LEARNING FROM OXFAM'S PARTNERSHIP-CENTERED RESPONSE IN UKRAINE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ACRONYMS

ACE	Advocacy, campaigns and engagement
BDM	Business development manager
CAPAS	Capacity and partnership assessment system
CBO	Community-based organization
CSO	Civil society organization
DD	Due diligence
DEC	Disasters Emergency Committee
FGD	Focus group discussion
GAU	Gay Alliance of Ukraine
HNRP	Humanitarian needs and response plan
IDP	Internally displaced person
ICR	Indirect cost recovery
INGO	International non-governmental organization
INSO	International NGO Security Organization
ISI	Institutional Strengthening Initiative
KII	Key informant interview
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual
LHL	Local humanitarian leadership
MEAL	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs
Oxfam GB	Oxfam Great Britain
PHK	Peaceful Heaven of Kharkiv
PMU	Program management unit
SMT	Senior management team
TTA	The Tenth of April
UHF	Ukraine Humanitarian Fund
VoR	Voice of Romni
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WCU	Women's Consortium of Ukraine
WHLF	Women's humanitarian leadership fund
WLO	Women-led organization
WRO	Women's rights organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and methodology

The full-scale invasion in Ukraine has led to grave humanitarian consequences with 5.7 million[1] people taking refuge outside of Ukraine, 2.8 million[2] people internally displaced, and in 2025, an estimated 12.7 million in need of humanitarian assistance and services (OCHA, 2025). Local actors including civil society organisations, volunteer groups and local authorities have led much of the humanitarian response, demonstrating speed, flexibility and courage in an increasingly protracted and complex crisis. It is within this context that Oxfam made the decision to engage in the humanitarian response through a partnership-centred response designed to support and strengthen local humanitarian leadersship (LHL).

Oxfam's response in Ukraine was designed from the beginning with learning as a key pillar. This review contributes to that process by focusing on four objectives:

1. To assess Oxfam's internal structures, processes and culture as enablers or barriers to the application of its partnership and feminist principles.
2. To examine Oxfam's financial and non-financial support and its effects, positive and negative, on advancing local humanitarian leadership.
3. To review program quality, including scale, timeliness, effectiveness, relevance and inclusivity.
4. To analyse Oxfam's partnership approach and its grounding in feminist principles.

Data was collected between September and October 2025 and combined qualitative and quantitative methods:

- 42 key informant interviews (KIIs) with Oxfam staff, partners, external stakeholders and donors/funders – conducted both remotely and in Ukraine, in English and Ukrainian.
- 11 focus group discussions (FGDs) involving 98 program participants across five locations (Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv and Odesa) and including women, men, individuals living in collective sites, LGBTQIA+ individuals and members of the Roma community.
- 33 survey respondents from Oxfam and organisations partnering with Oxfam.

A partnership-centred response

With no prior presence in the region, Oxfam launched a four-country humanitarian response covering Ukraine, Poland, Romania and Moldova focused on supporting local leadership through a partnership-centred response and driven by Oxfam's commitment to LHL and feminist principles. Oxfam's partnership-centred response in Ukraine illustrates a departure from how humanitarian programming has traditionally been designed and delivered. In Ukraine, the response supported by Oxfam was defined as partnership-centred because local partners designed the program from inception, determining priorities, methodologies, budgets and implementation strategies based on their intimate knowledge of community needs and contexts. Oxfam chose to finance this response entirely through pooled humanitarian appeal funds (including the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)) alongside its own public fundraising which in itself facilitated the flexibility needed to support the partnership-centred response.

As the regional context evolved, Oxfam **phased out from Romania and Moldova by mid-2023 and completed its exit from Poland in October 2024,** with subsequent efforts focused exclusively on Ukraine. This prompted an internal restructuring, as Oxfam transitioned from a regional management model to a single-country structure merging into a streamlined configuration. This transition was part of a planned, time-bound response, with Oxfam aiming to fully exit Ukraine by August 2026. From early 2024, this phase of the partnership-centred response prioritises partner organisations' sustainability, responsible transition planning, and investment in local leadership. This phase sees the response moving away from partnership-centred program delivery to supporting partners' resilience with a

focus on **seven strategic partner organisations in Ukraine**[3] **and supporting WROs through a specific Women Humanitarian Leadership Fund (WHLF).**[4] As part of this phase, the Institutional Strengthening Initiative (ISI) was introduced in early 2025 to support strategic partners' organisational development.

