

OXFAM CLOSEUP

SPRING 2023



UKRAINE: ENDURING A YEAR OF WAR

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// I make donations that go beyond the borders of America because that is where the real poverty lies.

I like that you're non-sectarian and that you just focus on helping people. //

EMILIE RASMUSSEN (RAZZ)

OXFAM LEGACY CIRCLE MEMBER & DONOR FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS

DEAR FRIENDS,

This issue of *CloseUp* focuses on the humanitarian emergencies Oxfam is responding to around the world. While each story describes dire times for so many, I also see hope.

Within weeks of the outbreak of hostilities in Ukraine last year, Oxfam established relationships with groups in Romania, Poland, and Moldova that were assisting refugees. Within Ukraine we are helping people endure the winter, rebuild and repair their homes, and survive the conflict. We have reached 800,000 people; 140,000 of them are in Ukraine.

More recently, the series of earthquakes that hit Türkiye (as Turkey now prefers to be known) and Syria created massive needs. Thankfully, we had the infrastructure in place to respond almost immediately. In Syria, Oxfam was already working in Aleppo and within hours we were delivering clean water. In Türkiye, Oxfam KEDV is collaborating with its existing network of women's rights organizations to facilitate provision of aid. With new resources raised from our generous donors, Oxfam is working to bring hope to 1.4 million people in Türkiye and 300,000 in Syria.

Although wars and earthquakes are shocking, a drought entering its sixth year in East Africa is just as dangerous. I had the chance to witness the situation myself when I traveled to Somaliland last September. While there, I visited the people in the village of Khalsheekh, who were unable to raise livestock because of the drought. I was heartened to see that they are now growing vegetables in greenhouses built by Oxfam and are irrigated by a solar-powered well we repaired. At this point there may be as many as 5 million of Somalia's 17 million people facing high levels of hunger, but Khalsheekh is a place where I see proof that people can adapt and survive.

It's your support that is bringing hope to so many people, and we thank you for your faith in our work and your continued commitment to Oxfam.

With gratitude for your commitment,



Abby Maxman
President & CEO, Oxfam America

OXFAM CLOSEUP

OXFAM AMERICA'S MEMBER MAGAZINE
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SPRING 2023

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UPDATE: 2022 MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE

With your support, we were able to surpass our fundraising goal for our 2022 year-end matching gift challenge campaigns. This fund was established by an especially generous group of Oxfam supporters, with the goal of raising \$550,000. Together, we are fighting inequality to end poverty and injustice. Thank you!

COVER: Nadiya Pavlenko, 75, lost her home in Ukraine to Russian shelling. She received an Oxfam latrine, which is helping restore some normalcy during her displacement. "Now I have nothing, but we survived hard times," she said. "We have to go on living." *Kieran Doherty/Oxfam*

We welcome your feedback. Please direct letters to editor@oxfamamerica.org.

IN THE NEWS

LOOK. WATCH. LISTEN. JOIN THE CONVERSATION.

SINCE 2020,
**THE RICHEST 1%
HAVE BAGGED
NEARLY TWICE AS
MUCH WEALTH AS
THE REST OF THE WORLD
PUT TOGETHER**



SURVIVAL OF THE RICHEST

Oxfam published its annual inequality report in January, timed to coincide with the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The report, titled *Survival of the Richest: How We Must Tax the Super-Rich Now to Fight Inequality*, details the ever-growing wealth gap between the 1 percent and the remaining 99 percent. *The Guardian* called the report “the only useful thing that happens at Davos each year.” The report received coverage in over 150 news outlets and media, including Bloomberg, Al Jazeera, *Business Insider*, CNN, CNBC, CBS Moneywatch, *Fortune*, *POLITICO*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Washington Post*, Devex, MarketWatch, *The Hill*, NPR, *HuffPost*, *Rolling Stone*, *TIME*, *Quartz*, Voice of America, *Entrepreneur Magazine*, *The Seattle Times*, and Univision. Oxfam America’s Director of Economic Justice Nabil Ahmed was also featured on the *Phillip DeFranco Show* and *Marketplace* and on the podcast *Economics & Beyond* with Rob Johnson.

