

Empowering people to fight poverty: Unit4 and ITK Solutions jumpstart Oxfam America's transformation strategy



Oxfam America



Oxfam America partners with Unit4 and ITK on an organizational transformation program.

The cloud-based system connects, automates, and streamlines end-to-end operational processes, ultimately supporting the nonprofit in its mission to end the injustice of poverty.

Key benefits include:

- Provides instant, trusted business insight into finance, project budgets, people, procurement, and more
- Increases control over financial processes, improving accountability, meeting funding restrictions and requirements, and limiting risk of overspend
- Optimizes productivity and lowers cost by automating or eliminating routine, repetitive data entry, freeing people to innovate

Fighting the injustice of poverty

Oxfam has a vision: nine billion people will live equitably and free from poverty, on a planet that has the natural resources to sustain them. Realizing this vision means overcoming complex challenges in a volatile world: saving lives, sharing natural resources fairly, and advancing gender equality.

As Director of Technology and Information Management System at Oxfam America, Farah Abbas is responsible for executing a technology roadmap that is aligned with these strategic priorities. She explains, "We want Oxfam America to speak with one voice, to be aligned around a common, shared view of data."

Oxfam had to replace its fragmented, manual operational systems with a modern ERP platform – spanning finance, people, budgeting, and procurement – and a Talent Management platform that spotlights people performance and helps develop the workforce. The goal is to increase efficiency, reduce corporate silos, and provide greater transparency into critical operational data.

Prioritizing process transformation

The outcome is Project TOPS (Transformation of Processes and Systems), a foundational reform of back-office operations. "We prioritized process transformation, followed by deployment of best-in-class technology," she says,

Industry

Nonprofit

Location

Boston, MA, USA

Size

One of 20 sister organizations globally, Oxfam America reaches tens of millions of people in more than 90 countries.

Product

Unit4 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Unit4 Talent Management

Challenges

As part of a business transformation program, Oxfam America needed to replace a fragmented suite of sunsetting legacy ERP systems and disconnected, manual people and finance processes.

Key metrics



CONNECTED INSIGHTS

Unified view of operations



VISIBILITY & CONTROL

Single data view speeds trusted decisions

“Unit4 enables and activates best practices for the way we need to work most efficiently and seamlessly. It’s now much easier to see and access data in real time. Users are more engaged, active, and able to leverage the system.”

Farah Abbas

Director of Technology and Information Management System, Oxfam America

“We transformed our back office end-to-end processes to enable our employees to be more productive and efficient.”

With Oxfam’s existing ERP platform sunseting, Farah and her team turned to Unit4. “During presentations, it became clear that Unit4 truly understands the nonprofit sector and shares many similar values to Oxfam,” she says. “Their demonstrations featured real-life scenarios based on Oxfam’s user stories, where staff could see directly how it would transform their work. That was inspiring.”

Crucially, the Unit4 platform also provides Oxfam with pre-configured nonprofit functionality for faster time-to-value. “The Unit4 Nonprofit Model framework is delivered with prebuilt processes. With seamless integration between modules and a first-class user experience, Unit4 is the gold standard for nonprofit ERP,” says Farah.

Chris Fibbe, Managing Partner at ITK Solutions Group, says, “Through our partnership with Unit4, we combined proven technology with our deep domain expertise, best practices, and industry process knowledge, to deliver a solution that could be implemented quickly and maximize efficiency for Oxfam America and its ultimate mission.”

Oxfam America is now live on a single, connected Unit4 ERP platform, covering finance, budgeting, procurement, project accounting, and employee engagement.

Everyone shares the same unified view of timely, accurate data. The implementation, masterminded by ITK Solutions Group, ensures Oxfam has 360-degree visibility into its finances and operations, for trusted, agile decision-making.

In addition, Unit4 Talent Management, a powerful, automated, people-focused platform, is helping oversee employee engagement, better understand the needs of the workforce, and develop talent. Unit4 Financial Planning and Analysis (FP&A) is also under implementation, which will make Oxfam America one of the first organizations to use Unit4’s entire platform.

Driving excellence

Four key factors are helping Oxfam America drive excellence and achieve continuous success in social impact programs:

- **Increased productivity:** Process automation frees resources from repetitive administrative transactions in favor of value-added tasks, such as fundraising and program execution. Oxfam employees can now enter and process time and expenses themselves anytime, anywhere. Managers have visibility and control for faster approval and accurate reporting. Self-service reporting means no waiting for someone else to build reports, accelerating program management.

- **Trusted insights and control:** A ‘golden data record’ offers complete and timely insight into everything from general financial performance, program budgets, and procurement to funding commitments. In the past, Oxfam only had insight into financial budgets and actuals. Now, people can drill down into fund commitment detail and status in real time.
- **Improved collaboration:** The previous ERP system was built around technology – this one is built around people and process. Farah again: “Unit4 enables and activates best practices for the way we need to work most efficiently and seamlessly. It’s now much easier to see and access data in real time. Users are more engaged, active and able to leverage the system.”
- **People power:** Unit4 Talent Management helps recruit, assess engagement, track performance, and develop the workforce.

The Unit4 go-live marked the start of an organization-wide transformation – and one that will benefit from continuous improvement. When Unit4 FP&A software is implemented, finance planning and budget management will be further enhanced. Farah says, “The Unit4 platform allows Oxfam America to better adapt to changing business processes, ultimately enabling Oxfam’s mission.”