

## Oxfam International

---

### Board Profile

#### Oxfam International

---

**Oxfam** is part of a global movement for social justice. We use our power and privilege to open spaces for those we share vision and values with; and work with people and communities before, during and after crisis to create a world that is just and sustainable. Together, we fight inequality to end poverty and injustice.

**Oxfam International** is a global confederation with currently 20 autonomous member organisations ('Affiliates') that is registered as a 'Stichting' (Foundation) in the Netherlands, as a foreign company limited by guarantee in the UK and under a host country agreement with the government of Kenya.

**Affiliates** lead work within their own countries and support the work of the global confederation including by participating in worldwide campaigns, raising funds from the public and institutional donors and in some cases providing back office support to Oxfam's country and regional programmes.

The **Oxfam International Secretariat** leads, facilitates and supports collaboration between Affiliates; coordinates global advocacy, campaigns and Oxfam's worldwide humanitarian response; and manages the confederation's regional teams and program operations across regions. It is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya with staff distributed across offices in several regions including Addis Ababa, Brussels, Geneva, Moscow, New York, Oxford and Washington DC.

The global confederation is united by a common vision and mission and works together to deliver Oxfam's **Global Strategic Framework**. For more information, visit [www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org).

#### Diversity and Inclusion

---

Oxfam is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusiveness as these core attributes align with our values and drive our mission. We are committed to reflecting the diversity of the people we work in our global leadership roles, both at governance and management level; and as part of our commitment to transforming our organisation, want to ignite a shift in who will lead Oxfam into the future. The selection of the OI Board will thus promote inclusion across race, gender, age, caste, religion, sexual identity, disability, and lived experience.

#### Safeguarding

---

Oxfam is committed to preventing any type of unwanted behaviour at work, including sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, lack of integrity and financial misconduct; and to promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. Oxfam expects all staff, board members and volunteers to share this commitment through its Code of Conduct.

#### The Oxfam International Board

---

Oxfam's global governance architecture is designed to enable collective effectiveness and impact as a confederation. To this end and informed by a global governance review initiated in 2017, transition towards a new global governance structure including a composed Board, a multi-stakeholder Global Assembly and an Affiliate Business Meeting is expected to begin in 2021.

The future Board is composed of Independent members with no concurrent or recent affiliation with the Oxfam confederation, and Non-independent members from Oxfam Affiliates. Support is provided by an OI Secretariat governance team. The working language of the Board is English.

**Mandate.** The OI Board exercises oversight, provides foresight and generates insight for Oxfam's global governance arrangement to be trusted and legitimate in search of effectiveness, relevance and impact. It ensures that the governance of the global confederation is sound and meets both legal and moral obligations. Its work is informed by its Committees and other organisational mechanisms and structures that provide it with timely management information in key areas.

**Decision authority.** The Board is responsible for:

- proposing and overseeing implementation of Oxfam's global strategic framework;
- approving and monitoring the implementation of Oxfam's global operational plans;
- deciding on the allocation and use of agreed Affiliate contributions to the global organisation;
- overseeing the OI Executive Director and OI Secretariat, including its annual plans and budgets;
- monitoring agreements that Oxfam has entered into as a global organisation;
- preparing policies with global application;
- overseeing global and OI Secretariat risk management and internal control frameworks; and
- making recommendations on the admission and expulsion of Oxfam Affiliates.

**Composition.** The Board is composed of a diverse set of members that reflect global footprint and who collectively provide independent reflection and decisions that are above any specific individual or corporate interest within Oxfam. Individual Board members have relevant business or organisational experience to contribute to the collective role of the Board; and a strong degree of personal commitment as well as the personal qualities necessary to work collectively to deliver Oxfam's vision and mission.

The Board has up to 13 members with the number of Non-independent members agreed by the Affiliate Business Meeting. The first Board is expected to have 9 members only, of which four (4) will be Independent. Independent members may include former Affiliate or OI Secretariat employees or former Affiliate board members after a cooling off period of 3 years (at the time of appointment). This cooling off period may be reduced to just one year during transition. Board members are appointed for a term not longer than 3 years; and may serve up to 3 terms.

The Board is diverse with regards to gender, age and socio-cultural background with at least 50% of its members identifying as women; at least 60% with socio-cultural roots (and having spent extensive time living and working) in the global south; and at least one person under the age of 35 at the time of appointment. The selection of Non-independent Board members proposed by Affiliates will take into account, as additional criteria, different Affiliate experiences and perspectives (in terms of geography, size and role played within the confederation).

