

Content for this topic: [Pooled Funds - How Can NGOs Engage](#), was informed through a combination of contributions from individuals and desk research.



Complementing the webinar for this topic on UN Humanitarian Funding, the International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP) took the opportunity to talk with **Ben Garbutt**, the **Humanitarian Funding Advisor at Oxfam**. Considering the increase in investment from donors in recent years into pooled funds, and Oxfam's participation in the discourse over pooled funds at the Pooled Funds Working Group, questions regarding NGO financing and engagement are a pivotal aspect of the agency's operations.

Read below for Ben's response to various questions.

## Expert Interview Questions

**Oxfam is represented at the Pooled Fund Working Group and co-chairs the NGO Dialogue Platform on Country-Based Pooled Funds. Why do you find it important that NGOs are part of the global policy processes in this area?**

"If any NGOs think that pooled funds could work better, both the Pooled Fund Working Group and the NGO Dialogue Platform are places where you can genuinely influence how pooled funds work.

For NGOs, there are three main questions concerning the UN-led pooled funds system: how to make it more accessible for those that are best placed to respond, how to make it more flexible, and how to make it more timely. If NGOs want to have a say in any of those three areas, they need to engage in the policy discussions on these topics at the Pooled Fund Working Group. Moreover, engaging in these fora gives us an opportunity to be part of setting the agenda for the NGO Dialogue Platform in those three areas as well."

**What is being done to ensure that NGOs can access information relating to the UN Country-Based Pooled Funds?**

As part of the Pooled Fund Working Group and the NGO Dialogue Platform we are working hard to try to ensure that there is no difficulty in accessing information. For example, we are working with OCHA to help ensure that their website is up to date with the information that NGOs need.

The NGO Dialogue Platform is now introducing meetings outside of global centers like Geneva and New York – adding meetings in the Global South, in order to be more inclusive of local NGOs. We are also increasingly trying to have online meetings and webinars to ensure that people are included and that more information is more easily accessible.

Organizations that are interested should start by looking up the [Country Based Pooled Funds Global Guidelines](#). The information is out there, and the fora that have strategic and policy level discussions are actively trying to ensure that more information gets out to those that need it.

**Most pooled funds have been led by the UN or intergovernmental institutions – how do you see the emergence of the new NGO-led pooled funds?**

“I find this to be an exciting development, but we have to tread carefully about how new funds are designed and introduced. We should only seek to introduce new pooled funds where there is a genuine gap that needs filling. Both the Start Fund and the Near Network’s fund have been very effective in arguing that there are gaps that they are filling. Obviously, those pooled funds have to be complementary to each other – both those within the UN system and those outside of it.”

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