► **READ THE REPORT:** oxf.am/closeup-survival

REACTING TO DISAPPOINTING NEW MIGRATION PLAN

In February, President Biden announced a revamped migration management strategy that pairs increased expulsions with expanded opportunities for migrants to enter the country legally, in an attempt to reduce record levels of unlawful crossings along the US-Mexico border. Oxfam America President and CEO Abby Maxman responded to *The New York Times* “New Rule to Impose Crackdown on Asylum” letter to the editor on the “illegal and immoral” policy, referencing the administration’s incoherence between the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection and this new asylum ban. A number of outlets, including AFP, BBC News, *Diario Las Américas*, and WBUR-FM *Here & Now*, *Law360*, *MSN*, *Common Dreams*, *Imperial Valley Press*, *Adelante Valle*, and *The Presbyterian Outlook*, highlighted Oxfam’s response to the announcement.

► **READ OXFAM’S STATEMENT ON THE BAN:** oxf.am/closeup-migration



OXFAM RUSHES SUPPORT TO THE PEOPLE OF TÜRKIYE AND SYRIA

Following the 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck Türkiye and Syria, Oxfam’s humanitarian response and efforts were covered by CNN, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Architectural Digest*, WTOP-FM, NBC News, *Rolling Stone*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, ABC News, Mashable, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *TIME*, Telemundo, and more. Abby Maxman was interviewed on WTOP News; Oxfam KEDV staff member Didem Demircan was interviewed on *Target USA Podcast* by WTOP and ABC News; and Oxfam spokesperson Meryem Aslan was interviewed by CNN. A number of public figures, including Diedrich Bader, Alyssa Milano, and Sharon Carpenter and musicians Calling All Crows, Lake Street Dive, and The Zombies, raised awareness for our emergency appeal on their social media platforms.

► **READ MORE ABOUT OUR WORK IN TÜRKIYE AND SYRIA ON PAGE 8 OF THIS ISSUE**

LEFT: An Oxfam worker delivers water to shelters in Aleppo, Syria, following the February 6 earthquake. Islam Mardini/ Oxfam



OXFAM AMBASSADORS TAKE ON WASHINGTON

Oxfam America Sisters on the Planet® Ambassadors convened in Washington, DC, for International Women’s Day. Our ambassadors met with Biden administration officials to advocate for bold climate action that centers women and girls. We also honored US Representative Ilhan Omar, Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, Vermont Commission on Women co-Chair Kiah Morris, filmmaker Rachel Lears, and Taproot Earth’s Collette Battle with Champions of Equality awards for their work driving change, speaking truth to power, and fighting inequality and injustice.

► **LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR SISTERS ON THE PLANET NETWORK:** oxf.am/closeup-sisters



ABOVE: Oxfam Sisters on the Planet Ambassadors and guests pose for a group picture during 2023 International Women’s Day events. *Becky Davis/Oxfam*

LEFT: Champions of Equality award recipients (left to right): Rachel Lears, Kiah Morris, and Jo Ann Hardesty. *Becky Davis/Oxfam*

HOLDING BIG CORPORATIONS ACCOUNTABLE

Oxfam America files shareholder resolutions with companies for a variety of reasons, including urging them to adopt more labor-friendly policies or more-transparent business practices. During the past six months, we’ve filed resolutions with nine companies—a record number for us. Four resolutions target Big Pharma companies—Moderna, Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson, and Merck—to ensure more equitable access and greater transparency in drug pricing for essential medicines. We are also calling on three Big Oil companies—Exxon, Chevron, and ConocoPhillips—to be more transparent about their financial reporting by publishing basic information (e.g., revenue, profits, taxes paid, and number of employees) for every country in which they operate. Our Amazon resolution continues our push for the company to put an employee on its board as a critical way to lift worker voices at the highest level of corporate governance. And our resolution to Walmart urges the company to better assess human rights risk, particularly when it comes to its labor practices. These resolutions go to a vote this spring, and Oxfam will present our resolutions directly to senior executives, boards of directors, and corporate investors.

► **LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR CALLS FOR TRANSPARENCY IN BIG OIL:** oxf.am/closeup-shareholders



WE’RE MOVING!

