

STRATEGIC PLAN

DETERMINED TO DEVELOP

2019-2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Determined to Develop (D2D) Strategic Plan for the years 2019 - 2023 is designed to guide the organization's resources in a way that best promotes education and development in the Chilumba area where D2D operates, and in the wider region. Having now accomplished almost 10 years of successful programming with the help of donors, volunteers, and staff, we have used this Strategic Plan to reflect on how best to move the organization forward to its next phase of operations. This Strategic Plan examines how we can utilize our comparative advantage as one of the only organizations working on education programming in the Chilumba area, prioritize resources to areas of greatest need, and scale up operations to provide more dedicated services. The plan begins with a contextual briefing on the country of Malawi, as well as a background description of our organization. It then outlines who was involved in the strategic planning process, what steps were taken, our organization's main priorities and values, and our strategic goals for the next five years.

1.2 COUNTRY CONTEXT

Malawi is one of the least developed countries in the world. More than 50% of Malawi's population is in poverty, and that rate is even higher (61%) for those living in Karonga District, where D2D operates. Malawi's Human Development Index is ranked 170 out of 188 countries (UNDP, 2015). The country faces many barriers to development, including a fast growing population, limited arable land, natural disasters, food insecurity, malnutrition, and a high prevalence of diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Malawi, a geographically small landlocked country, is home to over 19 million people. Approximately 67% of the population is under the age of 25, and almost 50% under the age of 15 (CIA World Factbook, 2017). The youth of the country provide Malawi with enormous human resource potential, which could greatly contribute to the economic growth and development of the country. One of the best ways to invest in this resource is by providing youth with the knowledge and skills needed for them to thrive. Many in Malawi, however, are unable to access their basic human right to education due to the cost, poor infrastructure, gender disparities, and lack of support. Therefore, addressing the youth's barriers to education is essential to Malawi's development and remains at the center of D2D's mission.



1.3 BACKGROUND

Determined to Develop is a charity registered in the United States as a 501(c)(3) organization. The on-the-ground operations are based in the rural community of Chilumba, Northern Malawi. The charity began in 2009 and works side-by-side with members of the community to address their needs and provide assistance in the overall development of the region.

In 2009, when D2D staff first held meetings with local stake-holders, a set of Four Cornerstones representing shared goals for development emerged: Education and Youth Support, Health and Nutrition, Women's Empowerment, and Environment. D2D succeeded in providing quality programming in these areas with overwhelming support from the community. In 2011 community assessments were again conducted, this time including government officials and Non-Governmental Organization leaders, including District Executive Committee Members, District Social Welfare Office Members, and District Education Managers. These assessments better informed D2D's programming, as well as its project approach. Results echoed those identified in 2009, with education and youth support remaining amongst the highest priorities, along with health, women's empowerment, and the environment.

Given this mandate from the community, D2D concentrated its programming around the Four Cornerstones. Project areas included, but were not limited to adult literacy, animal husbandry, school feeding programs, health projects, nursery school development, women's business groups, reforestation, tutoring programs, and the development of a technical center. Some of D2D's accomplishments have included:

- Sponsorship of over 1,500 students through school.
- Provision of a home for over 100 orphan and disadvantaged boys with its residential program.
- Establishment of 4 nursery schools.
- Over 2.5 million nutritious meals fed to youth
- Construction of sanitary kitchens, school blocks, compost toilets, the electrification of a school campus, and the donation of school supplies and materials to local education institutions.
- Donation of more than \$120,000 worth of medical supplies to local hospitals.
- Installation of a water system for a nearby hospital which serves over 30,000 people.
- Establishment of 4 women-run businesses, and the donation of over \$7,000 in equipment training, and support.
- Introduction of a women's revolving goat loan program which serves over 140 beneficiaries.
- Distribution of over 33,000 trees to be planted in the community.
- Construction and development of Wasambo Boys High School.

