STRATEGY

2014 – 2016

“Support to Communities” Benevolent Non Governmental Organization

YEREVAN – 2013
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Abbreviations

AYWA – Armenian Young Women Association
BNGO - Benevolent Non-Governmental Organization
CCA - Climate Change Adaptation
DRR – Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRNP - Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform
FAVL – Foundation Against Violation of Law
IWAY – International Women Association of Yerevan
JFK - Jinishyan Memorial Foundation
MES–Ministry of Emergency Situations
MCH – Mother & Child Health
MOH – Ministry of Health
M&E – Monitoring & Evaluation
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
PHC – Primary Health Care
RoA - Republic of Armenia
STC – Support to Communities
SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
UN – United Nations
UNDP – United Nations Development Program
UNICEF –United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
USAID – US Agency of International Development
WB PIU – World Bank Project Implementation Unit
WHO–World Health Organization
**Background and need of the strategy**

"Support to Communities", the benevolent non-governmental organization (STC BNGO) was founded in November 1999 on the principle of its members' common interests and free will, for the purpose of satisfaction of cultural and other non-material needs. The mission of the organization is to support community development in order to overcome poverty and the inequality in Armenia.

During 14 years of its existence, the organization has been active in implementing livelihood, material and moral support projects, raising the standards of living of the population in targeted communities. The organization has implemented a number of programs that are specifically aimed at:

- providing the full material and moral support to the vulnerable groups of population, regardless of their nationality, gender, religion and beliefs;
- supporting people in need to have access to water supply, sanitation, health, education, vocational training systems and other public services;
- contributing to prevention and elimination of consequences of natural and man-made disasters;
- the creation of sustainable sources of income for vulnerable groups of population and people in need;
- consolidation of charitable organizations’ and individuals’ efforts to implement the above tasks.

In considering the expiration of the previous 2011-2013 strategic plan terms, and taking into account the political and socio-economic developments, and changes in opportunities to meet the public's primary needs, the need for development of a new medium-term strategy of the organization arose.

In a two-day workshop held in November 2013, the priority areas, issues, the basic provisions and approaches of a new strategy of "Support to Communities" BNGO for the next three years were discussed and outlined with participation of STC members, colleagues, and representatives of partner organizations.

This strategy includes also principles, provisions and approaches, agreed at the aforementioned workshop, which in our opinion increases the likelihood of successful implementation of the strategy.

**The mission of the organization**

The mission of "Support to Communities" BNGO is to support sustainable community development in order to contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequality in Armenia.
The vision of the organization

In light of implementation of its mission in foreseeable future, "Support to Communities" BNGO seeks to become an effective agent of change, a leading, reliable and well-known organization that will support the establishment and development of prosperous, healthy, safe and responsible communities.

The values of the organization

As a basic guarantee for the implementation of its mission and vision, the STC BNGO members adopt and maintain priorities of organizational culture, behavior and credo, such as professionalism, legitimacy, adherence to principles and goals, commitment to the cause, efficiency, responsibility, realism and transparency in partnership relations.

Major strategic directions and priority objectives of the strategy

In order to accomplish the mission of the organization - sustainable development of communities, the following **two strategic directions and five priority objectives** will be the target activity areas of the "Support to Communities" BNGO for the next three years:

1. **Public health.**
   
   including support for the following three priority objectives:
   
   1.1 Public health in emergencies
   1.2 High-quality and affordable health care services to the population of communities
   1.3 Health issues’ (including policy) research and advocacy

2. **Community resilience building**
   
   including support for the following two priority objectives:
   
   These include support for the following two major problems.
   
   2.1 Increase preparedness of communities to withstand disasters and climate change effects
   2.2 Planned / current community livelihood programs
The main approaches (methods, tools) of the strategy implementation

1. Considered the priority objectives in the public health area, the following activities are planned to support/implement:

Objective 1.1 - Public health in emergencies

- The activities raising the preparedness of community population to adequately respond to most commonly occurring health problems in emergency, particularly the training on the following issues:
  - first aid in emergency care.
  - epidemic prevention in emergency.
  - response to reproductive health needs in emergency.
- The activities mobilizing communities to solve health problems arising in emergency situations, in particular,
  - Organization of emergency medical care during the disasters.
  - Organization of emergency response to address reproductive health needs during the disasters.
  - Organization of extraordinary measures to prevent the epidemic and infectious diseases during the disasters.
  - Water and sanitation system rehabilitation and construction in emergencies.
- Activities raising awareness of communities on public health related topics in emergency