Oxfam is adopting a hybrid workplace strategy that reflects our values and feminist principles. As part of our new ways of working, we are reducing our physical footprint in the Boston area.

OXFAM AMERICA’S NEW BOSTON ADDRESS (AS OF APRIL 1, 2023)

Oxfam America
77 N Washington Street
Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114

RECOVERY AMID ONGOING CONFLICT

OXFAM'S PARTNERS IN UKRAINE ARE HELPING TO REBUILD INFRASTRUCTURE, PROVIDING ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, AND RESTORING A SENSE OF NORMALCY FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE. BY DIVYA AMLADI WITH REPORTING BY BEKKI FROST

In March of last year, Nadiya Vasylivna was taking shelter from Russian bombardment in her cellar in Novoselivka, Ukraine, with her daughter and neighbor. "Mum, the house is on fire!" her daughter exclaimed. They watched as the cellar doors—made of wood—caught fire; luckily, the rest of the cellar was brick, and their lives were spared.

But they had to leave behind the hometown where she had made a life and where Vasylivna's parents were buried. Vasylivna, 69, recounted the painful experience to Oxfam staff in January. "I can't tell you what I felt. Everything was lost, everything I owned," she said. "I have nothing. I have to buy everything, to the last needle and thread ... it's impossible to describe."

ONE YEAR OF WAR

February 24 marked one year since the start of the war in Ukraine. Since then, about one-third of all Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes. Eight million Ukrainians have sought refuge in Europe. In Romania alone, between 8,000 and 10,000 refugees enter the country each day because of the crisis.

Within Ukraine, the UN estimates that as of January 2023, 18 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. More than six million had to leave their homes and are seeking shelter elsewhere in the country. The majority of those who have been displaced have been homeless for at least six months. Without homes and livelihoods, Ukrainians are watching their savings dwindle. Families have separated, and critical infrastructure, such as water supplies, medical facilities, and schools, have been destroyed.

OXFAM'S RESPONSE IN UKRAINE AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

Thanks to your generous support, Oxfam is currently working with 10 local organizations in northern and southern Ukraine to provide a variety of assistance: cash to cover essential needs, access to services to support survivors of gender-based violence and reduce risk of exploitation, and safe modes of transportation for traveling within Ukraine and to neighboring countries. We are also supporting partners to deliver mobile consultation and hotline services, legal and psychosocial services, and housing and resettlement assistance.

Your support has gone toward cash and hygiene kits for people on the move, meals for people at transit centers, legal assistance, and clean water, toilets, and showers for people at border crossings.

Gordana Vucinic, Oxfam area manager for north and east Ukraine, explained Oxfam's approach: "We supported [organizations] already doing certain activities just to make it quicker and to be able to have a higher outreach to the most vulnerable people. ... When it's the partner who knows the local contacts, they know the needs. They know what the aid supports in their community. They're the ones who know the priorities for a certain period of time."

In addition to providing lifesaving aid, Oxfam is also working with local partners to create long-term solutions for affected communities. We are channeling our expertise in humanitarian response, technical support, and funding through 29 partner organizations in Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, and Romania—organizations that are already working directly with displaced people and communities that host them—helping these organizations expand their own capacities and impact.



Thanks to our Oxfam supporters, we have reached 800,000 people across the four countries, including 140,000 in Ukraine.

RESTORING WATER SYSTEMS

Access to clean water and adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion are essential elements of Oxfam’s humanitarian responses. We believe that equitable access to water prevents diseases and reduces public health risks, and that sanitation facilities maintain safety and dignity, especially in regards to gender-based violence and accessibility for people with special needs.

During crises, water and sanitation services tend to collapse or become overtaxed. That was the situation Oxfam encountered in Mykolaiv, a city in southern Ukraine, where Russian occupation

had cut off the town’s access to the river, its source for water. Working in collaboration with municipalities, community-based groups, and other public health stakeholders, Oxfam is repairing water and sanitation facilities to ensure people have safe water to drink.

Laurence Hamai, a public health engineer working for Oxfam in Ukraine, explains what people living in Mykolaiv endured: “When the area was occupied, the water in the pipes completely stopped, and then the intake where the water is taken from the river was damaged, and the pipes that go to the town were all damaged in several places. Within a short amount of time, people lost their water. No water in the taps, no water in the town.”

