



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL NORMS IN REFUGEE SETTLEMENTS OF IMVEPI, RHINO CAMP, AND BIDI BIDI RESPECTIVELY

1. Background about Oxfam

Oxfam is an international confederation of 21 affiliate organizations working together with partners and local communities in more than 90 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty and injustice. Oxfam in Uganda started work in the early 1960s delivering development and humanitarian support as part of the global movement of people fighting to end inequality and injustice. Today, we continue to tackle the inequalities that make and keep people poor. We save and protect people's lives in times of crisis. We work with people to build their resilience and rebuild their livelihoods. We enable vulnerable people's voices to be heard and campaign for genuine, durable change.

Oxfam envisions Uganda free of extreme inequality and injustice; a society where citizens and particularly women across all age groups claim and exercise their rights and responsibilities and can influence decisions that affect their lives. Our one country program is hinged on four thematic areas that is Inclusive Governance & Accountability, Resilient livelihoods, Humanitarian Preparedness and Response; and Gender Justice & Women's Rights.

2. Introduction

Uganda is host to one of the largest refugee populations in Africa, with the West Nile region, particularly Yumbe, Terego, and Madi Okollo Districts, accommodating a significant portion of these communities. While women play vital roles in their communities, their participation in leadership remains constrained by entrenched social norms, cultural expectations, and the unique challenges of displacement. Understanding these dynamics is essential for designing interventions that promote gender equality and empower women leaders in humanitarian development peacebuilding contexts.

This research is vital as it directly contributes to the implementation of the global Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, established under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and its subsequent resolutions, which emphasize the meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and leadership across all stages of the conflict cycle. It also aligns with Uganda's Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2021–2025), which prioritizes women's leadership and participation in peace and development processes, particularly in contexts affected by displacement, conflict, and humanitarian crises. By focusing on refugee settlements in West Nile Imvepi, Rhino Camp, and Bidibidi, this research will generate evidence to inform inclusive policies and programs that promote gender equality, challenge harmful social norms, and strengthen women's roles in community governance and peacebuilding. The findings will support Uganda's commitment to the WPS agenda and contribute to broader efforts to ensure that women's voices and leadership are recognized and supported in humanitarian settings.

Based on the findings of the research on women's leadership and social norms in refugee settlements in West Nile, a policy brief will be developed to support advocacy efforts aligned with the Women, Peace and Security (WPS)



Agenda. The policy brief will aim to translate research insights into actionable recommendations that promote women's meaningful participation in leadership and peacebuilding processes.

Objectives of the Policy Brief:

- Summarize key findings from the research in a concise and accessible format.
- Highlight the relevance of the findings to the global WPS framework, particularly United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and related resolutions.
- Align recommendations with Uganda's Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2021–2025).
- Provide evidence-based messages to influence policy and programming in refugee settings.

3. Information about the Project:

Oxfam in Uganda, with funding from DANIDA through Oxfam Denmark, is implementing a Strategic Partnership initiative from 2022 to 2025. This program focuses on four key thematic areas: Economic Justice and Inclusive Democracies, Education for Active Citizenship, Inclusive Peacebuilding, and Humanitarian Action & Resilience. The initiative is being implemented in collaboration with four Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs), one national community-based organization, and four national NGOs, with operations in the Southwestern region (EACOP districts) and West Nile districts of Yumbe, Madi Okollo, and Terego.

The overall goal is to contribute to a peaceful, gender-just, and climate-resilient society that upholds human rights through interventions in peacebuilding, livelihoods, education, climate change, and social and economic justice. Oxfam supports nine partners with direct funding to implement most activities, while taking a lead role in capacity building and coordination. Key partners include RLOs such as CECI, YSAT, I CAN South Sudan, YETA, AFCE, AWAN, and URDMC, as well as Lugbara Kari, a cultural institution based in Arua. Advocacy-focused partners like LGIHE, CSBAG, and CRED are working on budget transparency, education, and petroleum governance to promote equity and human rights.

It is within this broader program framework that Oxfam and its partners are undertaking a research study on Women's Leadership and Social Norms in Refugee Settings, specifically in Imvepi, Rhino Camp, and Bidibidi settlements in West Nile. This research directly contributes to Outcome 2 of the Strategic Partnership:

Outcome: *Civil society and local actors, including Refugee-Led Organizations and community leaders, lead and participate in decision-making in humanitarian action and peacebuilding, challenge harmful social norms, and promote gender justice.*

Indicator: *Increase in the number of women refugee leaders taking up key decision-making positions in organizations and community structures.*

The research aims to generate evidence on the status of women's leadership, the influence of social norms, and the barriers and opportunities for women's participation in decision-making. It will also inform the development of a policy brief to support advocacy efforts aligned with the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, including UNSCR 1325 and Uganda's Third National Action Plan on WPS (2021–2025).

