

VOICES

AUTUMN/WINTER '24



We hope for a society free of violence.

Shaden is supporting families in the West Bank

CHANGE IN FOCUS

04



Nahla is repairing technology for women in Yemen

06



George is making disaster preparation more inclusive

09



Kate is embracing life's changes as a volunteer



OXFAM

WELCOME TO VOICES

I'm so pleased to welcome you to the latest edition of VOICES, your Oxfam supporter magazine, in which we have the great pleasure of sharing stories from our global community with you.

In this edition, we're exploring the theme of change. From our global fight to protect our environment to the vital individual actions we take to tackle local challenges, together we're on a collective journey to improve our planet. While change can feel daunting, it is often essential. Challenging unfair systems and working for a fairer society are some of the most powerful things we can achieve together.

This issue of VOICES is filled with stories from people driving change, and every action adds up to something huge. In Yemen, Nahla shares how she trained to repair mobile phones and technology while navigating loss (p4). And in a Q&A with George (p6), we hear about his community work advocating for disabled people in the island country of Vanuatu.

In the West Bank, which I recently visited myself to see the incredibly important work you support, changemakers like Shaden offer help to families facing domestic violence, and living with the consequences of conflict (p3).

Meanwhile in Ghana, while the climate crisis is threatening cocoa production, Leticia is stepping up and fighting for fairer prices for farmers (p12).

This issue of VOICES demonstrates a truly global effort to achieve change and I really hope you enjoy – and find inspiration – in your reading. On behalf of all of us at Oxfam, I want to say thank you for being a part of our global community. Together, we can work for real change: change that will make the world a fairer, more equal place for everyone.

Andy Aitchison/Oxfam



With warmest wishes, as always,

Halima Begum
CEO of Oxfam GB

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ACHIEVEMENTS inspire us to keep going.

As violence in Gaza continues, settler violence and discriminatory policies from Israeli authorities on the West Bank have also led to killings and the widespread demolitions and confiscation of Palestinian homes and land. Shaden, director of Oxfam partner, the Family Defense Society (FDS), is working with women and families experiencing both domestic violence and the ongoing consequences of the Israeli occupation. Oxfam is supporting the FDS through the Women's Rights Fund.

My name is Shaden

I live in the West Bank and I've worked at the FDS for almost 20 years. I first started as a social worker. Now, I've been the director for eight years. We hope for a society that is free from violence. Where women can claim their rights, and where gender-based discrimination no longer exists in our Palestinian community.

The best thing about my job is feeling that your work is making a real difference to women's lives. Sometimes you encounter cases that are very difficult, but later turn into success stories. Seeing these achievements inspires us to keep going. It's so gratifying to feel you've helped people build a new life.

How the Family Defense Society works

The FDS was set up in 1994 by a group of women. Now, we support almost 1,500 people each year.

I think what distinguishes us from other organisations is our joined-up approach. Our services are free and comprehensive: we provide social, psychological, legal and economic support. Recently, we've developed an economic empowerment program,

where women can train in various professions, providing opportunities to enter the job market and earn incomes of their own.

In terms of [domestic violence] prevention, we run awareness and education programmes. We also have a protection programme through our safe house, where we provide temporary shelter for women at high risk.

The impact of conflict

Currently, there's an increase in the number of people that need our help. Most of these cases involve children, because

"That's the most important thing for us: serving the best interests of women."

they are scared. In the Nablus region, there are attacks [on Palestinians] almost daily by the Israeli army and settlers.

Women report that their children are bedwetting.

To protect children from the violence, education is mostly online. Many women don't know how to use these online systems so it becomes a challenge for them to help children [with their learning].

In addition, many men and women have lost their jobs, specifically those in the Occupied Palestinian Territory who worked in Israel. Crossings between here and Israel have been closed and movement is restricted. This economic situation adds to

Shaden working in her office in the West Bank. Foza Masalma/Oxfam



people's psychological pressure, grief and despair. Further, the ongoing and escalating violence outside of the home increases pressure and stress at home, which can in turn lead to a rise in domestic violence.