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT:

After her home in Novoselivka was destroyed, Nadiya Vasylivna, 69, relocated to Chernihiv, where she is living in a modular home.

Last March, Mykola Shykuta’s home was destroyed by Russian bombardment. He is living in temporary housing and is now beginning the slow process of rebuilding his home.

St. Nicholas House of Mercy Care Home resident Ljudmila Tymchenko, 79, says that the filtered water provided by Oxfam looks and tastes better than the trucked water they were previously receiving.

Volodymyr Yakovlev, 65, is the director of the St. Nicholas House of Mercy Care Home. Oxfam supplied a water treatment unit to provide drinking water to the home and neighboring community.

PHOTOS: *Kieran Doherty/Oxfam*



“// When it’s the partner who knows the local contacts, they know the needs. They know what the aid supports in their community. //”

GORDANA VUCINIC, OXFAM AREA MANAGER FOR NORTH AND EAST UKRAINE

Initially, Hamai reported, water was trucked in from Odessa, but that was not a sustainable solution. The townspeople needed a system for retrieving and treating water, so Oxfam worked with other groups, such as the Red Cross, and coordinated with local organizations to drill holes across town to access water, and to provide equipment to treat that water.

The water company received equipment and support from Oxfam to help restore operation, though the service is greatly reduced from what it was before the Russian occupation. Ukrainians are suffering the effects of an unstable electrical infrastructure, which includes power outages and surges in the network. Hamai said that in some areas, the surges have damaged water pumps. In these areas, it is not just water treatment chemicals that are needed, but also generators, pumps, and pipes.



“Basically, it depends on the situation,” he said. “We start from what the people need and we add up to support them.”

Oxfam has also installed individual water treatment units in Mykolaiv. When electricity is on—there is a schedule for when it is on and when it must be conserved—people can use a dispenser to fill bottles. St. Nicholas House of Mercy Care Home in Mykolaiv is one location that received a water treatment unit. “People in need, especially the elderly, are turning to us,” said the care home’s director, Volodymyr Yakovlev. St. Nicholas serves as a water point for the larger community as well.

Before the tap was installed, water was trucked to St. Nicholas from a well outside the city. The staff at the care home had to boil the water to make it drinkable.

“We’re not used to drinking water of such great quality from the tap,” Yakovlev said. “We can just use filtered water, and everyone we look after has bottles in their rooms they can drink from. They still don’t believe that you can just get water from the tap like this and it’s purified.”

St. Nicholas resident Ljudmila Tymchenko, 79, attests to the transformation. “It was so grey,” she recalled. “The water was not good, but now the clean water is good, you can have a wash. We have water, good clean water.”



OXFAM'S PARTNERS IN UKRAINE

Because We Can, Anika Foundation, and Rebuild Makariv

These three community-based organizations provide direct support to people affected by the war in Chernihiv and Makariv, including clearing debris from damaged homes, rebuilding houses, repairing roofs and installing windows, and providing families with materials to survive the winter.

Caritas Odesa

Assists the most vulnerable, regardless of their ethnicity, nationality, religion, or social status.

The Tenth of April ("Desyate Kvitnya")

Provides free legal aid to refugees and asylum seekers, in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as psychosocial support and cash grants to people whose safety is at risk.

Gay Alliance Ukraine

Aims to increase the level of tolerance in Ukrainian society to promote the full realization of human rights for the LGBTQIA+ community in Ukraine and beyond.

Peaceful Heaven of Kharkiv

Operates four humanitarian centers that offer support services and supplies people in Kharkiv and Oblast with hygiene kits, food and nonfood items, and hot meals.

Rokada

Supports refugees, asylum-seekers, and displaced people and other populations affected by the conflict.

Rural Women Business Network

Protects the rights and interests of rural women to support their empowerment, equal economic participation, leadership, access to education and health care, and participation in decision-making.

Women's Consortium of Ukraine

Coordinates advocacy, training, and education initiatives to strengthen equal opportunities for women and men, as well as to promote the rights of children.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

After her house was destroyed, Vasylivna's son-in-law drove her and her daughter to the city of Chernihiv. When we spoke to her, she was living in a modular unit and had received a latrine from Oxfam. For her, the latrine is a start in the direction of possibility.