4. Purpose and Objectives:

a. Overall objective of the research.

The overall goal of this research is to understand the status and dynamics of women's leadership in refugee settlements in West Nile specifically Imvepi, Rhino Camp, and Bidibidi and how social norms influence their participation.



b. Specific objectives of the Research:

- Assess the current level of women's representation in leadership roles within formal and informal structures in the refugee settlements.
- Determine whether there has been an increase in the number of women in leadership positions over time and identify the factors contributing to this change.
- Identify the types of leadership roles women occupy, including positions in Refugee Welfare Committees (RWCs), community-based organizations, peacebuilding groups, and informal community structures.
- To investigate how social and cultural norms, along with structural barriers and enabling factors such as education, age, ethnicity, disability, caregiving responsibilities, and economic status affect women's participation and sustainability in leadership roles.
- Explore community perceptions and attitudes toward women in leadership, including the role of men and youth in supporting or resisting women's leadership.
- Provide actionable recommendations to humanitarian development and peace actors, policymakers, and community leaders to strengthen women's leadership and promote gender inclusive governance in refugee settings.

5. Scope of Work:

In the Geographic focus, the research will cover Oxfam project Operation areas in West Nile, and the geographical coverage will be limited to Districts of Yumbe - Bidibidi Refugee Settlement, Terego and Madi Okollo- Imvepi Refugee Settlement and Rhino Camp Refugee Settlements respectively. Fieldwork and data collection is expected to be conducted in both refugee settlements and host communities within these districts.

The overall scope of work for this consultancy assignment involves conducting a comprehensive research study on women's leadership and social norms within specified refugee settlements in Uganda's West Nile region. The consultant is tasked with designing and implementing a tailored research framework that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather evidence on the status, dynamics, barriers, and opportunities related to women's participation in leadership roles. This includes performing a literature review, mapping women's leadership structures, collecting data through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and case studies, and conducting an intersectional analysis that considers factors like age, ethnicity, disability, and economic status. The work culminates in producing a detailed research report and a policy brief, which will summarize findings, provide actionable recommendations, and align with global and national frameworks such as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda under UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and Uganda's Third National Action Plan on WPS (2021–2025). The assignment emphasizes ethical considerations, stakeholder engagement, and validation of findings to inform advocacy, policy, and programming that promote gender justice, challenge harmful norms, and enhance women's roles in peacebuilding and community governance. The consultant must also manage the process within a defined timeline and budget, ensuring deliverables like an inception report, raw data, and presentations are submitted for review and approval by Oxfam.

The technical scope focuses on investigating the status and influencing factors of women's leadership in formal and informal structures, such as Refugee Welfare Committees (RWCs), community-based organizations, peacebuilding groups, and other community roles. This aligns with the study's overall objective to understand women's leadership dynamics and the role of social norms in their participation, as well as specific objectives to assess representation levels, track changes over time (including contributing factors), identify occupied roles, examine cultural and social norms, analyse barriers (e.g., education, age, ethnicity, disability, caregiving, unpaid care work and economic status) and enablers, explore community perceptions (including attitudes from men and youth), and develop recommendations for stakeholders. It directly supports the project's Outcome 2 indicator: an increase in the number



of women refugee leaders in key decision-making positions within organizations and community structures, by generating evidence on progress, challenges, and strategies to promote gender-inclusive governance in humanitarian settings.

The key research questions, derived from the objectives, include: What is the current level of women's representation in leadership roles across formal and informal structures in the settlements? Has there been an increase in women holding leadership positions over time, and what factors (e.g., interventions, social shifts, or external support) have contributed to or hindered this change? What specific types of leadership roles do women occupy, and how do these vary by context? How do social and cultural norms, including those related to gender expectations and displacement, influence women's ability to participate in and sustain leadership? What are the primary barriers and enabling factors affecting women's leadership, such as education, age, ethnicity, disability, caregiving responsibilities, and economic status? What are the prevailing community perceptions and attitudes toward women in leadership, including the roles of men, youth, elders, and other groups in supporting or resisting it? Finally, what actionable recommendations can be provided to humanitarian actors, policymakers, and community leaders to strengthen women's leadership and foster gender-inclusive governance?

