



# **SOUTH SUDAN & UGANDA GEARED FOR SUCCESS (GFS)**

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## **2024 Project Summary**

The Geared for Success (GFS) project is a multi-year initiative aimed at enhancing access to gender-responsive, quality education for refugee and internally displaced children and youth, particularly adolescent girls, in Uganda and South Sudan. Implemented by Oxfam Canada and War Child Canada in collaboration with local refugee-led and IDP-led organizations, the project seeks to build the organizational capacity of these partners, promote women's leadership, and transform social norms that limit educational opportunities. Through targeted training, participatory research, community engagement, and flexible funding mechanisms, GFS works to strengthen the education ecosystem from the ground up, ensuring that marginalized voices—especially women and girls—are empowered and heard.

In 2024, the GFS project made meaningful strides in both Uganda and South Sudan toward its core objective of strengthening the role of partner organizations for the delivery of gender-responsive education to refugee and internally displaced populations. With a shared implementation model led by Oxfam Canada and War Child Canada, the project focused on deepening organizational capacity, elevating women's leadership, and laying the groundwork for systemic advocacy in challenging environments.



In both countries, three partner organizations successfully completed the self-assessment process through the Capacity Assessment Tool (CAT), which guided the development of customized action plans addressing institutional gaps. These plans focused on transformative leadership, safeguarding, and organizational resilience. In Uganda, each of the partner RLOs—CECI, YSAT, and RELON—began implementing their action plans with Oxfam's technical guidance, including setting up internal structures like gender focal points and resource mobilization teams. Meanwhile, in South Sudan, the CBOs—CCOSS, UNYDA, and HARD—received core grant funding and initiated safeguarding training and leadership strategy sessions, ensuring alignment with the CAT results.



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### **Continued 2024 Project Summary**

A significant achievement across both countries was the completion of participatory research to identify and analyze barriers to women's leadership within CBOs. In Uganda, the research spanned three districts and included engagement with community-based organizations and refugee women to produce actionable recommendations. Similarly, in South Sudan, comprehensive studies involving over 200 households and numerous key stakeholders revealed deeply rooted social norms and structural challenges. These findings have already informed early-stage program adaptations, including the creation of safe physical spaces for women within partner organizations and the design of targeted leadership curricula.

The project also took foundational steps in changing community attitudes toward gender equality and education for girls. In Uganda, key influencers—including education officers and cultural and religious leaders—were identified and engaged in training. In South Sudan, 45 community influencers were trained to become advocates for gender-responsive education, with follow-up sensitization sessions using the Gender Action Learning System model demonstrating early shifts in participant understanding of positive masculinity and gender norms.

With broader community-focused campaigns scheduled in the coming year, the groundwork for behavior change communication strategies is well underway, supported by feminist research conducted in both countries. Additionally, peace and conflict analyses were completed to inform future trainings on community-based mediation and conflict resolution.

On the funding and operational front, all six CBOs received core organizational strengthening grants aligned with their CAT action plans. In both countries, Oxfam and War Child Canada led training sessions on grant management, compliance, and financial reporting, significantly enhancing partner capabilities in fund administration. Preparations for flexible response grants were also advanced with the formation of small grants committees and the development of selection criteria and application tools, setting the stage for rapid, needs-based funding in response to emergent challenges.

Progress on advocacy has been steady, with groundwork laid for strategy development and policy engagement. In Uganda, efforts to analyze local education policies and identify advocacy entry points are in progress. South Sudan's partners have initiated discussions with state education officials and completed field assessments that will guide advocacy training and policy dialogues in the coming quarter.

Overall, this year reflects a strong trajectory of growth and capacity development across partner organizations, with promising early impact in leadership development, community mobilization, and organizational effectiveness. As activities move into their next phase, the project is well-positioned to scale its impact and deepen its transformative influence for refugee and host communities.

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## Key Results for 2024

Indicator	Uganda	South Sudan
CBOs completed CAT assessments	3 CBOs	3 CBOs
Participatory research on barriers to women's leadership completed	Yes	Yes
Key influencers trained on gender-responsive education	60 identified; training modules developed	45 trained (21F, 24M)
CBOs received core funding for organizational strengthening	3 CBOs	3 CBOs
Staff trained on grant compliance and reporting	20 staff (13M, 7F)	20 staff (16M, 4F)