Mykola Shykuta's family also received latrines—one for his family and one for his daughter's. Both their homes were destroyed in bombardments, and they are temporarily living in a modular home. Prior to receiving the Oxfam latrines, he told us his family had to resort to using an outdoor shower as a toilet.

Shykuta has started to rebuild his home, piece by piece. He is hopeful, but practical. "In order to rebuild our homes, we need the war to be over," he said. "We need peace."

It's not clear when the people of Ukraine will see peace. But with your support, Oxfam will continue to assist people like Shykuta, Vasylivna, and others affected by the war through our local partner organizations.

A CLOSER LOOK

Read more about how Oxfam's partners are helping displaced Ukrainians rebuild their homes: oxfam.org/closeup-ukraine

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: Gordana Vucinic, Oxfam area manager for north and east Ukraine, said many of the initiatives we are supporting came from community initiatives to help each other.

OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT: Residents of Mykolaiv access a water point installed by Oxfam. The water system there has been damaged and we are working to repair facilities and provide clean water.

PHOTOS: *Kieran Doherty/Oxfam*

GETTING AID TO EARTHQUAKE SURVIVORS IN TÜRKIYE AND SYRIA

WITH HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE, OXFAM IS RUSHING CLEAN WATER AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE STRUGGLING TO RECOVER FROM EARTHQUAKES AND LOSS OF HOMES AND BUSINESSES.

BY COLIN CAREY

Emine Oguz says she jumped from her bed when the earthquake rattled her home in Gaziantep, in southern Türkiye (Turkey) on February 6.

Somehow, she and her two sons, daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren managed to get outside, where they watched everything shake violently for two hours. Eventually, the freezing temperatures outweighed the danger in their home, and her elder son dashed inside to quickly grab some blankets. A neighbor suggested they go to the Middle East Exhibition Centre to escape the cold.

After making the long walk to the center, they slept on the floor. But at least they were safe and warm. It was loud and busy, but in some parts of it people sat in silence, frozen in grief.

Oguz, 60, has lived through two other earthquakes, but says “this one was different, this one was terrible.” She says when she is sitting down, it feels like her legs are shaking. “My legs don’t work how they used to,” she says between tears.

Oguz and her family are among the 13 million people in southern Türkiye affected by three massive earthquakes; about one million of these people are now living in shelters. Tens of thousands more are injured.

The earthquakes also hit areas of northern Syria, affecting eight million people. These areas are already debilitated by 12 years of ongoing conflict. Syria is suffering from an economy weakened by inflation and conflict; food and fuel prices are soaring. About 90 percent of the country lives below the poverty line, and cholera is also a threat in areas affected by the earthquake, according to Moutaz Adham, Oxfam’s director in Syria. “Cholera cases, which were already on the rise even before the earthquake, could surge given the scarcity of proper sanitation facilities in overcrowded mosques and temporary camps,” Adham says.

In the weeks after the first earthquake hit on February 6, officials estimate that more than 50,000 people have perished across Türkiye and Syria.

RUSHING AID TO SURVIVORS

The sheer scale of the disaster is staggering. Oxfam and our partners in Türkiye and Syria are dealing with destroyed roads, and damaged gas pipelines and communications networks. The affected area is massive—more than 99,000 square kilometers (39,600 square miles), roughly three times the size of Belgium.

And the affected people include the staff of Oxfam KEDV, the Oxfam affiliate in Türkiye: Münevver Tuvarlak, 35, says she and her husband and two children fled their fourth-floor apartment in Gaziantep after the second large earthquake. “We stayed in the car for about six hours after the earthquake,” she says. “I remember looking at the garden shake and thinking, ‘This shouldn’t happen; gardens don’t shake like this.’”

For decades, Oxfam KEDV has worked closely with a network of grassroots women-led organizations, and plans to continue this collaboration to reach up to 1.4 million people over the next three years, distributing food, cash, clean

water, and hygiene items; repairing water and sanitation systems; raising awareness of the threats of deadly diseases; and helping to protect vulnerable women and children from violence.