Learning 1: the success and difficulties of adapting internal processes

What characterised Oxfam's approach to adapting internal processes was a relational approach with partners: how Oxfam staff interacted and engaged with partners as opposed to what tools they used. Instead of lowering standards, Oxfam brought agility within existing systems and processes, applying them more flexibly rather than replacing them. Oxfam was intentional in its approach to systems and processes asking itself what was necessary and required at each step of the response.

Yet, Oxfam's systems and processes (e.g., financial management, reporting) were perceived by Oxfam staff (38% of survey respondent) and some partners[5] as not adapted enough to a partnership-centric response. This is despite Oxfam investing time and effort in tailoring due diligence approaches, partnership agreement and finance management as well as reporting requirements. In contrast, in spite of ranking systems and processes as a third highest challenge in the survey, partners stated they perceived most systems and processes as flexible and agile enabling their work rather than being a barrier. They reported these systems and processes to be complex but responsive to their needs and circumstances.

Legacy systems within Oxfam continue to cause a mismatch with LHL. More specifically, challenges remain with regards to Oxfam's internal audit process which is not set up for a partnership-centred response and therefore not fit for purpose. Process comfort and risk aversion within Oxfam also translated into long approval chains with hesitation to test bold approaches and at times self-censorship from Oxfam staff. While flexibility was at the heart of the partnership-centred response, flexibility proved to be hard to learn for both Oxfam and partners and required learning flexibility as both a skillset and a mindset. Flexibility is also fragile and requires an overall system and organisational culture adaptation to continue working.

The Ukraine response team focused on **balancing flexibility with accountability**, consciously tailoring compliance mechanisms and accepting a higher level of perceived risk to enable rapid delivery and genuine partner leadership. On paper, a partnership-centred response can appear riskier particularly in terms of compliance and fiduciary oversight. In a few instances, compliance risks could have materialised if the response had been under greater institutional donor scrutiny but this was primarily due to an imperfect paper trail rather than any misuse of funds or unethical behaviour. In practice, no significant financial or operational risks materialised. The perception of heightened risk was further challenged by Oxfam's internal audit of the Ukraine response, which awarded a **medium grade** confirming overall compliance and effective internal controls. This outcome illustrates that, despite the perception of higher risk, a partnership-centred response can meet organisational standards when supported by adaptive oversight. More broadly, this aligns with wider sectoral evidence showing that **perceptions of risk** especially among donors and INGOs tend to **overstate fiduciary and reputational risks** while **underestimating the capacity of local actors to mitigate other types of risk**, such as those related to access, contextual understanding, or responsiveness. The Ukraine experience demonstrated that contextualising and tailoring systems and processes does not inherently increase risk. It also underscored the need to redefine how institutional risk is understood and managed within a partnership-centred model.

Learning 2: Team structures and cultures

Oxfam intentionally rethought its team structure to support a new phase of response from 2024 putting LHL and partnerships at the heart of Oxfam's country structure. This marked a deliberate move from supporting partners' program delivery to positioning the entire team as a service to partners. Roles across the response were repositioned to directly support partners' systems, leadership, and organisational sustainability. The 2024 restructure also introduced a deeper cultural transformation, embedding a relationship-based model of collaboration across the team. Recruitment under the new structure placed equal emphasis on soft skills, interpersonal communication, and alignment with LHL values, alongside technical expertise. The Partnership Coordinator role brought structure, coherence, and a more strategic, solution-oriented way of working across the team. Staff described this function as acting like a partnership union representative, ensuring that partners' perspectives and needs are embedded in internal decision-making processes.

What enabled a genuine partnership-centred model was not new processes, tools or templates, but a shift in mindset: from control to collaboration, from compliance to conversation. What mattered was not the **what** of procedures, but the **how** of engagement: attitude, behaviour, and relational practice. Partners consistently described Oxfam as *"the most comfortable and supportive partner"* (KII partner). A defining feature of Oxfam's technical approach was its propositional but non-directive character. Staff learned to offer options and ideas without imposing them, a subtle but significant shift in practice that reflected genuine respect for partners' autonomy. Overall, the relational quality and the way staff engaged with partners proved more influential in building equitable partnerships than any formal procedural innovation.