Using the Women's Rights Fund

Oxfam funding played a role in us being able to develop FDS and support more marginalised women and children. The funding is flexible, so we've been able to use it where it's needed most. It has helped us provide food, medication and other essentials to shelter residents and improve facilities, as well as paying staff salaries.

Through our partnership with Oxfam, we've taken courses on project proposal writing, as well as having training in types of self-care. Relieving the psychological pressure on my team is essential, and means we can keep providing the best services to more women. That's the most important thing for us: serving the best interests of women.



THE FAMILY DEFENSE SOCIETY
The Family Defense Society (FDS) was established in 1994 to support women who have experienced domestic violence. It provides survivors with ongoing support, safe shelter and protection. The FDS also focuses on prevention and works with communities and local leaders to challenge and address the root causes of violence against women.

THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS FUND

The Women's Rights Fund supports women's organisations to become stronger, grow and increase the impact of their work to improve people's lives. Visit this website to learn more about the fund: oxfam.org.uk/voiceswrf



Nahla, a 25-year-old mobile technician, holds her phone and mobile maintenance guidebook in Taiz, Yemen.
Gabreez/Oxfam

“ At every corner there is HOPE. ”

For almost a decade, people in Yemen have been living through a severe conflict, with many experiencing extreme vulnerability through lack of food, economic upheaval and the destruction of homes and cities. After facing personal loss and adversity, Nahla trained to repair mobile phones with Oxfam partner, Tamdeen Youth Foundation. Now, as the only female technician in her village, she's supporting her family and changing the lives of other women with every repair she makes.



Early life

[Before the war] my family thrived, living in a village in Taiz. Our days were filled with the beauty of nature.

I always dreamed of wearing a graduation hat and becoming the first female engineer in my family. I was intrigued by everything related to electricity and electronics. But instead, I followed my father's wishes and started to train in medicine.

My brothers' accident

On what I thought was a normal day, my mum's shouting interrupted my graduation daydreams. My brother Saeed was in a car accident and died immediately. My other brother, who was with him, was unable to walk again.

This was when our real darkness started. As the shadows of war loomed, we found ourselves without a breadwinner. Prices of everyday essentials skyrocketed. Desperation forced us to part with everything – land, sheep, cows, even our essential appliances. There were days we went without food, and the distant dream of graduation seemed impossible. I had no choice but to leave my education and support my family.

Rediscovering my dream

To make ends meet I became a house cleaner, a shepherd, and even delved into making natural beauty products. Being from the marginalised Muhamasheen group made it even more difficult because we are discriminated against and people sometimes refuse to pay us. There were days and weeks where I'd cry myself to sleep.

In the struggle, I forgot my dreams. Then one day I stumbled upon my brother's old computer. Seeing one of the only belongings left from him sparked something inside of me. Memories of everything he taught me came flooding back, and I yearned to be like him and to restore financial security to our family.

“I started making a very good income and I've been training other women too.”

One day, I visited a friend in a place where Tamdeen Youth Foundation were interviewing young men, and registering them for training in mobile phone maintenance. And I asked if they could register me, since I already had experience – I just needed some more support.

I received a life-changing call offering me a place on the training. I was more than happy; I felt like a new door of hope had opened up for me. I completed the intensive training sessions, then I embarked on my new journey, armed with my tool bag.

Women put their trust in me

Now, I'm proud to be the only female technician in my village, fixing phones and breaking barriers so that my family and I can have a better future. Many girls in my village wished for a female technician for their mobiles as they felt more comfortable trusting a woman with their personal information.

As the demand for my mobile maintenance grew, I started making a very good income and I've been training other women too. If there is anything I can advise girls living in similar circumstances, it is to be patient and never despair: life is full of surprises and at every corner there is hope.



Nahla fixes devices at her mobile maintenance shop.
Gabreez/Oxfam

Training with Tamdeen Youth Foundation

Using guides I'd found, I started experimenting on my own phone. And with growing confidence, I offered my skills to friends and family, charging a small amount to fix their gadgets.

“As the only female technician in my village, I'm fixing phones and breaking barriers.”