In December 2017, the D2D Board of Directors adopted a resolution to refocus itself as a charity exclusively rooted in education. Under the Four Cornerstone model, programming had become extensive, and the finite resources of the charity were stretched thin. Progress was made, but at great cost. Under the new education focus, projects were consolidated under the banner of education or, for those that did not align with the new mission, phased out. This change allowed D2D to channel resources and deliver the best possible programming, while continuing to follow the development priorities of local stake-holders. Since the refocus to education, projects have shifted to girls' empowerment programs, extended learning opportunities for youth, nursery school support, local education partnerships, and school tuition sponsorship.



1.4 DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan, for the period of 2019 to 2023, has been developed in consultation with various stake-holders including the Board of Directors, staff in Malawi, and local community members. D2D has aligned itself with development priorities, especially those related to education, put forth by the United Nations, Malawian Government, Karonga District, local traditional authorities, and community members. A Risk Analysis of the organization was conducted, as well as a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis. Mitigation measures, in response to those results, have been incorporated into this Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors to assess progress made and make changes as necessary.

THE DEVELOPERS FOLLOWED THE FOLLOWING STEPS WHEN CREATING THIS STRATEGIC PLAN:



2.0 VISION, MISSION, VALUES

The **VISION** of Determined to Develop is:

A future where all people realize their full potential through access to quality education.

The **MISSION** of the organization is:

To empower, through education, the people of Malawi to become agents of development for their families, communities, country, and world.

The **VALUES** of the organization are:

COMPASSION – We commit to treating people from all walks of life with dignity and respect.

CONNECTIONS – We know that the strength of our relationships build partnerships that allow us to accomplish our mission.

INTEGRITY – We are true to our ideals and values and do what we say we will do.

EMPOWERMENT – We believe that personal responsibility gives value to people's inner drive.

GOOD STEWARDSHIP – We believe in safeguarding the trust that partners place in us.



3.0 PRINCIPLES + APPROACH

3.1 D2D's PROJECT POSITION

- D2D delivers services through education, support and empowerment.
- D2D serves the educational needs of the surrounding geographic area of Chilumba, as well as the country as a whole. This relies on relationships with families, communities, stakeholders, and partners to help facilitate the delivery of educational support.
- D2D aims to support vulnerable people, and those who need help the most.
- D2D focuses on youth, knowing that they are the group that will be the change-makers in Malawian society.
- D2D delivers support without judgement, with sensitivity to needs, strengths, barriers, and circumstances.

3.2 REPUTATION

- D2D delivers relevant services with minimal hurdles and maximum impact.
- D2D builds relationships with beneficiaries and partners.
- D2D is community-driven and locally-responsive.
- D2D is competent and steadfast; a steady hand in an unsteady world for many beneficiaries.
- D2D advocates for best practices and is a place for others to come and learn our methods and apply them across the world.
- D2D believes in the inherent value and capacity of each individual, regardless of past circumstances or situations.

4.0 ALIGNMENT WITH BROADER DEVELOPMENT GOALS

4.1 INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

In 2015, the United Nations developed a list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) covering a range of social and economic development issues. While D2D is committed to the achievement of each of these internationally recognized goals, it can best assist in the accomplishment of SDG 4, which aims to “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.” The specific targets of this goal include:



4.1 Universal primary and secondary education

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes



4.2 Early childhood development and universal pre-primary education

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education



4.3 Equal access to technical/vocational and higher education

By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university



4.4 Relevant skills for decent work

By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship



4.5 Gender equality and inclusion

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations



4.6 Universal youth literacy

By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy



4.7 Education for sustainable development and global citizenship

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development



4.2 NATIONAL LEVEL

The Malawian government released its Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III, for the years of 2017 to 2022, which outlines 5 key priorities for the development of Malawi. D2D is best able to assist in the area of Education & Skills Development with the goal "to improve quality and relevant education and skills for all." Outcomes for this goal which will be assisted by D2D's strategic planning include:

- Improved quality of early childhood education services for children in Malawi
- Improved access and equity to early childhood development
- Improved access and equity in basic education
- Improved quality and relevance of primary education
- Improved quality of secondary school education
- Increased access to secondary education for both boys and girls and those with special needs
- Improved access and equity in skills development training
- Improved quality of labour force

source: <https://cepa.rmportal.net/Library/government-publications/the-malawi-growth-and-development-strategy-mgds-iii>



4.3 DISTRICT LEVEL

D2D works within Karonga District of Northern Malawi. The District Planning and Development Office released a Karonga District Development Plan for 2013-2018 which aims to reduce poverty in Karonga. Of the 17 development issues identified, “Poor quality of education services” was ranked as the highest priority. To address this issue, the district plans to “Improve access to quality and relevant education.” This aligns with D2D’s mission and demonstrates the value of its services in the district. Karonga’s strategies aimed to address the issue, which are also covered by D2D’s programming, are as follows:

- Construct classrooms
- Lobby for more teachers
- Construct teacher houses
- Construct laboratories and libraries
- Promote school feeding programs
- Conduct in-service trainings
- Construct hand washing facilities
- Provide teaching and learning materials
- Promote incentives for teachers
- Conduct school management trainings
- Proprietors of private schools to recruit
- Sensitize communities regarding the importance of education



4.4 VILLAGE LEVEL

A SANGILO VILLAGE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT WAS CONDUCTED IN MAY 2018, WITHIN THE CHILUMBA CATCHMENT AREA WHERE D2D OPERATES MOST OF ITS PROJECTS.

The meeting was facilitated by the Chief with assistance from D2D staff, and included various stake-holders including traditional leaders, Village Development Committees, Women and Mothers Groups, Church leaders, youth leadership groups, political leaders, and civil servants. During the meeting, development priorities for the village were identified, as well as strategies for addressing these issues. Many of the priorities identified were echoed in community assessments completed in 2009 and 2011, including access to education, improved nursery education, combating dropouts and causes of dropouts in girls, women's empowerment, and unemployment.

The community's action plan listed the following items to be addressed by linking with external partners and conducting civic education. Addressing these issues is essential to D2D strategic planning, as they were identified by local community members of which D2D is in a unique position to be of assistance:

- Teen pregnancy
- Primary school dropouts
- Nursery school teaching
- Secondary school distance
- Poverty
- Women empowerment
- Health and sanitation
- Unemployment

5. STRATEGIC GOALS

Based on the organizational restructuring and analysis that has taken place, as outlined in previous sections of this Strategic Plan, D2D has recognized three Strategic Goals to be accomplished in the years of 2019 to 2023.

We, as an organization, plan to work towards these goals, which are further broken into focus areas, in an efficient and effective manner:

1. Maximize Awareness and Support of D2D

- Increase the Number of Individual Donors and Ambassador Outreach
- Increase Grant Procurement
- Increase the Active Participation of Malawian Stake-Holders
- Expand Formal Partnerships and Programming Opportunities

