

Dedicated for empowering women and Children



Strategic Plan of AFAD, 2024- 2028

Association for Alternative Development (AFAD)
R K Road, Khalilganj
Kugri gram-5600
Contact Person: Ms. Sayda Yesmin , Chief Executive

Dedicated for empowering women and Children

Strategic Plan of AFAD

2024- 2028

Association for Alternative Development (AFAD)
R K Road, Khalilganj
Kugrigram-5600
Contact Person: Ms. Sayda Yesmin , Chief Executive

Table of Content

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.1. BACKGROUND	4
2.2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION	4
2.1. EXTERNAL CONTEXT	4
2.2. PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING STRATEGIC PLAN	6
2.3. PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE STRATEGIC PLAN.....	6
2.4. MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES	7
► <i>Vision Statement</i>	7
► <i>Mission Statement</i>	7
► <i>Core Values</i>	7
2.5. PRINCIPLES:.....	8
3.0 WHERE AFAD IS NOW	8
3.1. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT	8
3.1. ASSOCIATES/PARTNERS.....	9
3.2. NETWORKING, PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION	9
3.3. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE	10
3.4. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS/GOOD PRACTICES MADE AS OF DECEMBER 2023	10
4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS	11
4.1. SWOT ANALYSIS.....	11
4.2. PESTLE ANALYSIS	11
4.3. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS.....	11
5.0 AFAD'S FUTURE/OUTLOOK	11
6.0 THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF AFAD	13
6.1. BROAD GOALS ALIGNED WITH THE MISSION.....	13
6.2. SMART OBJECTIVES SUPPORTING EACH GOAL	13
A. HUMAN AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN AND ADOLESCENT	13
B. PROMOTING QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN	13
7.0 STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS	13
7.1. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES.....	13
7.2. ACTION PLANS WITH TASKS, RESPONSIBILITIES, TIMELINES, AND RESOURCES	15
7.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN,.....	17
8.0 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES.....	22
9.0 RISK MANAGEMENT, RESOURCE ALLOCATION	22
9.1. RISK AND MITIGATION PLAN	22
9.2. RESOURCE ALLOCATION	23
10.0 CONCLUSION	23
10.1. SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS AND NEXT STEPS.	23
10.2. REAFFIRMATION OF COMMITMENT TO MISSION AND VALUES.....	23
11.0 APPENDICES	24

1.0 Executive Summary

- **Brief overview of the AFAD's mission and objectives.**
- **Summary of key strategies and initiatives outlined in the plan.**
- **Highlights of expected outcomes and impact.**

2.0 Introduction

2.1. Background

Association for Alternative Development (AFAD) is a women led regional NGOs working in Northern part of Bangladesh in Rangpur Division. Association of Alternative Development (AFAD) is a woman led organization registered under the Directorate of Women Affairs. AFAD is also registered with Youth Development Department, and NGO Affairs Bureau of Government of Bangladesh. The organization was established in 1998. All registrations are valid.

2.2. Brief History of the Organization

To achieve the organizational objective AFAD has been implementing diversified awareness raising and motivational activities following community led approach. AFAD is supporting the violence victim women of the kurigram district since its establishment in 1999 through legal aid and counseling and rehabilitation. It has operated so far 45 cases and found that women of char based unions of Sadar and Rajarhat Upazila is highly tortured (almost 70%). It has been supported by world food program(WFP), Action Aid, USCCB-Canada, Practical action, Steps towards, Development, Freedom Foundation, BRAC, water aid, European union, Practical action etc. for women empowerment, livelihood development, women entrepreneurship development, governance etc. It has supported 440 women, 1635 men, adolescents 750 and children 551 and person with disability. As a result the beneficiary households came to know the gender discrimination and aware about women rights. They become understand about the existing law of the country, which has contributed to end domestic violence in the family as well as society. The women of the area are involving in different employment and establishing their rights, values and dignity. The duty bearers are also getting involved in the project processes and become supportive to the women.

History---- first donor, weaving factory, child centre by USSCCB

2.1. External Context

With an income per capita of 1140 US-Dollar per year, Bangladesh still belongs to the poorest countries in the world. According to the UN, in 2012 the percentage of people living below the poverty line was 31% (less than 1.25 US-Dollar/ day). Although this number implies a slight decline compared with previous years, as a result of the population growth it means a rise in the absolute number of poor people. 20% of the population has to be considered as ultra-poor; they live less than 1,840 kcal per day and are largely excluded from any kind of development. Over last 5 years, the Mobile Phone & Information Communication technology is wide spread. People's mobility has been increased due to improve network of roads and communications. Peoples purchase power of also has been improved.

The annual growth rate of population has declined. However, considering the limited natural resources of the country the rate is still very high. For 2030, the World Bank

assumes a population of almost 200 million people of which around 25% will be poor and extreme poor.

More than two thirds of the population live in rural areas and depend on small-scale subsistence agriculture. Land distribution is unequal: 40% of all households only own 3% of the land. With a share of 20% of the gross national product, agriculture is of decreasing importance for the country's economy.