TAMDEEN YOUTH FOUNDATION
Oxfam partner Tamdeen Youth Foundation (TYF) is a Yemeni non-governmental organisation that focuses on providing aid, development projects, humanitarian response, peace building, youth work and empowering women. So far, TYF has supported over two million people.

novo nordisk fonden

This TYF project was funded by the Novo Nordisk Foundation. Working alongside Oxfam, the project aims to provide economic, income-generating and self-employment opportunities to more people. Your support, as a member of Oxfam's global community, is funding projects like this worldwide.



Nahla receives a broken phone from customer Nahid at her mobile maintenance shop.
Gabreez/Oxfam



I WANT CHANGE for people with disabilities.

After a life-changing accident, George began to advocate for the rights and well-being of disabled people in his community in Erakor, Vanuatu, an island nation in the South Pacific. He is now chairman of the disability committee in Erakor, working with Oxfam partner, the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities (VSPD).



George, disability committee chairman, Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities (VSPD).
Arlene Bax/Oxfam

How did your accident change your life?

[Before], I played sports, and took part in activities. Then one day I had an accident, and I became part of the family of people with disabilities. We're missing out. Sometimes when there is a meeting in the community, they would not even invite us to attend. My job is to advocate and spread awareness that every child with a disability needs access to an education, and everyone with a disability must have the same rights as non-disabled people.

What challenges are you facing?

In this place, it is very hard to survive with a disability. The [main] challenges are lack of transport in the health department, and lack of transport for children [with disabilities] to go to school.

How have VSPD been working with Oxfam?

Since I came into VSPD, Oxfam has been providing support with the cash transfer programme. We went to a lot of workshops and learned about our rights, especially those of people with disabilities. We learned how to advocate [for disabled people] so we can educate our community to manage welfare [better], so that disabled people can have the same rights.

What changes have VSPD made?

One of the changes is we have registered every person with disabilities, so the office knows the exact number of people with disabilities in every area and can pass on the information to those who offer support.

What are your hopes for the future?

I want to see that every person with a disability has a home, a good place to sleep, a proper toilet and a proper place to wash their hands. We all need to find a way to join hands together and make sure the children go to school. And I also [want to] make sure people with disabilities have a share of any form of support that comes into the community. Everyone needs a share.

How is climate change impacting the disabled community?

When I hear the term climate change, it brings out a fear in me as a person with disabilities, and [worry] how we will be able to survive. At any time, the weather can change. There can be a big rainfall, or a hurricane. People with disabilities are scattered: they're not living in the same area. At any time, for people living in coastal areas, the sea can carry them away.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SAVES LIVES

Natural disasters affect everyone, but they affect certain groups – including disabled people – more than others. It's crucial that communities are prepared for natural disasters, and their preparation is inclusive.

Simulation drills are a key tool for communities to respond quickly and efficiently when disaster strikes. Oxfam worked with the Oibola community in the Malaita province of the Solomon Islands, to shoot a film that simulates a drill in action to demonstrate the importance of disaster preparedness. You can follow this link or scan the QR code to watch the short film: oxfam.org.uk/voicesdisaster



VANUATU SOCIETY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
Oxfam is working with VSPD as part of the Together We Are Stronger project. Together, we're working to address inequalities faced by groups of people including those with a disability, women, young people and LGBTQIA+ people.



Oxfam acknowledges the support of the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). Your support funds projects like this worldwide.



Nyalok makes improvements to her family's home.
Petterik Wiggers/Oxfam

It's tough. But we
HOLD ON TO HOPE.

Gambella, one of the most remote places in Ethiopia, is home to nearly 400,000 refugees. With more refugees being forced to come to Gambella fleeing ongoing drought, floods, and conflict in South Sudan, resources are becoming increasingly scarce.

We spoke with Nyalok, a 27-year-old mother of two who fled South Sudan in 2014, to hear more about her life living in Kule, a camp for displaced people.

"I come from Nasser in the Upper Nile state of South Sudan. During the war, we had to flee to Gambella. It was a tough journey with many dangers along the way due to conflict, but it was a closer option, which was good given my disability."

Reflecting on the differences between life in Gambella from the home she had to leave behind, and some of the challenges of living at the camp in Kule as a person living with a disability, Nyalok says:

"Back home, we had our farms, our businesses. But here, as refugees, our options are limited. Especially for someone like me, with a disability, it's challenging

to do heavy activities such as walking longer distances to access water, or to fetch firewood.