2. Increase D2D's Organizational Capacity

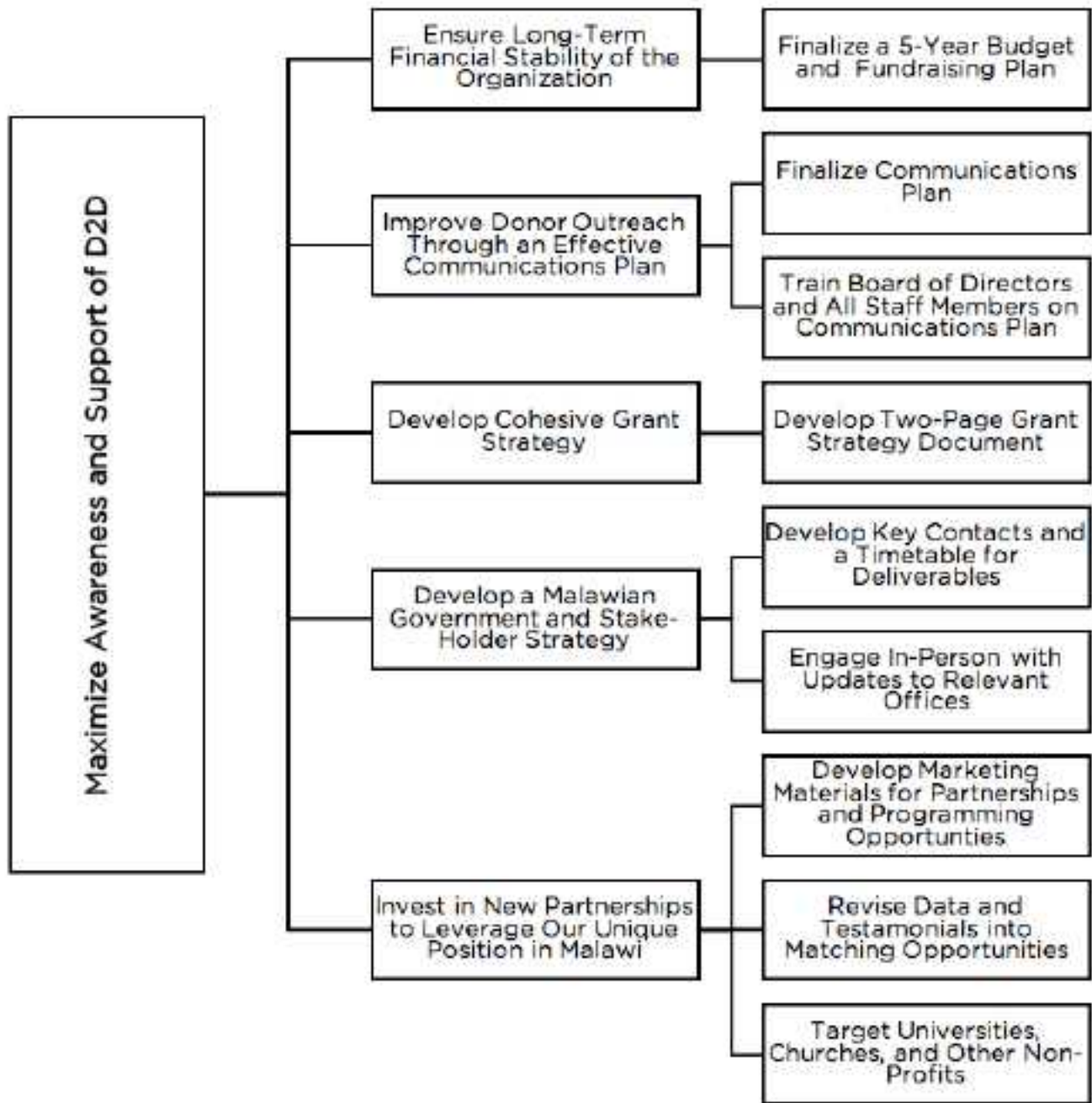
- Develop the Capacity and Skills of All Employees
- Improve Efficiency in the Office and in the Delivery of Programs
- Fully Delegate Responsibilities to the Board of Directors and Staff