At an industrial park on the outskirts of Gaziantep, Berfin Akdeniz, 18, is at a distribution center, sorting through onesies and diapers, a reminder of some of the most vulnerable survivors. These and other aid items are destined for a local hospital. Outside, a steady stream of cars and vans pull up, and the drivers report where aid is needed the most. Snow covers the ground as Turkish soldiers check everyone arriving at the warehouse.

This distribution center is operated jointly by local aid groups, the government aid agency AFAD, and larger aid organizations like Oxfam KEDV. Akdeniz, a recent high school graduate planning to attend university to become a teacher, is volunteering here along with some of her friends. As part of their work to facilitate the delivery of aid to affected people, they check and recheck all the items about to go out the door.



“My family and friends are safe,” Akdeniz says. She is at the distribution center in solidarity with all those who are less fortunate. “I am here because I need to be.”

ABOVE: The Oguz family from Gaziantep, Türkiye, lost all their possessions when earthquakes damaged their home on February 6. *Tineke D'haese/Oxfam*

A CLOSER LOOK 🔍

See more photographs of the areas affected by earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, and get the latest updates on the work of Oxfam and our partners: oxf.am/closeup-emergencies

HOW IS OXFAM RESPONDING TO THE EARTHQUAKES IN TÜRKIYE AND SYRIA?

TÜRKIYE

In the next three years, Oxfam will work closely with its network of women-led organizations to reach up to 1.4 million people. They intend to:



Get food to people, distribute cooking equipment, and provide cash and/or food vouchers. In the long term, Oxfam KEDV will work with partners to create jobs and income-generating opportunities to help people support themselves.



Provide clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, which includes setting up toilets and showers in emergency shelters.



Keep people safe and respect their rights by supporting local women's rights organizations to set up information hubs for reporting violence, and by providing counseling and safe spaces for women and children.

SYRIA

Oxfam immediately provided safe drinking water and water tanks to shelters and helped 50 engineers check the safety of hundreds of buildings. In the next three years, Oxfam in Syria's plans include reaching 800,000 people by:



Distributing hygiene items and water containers to help people avoid waterborne diseases.



Installing water tanks and delivering clean water to collective shelters and other areas.



Repairing water and sanitation systems at shelters and in neighborhoods.



Ensuring women and girls are protected from violence and are able to maintain their dignity by distributing solar lamps, menstrual products, and information to prevent violence and help survivors of violence.



Providing cash so people can buy food.

A FARMER FIELD SCHOOL CHANGES LIVES IN SOMALILAND

IN AN ARID CORNER OF EAST AFRICA, SOME WATER, A GREENHOUSE, AND TRAINING CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PASTORALISTS WHO CAN NO LONGER RAISE ANIMALS DUE TO AN EXTENDED DROUGHT. BY CHRIS HUFSTADER WITH REPORTING BY AHMED OSMAN

For someone who has raised livestock in Somaliland his entire life, always on the move with his animals looking for water and pasture to tend to them, settling down to grow vegetables is hard to imagine.

But it's becoming more and more necessary for people like Abdirisak Ahmed, who raised camels and goats his entire life, to put down roots. Ahmed and his wife and children live in a village called Khalsheekh, in the Sanaag region of Somaliland. There, as in other areas of East Africa, years of drought have dried up water sources and killed the grasslands that pastoralist families rely on for their camels, cows, and goats.

To help pastoralists make the transition to farming, Oxfam helped rehabilitate a well near Khalsheekh, installed a solar-powered pump, and piped the water to a nearby level area where villagers began growing vegetables. Oxfam funded the construction of two greenhouses, and

local farmers found the money to build a third. Then, Oxfam started a farmer field school to teach Ahmed and others how to grow vegetables.

"When the training started, I thought I was too old to take part," says Ahmed, who is 51. But he and about 50 others started working and learning, and two years later they are growing cabbage, onions, peppers, eggplants, beets, watermelons, and tomatoes in the dry season, thanks to the irrigation system. In the rainy months, they grow cereal grains like maize and sorghum. In a small corner of the field near the driveway entrance is a nursery of about 20 papaya tree seedlings, a new fruit crop the farmers want to try.