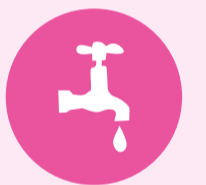
"Having water nearby has been a blessing. I used to walk nearly two hours to access water and I could only carry 10 litres due to my back injury; it was not easy. I'm so happy I now have water closer to my home.

"But the water supply is becoming increasingly unreliable. And without proper access to clean water, our health is at risk. A lack of water would mean walking even longer distances to access this precious commodity."

In Gambella, the refugee community has been working with Oxfam since 2014 to make sure they have clean and safe water. However, dwindling funds combined with ageing infrastructure mean the existing water supply system is no longer fit for purpose. Nyalok is concerned, especially with food being cut off. She explains:

"To eat, we rely on whatever we can find, but it's not enough. For the last eight months, we were told food was suspended, so nothing has been coming, forcing us to pick and eat leaves from the forest.

"It is tough. But we hold onto hope, hoping for a better tomorrow."



Some days, the water system can only deliver 5-6L of the required 15L.

KULE COMMUNITY COHESIVE REFUGEE YOUTH GROUP
Oxfam has been working with the refugee-led network since 2014 to provide essential services to those in the Gambella camps. Together we provide clean water and sanitation to communities, and help people with disabilities access humanitarian assistance.

“ The first and last responder is **COMMUNITY.** ”

After years of campaigning together for a Loss and Damage Fund, we’re now beginning to see its impact, as higher polluting countries start to fund climate recovery projects in frontline communities. Golicha, who works with our partner Strategies for Northern Development (SND) in Kenya, shares how they are using loss and damage funding to support pastoralist communities affected by the climate crisis.



Golicha speaking to a community in Samburu, Kenya. Eyeris Communications

Loss and damage

The project funding came at the right time for the communities we work with, who had been hit by a series of crises – all caused by climate change. We hope that this project will help communities recover from the loss and damage they’ve experienced.

In Samburu County, pastoralist communities are living through drought and flooding because of the climate crisis. This is causing conflict, as the livestock communities depend on for a living are dying. Some communities go across the county and raid from each other for their survival. Conflict also causes people to leave their homes, and move to other communities, putting more pressure on resources such as boreholes and water systems.

How our project is working

Our communities are survivors of drought, floods and conflict. With our Loss and Damage project, we’re focusing on three key areas: water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), creating a survivor-led community response, and peace building. In our new approach for this project, power stays with the local community to make decisions for themselves, instead of others making decisions for them. They have ownership of the project, and the specific knowledge to respond to any potential crisis in a way that works best for them.

For example, after losing livestock to drought, one community decided to use funding to restock with goats, as they are believed to better endure drought conditions and have strong cultural significance.

Improving water, sanitation and hygiene

Drought has severely damaged water infrastructure. We’re fixing and improving facilities by introducing solar-powered boreholes to replace old generator pumps. We also plan to renovate damaged water troughs and install a larger, more durable steel tank to meet the increased water demand in communities. These improvements will make sure people and livestock both have a reliable water source.

Peace building

As the climate crisis is driving conflict by putting a strain on resources, we are working within existing social structures to help build peace amongst communities. To do this, we’ve been bringing women and members of the youth on board as both have a vital role to play in pushing for peaceful coexistence.

SIGN OUR OPEN LETTER NOW!

While setting the Loss and Damage Fund up was a major win, we must keep pressuring richer countries to put money into the fund. The biggest and richest polluters should pay the most for damage caused by the climate crisis. We’re calling on the UK and Scottish Governments for fair taxes on high-polluting superyachts and private jets. Money raised could fund Loss and Damage projects, at no extra cost to the typical taxpayer. To sign our letter, scan this code or sign and return the card enclosed with this pack.



The richest 1% emit as much planet-heating pollution as two-thirds of humanity.



STRATEGIES FOR NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT
The Strategies for Northern Development (SND) is a local non-governmental organisation and Oxfam partner. It supports nomadic pastoralist communities in Northern Kenya and Southern Ethiopia, through development projects and humanitarian work.