3. Deliver Vital and Impactful Services and Initiatives

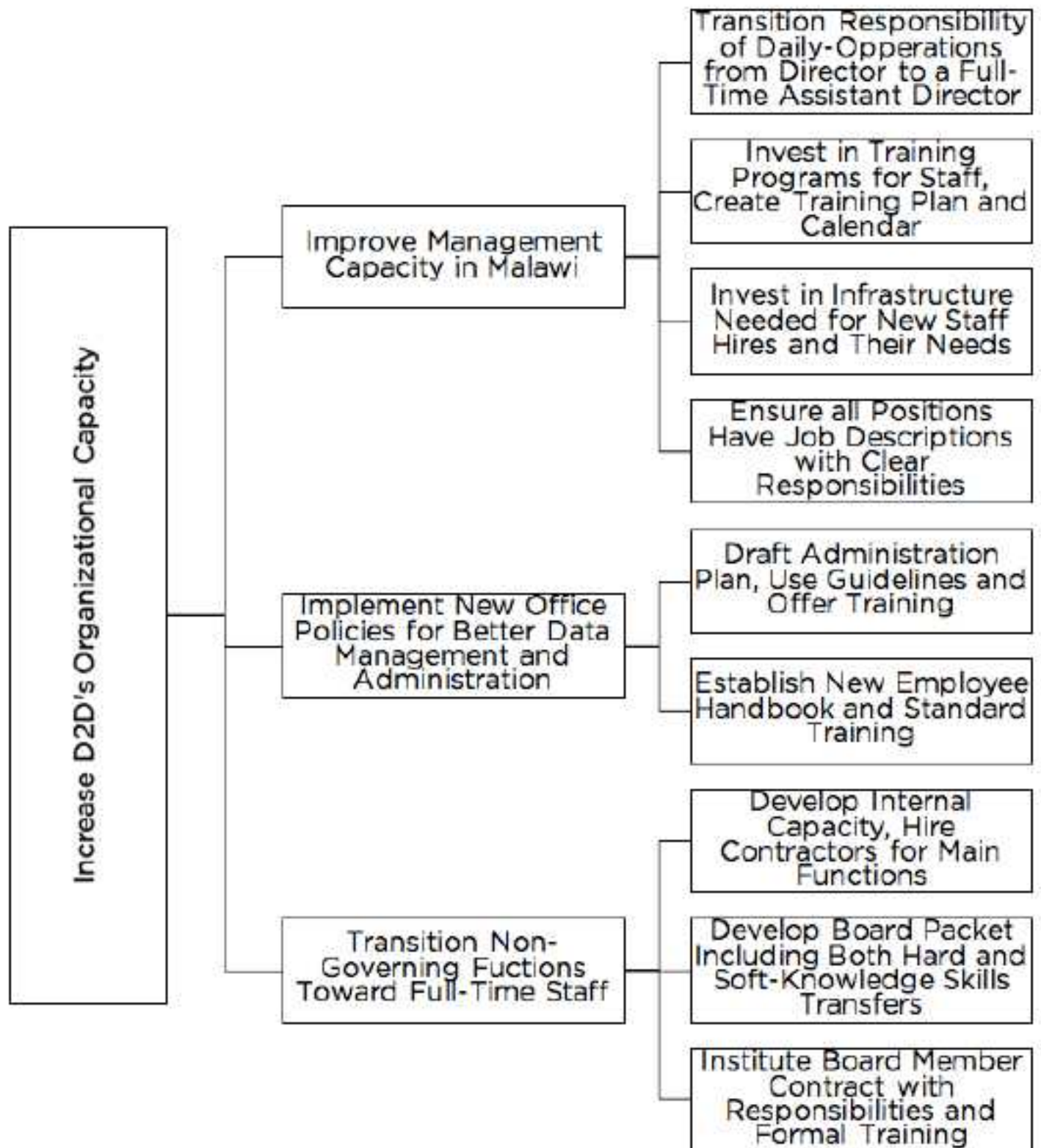
- Echo International, Government, and Local Development Priorities
- Provide an Excellent Standard of Care for Youth Under Our Programming
- Maintain Effective and Efficient Service Delivery for Beneficiaries
- Measure the Impact of Services in Both a Quantifiable and Qualitative Way

By translating our broader goals into manageable objectives, we are able to take concrete steps to respond to our needs. In the following three graphs, we translate these strategic goals for the organization into manageable short-term tasks.

5.1 STRATEGIC GOAL #1



5.2 STRATEGIC GOAL #2



5.3 STRATEGIC GOAL #3

