



Walk and Talk activity in Gaza for women survivors of cancer - Aid and Hope. Credit: Ain Media, May 2023.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS FUND

"To see the partners move from where they were to where they are now...has been beautiful"

Blandina Bobson, Oxfam Director Programmes, Kenya

Year 3 Interim Report

DECEMBER 2022 – MAY 2023



OXFAM

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ACHIEVEMENTS



Usikimye continue to run a feeding programme in Nairobi for up to 20,000 children to reduce their vulnerability to abuse and oppression. Photo credit: Usikimye

It has been another busy six months for the Women's Rights Fund (WRF). From running community activities and hosting supporter trips, to launching a webpage and holding our first event for institutional donors, the last few months have seen the WRF become increasingly 'visible' to the donor community and within Oxfam.

In this report we would like to share with you the highlights from December 2022 to May 2023 period, from Kenya and OPT as well as the global management team.

Kenya

Usikimye have been supporting members of the LGBTQ+ community, creating safe spaces for people to come together. There has been a significant rise in homophobia and transphobia in recent months due to a Bill that is being debated in parliament to make homosexuality illegal.

One Usikimye member said "**I get to talk, put all my stress and sadness on the table and leave feeling a bit lighter**".

Through their hotline and social media platforms, Usikimye are responding to approximately 660 calls for help per month.

AWAK have just completed another set of trainings to 67 farmers, who received 10 trees each. The training was undertaken in partnership with the Kenyan Forestry Institute and included how to prepare seed for growth, create the right soil composition and to plant and nurture. Extension workers¹ from the Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI) that AWAK collaborate with, will follow up with each farmer to make sure trees survive (last year 96% did).

IREMO held training sessions for community champions on gender responsive budgeting. This means they can more confidently attend county government meetings to lobby for the importance of gender issues to be taken into account when budgeting – for example, care related work, provision of water, support to early childhood education centers and for water and lights in maternity clinics.

¹ Agricultural extension services provide farmers with important information, such as patterns in crop prices, new seeds varieties, management practices with respect to crop cultivation and marketing, and training in new technologies. Extension services improve the knowledge base of farmers through a variety of means, such as demonstrations, model plots, specific training and group meetings.

This year **Badili Africa** have been shifting to the inclusion of men in their activities and discussions around gender-based violence (GBV). So far they have trained 20 men who will now go out to engage male groups in different communities.

AWEIK convened a meeting for small-scale artisanal miners to check on the progress of a case the miners filed against the Kenyan government's plan to introduce heavy taxation on their work. They have also partnered with the miners to organise the Kenya Mining Week from 17th to 19th July to lobby the government on the same.

Dhobi Women Network (DWN) have continued their training and awareness sessions with domestic workers about labour rights and gender-based violence. Dhobi Women Network have recently launched a new strategy which you can read [here](#).

Encouragingly, we are starting to see cross-collaboration between some of the WRF partners in Kenya. **DWN** and **Badili Africa** both refer gender-based violence cases to **Usikimye**. **AWAK** has trained DWN members on kitchen farming to support domestic workers food security and are launching an urban farming project in Nairobi with Usikimye, to respond to the ongoing food shortage and inflation.

Oxfam in Kenya hosted WRF supporters in March where all 6 partners and many community members were met. We are very grateful to all the partners who spent time and care planning the activities for the time that was spent with them.

Occupied Palestinian Territory

As well as using the WRF grant for operational costs, **Aid and Hope** have recruited a coach to offer counselling to 60 women survivors of cancer and provide them with well-being kits (including hygiene, beauty and other self-care items).

During March and April, **Bisan** ran 12 workshops in Gaza for 80 women and men, on sexual and mental health. They have continued to refurbish their meeting hall, making it accessible for people with disabilities and are building an extension where children can play while their mothers are in workshops.



Artisanal miners, supported by AWEIK, at a meeting in Nairobi, March '23. Credit: The Dispatch Agencies.



AWAK members training Dhobi Women Network on kitchen gardening (in bags as the women have no access to land). Mombasa, May '23.

