Collaborating our Capacity
Strengthening Efforts for Refugee Led Organisations
In protracted refugee crises, refugee leaders have the capacity to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and set ambitious integrated development strategies for their communities. In East Africa, and globally, a thriving sector of refugee-led organisations (RLOs) are taking a lead in the humanitarian response to refugee crises.

Xavier Project, has been working with a network of refugee-led organisations across East Africa, by strengthening their capacity and capability to further elevate RLOs’ role in the humanitarian response and by extension the funds they receive.
Who is Xavier Project?

Xavier Project supports refugee leadership so that refugees can lead the positive changes that affect their communities.

- We have been working with refugee communities in East Africa since 2008, implementing education and livelihoods programmes with a range of donors and partners.

- We have partnered with refugee leaders since 2012 and are currently working with 18 refugee led organisations (RLOs) in Kenya and Uganda.

- In 2019 we won UNHCR’s Innovation Award under the Partnerships category for a “Capacity Strengthening and Sharing Course” designed with and for leaders of RLOs.

- Through meaningful partnerships we reached 21,383 community members in 2020.
Xavier Project’s Model

Xavier Project has designed a model to elevate and shift both power and funds to RLOs. The model will contribute to four long-term goals highlighted below.

**Coordination**
Showcase the work of RLOs and connect them with other RLOs and the wider international aid sector.

**Funding**
Create opportunities to fund RLOs at scale and mitigate the risks for both donors and RLOs.

**Capacity Strengthening**
Tailored support to ensure that RLOs can effectively respond to the needs of their communities.

**Advocacy**
Influence donor and implementing partner practices, and support RLOs to generate evidence.
## Challenges and Our Solutions

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<tr>
<th>Challenge faced by RLOs</th>
<th>Our Model’s Proposed Solutions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordination</strong></td>
<td>RLOs need greater access to networks and coordination with donors and partners, including other RLOs.</td>
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<td>Networking and coordination will be facilitated through Xavier Project’s <a href="#">RLO platform</a>, which will also showcase RLO’s work.</td>
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<td><strong>Capacity Strengthening</strong></td>
<td>RLOs have the skills, community connections, and local expertise, but they may not have governance structures or financial systems to stand up to the due diligence processes of many donors.</td>
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<td>Xavier Project’s capacity strengthening and sharing course, that was co-designed with and for RLOs, will form the building blocks for tailored capacity and operational support for RLOs. Modules include Resource Mapping, Governance and Proving Impact.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
<td>While some RLOs can access private funds, many need opportunities for sustainable and flexible sources of funding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding will be channelled to RLOs in a number of ways, including intermediary funding through Xavier Project, direct donor funding to RLOs, or pooled and direct funding facilitated Xavier Project’s <a href="#">RLO platform</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
<td>RLOs are not widely recognised as service delivery partners by donors and INGOs involved in humanitarian assistance.</td>
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<td>Advocate for funding to reach RLOs, influence private and government donor and implementing partner practices and funding pathways.</td>
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How we plan to grow the model

Our model is centred around equitable partnerships with RLOs and is designed to reduce Xavier Project’s role over time, shifting power and funds to RLOs.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Coordination</th>
<th>Phase 1: Led by XP</th>
<th>Phase 2: Led by graduated RLOs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Strengthening</td>
<td>Phase 1: Led by XP</td>
<td>Phase 2: Led by graduated RLOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Phase 1: Distributed through XP</td>
<td>Phase 2: Funds directly to RLOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Phase 1: Led by XP</td>
<td>Phase 2: Led by graduated RLOs</td>
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RLOs
How we plan to grow the model