Key stakeholders include women leaders and aspiring leaders within the refugee settlements, community members (encompassing men, youth, elders, and diverse groups based on ethnicity, age, disability, and marital status), government representatives such as officials from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and district authorities in Yumbe, Terego, and Madi Okollo, as well as NGO/INGO staff and Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs). Oxfam and its partners are central, including RLOs like CECI, YSAT, I CAN South Sudan, YETA, AFCE, AWAN, and URDMC; the cultural institution Lugbara Kari; and advocacy-focused organizations such as LGIHE, CSBAG, and CRED. Additional stakeholders encompass humanitarian actors, women's groups, community-based organizations, religious leaders, and local authorities, who will be engaged through data collection, validation workshops, and dissemination of findings to ensure relevance and buy-in.

The study will be conducted in the West Nile region of Uganda, specifically within the refugee settlements of Bidibidi (Yumbe District), Imvepi (Terego and Madi Okollo Districts), and Rhino Camp (Madi Okollo District). Fieldwork and data collection will extend to both the refugee settlements and surrounding host communities in these districts to capture a holistic view of dynamics in humanitarian and displacement contexts.

The assessment period focuses on the status of women's leadership and social norms as of late 2025, with a retrospective analysis to determine changes over time, particularly since the start of Oxfam's Strategic Partnership initiative in 2022. This aligns with the project's duration (2022–2025) and Uganda's Third National Action Plan on WPS (2021–2025). The consultancy itself is timed for 45 working days, from November 15 to December 29, 2025, during which all research activities, from inception to final deliverables, must be completed, accounting for potential disruptions like weather or insecurity.

6. Methodology

The consultant is expected to articulate the research design and provide detail of study approaches that will be applied. The methods should be sensitive to the target population (unit of analysis), and robust enough to provide adequate responses to the stated research questions. Overall, the methodology section should cover details of research design and approaches, sampling, sample size determination, data collection methods/instruments, data analysis techniques, plan for dissemination of study findings and a statement on quality assurance and ethical considerations during the evaluation. Overall, the section should provide details of how the research will be conducted. The expected approach should be described in enough detail to enable any other evaluator interested in the same study to apply the same methodology.

The research will use a **mixed-methods approach**, combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of women's leadership and the influence of social norms in Imvepi, Rhino Camp, and Bidibidi refugee settlements.



- a) **Desk Review;** A thorough review of existing literature, policy documents, program reports, and previous studies will be conducted. This will include global frameworks such as the UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda (UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions), Uganda's Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2021–2025), and relevant humanitarian and gender equality strategies.
- b) **Quantitative Data Collection;** Structured surveys will be administered to a representative sample of women and men across the three settlements. The surveys will gather data on:
 - The percentage of women in leadership positions.
 - Types of leadership roles held by women.
 - Community perceptions of women leaders.
 - Barriers and enablers to women's leadership.
- c) **Qualitative Data Collection;** To gain deeper insights, the research will include:
 - **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** With women leaders, refugee welfare council members, humanitarian staff, and local government officials.
 - **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** With diverse groups including women, youth, elders, and men to explore social norms, cultural beliefs, and lived experiences.
 - **Case Studies:** Documenting 06-10 success stories and challenges faced by women in leadership roles.
- d) **Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement;** The research will identify and engage key stakeholders such as women's groups, community-based organizations, religious leaders, and humanitarian actors. Their perspectives will help validate findings and shape practical recommendations.
- e) **Intersectional Analysis;** Special attention will be given to how factors such as age, disability, ethnicity, education level, and marital status affect women's leadership opportunities and experiences.
- f) **Validation and Dissemination;** Preliminary findings will be shared through validation workshops with stakeholders in West Nile to ensure accuracy and relevance. Findings will be presented in a comprehensive report and shared with partners, policymakers, and community leaders.

The selected consultant will prepare a detailed methodology and share with Oxfam team for review and approval through an inception report.

7. Study outputs /Deliverables:

The consultant is, expected to lead, accomplish and submit the following deliverables within the agreed timeframe and budget:

- An inception report, which will serve as an agreement between parties on how the evaluation will be, conducted. The inception report should include work plan, methodology, tools, ethical considerations among others
- Summary of existing data and evidence relevant to the research
- Draft report.
- Final report, the report should consist of:
 - Standard cover sheet
 - Executive summary.
 - Description of objectives,
 - Methods and limitations.
 - Study findings,
 - Conclusions and Recommendations.



- Raw data in any of the following statistical packages (STATA, SPSS, Excel) and transcribed qualitative scripts.
- Presentation: Present the research findings and recommendations, to Oxfam, key stakeholders and partners within 1 week of finalizing the draft report as a way of validation.
- Incorporating feedback from validation, includes executive summary, methodology, findings, and recommendations
- Policy Brief: Develop a policy brief using the summary of findings and recommendations for influencing and advocacy use.

Annexes:

- ✓ Relevant maps and photographs of the Research areas where necessary
- ✓ Bibliography of consulted secondary sources
- ✓ Used data collection tools
- ✓ List of interviewees with accompanying informed consent forms.