WEFAQ have been concentrating investments in the capacity of their staff. They are working with consultants to identify areas for organisational development, including writing funding proposals and developing strategic and operational plans. They have also recruited a media coordinator. For more information on WEFAQ's work with women and girls in Gaza – please see their beautiful new [video](#).

Family Defense Society (FDS) dedicated most of their grant over the past six months to operational costs to keep the shelter running. This includes staff salaries, fuel and food for residents (16 women and 6 children).

They also ran 25 workshops on communication skills and domestic violence (for 178 women) and responded to 191 calls for help.

FDS now have an official agreement with the Ministry of Social Development, whereby they will be paid for hosting women referred through the ministry.

Global Fund Management Team

Kenya and OPT teams, as well as the global management team, came together with all partners at the first learning event in December 2022 (held on-line). The [WRF learning paper](#) has been finalised, covering the first two years of operation.

The WRF [webpage](#) launch was very much appreciated by partners and helps them to connect to donor community. To our knowledge, it is the first time Oxfam GB has had a webpage that features partner organisations so prominently.

Our donor pool continues to grow. £100K was received from People Post Code Lottery (in addition to their contribution to the WRF's mental health work – please see page 8).

We held a successful webinar in April to introduce WRF to institutional donors. The webinar featured speakers from **Aid & Hope**, **WEFAQ**, **IREMO** and **Usikimye** in conversation with Oxfam GB's CEO, Danny Sriskandarajah. 25 potential donors attended and we are now following up on leads.

Financial processes are becoming simpler: we have reduced the number of grant instalments to partners from 3 to 2, reducing the administrative burden on them.

We continue to simplify our reporting process. This report was written based on an interview with Oxfam colleagues in Kenya and OPT and reviewed by partners. They were not required to send anything in writing.



FUNDS RAISED BY PARTNERS

(DECEMBER 22 – MAY 23)

Partner Organisation Name	Donor	Amount raised in US\$
Wefaq	Global Communities	237,402
	OCHA	53,217
Badili Africa	ACT/USAID	21,662
	HANNS SEIDEL FOUNDATION	6,679
	HBF	16,672
	FORUM CIV	27,280
AWEIK	Brilliant Earth Kenya/Pact International	35,000
	Oxfam GB (Fair4All Project)	164,797
Dhobi Women Network	CRAWN TRUST	650
Usikimye	Amplify Girls	10,000
	CIGNA	20,000
	HIVOS	25,000 (Yet to be disbursed)
IREMO	ForumCiv	14,500
	Oxfam (drought response)	24,096
	Diakonia	63,278
Total		720,233

CHALLENGES



Members of Bisan learning new skills in Palestinian embroidery. Gaza, March 2023. Credit: Bisan

Kenya

Recent rise in homophobia and transphobia has put Usikimye offices and staff at risk, with some community members and local officials initially turning against them because of their support of LGBTQ+ groups. Despite this, Usikimye have continued their work (more discreetly) and are planning to hold events during Pride Month to show support for the community. These will be invitation only for safeguarding reasons.

Drought continued to be a challenge particularly for IREMO and AWAK during the reporting period. IREMO reported that pastoralist farmers had returned home since their animals had perished and that the subsequent stress and feelings of hopelessness have resulted in increased gender-based violence.

Farmers supported by AWAK have worked hard to protect and nurture their saplings. However, despite other parts of the country receiving adequate rainfall, Kitui has not. Farmers have undertaken many activities to ensure they are ready to collect the rain when it comes so they 'do not waste a drop'.

OPT

The escalation of violence in Gaza in May 2023 has caused considerable stress for Oxfam colleagues and WRF partners. Thankfully, all our teams and partners were safe, though we are sorry to report that some partners lost close friends.

Oxfam's WRF manager in OPT, Sukaina Samhan, has left the Fund and we are in a period of transition. Luckily, Sukaina is working in another Oxfam programme and able to support while recruitment is in place. Sukaina's departure has led to some delays in recruiting new partners and in carrying out further safeguarding trainings. This will be pursued in the next reporting period.

Global Fund Management Team

The approach to institutional donors will take time to come to fruition. This donor group is not used to flexible funding modalities.