Bangladesh's performance with regard to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment remains mixed. There has been a narrowing of the gender gap in most of the SDG indicators in general and in the education sector in particular, where, as a result of targeted government policies, female enrolment rates in primary and secondary schools exceeds those for males. However, in other areas such as economic and political participation and adult literacy, much still remains to be done to ensure the rights to survival, livelihood and participation

Despite improvements in antenatal care, it will be a challenge to meet the goal of reducing MMR to 140 by 2024 because of a number of demographic trends. A third of Bangladesh's population falls within the age group of 10-24 years. Nearly half the adolescent girls (15-19 years) are married, 57 percent become mothers before the age of 19, and half of all adolescent mothers are acutely malnourished. Efforts to provide adolescent girls with greater access to higher education through scholarship and stipend programmes while proven to be effective, will nonetheless take several years to have a meaningful impact on fertility rates, and by extension, MMR rates.

On the basis of repressive traditions, economic dependency, illiteracy and legal discrimination women are extremely disadvantaged: within the families, in public life and in the political sphere. Often the existing laws protecting women, e.g. laws against child marriages, dowry and polygamy, are not properly enforced and applied.

The human rights situation continues to be unsatisfactory. Members of minorities as well as journalists are only insufficiently protected by the state against attacks. Abduction of the opposition party workers and involvement law enforcing agencies is a recently most discussed issue in the media. The business persons are also taking the driving role on politics. Politics is also mostly the effective participation of political parties in democratic process still not up to mark. In particular women and landless people are victims of direct and indirect violence in Bangladesh, e.g. because of land conflicts, kidnapping, fatwas and dowry. But only the wealthy section of the population can make use of courts. The vast majority of the poor people are subjected to arbitrariness of the authorities and wealthy people. These mechanisms to examine power contribute to keep poor people in poverty.

The public sector, partly highly deficit state-owned companies as well as a centralistic administration hampers development. It is characterized by misuse of resources, which could be used in a more effective way considering the development of the country, as well as by low efficiency and is considered to be largely corrupt.

The working area of AFAD is lying with the river Dharla, Teesta and Brahmaputra that flow through the alluvial delta often cause floods. The area is not far from the border of India. The people of the area is suffering the climate change effect such as flash flood, river erosion and sedimentation in river bed. Drought and downing of ground water table also bring sufferings of the people.

People of the area are most vulnerable, with regular flooding and social marginalization due to river erosion and climate migration. The climate is colder in winter and drier during summer than the rest of the country, also causing problems for the poor. The economy of the area is completely agriculture based, which is the main reason of seasonal unemployment situation of poor people.

2.2. Purpose of Developing Strategic Plan

AFAD is implementing its activities since 1998. However, it has developed a humanitarian response based 03 years Strategic plan document in 2026. Due to various problems, AFAD could not formulate a comprehensive strategic plan document for its own till now. Generally, it is implementing its program with a broader view of Women and children development focusing adolescent girls under the guidance of general body and executive committee. Over the years, the already initiated have been more concentrated. Different donors are providing financial and technical support to enhance the program implementation and organizational capacity building support. At this stage, AFAD need more comprehensive and intensified by setting its it's organizational uniqueness and better management capacity to provide quality services to the poor people and particularly to the women and children.

Moreover, the changing scenario of both intra organization and external socio-political environment, it is a necessity to develop a new strategic plan which would be a key guiding document to for fitting AFAD.

The strategic plan has been designed as a navigation tool; by which AFAD will get the clear indication of present situation as well as future reference, and it will also help in designing the road map of the organization. It will provide a point of reference, which must be used, assessed and updated as the organisational (internal/ external) environment changes. Consequently, the strategic plan is important for AFAD to strengthen its capacity for adapting significant changes by:

2.3. Process of Developing the Strategic Plan

This strategic planning document is the outcome of the exercise, which comes into existence after series of discussion with different stakeholders i.e. staff, board members, and beneficiaries, phase out groups, service providers of AFAD over last 02 months. The documentation of the strategic plan for the period from 2024 to 2028. The processes encompass:

- Revisiting / formulating vision, mission, strategies, structures and activities of AFAD in order to make the best use of opportunities and to overcome the threats that exist in the environment;



- Paying particular attention to interpret and identify the strengths and areas for improvement;
- Analysing requirement of stakeholders;
- Analysing existing programs to find out future scope of expansion;
- Determining the critical issues that needs to be addressed;
- Deciding strategic directions for strengthening AFAD by addressing the critical issues as well as to ensure democratic practice towards good governance; and
- Setting Action Plan/ operation plan as a road map for implementing the Strategic Plan.

2.4. Mission, Vision, and Values

► ***Vision Statement***

AFAD envisions for a society where women and men are equally empowered and have equal access to justice, equality, human rights and dignity.

► ***Mission Statement***

Facilitating the poor and marginalized particularly women for realizing their problems and resources position and increase their capacity for improving the socio-economic condition and position in the society and family

► ***Core Values***

Women first: AFAD will remain conscious and sensitive in making all decisions in a way that women and children issues are addressed and all programs and initiatives always be sensitive and responsive to their causes within its capacity. However, it will not undermine the role of men in household and community level for the empowerment of women and children

Innovation, diversity and excellence of work: AFAD continuously encourage people particularly women to think differently, argue for self-empowerment, come up with alternatives for better result, and bring diversity in approach and challenge own performances to create a greater impact of the work.

Sincerity , Honesty, and Transparency : AFAD encourage and create a situation for people to remain honest to her/him and to work entrusted, dedicated to the responsibility and raise voice against any unethical issue internally and externally. AFAD and its staff members always remain accountable to the government and to the people for whom AFAD is rendering its services.