Objective 1.2 - High-quality and affordable health care services to the population of communities

- Supportive measures/activities in healthcare facilities (mostly in health posts, PHC and MCH centers), providing health care services to the community population, in order to:
  - enhance facility staffing,
  - address the healthcare providers’ needs of professional development,
  - enhance management skills of the facility leaders,
  - improve equipment and/or material-technical supply of facilities,
  - implement healthcare quality standards, to monitor and evaluate their implementation,
  - increase access to health care services and medications for the vulnerable groups of population,
  - provide targeted health care, including rehabilitation services for the vulnerable groups of population,
  - improve disease prevention in communities.

Objective 1.3 - Health issues (including policy) research and advocacy

- Health education and awareness-raising activities for population, including:
  - promotion and advocacy of healthy lifestyle;
- population awareness on and protection of their healthcare rights;
- promotion of use of the modern information and communication technologies in population health education and awareness activities.

- Research activities to assess need for reforms in the areas of health policy, legislation and regulations, effective management, financing, standardization, health information systems, health services administration, pharmaceutical policy and other areas, and advocacy of contemporary approaches to these issues among the decision makers and the public.

- Promotional activities aimed at improving the legal and social protection of health care providers.

Community Based Primary Health Care Programs

2. In order to contribute to the solution of priority problems observed in the field of community resilience building, the following activities are planned:

Objective 2.1 - Increase communities’ preparedness to withstand disasters and climate change effects.

The community mobilization activities for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) will include, particularly, the following supportive measures and activities:

- Assessment of communities’ capacity to withstand possible disasters in terms of available resources, strengths and weaknesses;
- Foreseeing/assessment of the special needs of specific population groups in possible emergencies, planning the adequate response and training of the population;
- Planning for public awareness in possible disaster situations and support for implementation of the plan;
- Training of communities in disaster response and support in formation, modernization and strengthening of the disaster response groups in communities;
- Strengthening the regional disaster risk reduction (DRR) teams, and enhancing their interaction with community disaster risk response groups;
• Disaster risk reduction training of communities, and the enhancement of practical application of the acquired knowledge;
• Activities raising the emergency preparedness of families, in particular, through providing DRR knowledge to children, developing and training on evacuation plans for families.
• Planning and organizing psychosocial support to population in emergencies;
• Small-scale construction works in communities for disaster prevention;
• Participation in DRR lobbying activities at the national level;
• Activities on DRR/CCA public awareness and advocacy within the framework of DRR National Platform through engagement in its various thematic groups.

Participatory Multi-Hazard Disaster Risk Reduction Programme

**Objective 2.2 – Planned community livelihood projects**

• Small-scale activities aimed at ensuring community infrastructure development, particularly in the areas of drinking water supply and irrigation.
• Activities to improve population employment, particularly in the small-scale agricultural production, tourism and cultural development in rural communities.
• Activities to extend access to modern IT means in communities.
• Assessment of ecological risks and needs of the communities, and planning for the appropriate response measures.

Water Supply and Sanitation Programme

*The "Support to communities" BNGO strongly recognizes the importance of forming and activating civil society in communities, and thus envisages the measures to raise the civic*
consciousness and morale, and to enhance the protection of civic rights of the population throughout all its strategic directions.

Organizational capacity and resources to implement the strategy

The SWOT analysis of STC’s capacity for implementing the new strategy allows to enlist some of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, as well as the opportunities and threats (see Appendix I), which may more or less affect the strategy implementation processes.

In this regard, it is important for STC members and staff to undertake necessary measures to allow for the most efficient use of the positive impact of these factors and to neutralize or reduce the adverse effects.

Financial resources

The main funding sources for implementation of the strategy are:

- The membership fees collected from STC members, and
- Expected donor grants.

Material and technical resources

The organization has five partnering offices in four regions of the country (in Ijevan, Tavush marz, in Stapanavan, Lori marz, in Eghegnadzor, Vayots Dzor marz, in Kapan, Syunik marz).

The organization’s current content of the material and technical equipment is satisfactory overall. Nevertheless, given the planned expansion of activities, the company needs the additional office and computer equipment, and the vehicle improvement / update.