Identifying the right level of capacity to keep within Oxfam remains a challenge. While partners did not highlight this as a challenge, Oxfam staff felt overstretched unable to provide their desired level of tailored accompaniment to partners. This was partly due to Oxfam staff delivering support to partners while learning by doing. Oxfam also found it challenging to clarify its offering to partners across all functions. This included in particular technical program support and operations (e.g., HR, security, logistics).

Learning 3: the institutional strengthening initiatives

The **Institutional Strengthening Initiative (ISI)** was established as a central pillar of Oxfam's **responsible phase-out strategy in Ukraine,** designed to move beyond short-term project funding and instead invest in **the sustainability and leadership** of a small group of long-standing partners. Each partner received an **€80,000 flexible grant** dedicated to institutional development, accompanied by intensive technical accompaniment. Oxfam intentionally adopted a trust-based and partner-driven model where partners defined what institutional strengthening meant for their organisations, identified their own priorities, and developed bespoke action plans. For many partners, the ISI represented a new kind of relationship: one that trusted them to set their own direction and make strategic decisions for their growth. Partners reported a real sense of confidence and felt the ISI was both empowering and transformative. Action plans were treated as living documents, adapted when needed.

While the financial support from the ISI gave partners the ability to hire dedicated staff, the non-financial support from the ISI was repeatedly highlighted as its strength. This non-financial support took the form of tailored and relationship-based accompaniment including holding bilateral discussions, playing a critical friend role through revising funding proposals, offering mentoring and coaching rather than predefined training. Quarterly check-ins play a key role in maintaining this dynamic. Rather than compliance exercises, these are framed as joint reflection sessions, focused on learning and forward planning. With about six months of full implementation at the time of this review, the ISI had already contributed to partners' diversification of funding and partnerships.

The non-financial support developed through the ISI could have been implemented more systematically as a core part of the partnership-centred response from the onset of the response. The ISI took a long time to be established and is now facing some limitations in terms of the limited time left before Oxfam's exit. In 2022, in the height of the humanitarian response more ad hoc support could have been provided where perceived to be essential to program delivery, evolving over time towards more structured self-defined institutional strengthening plans and eventually more in-depth assessments of capacity gaps. Indeed, while partner organisations should always define their own priorities, a more joint approach to assessing capacity gaps and institutional strengthening needs could further inform institutional strengthening plans.

Learning 4: Keeping program outcome and impact at the core of partnership-centred approaches

The partnership-centred response led to better outcomes for people affected by the full-scale invasion in Ukraine. It was principled, accountable, relevant, able to adapt to changing needs, in a timely manner; the partnership-centred response reached hard-to-reach populations and was inclusive of more marginalised population groups. It supported interventions nobody else was willing to fund and filled in gaps in the wider humanitarian response. This was significantly due to partners' own capacity, relationships with communities, proximity to communities and ability to understand the context.

However, Oxfam's intentional and thoughtful approach to the partnership-centred response skipped a bit on program outcome and impact. The learning review found there was limited visibility around program outcomes and impact. Oxfam struggled at times to transfer its technical know-how and contribute to improving program quality. The fear of imposing Oxfam's ways of working and standards on program delivery meant Oxfam missed an opportunity to fully act in complementarity with partners and lend its added value where possible. Oxfam could have worked more intentionally with partners to define what program quality mean for the partnership-centred response, jointly defining an approach rather than imposing externally set standards and approaches. This could have been supported by a joint approach to monitoring program outcomes and impact which was lacking in the partnership-centred response. The role of Oxfam in a partnership-centred response should be based on a clear understanding and definition of what Oxfam's complementarity is, including with regards to achieving outcomes and impact for people affected by crises.

The partnership-centred response was also perceived by Oxfam staff as fragmented and lacking in scale. Oxfam could have done more to work across partners to ensure more coherence and more strategic approach to program design while still putting partners in the lead. Oxfam could have worked as a facilitator to support more joined up approaches within and across sectors. The challenge of scale may have been the result of the protection focus response where protection programs tend to be implemented at lower scale due to their nature. The focus on scale as critical outcome also reflects a sector-wide tendency and bias where scale tends to be valued over other indicators of success such as inclusion, quality, impact. While in Ukraine other actors were responding at scale where necessary, the partnership-centred response focused on a critical failure from others: to deliver assistance and

services to highly vulnerable, marginalised and hard-to-reach populations. This was more critical to complement gaps in the wider humanitarian response than focusing on scale. More generally, the humanitarian sector tends to fail to deliver quality, impactful and inclusive responses highlighting the benefit of partnership-centred responses that intentional partner with organisations run by and for marginalised population groups.