Effective and efficiency: AFAD will remain conscious and justifies all decisions in a way that it incurred value for money, implemented in timely manner in appropriate manner including human, logistics and expenditure designated to management, program or any other services rendered. Try to be prudent in resource mobilization and maximize its use. AFAD remain its policy of Zero tolerance for financial misappropriation.

2.5. Principles:

- **P**articipation: Empowering Poor, women & disadvantaged groups through participatory development approach, methods and tools. Appropriate person in relevant situation sees participation as key in all process. This will go beyond the internal management system and all stakeholders are equally encouraged to participate in the AFAD development endeavor.

Localization: AFAD will remain in all development planning and approach that people have their own way to cope with their situation for survival and their struggle to survive should be honored and recognized.

Innovation: Implement innovative programs for linking and institutionalizing experiential learning

Capacity Building: Capacity (human and Skill) development of women and children including men and boys by developing self-help groups through awareness, motivation & training for increasing income, market and service access, improve health, sanitation and access to other rights & entitlements by mobilizing stakeholders as well as actors CBOs, LGIs as facilitator of people's participatory development process.

Trust on human potentiality: Human beings are the prime actor and not object to any development work. It is always people first who should get priority and should recognize their rights, choice, opinion and participation from self not dictated.

3.0 Where AFAD Is Now

3.1. Governance and Management

The principal organs of AFAD management are:

- A General body consisting of 21 women members amongst development workers, and social workers..

- An executive committee consisting of 7 members elected from the General Parishad. The EC is constituted with Chairperson, Member Secretary and the Chief Executive, Treasurer and 03 members. All the members of both committees are female

The Chief Executive, who is also the main functionary on behalf of the Executive Committee, manages the organization and its programs. The Chief Executive is assisted by program, finance and admin staff, all having good experience in the field of women empowerment. The Executive Committee governs the major policy matters and overall management issues of the organization, while the General Body, the supreme authority, formulates and approves rules, regulations, annual activities, plans and budgets of the organization.

Other than Chief Executive, there is a an absent of clear second line management of the organization. Among 21 staff, 11 are male and 10 are women including Accounts Officer and service staff. The project staffs are mostly concentrating on project activities.

The role of Member Secretary and Chief Executive is over lapping. Virtually, the Chief Executive is the capacitate women in the committee. There are seven types of members in executive committee and the roles of different positions are overlapping. Amendment of constitution is necessary demand at this moment. One major decision over the period was to stopping the micro credit activities

3.1. Associates/partners

3.2. Networking, Partnership and Collaboration

AFAD is maintaining relationship, affiliation and networking with many local, national and regional and international network and bodies; following are major;

- Stop Violence Against Women (SVAW)
- For The Women By the Women Forum (FWBW)
- Gender and Development Alliance (GAD)
- National Girl Child Advocacy Forum
- Child Labour Elimination Action Network (CLEAN)
- Durbar Network (NARIPOKHO);
- SPED Network;
- Federation Of NGOS In Bangladesh (FNB)
- Kurigram NGO Association (KNA)
- Community Managed Disaster & Risk Reduction (CMDRR)
- South Asia Network Women Rights in Diaster (SANWID)
- Disadvantaged Adolescent Working NGOs (DAWN) Forum

- National Alliance of Humanitarian Actors, Bangladesh

3.3. Project Implementation Performance

AFAD tried to implement to develop the human and institutional capacity of the poor women and adolescent girls along with the support of male members of the houses and community and ensure sustainability of efforts by involving the local government institutions in the process. AFAD is locally recognized for its reliable, accountable, effective & transparent project implementation and efficient management. AFAD has been promoting a positive environment for equal opportunity for its staff at the organizational level and promoting scope for volunteers and the beneficiaries at the community level. AFAD gives more emphasis on women empowerment and gender sensitive program design for sustainable development. Some important steps of equal opportunity and social justice are in practice. It has long experience on the issues such as Capacity Building – Livelihood Improvement – Gender Equality, Justice & Governance as well as humanitarian situation dealing. In 1998 AFAD started its journey in Kurigram district and until 2004 major interventions of the organization concentrated in Kurigram Sadar, Rajarhat and Ulipur upazila Upazilas of Kurigram District. It is also nurturing a coalition 05 local women led CSO and jointly undertaken and implemented different initiatives.

It has coverage of 1309 villages of 50 unions under 07 Upazilas of Kurigram district and over 50,000 households are receiving different supports. Though geographical coverage of AFAD has been expanded but the number of project reduced in the contrary.

3.4. Key Achievements/Good Practices made as of December 2023

AFAD is working with destitute young girls who were the victim of early marriage and then abandoned by their husband by establishing Adolescents Resource Centers supported by USSCCB-Canada. Life skill education for young girls" project was in Kurigram sadar Upazila. So far, the organizations have completed 19 projects mostly are small in fund size. Presently it is implementing three projects named" "South Asia Young Women Leadership and Mentoring Initiative project" funded by Global Fund for Young women where 160 young women leader have been developed as peer leader who are providing life skill education support about 4,000 young girls, "Enhancing the capacities of Local and National Humanitarian Actors- ELNHA supported by OXFAM/MJSKS and Rehabilitation of women and girls with disabilities with assistance from Sense International India. It has supported 440 women, 1,635 men, adolescents 750 and children 551 and person with disabilities. Moreover the applicant have been supporting the violence victim women of the Kurigram district since its establishment in 1999 through linking police, hospital and legal aid as well as counseling for rehabilitation. It has operated so far 45 cases and found that women of char based unions of Sadar and Rajarhat Upazila is highly tortured (almost 70%).