Human resources

The expansion of activity areas and the volume of planned strategy activities dictate the organization's additional recruitment needs, including:

a) Permanent employees:
   - Program Assistant
   - Livelihood Specialist / Expert

b) Temporary employees, consultants:
   - Psychologist
- Legal adviser/Counsel
- IT specialist
- Public Relations Specialist

g) Volunteers, interns’ involvement

**Partners and donors mapping**

The main directions of the strategy implementation process is expected to involve a range of local and international organizations, as investors, donors and/or partner organizations *(see Appendix 2).*

**Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)**

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the Strategy will be implemented in the following intervals.

- *Current programmatic M&Es* - according to the timelines, indicators and standard measures defined for each of the specific project or activity.
- *Interim planned M&Es* of the Strategy global progress - once a year, at the end of the first and second years of its implementation.
- *The final M&E* – by the end of the Strategy last year.

The interim and final monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy progress will be carried out by independent experts.

**Communication and coverage**

The coverage of the strategy implementation and communication of the relevant information to the public will be implemented basically through the following channels:

- Company's website, ensuring its regular update;
- Active participation and representation in various civil society alliances and networks;
- Proactive and consistent work with mass media;
- Other promotional campaigns, exhibitions, innovative promotional events through use of modern technologies and other information means.

**Implementation timeline**

Given the difficulty of an accurate prediction of assuring necessary resources and specific terms for the implementation of the strategy, the schedule of the strategy implementation is prescribed in an outline form *(see Appendix 3)*, which is based on the approximate probability forecasts of availability of resources.
**Appendix 1.** - SWOT analysis of STC’s capacity for implementing the new strategy

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- **Internal**
- **External**
Note – The figures in front of each listed factor indicate the discussion participants’ point of view about how big is the factor’s likely impact on the implementation of the strategy. Evaluation was performed on a 10-point scale, in terms of both positive (strengths and opportunities) and negative (weaknesses and threats) effects being assigned as 1 point = minimal impact, and 10 point = maximum impact.

1. Internal factors (within the organization)

1.1 Strengths
S1- Organization’s experience - 9
S2- Professionalism of the staff - 9
S3- Material and human resources - 7
S4- Popularity in Marzes throughout the country - 6
S5- Cooperation with partner organizations - 7
S6- Organizational culture (assumed OXFAM’s work style, transparency, accountability, responsibility, communication, willingness to learn, an active civil position) - 10
S7- Active use of information technology - 6

1.2 Weaknesses
W1- Material and human resources - 3
W2- Public coverage of organization’s performance - 7
W3- Limited financial resources - 7
W4- Lack of financial self-sufficiency - 8
W5- Cooperation with Civil Society - 6
W6- Inadequate opportunities for transferring information, knowledge and experience of the organization (volunteers, young professionals involvement) - 5
W7- Limited geographical coverage of organization’s performance - 5
W8- Staff capacity building needs - 8

2. External factors (outside of the organization)

2.1. Opportunities
O1- Opportunity to expand cooperation with other/new organizations - 6
O2- Opportunities to improve the coverage of organization’s performance - 6
O3- Support from community (local government) and regional government bodies - 7
O4- External /additional funding opportunities (OXFAM, USAID, UNFPA, WB PIU) - 8
O5- Trends in international donor organizations’ behavior to work directly with local NGOs - 5
O6- Support from Diaspora - 1
O7- Online training opportunities - 9

Threats
T1- Challenges for ensuring sustainability of programs - 10
T2- Economic and political instability - 5
T3- Personnel migration hazard - 5
T4- Possibility of failure and/or termination of external /additional financing - 5
T5- Possibility of unfavorable legislative changes - 5
T6- Civil society passivity - 6
Appendix 2. - Parties, partners and donor involvement

It is assumed and expected that the following international donor organizations will provide contributions in implementation of certain strategic objectives of the Strategy.

- OXFAM
- USAID
- World Vision
- UNICEF
- UNDP
- UNFPA
- WB PIU
- DFID/UKAID
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- JMF (Jinishyan Memorial Foundation)
- Geoteam CJSC
- Armenian Diaspora organizations

The involvement of the following local and international partner organizations in the implementation of the strategy is envisaged.

- Save the Children Armenia
- WHO
- FAVL
- AYWA
- IWAY
- DRRNP – Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform
- Regional (marz) governing bodies
- Local (municipal) governing bodies
- Healthcare organizations/facilities
- MOH
- MES
## Appendix 3—Strategy implementation timeline

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- **Planned (high probability) events**
- **Expected (medium probability) activities, dependent on the fundraising**

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