaning handmade) is one of our partners working on the new Bagpuss line. It is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, and employs over 300 people from nearby villages, including Kripa.

Kripa loved crafting the Bagpuss line and most of all the coaster, saying, “It

makes me happy due to its pink colour with a soft and charming expression.”

Kripa shared what working at Hatale means to her, “This work is a path for me being independent and provides strong financial support for my family. It means I can work in Nepal and don’t need to go abroad to support my family because I have fair wages and a good working environment.”



**BAGPUSS
AND HATALE**

Artisans at Hatale have been using a needle and wool technique to handcraft part of the new Bagpuss line.

Oxfam placed the order during the low season, which meant that more Hatale artisans could work all year round and support their families.

**CHECK OUT THE
NEW RANGE**

To explore our new Bagpuss range, and discover even more treats from Sourced by Oxfam, scan the QR code or follow this link: oxfam.org.uk/voicesshops



You can shop our new Bagpuss range online, and support people like Kripa.
Abbie Newton/Oxfam



I'm a true farmer AT HEART.

In Vietnam's Mekong Delta – also known as the 'rice bowl' – farmers were stuck at a disadvantage. They were growing rice and selling it to traders, which meant that when harvests failed, they bore the losses alone, and when yields were good, they were pressured into selling at low prices.

Yen Hang (pictured) had a different vision for business. But she needed support to bring it to life.

She joined Oxfam's Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investments in South East Asia (GRAISEA) programme. This helped her build stronger relationships with farmers and processors, encouraging them to work as cooperatives who now share the risks of harvests.

Yen Hang told us, "All I want is to bring Vietnam's finest rice to the world. My staff now enjoy stable lives, are happy with their work and feel confident in taking care of their families."

Yen Hang visits a rice field in Vinh Long, Mekong Delta, a major rice-growing area in Vietnam.
Pham Huynh Nhu/Oxfam



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Rogers Ouma-Ojwook/Oxfam

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