“ I want a fairer, **MORE JUST SOCIETY.** ”

Our actions as individuals can all add up and change the world for the better. As a long-term Oxfam supporter, and former trustee, Kate has committed to stay in the fight with a gift in her Will.

Kate, Oxfam supporter and legacy pledger, at her home in London. Andy Oxley/Oxfam

Embracing a new beginning

I had an early career in economics, then stopped working after my first child. The week my second daughter started primary school, incidentally was the same week I got a letter from Oxfam saying they were reopening a shop a few miles from where I lived and asking if I could spare half a day a week to volunteer.

Going beyond the shop floor

The area manager overseeing the shops I volunteered at was a truly inspirational figure. Within weeks, she encouraged me to take on the role of volunteer shop manager. Not long after, I was invited to join a course designed for dedicated

volunteers who had the potential to contribute in other ways. It was an opportunity I couldn’t resist. Within a year, I was asked to join the fundraising committee, and soon after I became a trustee.

Coming full circle

Initially, I had planned to take a year off before returning to work, but one year turned into ten. Afterwards, I spent many years as a charity governance consultant and lectured on a master’s course in charity management until the age of 72. Now, I find myself back where it all began – volunteering in the Oxfam shop in Wimbledon Village, where I once served as the volunteer manager all those years ago.

“I felt I was doing my tiny bit towards trying to make the world a better place.”

A lasting contribution

Donating money to Oxfam can make a real difference to countless lives, and leaving a legacy is an opportunity to show an example to others. I’ve explained to my children why it’s important to me and they respect that. I still have that sense of trust that the money would be well spent by Oxfam and will make a real difference.

“While you may not be in a financial position to make a substantial gift during your lifetime, leaving a legacy in your Will gives you a real opportunity to do so.”



Kate, volunteering at her local Oxfam shop. Andy Oxley/Oxfam

LEAVE A LEGACY. STAY IN THE FIGHT.

If you believe in building a fairer, more equal world, you can stay in the fight by leaving a gift in your Will to Oxfam. Scan the code or visit the website below to learn more or sign up for a free gifts in Wills guide: oxfam.org.uk/voicesgiffinwill





Left: Richard stands outside the new Oxfam superstore, Manchester. The shop floor of the superstore (below), filled with second-hand treasures. Textile banner made by local artist Sarah-Joy Ford.

Fiona Finchett



“ We need to keep changing and adapting.”

In July this year, we opened our second superstore in Manchester Fort Shopping Centre. Richard, Superstore Implementation Manager, tells us more about the new retail space – and shares his Christmas gifting tips!

Why is Oxfam developing some of its retail spaces in this way?

Our superstores are designed to go alongside our high street stores. High street stores have been the heart of our business for 76 years now but we also need to keep changing and adapting to how people shop. We want to reach new customers and raise awareness of our work.

What’s special about the Manchester superstore?

A key change we’ve made for Manchester is to create a community space, which I hope will be used as a hub for everyone who makes up our diverse community here. Whether it’s with upcycling groups, or giving children a dedicated space to play in our kids’ section, we want the Manchester Superstore to become a thriving space where people can enjoy a great shopping experience.

How can we shop more sustainably this Christmas?

Sourced by Oxfam’s amazing gifts are brand-new, ethically sourced items. I’d definitely encourage people to look at that range as well as second-hand gifts.

What’s the best present you’ve found at an Oxfam Shop?

A Christmas decoration that I bought my first Christmas working at Oxfam. I put it out every single year and it causes controversy in my house because my wife hates it with a passion. It’s a three-foot-tall wicker penguin.

Platforming our partners: Aspiration

Aspiration is a Sourced by Oxfam partner based in India and dedicated to putting people and planet before profit. They work with artisans to preserve traditional crafts while supporting people to modernise their designs and reach a larger audience. Aspiration is committed to protecting the environment and asks their producers to adopt two trees a year and care for them.



The Aspiration team work with artisans making recycled sari laundry bags, hair clips, and more, in India. Aspiration 2024

SEND US YOUR PRE-LOVED ITEMS

You can give your pre-loved items to Oxfam by post. Scan the QR code to order one of our donation bags or visit: www.oxfam.org.uk/voicesbag



CHANGING FOR GOOD: SHOPPING!