MENTAL HEALTH



Participant of Aid and Hope's Walk and Talk activity for cancer survivors. Gaza, May 2023. Credit: Ain Media

As well supporting the WRF's granting mechanism, the People Post Code lottery has granted us £150,000 to work specifically on mental health activities with partners for whom this is relevant. This initial grant covered the period from April 2022 to March 2023.

The grant enabled a total of four WRF partners in OPT and Kenya to pilot community-based mental health activities for vulnerable communities.

In Gaza (OPT), two women's protection groups were established by Aid & Hope and WEFAQ, comprising a total of 40 women. The groups received comprehensive training on community mental health support. Participants identified several pressing issues faced by women in the local community, including apprehensions about the future, feelings of isolation and physical discomfort. Various actions ranging from theatre to stress management workshops

helped the women's groups to build community support. Together the two groups supported 654 women and 182 children in vulnerable communities where mental health is a taboo topic.

In Kenya, a total of 40 Badili Africa and Usikimye members were trained on mental health support. They then went on to conduct 420 group therapy sessions for women, girls and gender minorities. In addition, 40 safe spaces were established and strengthened in Nairobi for community members to come together, especially for sexual and gender minorities.

The impact of these interventions is best expressed by one of the women who participated in the activities. She stated:

"Mental health therapy saved my life! Mental health is just as important as physical health".

NEXT STEPS



WRF Team Meeting in Amman, Jordan, June 2023. Credit: Oxfam.

- ❑ Badili Africa, DWN, Aid & Hope and FDS will be ending their 3-year cycle with the WRF. We will be defining how to transition to a non-financial relationship with them.
- ❑ WRF partner meeting – held in June 2023 – you can read a preview of the report [here](#).
- ❑ Following on from last year's safeguarding training run by an external consultant, Oxfam Kenya are looking to work with partners on an individual basis to address the gaps identified from the training.
- ❑ Video production with FDS and Bisan.
- ❑ Onboarding of new partners in OPT and Kenya.
- ❑ Recruitment of OPT gender lead.
- ❑ Further develop plans for expansion of WRF in the Middle East and North Africa region.

FINANCE

Programme activities	Year 3 Budget (GBP) Dec 2022 - Nov 2023	Year 3 Expenditure Dec 2022 - May 2023	Variance	Comments
Output 1: Direct Support to Partner Organisations				
Grant to WROs in OPT	104,034	76,129	27%	On track
Grant to WROs in Kenya	132,707	46,044	65%	Expenditure from two partners not included due to delayed submission
Capacity strengthening activities (OPT & Kenya)	21,715	5,340	75%	On track as most actions post May period.
<i>Total for Output 1</i>	<i>258,456</i>	<i>128,619</i>	<i>51%</i>	
Output 2: Oxfam and WRO partner staff gain awareness of mental health issues and identify ways to integrate actions to promote self-care amongst their				
Research activities in countries	5,481	-	100%	This budget line being moved to include expenditure for staff well-being
Research analysis, reports etc	-	-		
<i>Total for Output 2</i>	<i>5,481</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>100%</i>	
Output 3: Improvement in Oxfam GB's partnership policy, practice, processes and ways of working with WROs, in alignment with our ambition to be feminist and partner led.				
Sharing and documenting of experience on internal processes by country teams, OGB, OI and identifying ways to make them lighter, more equitable. (MEAL and Visibility)	11,183	4,109	63%	On track will be spent by year end
<i>Total for Output 3</i>	<i>11,183</i>	<i>4,109</i>	<i>63%</i>	
Output 4: Learning from the project is used to influence other stakeholders to enhance support for small WROs and for women's rights actions.				
Learning Report End of Year 1 (230 gbp x 15 days).	-	-		
<i>Total for Output 4</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>		
Staff and Other Costs (including Admin, MEL & Safe Programming, Travel and others)				
Oxfam OPTI	17,734	6,304	64%	On track-expenses will be booked annually
Oxfam Kenya	30,000	3,818	87%	
Oxfam GB				
<i>Total Staff Costs</i>	<i>47,734</i>	<i>10,122</i>	<i>79%</i>	
Grand Total	322,854	141,745	56%	



OXFAM

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