AFAD is working with destitute young girls who were the victim of early marriage and then abandoned by their husband by establishing Adolescents Resource Centers supported by USSCCB-Canada. Life skill education for young girls" project was in Kurigram sadar Upazila. So far, the organizations have completed 19 projects mostly are

small in fund size. Presently it is implementing three projects named" "South Asia Young Women Leadership and Mentoring Initiative project" funded by Global Fund for Young women where 160 young women leader have been developed as peer leader who are providing life skill education support about 4,000 young girls, "Enhancing the capacities of Local and National Humanitarian Actors- ELNHA supported by OXFAM/MJSKS and Rehabilitation of women and girls with disabilities with assistance from Sense International India. It has supported 440 women, 1,635 men, adolescents 750 and children 551 and person with disabilities. Moreover the applicant have been supporting the violence victim women of the Kurigram district since its establishment in 1999 through linking police, hospital and legal aid as well as counseling for rehabilitation. It has operated so far 45 cases and found that women of char based unions of Sadar and Rajarhat Upazila is highly tortured (almost 70%).

Previously it has been supported by world Food Program (WFP), Action Aid, Practical action, Steps towards, Development, Freedom Foundation, BRAC, Water Aid, European Union, Practical Action etc. for women empowerment, livelihood development, women entrepreneurship development, governance etc. Presently 02 staff is getting regular salary and other 19 are getting honorarium with very low amount.

AFAD head office situated in its own office at Khalilganj Bazar, R.K road, Kurigram. The organization has very good network with different women and humanitarian networks.

In 2025, they spent BDT 12,47,000.00 against the budget BDT 7,700,000 BDT. In 2026, they spent 7,500,000.00 and for 2018, the budget BDT 9,943,982.00 and the organizational contribution is 5%. General fund cashbook not updated after 31 December 2026, Bank reconciliation was updated up to December 2026,

4.0 Environmental Analysis

4.1. SWOT Analysis

4.2. PESTLE Analysis

4.3. Stakeholder Analysis

5.0 AFAD's Future/Outlook

- AFAD's Stakeholder**

- Geographical Area of Operation**

In addition to its present working area, i.e. Kurigram district, AFAD is planning to expand its working area to adjacent upazilas of neighboring districts of Naogaon,

Chapainawabgonj and Natore districts. In addition, to create a critical mass, AFAD would like to intensify its programme in all Upazilas of Kurigram district. Work will continue in the existing areas with a change support mainly value chain base social business development services, and rights based activities.

- **Staff Strength and Capacity Development**

Staffs are the central point of quality programme implementation. Staff Development Policy of the organization would be reviewed and on the basis of that a staff development plan will be developed, which will help implementing programme activities by individual staff independently in a great extent. Some areas staff capacity building would be Development Foundation training, Writing project proposal, writing annual report of the organisation, Financial Management, Gender, HIV/AIDS, Legal Aid, Communication and Presentation, and Climate Change.

- **Strengthening Partnership, Networking and Alliances**

- **Strengthening Organizational Structure and System**

This is one area where AFAD has to develop capacity considerably. Planning, Monitoring Evaluation and Documentation is essential to make programme more effective. A common system of PME would develop for the whole organization and a set of specific indicators would be formulated during the planned period for all programmes, which would help to analyze the effectiveness of different interventions regularly. PME system would be reviewed in regular intervention. Use of Information communication Technology (ICT) in survey and research findings to be increased.

- **Advocacy and Lobby**

- **Resource Mobilization and Localization**

As the interventions of the organization expanded geographically and AFAD would also like to include broader number of vulnerable people in its programme span, generating adequate resource is a pre-condition. In this regard AFAD would certainly strengthen her relationship with existing development partner through becoming more effective in programme implementation and documentation. Besides, AFAD would also try to include new donor partners having development agenda in line of AFAD. During this planned period, AFAD would also try to make the local business community interested to invest in social business ventures, which will create a lot of employment opportunities for the poor and extreme poor.

- **Leadership and Succession**

- **Program Priorities/Thematic Areas**

6.0 The Strategic Plan of AFAD

6.1. Broad goals aligned with the mission.

Poor and marginalized people particularly women, adolescent girls and children will have capacity to improve and sustain their livelihood and human rights security and live as a dignified citizen of the country in cooperation with public, private and civil society members from local, regional and national level.

6.2. SMART Objectives supporting each goal.

- a. Human and skill development for empowering women and Adolescent
- b. Promoting quality education for all children
- c. Ensure sustainable livelihood of poor, extreme poor women, men and children and other vulnerable people including person with disability and other primary health care issues.
- d. Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women.
- e. Enhance community resilience on disaster management and to adapt with climate change effect through localization process.
- f. Strengthen good governance and democratic environment
- g. Strengthen good governance and democratic environment
- h. Strengthen Organizational capacity and initiatives for organizational sustainability

7.0 Strategies and Action Plans

7.1. Strategic Initiatives

In the process of developing strategic plan, some thematic areas have been identified by the participants, which have been decided as center points of the plan. Thematic areas are as below:

- **Empowerment of women is first:** AFAD affirm that the society moves with the participation of both women and men. Believe in equality between women and men should not be a paradox but to practice it to break the existing dominant power relation between men and women. Bringing equality is a priority area of AFAD and will remain so. This is completely a crosscutting issue for any intervention of the organization. Minimum 50% cost of any project of AFAD would be spent towards achieving gender equality. Besides, efforts would be continued to ensure participation of women in the decision making process of the organization in terms of both number and quality. Necessary affirmative actions would be taken in this regard.
- **Integrated and rights based approach:** AFAD believe that development intervention should not be in a peace meal, rather in a holistic manner. Besides, AFAD also believes that with necessary resources and capacity, people can solve their own problem. Through its experience AFAD believes that, it is not possible to bring about a sustainable change in the life of people only by service-oriented programme. Therefore, the organization would continue its comprehensiveness in

program blending service delivery with the rights based approach. AFAD would support empowerment, not create dependency. Integration/coordination of different endeavors and rights approach would be followed in all spheres of AFAD.

- **Inclusion of Excluded:** Women, widow, distressed, dalits/Horizons, third sex, person with disability and extreme poor people of Bangladesh are being excluded from the main trend of development, which create more vulnerable situation for them. They have minimum access to quality education, health services and legal systems. Gap between rich and poor is ever increasing and contributing to growing number of extreme poor people. In Bangladesh, 20% poorest share of income or consumption in 1981-82 was 6.6% and in 2004 that was decreased to 4.7% and the share of 20% richest in 1981-82, was 45.3% and in 2004, increased up to 52.0%. AFAD has to put particular focus in this regard.
- **Adaptation with Climate change effect:** It is a great challenge for Bangladesh to deal with the effects of the imminent threat of global climate change. Considering the working area of AFAD, which is extremely vulnerable to drought, and going down of ground water table, the organization will provide particular emphasis to strengthen the capacity of people to cope with the effect of climate change.
- **Changing mindset:** AFAD believe a shift in mindset of people is needed to overcome poverty and distress as well as to ensure gender equality. It is needed to facilitate a social and cultural movement including both civil society members and poor people, which would contribute in formulating necessary policies to end extreme poverty.
- **Social Business for benefiting poor:**
During the present phase of strategic planning, AFAD will also initiate several enterprises with a thinking of social business model. For example: Trade base training for women, e commerce for beneficiaries and AFAD farm products with higher market, better handicrafts and home delivery of quality bakery products (celebration cake), fresh foods, fish etc. AFAD also got involve with private sector to create job opportunity for the graduated trainee of trade base training centre and SME service providers. AFAD will also initiate the process of establishing a vocational institute to generate a skillful youth group particularly girls in its own land
- AFAD management structure changes will be happened for effective implementation of organizational activities. Several policies also would be reviewed and updated as well some new policy document would be developed in the upcoming years.

Cross cutting issues

- **Remain positive and keep vigilant to sustain environment and bio-diversity:** In a situation of gradual extinction of bio-diversity and degradation of our environment, AFAD, in all aspect maintain and preach to protect bio-diversity, natural environment and will never undertake project/activities detrimental to any form of environmental sustainability.
- In addition, AFAD will ensure that all its interventions constantly address the cross-cutting issues of disability and HIV/AIDS.

7.2. Action Plans with tasks, responsibilities, timelines, and resources.

AFAD will facilitate achieving following six strategic objectives, which will help achieving the Mission of the organization and contribute towards the Vision.

Strategic Objective 1: Human and skill development for empowering women and Adolescent

The primary target groups of AFAD are poor and extreme poor families, who are generally isolated from each other, not united. Very often they are influenced and pressured by the local elites and vested interest groups for their own decision making. They have lack of capacity to come out from such situation. Bureaucratic administrative structure does not help them the way they need and other members of the society generally unaware about their day to day struggles. From the beginning, AFAD has been maintaining the process of uniting people at the grassroots level and strengthening their capacity. This process would be further strengthened in future along with raising awareness of the society as a whole to the causes of poor and extreme poor.

Strategic Objective 2: Promoting quality education for all children

Although education is an integral part of the overall livelihood aspect, however, in view of providing particular emphasis AFAD has identified it as a separate area and to AFAD education and awareness is the main conditions for fighting poverty, which enables people to improve their social, cultural and economic situation and improves the opportunities for economic growth. Access to quality vocational training, improved school-to-work transitions and the provision of decent work opportunities are further necessary conditions for sustainable poverty reduction. During the planned period AFAD would concentrate on trade base training and life skill education at different levels, which is inclusive and quality oriented.

Strategic Objective 3: Ensure sustainable livelihood of poor, extreme poor women, men and children and other vulnerable people including person with disability and other primary health care issues.

The fight against food insecurity as a means to tackle poverty is strongly focused in the MDGs and PRSP of the Government of Bangladesh. Almost half the population of the

country lives below the poverty line of which around 20% are extremely poor, food security is of vital importance to the poor. The situation in the Barind tract is much worse as the area is quite vulnerable to drought and people lack adequate employment opportunity throughout the year.

On the basis of AFAD's experiences, lesson learned as well as recommendations of internal and external reviews/evaluations, AFAD has identified following strategic activities to achieve the objective of sustainable livelihood of poor and extreme poor.

Strategic Objective 4: Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women.

