

Strategic Plan 2012-2015



African
Communities
Foundation
Australia inc

1. Introduction

African Communities Foundation Australia (ACFA, formerly Eastern and Central Africa Communities of Victoria) is a state-wide emerging and inclusive organisation that aims to bring together African-Australians in Victoria who mainly trace their genealogy from various African countries as well as those who feel connected to Africa. One among its many objectives is to address issues that impact on their settlement in Australia.

ACFA was established in 1998 to provide a forum where common issues of settlement could be collectively dealt with.

In an effort to enhance ACFA's strategic positioning, ACFA's Executive Committee developed the organisation's first ever Strategic Plan that covers the medium term. This would better align the organisation's goal of providing services to its clients in a more relevant, effective and timely

manner. The strategic planning process addresses both program and support services functions of ACFA.

A strategic planning workshop was held over the period 17th – 19th June 2011 at Coronet's Bay, Melbourne culminating with this **Strategic Plan 2012–2015** document covering the period 1st July 2012 to 30th June 2015.

The ACFA *Strategic Plan 2012-2015* was developed by the members of the ACFA Executive Committee with the involvement and input from ACFA staff members. The wider ACFA membership was involved when the final document was presented to them for ratification at the 2011 AGM.

This Strategic Plan seeks to improve the delivery of ACFA's services and better align itself to its Mission.

2. Key Questions

1. Where is ACFA going?
2. How is ACFA going to excel effectively in what it does?
3. How will ACFA continue to meet client needs in the face of social barriers, challenges to sustainability and the changing landscape?

These questions underpin the need for the organization to reflect on what it does and draw a strategy that enables the organization to remain relevant to the changing needs and landscape.

3. Our Organisational Culture

ACFA's culture is determined and reflected in our key drivers i.e. the African-Australians and how we think, act, and view the world around us. This has evolved naturally because of our common bond, aspirations and the desire to be a positive voice in the Australian society. ACFA is one of the very few organisations in Australia that is fully managed by African-Australians to reach out to others in need. ACFA prides itself in the strong legacy and brand it has built over time.

3.1 Our History

At the formation of ACFA, the original core objectives were:

- To provide a forum for the Sub-Sahara Africans from Eastern and Central Africa communities through which settlement issues encountered in Victoria could be addressed
- To represent those persons whose genealogy could be traced to the Sub-Sahara African region and anyone else who felt connected to Africa
- To improve the settlement process of African-Australians towards full integration through advocacy, working in partnership with mainstream service providers and other agencies
- To advance the well-being of 'African-Australians'

3.2 Our Vision

Our vision is of a vibrant African-Australian community thriving and participating in a diverse Australian society

3.3 Our Mission

Our Mission is to support the integration of African migrants and Africans with refugee background in the Australian society through the provision of culturally-sensitive services.

3.4 Leadership

ACFA is an Incorporated Body registered under the Associations Incorporations Act 1984. ACFA is governed by a Board made up of the office bearers, 4 co-opted members. Members of the Board are responsible for the overall governance of the organisation.

The Constitution lists the objects of the organization, its legal powers, composition of the Board, office bearers, conduct of elections and general meetings, membership, et cetera.

3.5 Governance Philosophy

The Board's role on behalf of the organisation, our members and other stakeholders, is to ensure that we achieve our Mission and strategic objectives and, in doing so, meet all the legal, social and moral responsibilities and requirements accompanying 'best practice' governance.

4. Our Changing Landscape

The organisational environment, being the aggregate of all conditions, events, and influences that surround and affect the operations of an organization, internally and externally, means that ACFA will thus undertake its functions with particular regard to the economic, legal, political, social, technological, demographic and policy changes.

ACFA will constantly study and re-adjust the core business to align with the changing operational landscape to achieve our vision.

It is critical that ACFA aspires to best understand the importance of our business and incorporate strategies to work within; and with other agencies with common interests. We strive to explore innovative strategies and develop products and services that address both ethno-specific needs of African-Australians as well as those of other emerging communities.

5. Our Strategic Choices

Strategic Choice 1: Provide targeted information to clients and communities

Objective	Responsible	Measuring performance
1a. Carry out information sessions and workshops with various target groups	Staff	Periodic Reports as determined by Funding Agreements
1b. Provide relevant information referral services	Staff	Minimum four information presentations per year recorded in meeting minutes

Strategic Choice 2: Advocacy for the needs of African immigrants

Objective	Responsible	Measuring performance
2a. Clients provided with support to follow through with complaints or advocacy actions	Staff	Clients that have approached us with an advocacy issue are served appropriately and in a timely manner
2b. Advocacy provided to persons and organs of influence about relevant issues each year	Executive Committee	Proactive, timely and responsive communication to policy-makers, general public, and other relevant agencies Number of communications to persons of influence