We can all do our bit to shop in a more planet-friendly way. But that doesn’t mean missing out on beautiful and personal gifts for our friends and family. Here are some tips for you this Christmas.

Pre-loved presents

Shopping pre-loved is a fast growing trend* and we’re so happy to see more of it! Head down to your local Oxfam shop to find unique, second-hand treasures and give pre-loved items a new lease of life. You can also shop our range online, and find just what you need this Christmas.



Ethical greetings cards

Writing, sending and receiving greetings cards is one of the best parts of the festive season, and can make us feel closer to the people we love. You can keep in touch with your loved ones, and shop for a fairer world, by choosing from our beautiful and unique Christmas card designs.



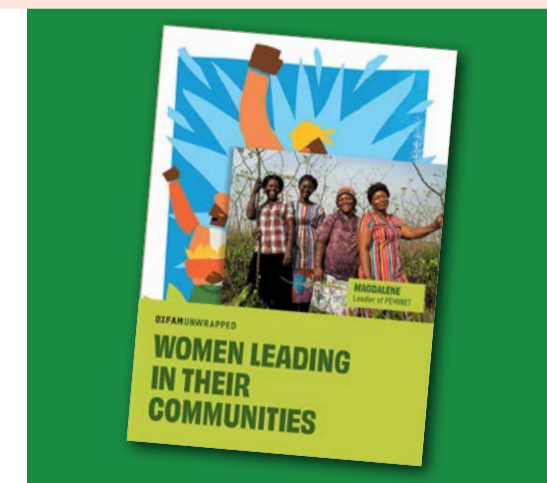
Handcrafted decorations

If you’re looking to add to your festive decorations, while avoiding plastic, visit one of our shops. Here you’ll find beautiful handcrafted decorations from our carefully selected artisan producers around the world. Find something unique and support small creators at the same time.



Oxfam Unwrapped gifts

Make a change this year and give an Oxfam Unwrapped charity gift! Each gift or virtual gift bought funds a vital area of work. And this year, Unwrapped celebrates 20 years of powering positive change around the world. Find the perfect Unwrapped gift for your trailblazing loved ones in shops or online.



SHOP ONLINE OR FIND YOUR NEAREST OXFAM SHOP



Whether you’re looking for unique gifts or second-hand treasures, or would like to volunteer with us, find your nearest shop today. Scan here or visit our website now: oxfam.org.uk/voicesshops

*An Oxfam survey of 3,000 people in 2023 found that 33% were planning to give pre-loved gifts, compared with 25% in a comparable 2021 study.



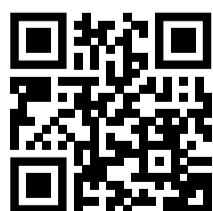
Me and cocoa are **IN LOVE.**

Climate change and unfair pricing are seriously threatening cocoa production. While changing weather patterns are disrupting harvests, many farmers are leaving the industry entirely because they are not being paid fairly for their crops. But in Ghana, cocoa producer Leticia is taking action.

Leticia, founder of the first women-only cocoa collective in Ghana, is working with Oxfam at cocoa conferences to lobby for fairer prices for farmers.
Nana Kofi Acquah/Oxfam

As cocoa harvests decline because of climate change, prices on the global market are skyrocketing. However, cocoa farmers themselves are not seeing the benefit of these price rises and many are taking up alternative incomes, from farming rubber to gold mining. As the owner of three cocoa farms, Leticia set up the first women-only cocoa cooperative. Made up of over 600 farmers, her cooperative is

working together to share farming techniques and lobby for better prices. Leticia says, "It's not fair that the people who produce the cocoa are paid so little. I am telling the big companies that if they don't increase the price of cocoa – and if they don't improve the incomes of the cocoa producers – their companies are going to be in danger in the very near future."



LET'S HEAR YOUR VOICE!

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO FILL OUT OUR SURVEY AND SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON VOICES OR GO TO: [OXFAM.ORG.UK/VOICESURVEY](https://oxfam.org.uk/voicesurvey)



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