Learning 5: Addressing power considerations helped Implementing partnership and feminist principles

The partnership-centred response aimed to implement LHL, partnership and feminist principles and commitments. The learning review found that these were not only implemented but were essential to one another. LHL, partnership principles and commitments are enhanced by the implementation of feminist principles and vice versa. This led to high quality partnerships where 100% of partner organisations rated partnering with Oxfam as either good or excellent in the learning review survey.

Careful considerations of power, power shifting and power sharing were at the core of implementing these principles. Oxfam staff demonstrated a high awareness of their own positionality and power, an essential element to intentionally shifting power in partnerships. There was also a recognition that power between Oxfam and partners can never be fully equal because of the way financial resources flow.

The internal implementation of feminist principles as part of the management culture (in particular in offering an environment where it was safe to fail) allowed Oxfam staff to try innovative ways of working with partners. While staff felt supported to implement these principles, feminist principles are inherently hard to translate in practice. They are inherently reliant on internal self-reflection, a mindset that takes time to adopt.

There must also be a recognition that LHL and feminist principles can come in tension with certain roles and functions. Flexibility was core to translating these principles in practice. Roles and functions that rely for their success on playing by the book, implementing strict standards and rules have a greater challenge in resolving inherent tensions between the culture of their role and flexibility. These tensions must be recognised and staff with these roles supported.

Learning 6: Cross-cutting enablers of the partnership-centred response

Leadership's commitment to LHL was a critical cross-cutting enabler of the partnership-centred response. At different levels of the Oxfam confederation, through affiliates to the Ukraine response leadership, there was a clear alignment and agreement on risk appetite and support to try new ways of partnering and working. This allowed Oxfam staff to adapt ways of working around internal processes. Even where internal processes were not fit for purpose as with Oxfam's internal audit, the leadership's commitment to LHL mitigated the findings of the internal audit recognising where the audit process was a mismatch with Oxfam's LHL commitments. The Ukraine response leadership adopted an adaptive and learning management approach and was described as intentional – taking time to reflect not only on what the organisation does but how it does it. This provided the reflective space necessary for staff to learn new ways of working and partnering. It fostered the right skillset and mindset to adopt the flexibility needed to implement a partnership-centred response aligned with LHL and partnership principles.

Leadership as an enabler was further supporting by a **strong financial base**. The partnership-centred response in Ukraine was facilitated by appeal funding (including from the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC)), which tend to be highly flexible. The financial stability and flexibility allowed multiple rounds of restructuring of Oxfam's team in a short period. It also enabled flexible approaches to financial management, due diligence and reporting. Flexibility within its budget and across budget lines directly translated in the ability for Oxfam to lend that flexibility to partners. Partners used this ability to shift budgets and therefore program focus according to changing needs and emerging crises. This ensured parter organisations could make the most of their own capacity to identifying shifting priorities and needs and intervene in a relevant and adaptive manner. This was further reflected in feedback from program participants who repeatedly confirm the relevance and adaptive nature of the response.

It is the interaction of Oxfam's leadership approach coupled with the financial flexibility of appeal funding that allowed the partnership-centred response to implement flexibility as a mindset and skillset. One enabler without the other would have made this outcome more challenging.

Learning 7: Remaining gaps for a partnership-centred approach

There were gaps in shared understanding and integration of risks sharing. While risk sharing became a frequent term in internal and external discussions, its meaning remained conceptually ambiguous. Although risk matrices were systematically developed as part of every project proposal, there was no structured mechanism to follow up on these risks as part of the partnership or to escalate them beyond the project level. The absence of established spaces for jointly discussing risks with partners limited opportunities to **reflect on how risks were distributed and managed between Oxfam and partner organisations**, and to promote a more deliberate, balanced approach to risk sharing. While Oxfam's approach to risk sharing was real and deliberate, it lacked formal documentation and structure which is what turns intentional practice into institutionalised risk management.