In present society women and children are disproportionately affected by the poverty. Almost all (95 per cent) of female-headed households are estimated to live below the poverty line, with 40 per cent being classified as extremely poor. Women are frequent victim of various forms of cruelty and injustice by their male counterpart as well as the society. Situation of women is worst during lean period particularly when the male members of the family temporarily migrate to other places in search of employment. Considering the context, we focus on achieving equal rights for women and men. We understand that affect of poverty is different on women and men, and women are the majority of people living in poverty and suffering.

Strategic Objective 5:Enhance community resilience on disaster management and to adapt with climate change effect through localization process..

Environment and disasters are economic issues in Bangladesh that affect mostly the poor. Environment and comprehensive disaster management identified as key supporting strategies to reduce poverty. The frequency of extreme weather events are bound to increase as a result of global warming and indeed Bangladesh may already be experiencing early impacts of climate change. Predict accurately rain, floods, droughts and planning adjustments to the agricultural calendar will be an advantage to people, who today have to cope with unpredictable changes in weather patterns brought on by climate change. Besides, working area of AFAD is under the threat of desert due to Farakka barrage and huge ground water up-lifting. Therefore, enhancing the ability of people to take coping actions in advance has no alternative in the working area of AFAD.

Strategic Objective 6: Strengthen good governance and democratic environment

Improved governance and democratic environment are central to the achievement of the MDGs, which has been recognized by the Government as a priority in the PRSP. There are the basic requirements of increasing the efficiency of governance in supporting growth and increased democratization of the discourse and practice of power. Strengthening of democratic values and the reinforcement of a more equitable society contribute to the reduction of poverty significantly. In this regard, during the planned period, AFAD will focus on effectiveness of public institutions and improve security as

well as access to justice for the poor. However, interventions of achieving these objectives are closely interlinked with interventions of other objectives.

Strategic Objective 7: Strengthen Organizational capacity and initiatives for organizational sustainability

Back in 1984 AFAD started its development intervention in a very small scale as a tiny organization. Over the period of time the organization has been recognized as one of the most significant one in Kurigram district and presently AFAD is working with more than 50,000 grassroots poor women and men directly to bring about a positive change in their life. AFAD has been constantly learning from target people, development partners, staff members and well wishers, which enabled AFAD to adjust with the changed situation time to time and going ahead keeping its values and principles intact. AFAD's efforts would be there to maintain this characteristics and advance further. AFAD believe, it is necessary to achieve the mission and objectives stated above.

In the process of strategic plan development, some areas of organizational development identified, which has been mentioned below briefly.

Initiate a quality training centre with accommodation facilities and training center along with eco-tourism facilities

AFAD has been conducting a number of training courses for its target people as well as for staff members. Considering requirement, it would be feasible to establish a separate Training Centre in the AFAD's land procured near Tanore road. Component of research could be added with training centre, which will enable the organization to have in-depth learning of different interventions, as well as help undertaking innovative projects. Besides, Research component would also play complementary role to Training Unit through developing IEC materials, education materials and different training modules on organic farming.

7.3. Implementation Of Strategic Plan,

a. Human and skill development for empowering women and Adolescent Strategic activities of this objective along with timeline mentioned below:

Strategic Activities	Time line	Major Responsibility to
<i>For poor and extreme poor groups</i>		
1. Strengthening Women Group and their broader platform including open up membership for new members	2024 onward until 2028	PM
2. Organizing Life Skills Development Training	Continuous	PM, FF
3. Skill and Capacity Building Training on IGA and small & micro enterprise (SME)	Continuous	PM, UF, FF

4. Family Development Plan (FDP) and support for implementation	Continuous	PM, FF
5. Conduct awareness Session	Continuous	FF
6. Involvement of Group Member in Different Committee	Continuous	PM, FF
7. Organized Exposure visit	Continuous	PM
8. Buildup and strengthen CBOs, LSP association, Federation and VDC with Groups at union and village level	Continuous	PM, FF
9. Facilitate in Forming Alliance at Union, Upazila, District Level	by 2015	Ed, PM

PM=Project/Programme Manager, UF= Union facilitator FF-Field Facilitator, ED- Executive Director

b. Promoting quality education for all children

Strategic activities of this objective along with timeline mentioned below:

Strategic Activities	Time line	Major Responsibility to
1. Continue awareness session at different levels ; groups, CBOs, LGIs .	Continuous	PM, UF, FF
2. Capacity building of trainers	Continuous	ED, PM, UF, FF
3. Forming and activating adolescents girls health club at different level	2024 on wards	ED, FF
4. Facilitate adolescent girls to access in health and hygiene support	2024 onwards ad continue	PM, AC, FF
5. Initiate quality trade base training e.g. mobile phone servicing in AFAD own land	2025	PM, FF
6. Documentation and information sharing at local, national and international level	Continuous	PO (Doc.), PM

LGI= Local Government Institutes

c. Ensure sustainable livelihood of poor, extreme poor women, men and children and other vulnerable people including person with disability and other primary health care issues.