Strategic Choice 3: Provision of advice and support services in a culturally sensitive manner

Objective	Responsible	Measuring performance
3a. Maintain a culturally-diverse workforce	Board	A majority of staff having the ability to speak an African language in addition to English
3b. Maintain a skilled and competent workforce	Program Manager	Staff undertake relevant and regular training Regular review of our practices and procedures Satisfactory client feedback
3c. Provision of relevant referral services	Program Manager and Staff	Feedback from clients and partner organisations Number of incoming and outgoing referrals

Strategic Choice 4: Promoting and celebrating diversity and heritage

Objective	Responsible	Measuring performance
4a. Facilitate cultural celebrations and events	Board and Staff	Minimum two events facilitated each year
4b. Promote African cultures in relevant events	Board and Staff	Showcase African artwork, posters, craft, language, etc in the events
4c. Promote African cultures in workplace; artwork, posters, craft, language etc	Staff	Display of artwork, posters, craft, language etc in the work place

Strategic Choice 5: Strategic alliances to promote integration of African migrants

Objective	Responsible	Measuring performance
5a. Establish relevant strategic alliances	Board and staff	Number of alliances established Support received from members of the alliance (funding, economic opportunities, etc) Attempt at least one alliance with an academic institution and one with private sector
5b. Work in partnership with community organisations and leaders	Board and Staff	Number of community organisations in partnership with ACFA Number of network meetings attended Increased participation in network meetings Representation at key network meetings in all service regions Diversity and number of partnerships established

Strategic Choice 6: A leading credible voice on African issues within Australia

Objective	Responsible	Measuring performance
6a. Provide cross-cultural training services	Staff	Number of promotional materials provided to service providers Number of training sessions held
6b. Establish and maintain presence in mainstream media	Board	Number of media contact, interviews, social media, website, etc
6c. Establish an African cultural centre	Board and staff	Establishment of an African cultural centre initiated

Strategic Choice 7: Diversifying and mobilizing resources and services

Objective	Responsible	Measuring performance
7a. Identify resource gaps in required to meet clients needs	Program Manager	Quantified resource gaps identified and documented
7b. Mobilize and secure funding sources in accordance with clients needs	Board and Staff	Number of funding applications submitted to non-SGP grants Number of grants approved
7c. Engage volunteers to meet community needs	Staff	Number of volunteers engaged
7d. Secure physical resources required to meet identified community needs	Board and Staff	Number of physical resources obtained

6. Our Critical Friends

ACFA values stakeholders who continue to shape the operations and future of the organisation. Here are our major stakeholders and their roles.

Service Users

Participants / beneficiaries

Staff

Implementation, growth opportunities, relationship



Community

Volunteers, public awareness, public relations, profile raising

Other African Associations

Information sharing, coaching, mentoring, peer review

Non-Government Organisations

Funding, partnership, capacity-development, internship

Federal Government

Funding, policy and direction, services, advice



State and Local Government

Funding, policy and direction, services, advice

Federal and State Police

Participants / beneficiaries

Statutory Bodies

Funding, partnership, training

Educational Institutions

Skills transfer, research, mentoring, liaison

Sporting Groups

Sponsorship, mentoring, talent development, engagement, leadership development

Corporates

Funding, jobs, mentorship, sponsorship, training, in-kind Contribution



Media

Communication, Public awareness, Public Relations, profile raising

Suppliers

Service provisions, consumables, utilities



7. Managing Risk

The implementation of this strategic plan encompasses several risks including financial risks, public liability, professional Indemnity etc. These risks and how they will be mitigated are captured in the “**Risk Management Policy statement**” document

8. Monitoring our Progress

8.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The ACFA Board will be accountable for the delivery of the Strategic Plan. This will be achieved through the implementation arm of the organisation (AHSSV, led by the Program Manager), who will be responsible to undertake the various activities necessary to attain the strategic objectives.

To better support the implementation arm to carry out its tasks, the proposed **Executive Committee**, through the Chairperson, will provide oversight to the

implementation of the activities. The said Committee comprises the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Program Manager and will report to the Board. The Committee shall meet at least once a month to carry out its responsibilities.

8.2 Measuring and Reporting

The Board and staff will operationalize the seven Strategic Choices. Staff will report the progress to the Board on a quarterly basis. Some of the reports will also be shared with key stakeholders like funding agencies. In addition, the board will report to the members at the Annual General Meeting on the progress of each of the seven Strategic Choices once every year.

8.3 Review and Evaluation

There will be an annual review of the strategic plan that will incorporate the top three partners/collaborators (stakeholders) to evaluate the progress made in the delivery of the strategic objectives.

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