Oxfam has yet to define what success looks like for a partnership-centred response underpinned by LHL and feminist principles. This partly led to the lack of visibility of program quality in Oxfam's ways of partnering and a less intentional partnership-centred approach to program outcomes. While learning was at the core of the response to inform adaptation and innovation, a more structured and intentional approach to monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) based on a clear definition of success was missing. This is a critical element to enable Oxfam to understand how well it is implementing its own commitments and principles, as well as an accountability to affected people. Better MEAL could also support Oxfam's advocacy on LHL and feminist principles and inform and incentivise the wider humanitarian sector's approach to localisation.

Oxfam struggled and has yet to find the right approach to sharing its technical program know-how. Oxfam was partly plagued by fear of imposing its own standards and ways of doing thing and thus shied away from a more joint responsibility around improving program quality through sharing technical know-how. Partners recognise Oxfam's experience and expertise and want to benefit from these through their partnerships with Oxfam. Oxfam needs to consider how it can act in complementarity, clearly defining its added value and role in the partnership in terms program quality and impact, while doing so in line with its LHL and feminist principles. These principles do not take away Oxfam's responsibility for the outcomes of the partnership-centred response but shapes how this should be done so as not to impose.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The partnership-centred response in Ukraine has been an experiment in fully embracing LHL and feminist principles. Oxfam and the wider sector must capitalise on this experience to learn how to advance their commitments to LHL. Ukraine is often categorised by its uniqueness. While this review acknowledges that the specific circumstances in the Ukraine response enabled Oxfam to take forward a partnership-centred response, these should not undermine the replicability of elements of this approach. There are learnings from the partnership-centred response in Ukraine that can and should be taken forward within Oxfam, local and national actors, by donors and by other humanitarian actors committed to supporting local humanitarian leadership. The below recommendations aim to identify how this can be done, focusing on replicating enablers and addressing remaining barriers.

Recommendations for Oxfam

- **Actively engage donors** in displaying what funding flexibility has enabled Oxfam and partners to achieve in Ukraine, and advocate for donors to adopt more flexible ways of supporting LHL.
- **Actively engage with other humanitarian actors** in Ukraine and beyond to advocate for improved partnership practices.
- **Continue to document in detail this experience** and embed it within wider Oxfam ways of working.
- Work to revise Oxfam's internal audit practices to make them more fit for purpose in partnership-centred responses and in line with LHL and feminist principles.
- Explore the possibility of extending multi-year funding to partners in partnership-centred response, challenging remaining barriers as well as through dialogue with donors on shared risk thresholds.
- Establish structured yet "good enough" spaces for open discussion on risks with partner **organisations**, recognising that partners are independent actors with the right to define and act on their own risk appetite.
- Reflect further on the response and team structure, and document what an ideal organigram would look like - particularly the capacities required to support institutional strengthening through both financial and non-financial support, including the technical program advisory expertise needed.
- Consider how the ISI approach could have been integrated earlier alongside program delivery.
- Document the management approach and style of the partnership-centred response as a key learning and enabler.
- Rebuild visibility on program quality and outcomes within a partnership-centred model.
- Reflect on Oxfam's positionality in a partnership-centred response - not as a donor but based on a **principle of complementarity and added value** - considering how Oxfam aims to lend its expertise and knowledge, grounded in LHL and feminist ways of working, to be an active contributor within the partnership.
- Address the fragmentation of a response where individual partners design programs.
- Define what success looks like according to LHL and feminist principles and integrate this within a **structured MEAL approach.**
- Conduct a post-exit evaluation or learning review focused on documenting the impact of the ISI on partners' organisations sustainability and their institutional strengthening plans. An appropriate timeline could be to conduct such an exercise in Summer 2027.

Recommendations for organisations that partnered with Oxfam

- **Share your experience** with other local and national actors in particular through the Alliance of Ukrainian CSOs to demonstrate how partnerships can work differently and better serve local and national actors.
- **Reflect on power, positionality and develop internal practices for how you engage with international partners**, ensuring you exercise leadership, co-design, influence including throug**h advocating with international organisations** you partner with to learn, adapt and adopt the positive practices you experienced with Oxfam.
- **Reflect critically** on your journey and role in the partnership with Oxfam, including where opportunities **may have been missed to strengthen impact for the population you aim to support.**
- **Collaborate with other** local and national actors in Ukrain**e to address increasing competition within the sector – displaying, through practice, how** collective action and cooperation can strengthen outcomes for affected populations.
- **Influence coordination and decision-making systems** including through advocating for operational systems that use local languages, take into account local realities, reduce barriers to participation.