Strategic Activities	Time line	Major Responsibility to
1. Need base skill development training	Continuous	PM, TC, FF
2. Develop social business policy of AFAD	By 2024	CE
3. Producer group development	Continuous	PM, FF
4. Promote Market and Business drive Agriculture Production.	Continuous	FF, Market officer, PM
5. establish e commerce centre along with policy along with data base of AFAD developed LSPs, advanced farmers, women entrepreneurs etc.	From 2026	PM&E dept.
6. Business network development involving CBO leaders, LSPs and private market actors with e solution base technical support	From 2026	FF, PM
7. Linking women entrepreneurs with SME loan providers	From 2024	CE, PM, FF

8. Develop differentiated approach for women, extreme poor, poor and middle class producers for social business	By 2024	PMs
9. strengthening organic Fish, poultry, duck, fruits and Vegetable production and marketing	Continuous	PM, AC, TO
10. Local service provider development	2024 onward	TO
11. Linking skill youth to private sector industries	Continuous	
12. Fodder production and possessing in AFAD farm	Continuous	CE, FF
13. Food processing /BAKERY item preparation and policy for home base quick delivery with much advertisement	From 2025 onward	PM, FF
14. Workshop on service availability with line department and producer group	Continuous	PM, AC
15. Establish AFAD organic Sell centre at Kurigram city	By 2024	CE, PM
16. Market linkage (local, national and in abroad)	Continuous	PM, AC, FF

d. Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women.

Strategic activities of this objective along with timeline mentioned below:

Strategic Activities	Time line	Major Responsibility to
<i>For staff capacity building and mainstreaming</i>		
1. Training on gender and human rights	Continuous	PM, ED
2. Training on leadership (women staff and leader)	Continuous	ED, PM
3. Organise Family day for all AFAD staff	Yearly once	ED, all staff
4. Include a second level senior women staff with capacity to link donors	From mid of 2024	
<i>For capacity building of community people</i>		
5. Couple orientation on gender and domestic violence	Continuous	FF
6. Workshop with Union Parishad Representatives	Continuous	FF
<i>For awareness raising of the mass people</i>		
7. Day observation	Continuous	FF
8. Popular event / cultural program	Continuous	FF
9. Banner campaign	Continuous	FF
10. Posterizing	Continuous	FF
11. Campaign against dowry	Continuous	PM
12. Campaign against domestic violence	Continuous	PM
13. Message dissemination in existing local fair	Continuous	FF
14. Felicitation of women entrepreneur/leaders	Continuous	FF
15. Video show	Continuous	FF
16. Publication	Continuous	PM, ED
<i>For Institutionalization</i>		
17. Campaign for birth registration	Continuous	PM, FF
18. Yearly student gathering	Continuous	PM, FF
19. Essay, quiz, art competition for students	Continuous	PM, FF
<i>For advocacy and responsive work</i>		
20. Rehabilitation support for survivors	Continuous	PM, FF
21. Linkage violation survivors to shelter home	Continuous	FF, PM
22. Sensitize members of law enforcing agencies	Continuous	PM
23. Sensitize the members of UP/kazi/match makers	Continuous	FF, PM

24. Home visit of survivors and follow-up	Continuous	FF
25. Legal aid support through referral process	Continuous	FF
26. Coordination with different legal service providing organizations	Continuous	PM
27. Mobilization against violence on women/emergency support	Continuous	PM
28. Facilitate participation of women at the UP	Continuous	FF, PM
29. Ensure utilization of district legal aid fund	Continuous	FF, PM
30. Reducing/Stopping early marriage	Continuous	FF, PM
<i>Program monitoring, learning and documentation</i>		
31. Stakeholder Gender assessment	Annually	PM,
32. Case study collection	Continuous	FF
33. Gender segregated data analysis	Continuous	
34. Quarterly report	Continuous	PM
<i>Policy review and adopt</i>		
35. Review gender policy	By June 2024	PMT, EC

- e. Enhance community resilience on disaster management and to adapt with climate change effect through localization process.

Strategic activities of this objective along with timeline mentioned below:

Strategic Activities	Time line	Major Responsibility to
1. Review and update AFAD's policy for participating other movements continuing in Kurigram (<i>Kurigram Rokha Committee</i>)	2024	CE, EC
2. Facilitate peoples initiatives at different level on climate change issues	Continuous	FF, PM
3. Review and update disaster management policy	annually	ED, EC
4. Strengthen organization level disaster management committee	Continuous	PM, PM, Accountant
5. Strengthen early warning system using web service at UP level	Continuous	PM, FF
6. Coordination with Union disaster management committee standing committee	Continuous	PM
7. Organize Human/animal health camp	Continuous	FF,
8. Formation of Union based disaster CBO team	Continuous	FF
9. Training on disaster management and preparedness at staff level	Continuous	PM,
10. Introduce climate adaptive technologies in agricultural production	Continuous	PM, FF
11. Training on disaster management for community people (UP representatives, local elites)	Continuous	FF
12. Networking at GO, NGO and donor level	Continuous	PM,

- f. Strengthen good governance and democratic environment

Strategic activities of this objective along with timeline mentioned below:

Strategic Activities	Time line	Major Responsibility to
1. Strengthening Local Govt (UP, standing committee of UPS);	Continuous	PM, FF
2. Advocacy workshop with service providers (govt. and non govt.),	Continuous	PM, FF
3. Facilitate involvement of community in developing ward and union level strategic plan ;	Continuous	FF
4. Involve Persons with Disabilities in Development Process;	Continuous	PM
5. facilitate to organize open budget sharing and annual plan sharing of UP	Continuous	PM, FF, UPs
6. Disseminate Citizen charters on service feasibility	Continuous	PM
7. Observing different days	Continuous	PM
8. Publish/declare organizational Annual and Audit Report to all through website and newspapers	Continuous	CE, EC
9. Support UP to become more accountable and transparent	Continuous	PM, FF

g. Strengthen Organizational capacity and initiatives for organizational sustainability