LEARNING TO ADAPT AND SURVIVE

Inside one of the 40-meter-by-10-meter (132-foot-by-32-foot) greenhouses, Ahmed has a look at the tomato plants, which are now nearly up to his chest in height.

"Greenhouses are easier to maintain than outdoor gardens," he says. "Insects can't hurt the plants."

He inspects a plump tomato on the vine, still green but big enough to cradle in the palm of one hand, while listing off some of the other advantages to growing in a greenhouse, such as that the tomatoes "will grow faster than outdoor gardening, and you can sell your crops for a good price."

Khalsheekh is near a main road, providing the growers with access to markets in nearby towns. A sign near the greenhouses provides instructions for buyers making digital payments directly to bank accounts.

The farmer field school in Khalsheekh offers a lifeline to avoid what many in Somalia and other parts of East Africa are enduring. With so many reliant on livestock, the sustained, climate-change-induced drought is a tragedy. In many



A WORKING WELL AND A PLACE TO GROW CROPS CREATE A WAY TO SURVIVE A SUSTAINED, CLIMATE-INDUCED TRAGEDY.

nearby areas of Sanaag, people have watched their animals die off slowly over the past five years, leaving them with no means to make a decent living. They have had to leave their homes in search of humanitarian assistance, finding help in numerous camps for displaced people, where Oxfam provides clean water and cash to help people access food. At the end of 2022, aid groups estimated 5.6 million people in Somalia were facing severe food shortages, and they expected the number to increase to more than six million in early 2023. About 20 percent of the affected people in Somalia are in Somaliland.

That's why a working well and a place to grow crops is so useful to people in Khalsheekh now—it gives them an

alternative to raising animals, and allows them to stay in their community as they learn to adapt to the changing climate.

Abdirisak Ahmed now makes between \$5 and \$7 dollars per day, which works out to about the average income for a worker in Somaliland. "Without Oxfam's assistance in delivering water, training, and constructing a greenhouse, the situation would have been much worse," Ahmed says.

A CLOSER LOOK 🔍

For more on what Oxfam is doing to help people survive the East Africa hunger crisis: oxf.am/closeup-eastafrica

CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT:

Abdirisak Ahmed checks tomatoes growing in a greenhouse near his home in Khalsheekh. He says tomatoes grow well and are less vulnerable to pests in the greenhouse, and he gets a good price for his crop. *Ahmed Osman/Oxfam*

Oxfam supported the construction of two greenhouses in Khalsheekh, Somaliland. A farmer field school teaches people to grow vegetables, with water provided by solar-powered pumps Oxfam set up at a nearby well. *Abdilahe Persia/Oxfam*

Ali Shire grows carrots, beets, onions, and tomatoes in Khalsheekh. He says he used to raise animals but now concentrates on growing crops after Oxfam repaired the well and made the solar-powered irrigation system available for the farmer field school. "I personally believe it is a win for the community," he says of the project. *Pablo Tosco/Oxfam Intermón*

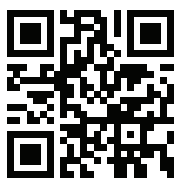
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Barey Ibrahim Korone receives monthly cash support from Oxfam through a program for families affected by drought in Wajir County, Kenya. She is pictured at her local store in Tula Tula in Wajir County shopping for supplies. *Billy Owiti/Oxfam*





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Your support helps make Oxfam's mission of fighting inequality to end poverty and injustice possible. Thanks to your generosity, we are able to continue our innovative long-term programs while responding to emergencies as they arise.

ABOVE: Lucia Picerno (Instagram: @badass.femme) created this illustration for Oxfam America to express our visual brand. "I decided to use my skills as a creative to fight for what I believe in," says the London-based Uruguayan illustrator. "With the world ever more divided, I want to make work that can transmit joy and a feeling of community and unity, especially inspiring women to be seen and heard."



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A NOTE TO OUR READERS: Oxfam America strives to reduce our footprint as much as possible. Due to supply shortages, we printed the last issue of *CloseUp* on 10% postconsumer recycled paper. With this issue, we have returned to our regular 30% postconsumer recycled paper stock.

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