Recommendations for Donors

- **Learn from Oxfam's experience in Ukraine,** particularly how it demonstrated the low-risk outcome of contextualised and relevant due diligence and compliance processes, and the critical impact of partners' leadership on response relevance and inclusive humanitarian outcomes.
- **Consider key funding enablers of the partnership-centred response** in Ukraine, in particular the ability of Oxfam to approve changes in partners' budget and interventions within broad parameters without prior approval from donors. This was a critical enabler of a response that was more relevant, adaptive to changing needs and responsive to new emergencies.
- **Review requirements to incentivise good quality and equitable partnerships,** including by rethinking value for money through more qualitative indicators in MEAL framework, such as trust and inclusion.
- **Dedicate funding to institutional strengthening, including** by funding intermediaries' staff capacities to ensure the provision of non-financial support and by enabling and making compulsory the sharing of ICR.
- **Require partners' co-leadership in proposal design and allocate sufficient budget to resource partner leadership roles meaningfully, including within coordination spaces.**
- **Reconsider how scale is used as the primary measure of program quality.**
- Recommendations for humanitarian actors wanting to adopt partnership-centred response
- **Consider how to replicate the enablers of the partnership-centred response** within your organisations.
- **Ensure your approach to institutional strengthening** integrates targeted and tailored non-financial support and partnership-centred institutional strengthening plans.
- Recommendations for humanitarian system reset.
- **Build from the experience of the partnership-centred response in Ukraine to reimagine different roles for international actors** based on the principles of complementarity and stepping back.
- **Ensure that where partnerships are formed they do not only reward the largest national and local actors but considers intentionally and carefully the need to support a diverse set of actors** to support an inclusive and complementary ecosystem of response at national and local levels.
- **Consider more radical approaches to locally relevant humanitarian coordination.**
- **Ensure that current hyper-prioritisation does not lead to the exclusion of marginalised population groups and the defunding of organisations representing them** including WROs, organisations of people with disability, LGBTQIA+ organisations.

Recommendations for humanitarian actors wanting to adopt partnership-centred response

- **Consider how to replicate the enablers of the partnership-centred response** within your organisations.
- **Ensure your approach to institutional strengthening** integrates targeted and tailored non-financial support and partnership-centred institutional strengthening plans.

Recommendations for humanitarian system reset

- **Build from the experience of the partnership-centred response in Ukraine to reimagine different roles for international actors** based on the principles of complementarity and stepping back.
- **Ensure that where partnerships are formed they do not only reward the largest national and local actors but considers intentionally and carefully the need to support a diverse set of actors** to support an inclusive and complementary ecosystem of response at national and local levels.
- **Consider more radical approaches to locally relevant humanitarian coordination.**
- **Ensure that current hyper-prioritisation does not lead to the exclusion of marginalised population groups and the defunding of organisations representing them** including WROs, organisations of people with disability, LGBTQIA+ organisations.

ENDNOTES

1   According to UNHCR's Operational Data Portal, updated 3 October 2025 (UNHCR, 2025).

2   According to the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025, published April 2025 (OCHA, 2025).

3   Oxfam's seven strategic partners include: Gay Alliance Ukraine (GAU), Peaceful Heaven of Kharkiv (PHK), Charitable Foundation Rokada, Shchedryk, The Tenth of April (TTA), Voice of Romni (VoR), Women's Consortium of Ukraine (WCU).

4   The WHLF's first phase ran from March to August 2025, with a second phase planned from November 2025, focusing on women-led and feminist leadership in humanitarian action. The WHLF is inspired from similar funds Oxfam already implements in development settings to support WROs and WLOs leadership. The WHLF in Ukraine consists of fully flexible funding provided to WROs and WLOs with the purpose to enable these organisations to fulfil their core mandate.

5   Only 11% of partners felt this was a problem but it remained the third highest ranked challenge.

OXFAM