Activities with RLOs will be implemented in two phases, with successful RLOs from the first cohort graduating to lead on ideas for coordination, control of resources, sharing of best practice and results as part of phase 2.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phase 1 Objectives</th>
<th>Phase 2 Objectives</th>
<th>Vision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>Small networks and groups coordinated by XP, and facilitated by our RLO platform.</td>
<td>Effective refugee led networks, RLOs managing the platform and supporting nascent groups</td>
<td>Refugees lead the positive changes that affect them and lead better lives. By 2030, Refugee Led Organisations will be impacting more than 2 million refugees in 6 countries. It will be delivered by 300 refugee led organisations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>XP work directly with RLOs on “capacity strengthening and sharing” course</td>
<td>Capacity strengthening is partially “franchised”, and co-led by RLOs working with nascient groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Shared projects, intermediary funding through XP / partners, direct funding via the RLO platform.</td>
<td>Some intermediary funding through XP / partners, more RLOS directly funded by donors both on and off the RLO platform.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Advocacy led by Xavier Project and partners.</td>
<td>Advocacy led by RLOs and their networks.</td>
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Collaborative Learning
Our collaborative learning style recognises existing capacity and encourages sharing of experiences to enrich learning.

Customisable Structure
Eight foundation modules are recommended to all learners. Twelve additional modules can be selected based on the needs of the RLO.

Open Source Content
The course content is open source and available for partners to leverage for further impact and learning.

In 2019 we won UNHCR’s Innovation Award under the Partnerships category for the course.
## What does the course cover?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Foundational Modules (8)</th>
<th>Optional Modules (12)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended for all participants</td>
<td>To be selected based on RLO needs</td>
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</table>

- Understanding and Describing Your Community
- Analysing Community Problems
- Forming and Communicating a Vision
- Strategic Planning
- Resource Mapping
- Leadership
- Governance
- Proving Impact / MEAL

- Financial management and best practices
- Community project design and implementation
- Fundraising and partnership engagement
- Communication and advocacy
- Protection
Examples of Modules

Proving Impact

This module covers why Monitoring and Evaluation methods are important for RLOs. It also takes the RLOs through various qualitative and quantitative methods.

It also discusses how all this data fits into data levels such as outputs/activities, outcomes/impact not just for donors but also for ones organisational strategic analysis.

The module finally takes the RLOs through the process of building their own M&E systems.
Examples of the Modules

Finance and Accounting for Community Projects and Organisations

This module teaches the RLOs how to build a financial system with methods for bookkeeping, maintaining financial records and coming up with internal controls.

The module brings it all together by helping the RLOs develop their own financial policy that can help them govern their activities.
Capacity Strengthening and Sharing

The Capacity Strengthening and Sharing Course follows this process:

**Pre-Training Phase**
Capacity Appraisal, Needs Assessment, TOT, Review of content and customisation, Collation of learning materials and resources for training

**Course Delivery**
Training and lesson planning, participant engagement, location planning, assessment review, reinforcement of existing content

**Post-Training Phase**
Capacity Appraisal and needs assessment, project planning, mentorship, coordination, advocacy and continued collaboration

Promote sustainability through partnerships
Promote scalability and sustainability through an RLO led approach
Promote complementarity and Measure success as a sector
Impact Measurement and Learning

**Accountability and Impact**

Beyond the training, Xavier Project will act as accountability partners for the RLOs and other partners that we work with. Where needed, we will train RLOs on M&E tools and approaches that can help them demonstrate impact, as part of our capacity strengthening course. This training will enable refugee leaders to design their own results frameworks, prove impact, share their results widely and further advocate for this way of working.

**Learning and Feedback**

Our course tests new approaches in humanitarian support and we will evaluate the effectiveness of our strategies. We have early stage data on the effectiveness of strengthening the capacity of RLOs, but a lot more is needed. We are committed to sharing all our learning and will partner with other organisations as well as RLOs. Further, we will be able to collate impact data from RLOs, expanding our scope of learning.
Our Call to Action

RLOs and refugee leaders all around the world should have the capacity to play a significant role in humanitarian responses and in transforming the societies of which they are an integral part.

Our Capacity Strengthening and Sharing Course and all our collaborative capacity strengthening efforts put refugee leaders at the centre of this. Together, we will contribute to the much-needed changes to humanitarian response.

Please Join Us.