**Level of effort / allowance.** Board members are expected to attend at least four Board meetings a year (held physically or virtually) and to participate in Board Committees (expected to meet virtually at least every quarter). Total level of effort is estimated at 15-20 days per year. Reasonable expenses incurred in the fulfilment of Board duties (e.g. travel or childcare cost) may be covered on a disbursement basis and in line with Oxfam policy.

## Competency Profile

---

**Personal attributes.** All members of the Board must demonstrate:

- commitment to Oxfam's global vision, mission, values and feminist principles;
- global awareness and a passion for the fight for social justice;
- critical thinking, analytical skills and good judgment;
- integrity, independence and commitment to high standards of excellence and ethics;
- self-awareness, an open listening mindset and the ability to identify and challenge blind spots and assumptions;
- willingness to contribute personal expertise in working collectively with people from diverse backgrounds in the best interest of the global organisation;
- commitment to devoting the necessary time and effort to discharge their duties as a member of the Board;
- sufficient knowledge of English to read Board documents and participate in discussions.

**Collective competencies.** Individual members of the Board will bring a range of different organisational and subject matter expertise to ensure it is collectively competent.

- i. **Organisational competencies.** A majority of Board members will bring expertise in one or several of the following areas:
  - **Governance.** Sound understanding and experience of contemporary governance through relevant experience in the private, public or voluntary sector, including work with Boards.
  - **Finance and Risk.** Sound understanding of and experience in overseeing the issues of finance and risk in complex global organisations.
  - **Change management.** Experience in leading/advising on change in complex global organisations.
  - **Activism.** Experience in grassroots campaigning, alliance building and collective advocacy (with a focus on young people, feminist networks and social justice movements).
  - **Influencing.** Extensive networks with strategic understanding and experience of collective advocacy at a regional and/or global level.
- ii. **Subject matter expertise.** Selected Board members will bring expertise in the following areas:
  - **Feminist leadership.** Proven expertise and leadership on gender justice and feminist principles.
  - **Sustainable development and humanitarian action.** In-depth understanding of trends, debates and changing paradigms in the development and humanitarian sector.
  - **System change.** Expertise in areas in which Oxfam is seeking transformational system change: just economies, gender justice, climate justice and accountable governance.
  - **Digital transformation.** In-depth understanding of the opportunities and risks (including for the non-governmental sector) created by the digital revolution.
  - **Resource mobilisation / Fundraising.** Understanding of key trends in global fundraising (from institutional, public or corporate donors and new market mechanisms).

## Chair

---

The Chair is an Independent Member of the Board. They work closely with the OI Executive Director (OIED) and OI Head of Governance in undertaking the following responsibilities:

- **leading the Board** in ensuring that it is fulfilling its responsibility for the governance of the organisation;
- **ensuring that the Board works effectively as a team**, chairing meetings in a focused and effective way, assisting the Board in reaching decisions by consensus and ensuring that business is dealt with professionally;
- **ensuring that the Board sets the right focus** while maintaining respectful differentiation between the roles of the Board and management;
- **coordinating closely with the OIED** in liaising with other parts of the global organisation (e.g. the Affiliate Business Meeting, Executive Directors' Forum and OI Executive Team);
- **supporting, overseeing and appraising** the work of the OI Executive Director;
- **ensuring effective and transparent communication** between all global governance bodies as well as with Affiliate Boards.

In view of the transition to a new global governance structure, the ongoing review of Oxfam's model and presence across regions and the broader context and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, **the level of effort** required from the OI Chair is estimated as approx. 40 hours/ month in the first 1-2 years.

## Treasurer

---

The Treasurer may be an Independent or Non-independent member of the Board. As chair of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee, the Treasurer works closely with relevant finance and senior management staff in undertaking the following tasks:

- **monitoring risk and financial health of the organisation**, reporting on all issues that might affect it to the Board and (where relevant) to the Affiliate Business Meeting or Global Assembly;
- **overseeing organisation-wide financial reporting and budgeting** and the financial obligations of the organisation;
- **overseeing compliance with finance-related standards and decisions** agreed within the organisation, including global finance policies and Affiliate contributions to the global budget;
- **overseeing global and OI Secretariat risk management and internal control frameworks**, including reports from a global external auditor and compliance of Affiliates with agreed global systems, policies and standards;
- **advising and assisting Board members** with regards to their statutory duties.