Strategic Activities	Time line	Major Responsibility to
1. Develop a social business policy	By 2024	ED, EC
2. Increase organizational own fund through social business	By 2024	ED, EC
3. Develop AFAD's own web site	By 2024	ED, EC
4. Involve one or two vibrant member in EC and GB those have connection with different donors at national and international level	By 2025	ED, EC
5. Establish a policy for collecting contributions from staff and other local individual and institutional donor	By June 2024	ED, EC
6. Initiatives to build "Friend of AFAD" from different sector at Kurigram, national and international level	From 2024	ED, EC
7. Recruit a second level senior staff e.g. Director on full time or part time basis and an advisor for developing project proposal, donor communication etc.	By 2025	ED, EC
8. Raising funds from development partners for continuation of the poor and extreme poor development programme and CSR fund from corporate business houses	2025	ED, EC
9. Establish a practice of communication with present previous contacts who are involved with different donors, national and international NGOs (either phone call or email on regular basis), yearly sitting with chief/country chief of existing donors	From 2024	ED, EC s
10. Update brochure and website	Beginning of 2024	PM
11. Engagement with Private sector	Continuous	ED
12. Strengthen the social business of AFAD Enterprises : bakery items, handicrafts production and selling; Ring slab making, Organic farming , trade base	From 2025	ED, EC

training selling,		
13. Assess the potentiality of establishing Technical institute	From 2026	ED & EC
14. Increase networking through other likeminded organizations	Continuous	ED
15. Host volunteers from different international organizations		ED
16. Policy on write off policy, depreciation calculation and re valuation, is developed	2024	ED

8.0 Cross cutting issues

- **Remain positive and keep vigilant to sustain environment and bio-diversity:** In a situation of gradual extinction of bio-diversity and degradation of our environment, AFAD, in all aspect maintain and preach to protect bio-diversity, natural environment and will never undertake project/activities detrimental to any form of environmental sustainability.
- In addition, AFAD will ensure that all its interventions constantly address the cross-cutting issues of disability and HIV/AIDS.

9.0 Risk Management, Rource Allocation

9.1. Risk and Mitigation plan

Interference of religious fanatics: The underlying assumption behind all of AFAD's programming is that the religious fanatic groups will strongly oppose the development of women particularly the mobility of women. AFAD has been tackling such opposition time to time and particular efforts have to be continued in future as well in this regard. The organization will increase the involvement on social awareness with special focus on education of girls and adolescent. Besides, relation would be strengthened with local government bodies, administration and influential persons. Furthermore, initiatives would be there to ensure people's access to organizational information.

Influence of political parties and political violence: Cadre based political practice in Bangladesh has negative effects on all sectors of the country. Such effects intensified whenever there is a change in the power. Violence among political parties adversely effect the implementation of development initiatives and unfortunately the existing political practices does not indicate possibility of any significant change in near future in these regard. To mitigate these risks, AFAD always exposed non-partisan role as well as maintained neutrality and objectivity. This strategy would be continued along with the efforts to strengthen advocacy activities and further promotion of NGO network and civil society movements.

Dependency on donors: It is a fact that AFAD is almost completely dependent on financial support of donors for its different development interventions. Such dependency very often creates a tense situation as well as feeling of uncertainty particularly

considering sustainability of endeavors. In coming days efforts would be there to expand the income generating projects of the organization through social business and target people would be intensively supported to develop their occupational skills. Besides, AFAD will also try to have long term development partners to bring about tangible sustainable changes in the life of the most deprived.

Violence against women and children: As the most vulnerable group, women and children are always at the risk of various forms of violence in our society. There is always the possibility that effort to ensure their broader and active participation in the development interventions might bring new dimension in the violence to them in the existing patriarchal society. In view of these, AFAD will focus on formation and strengthening women organizations and establish network among them. The organization will also extend support to develop the skills of women on income generation and create scope for the employment of women. Furthermore, initiatives would be there to raise awareness of the society as a whole, both female and male, on the present condition of women, gender concept, reproductive health rights and access to services.

Risk of limited human resources: Skilled and motivated workforce is a precondition to implement the development interventions successfully particularly in the remote areas, which is a scarce in the present context. Fast growing corporate sector of the country presently is attracting the young generation when government job in general is the first choice for everyone. Available skilled and experienced personnel of the NGOs have various options, which increased during last few years because of MFIs and intermediary offices of different donor agencies. To tackle such challenge, AFAD has particular focus on working environment of the organization, which is very much congenial and efforts would be there to maintain as well as strengthen this. Besides, AFAD always try with its limited resources to provide not lucrative but modest remuneration to its staff. Objectives of the organization and sincere efforts to achieve those through transparent process hopefully would also contribute in motivation of staff to remain involved in the struggle against poverty as a whole.

9.2. Resource allocation

10.0 Conclusion

10.1. Summary of key points and next steps.

10.2. Reaffirmation of commitment to mission and values.

Strategic planning exercise has been a long cherished dream of the staff, management and both primary and secondary stakeholders to visualise AFAD future course of action. The stakeholders also felt that, without the strategic plan the AFAD can not work on piece meal basis, thus the emphasis on strategic plan was given in several occasions. As a result AFAD took the initiative to have this document. It is expected that the shared and realistic plan mentioned in this document will give AFAD a strategic direction. To keep it

a living document, periodical review is a must and AFAD will do so without failure in a participatory manner.

11.0 Appendices

- Supporting documents and additional analysis.