8. Qualification and experience.

The consultancy should have:

- Postgraduate or master's degree in Gender Studies, Social Sciences, Peace studies, Leadership Development Studies, or related fields are required and post-graduate diploma in Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning is an added advantage.
- Proven expertise in women's leadership research methodologies and intersectional analysis.
- Strong analytical skills and familiarity with qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting qualitative research in similar contexts.
- Experience working in refugee-hosting areas, preferably in West Nile.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse stakeholders.
- Knowledge of Uganda's refugee and education policy landscape including its cultural and gender dynamics.
- Strong report-writing skills.
- Neutral, non-judgmental facilitation skills that can foster constructive conversations around sensitive subjects amongst diverse stakeholders.
- Experience in using participatory and engaging workshop facilitation methodologies (strongly preferred).
- Strong English language skills required, other local languages an asset. Arabic is an added advantage.

9. Ethical Considerations:

The consultant must adhere to ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for the privacy and safety of all participants. All research activities will be cleared through appropriate Regional, District and settlement level authorities.

10. Timeline and estimated working days

The proposed evaluation time frame is 45 working days between 15th Nov to 29th Dec 2025. This will be done in accordance with the OXFAM evaluation criteria.

Activity	Date	Number of days
Consultant to sign contract for the assignment	15 th Dec.2025	1
Review of documents and development of the inception report and research instruments	3 rd to 6 th Jan 2026	4
Presentation of Inception report and data collection tools	7 th Jan 2026	1



Training of research assistants and pre-testing of study instruments	8 th to 9 th Jan 2026	2
Primary data collection (field work)	10 th to 19 th Jan 2026	10
Data analysis and report writing	20 th to 29 th Jan 2025	10
Submission of the draft study report to Oxfam in Uganda	30 th Jan 2026	1
Incorporating comments on draft report	1 st to 2 nd Feb 2026	3
Submission of the final project research report including policy brief and recommendations to Oxfam in Uganda	3 rd Feb 2025	1
Presentation of research findings/ sharing feedback on report	4 th to 8 th Feb 2026	5
Incorporating feedback from validation	9 th to 13 th Feb 2026	5
Submission of the final report with policy brief	14 th Feb 2025	1

* Timetable depends on the weather; not all areas may be accessible in case of rain or insecurity.

11. Budget

The consultant should provide a detailed budget proposal covering all expenses related to the research, including personnel, travel, data collection tools, and other relevant costs. Oxfam will provide professional resources fees to facilitate implementation of the assignment.

Statutory Deductions, the Consultant will be responsible for declaration of the income for income tax purposes (i.e. **6% from the gross payment**) payable to Uganda Revenue Authority in accordance with the income tax regulations of the Republic of Uganda.

13. Evaluation and award of Consultancy

Proposal study Criteria

The technical proposal will be evaluated based on the Quality Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) Criteria:

- The individual general reliability as well as experience and capacity in carrying out the assignment (30%).
- The approach in responding to the TOR and detailed work Oxfam in Uganda (45%).
- The qualifications and competencies of the proposed personnel for the assignment (25%). Proposals obtaining more than 70% of the technical points will be considered technically suitable and qualify for financial assessment.

Payment: The consultant will be paid 20% upon approval of the inception report and 80% upon submission and approval of final report and any agreed upon products of the study. The technical fees will be subjected to 6% withholding Tax.

14. Supervision/management of the assignment

The study will be supervised by the Refugee Engagement and Participation Coordinator with support from the Area Manager and the MEAL contact person.

15. Submission of Technical and Financial Proposal:

Interested applicants are expected to submit the following not later than **30th November 2025**.

- Technical proposal
- Financial Proposal: the financial proposal should provide cost estimate for services to be rendered including consultancy fees, transport, accommodation and living costs, stationery and supplies needed for data collection etc.

Interested applicants/firms are invited to submit the following:

- A cover letter outlining relevant experience in similar work (1-2 pages)
- CV of the consultant(s) and information about the firm
- Technical Proposal on the understanding of the TOR
- List of proposed key activities, Level of Effort and timeframe
- Financial proposal



The application package should also include:

- A list of three references that can attest to their expertise as it relates to this assignment and /or Copies of similar evaluation reports conducted by the applicant where possible and or a recommendation letter from an NGO's who the consultant has worked with before.
- Confirmation of availability for assessment period and ability to travel to project location.

Please ensure your submission email has the subject heading:

"The HDP Project - Women's Leadership and Social Norms in Refugee Settlements of Imvepi, Rhino Camp, and Bidibidi" respectively to ugandalogistics@oxfam.org by 5:00pm 30th November 2025.