

**YUVA
RURAL
ASSOCIATION**



Strategic Plan

2025-2030

Helping people to Help themselves



www.yraindia.org





Message from the Strategic Plan Committee

We, the Special Committee for Strategy Plan of YRA, proudly present the sixth Strategic Plan. This document is the result of four months of collaborative effort involving staff, volunteers, interns, and representatives from various groups. A stakeholder meeting on March 25, 2025, in Nagpur, further enriched its development with diverse perspectives.

This plan serves as a roadmap for the next five years, guiding program development, planning, and implementation. It defines our vision, goals, and objectives, ensuring alignment in decision-making for staff and volunteers. Upholding the values and principles outlined here is crucial for the success of our initiatives.

We urge all staff members to review this document and assess program implementation against strategic objectives every six months. Consistent evaluation will help YRA steadily achieve its goals.

Wish YRA continued success !

The Strategic Plan Committee



Ms. Seemantini Khot
President



Mr. Datta Patil
CEO



Mr. Laxmikant Padole
Secretary



Mr. Devraj Patil
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Mr. P. L. Mathew
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1. Introduction :

Yuva Rural Association was registered on 23rd May 2002 as a society in Madhya Pradesh, and the first Strategic Plan was developed for the period April 2003 to March 2006. Following its successful implementation, the next Strategic Plan was prepared for April 2006 to March 2011. During this time, YRA focused primarily on Human Rights and addressing issues faced by deprived communities, supporting them through eleven levels of intervention, ranging from popular education and awareness generation to demonstrations and advocacy with the government for policy and program changes aimed at their welfare. Tribal communities, small and marginal farmers, and landless laborers formed the core constituency, with a strong focus on women, youth, and children. YRA expanded its presence across Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat, working to uplift disadvantaged populations through a holistic approach that aligned with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), emphasizing ecological sustainability on one hand and Good Governance on the other. YRA's core thematic areas include:



b) Third Strategy Plan (2011-2014)

In 2011, YRA developed its **third strategic plan (2011-2014)**, marking a pivotal shift in its approach. Recognizing that earlier interventions—focused on policy advocacy, research, campaigns, and networking—lacked measurable impact, YRA redefined its strategy. The district became the core unit of intervention, with families as direct beneficiaries, ensuring more tangible and trackable outcomes.

However, this period presented significant **internal and external challenges**. In 2011, YRA gained full financial independence after registering under FCRA. By 2014-2015, the organization faced sustainability struggles, leading to the departure of senior staff. The absence of a structured strategy plan during this transitional phase further compounded these challenges.

This strategic shift laid the foundation for a more **impact-driven approach**, despite the hurdles encountered.

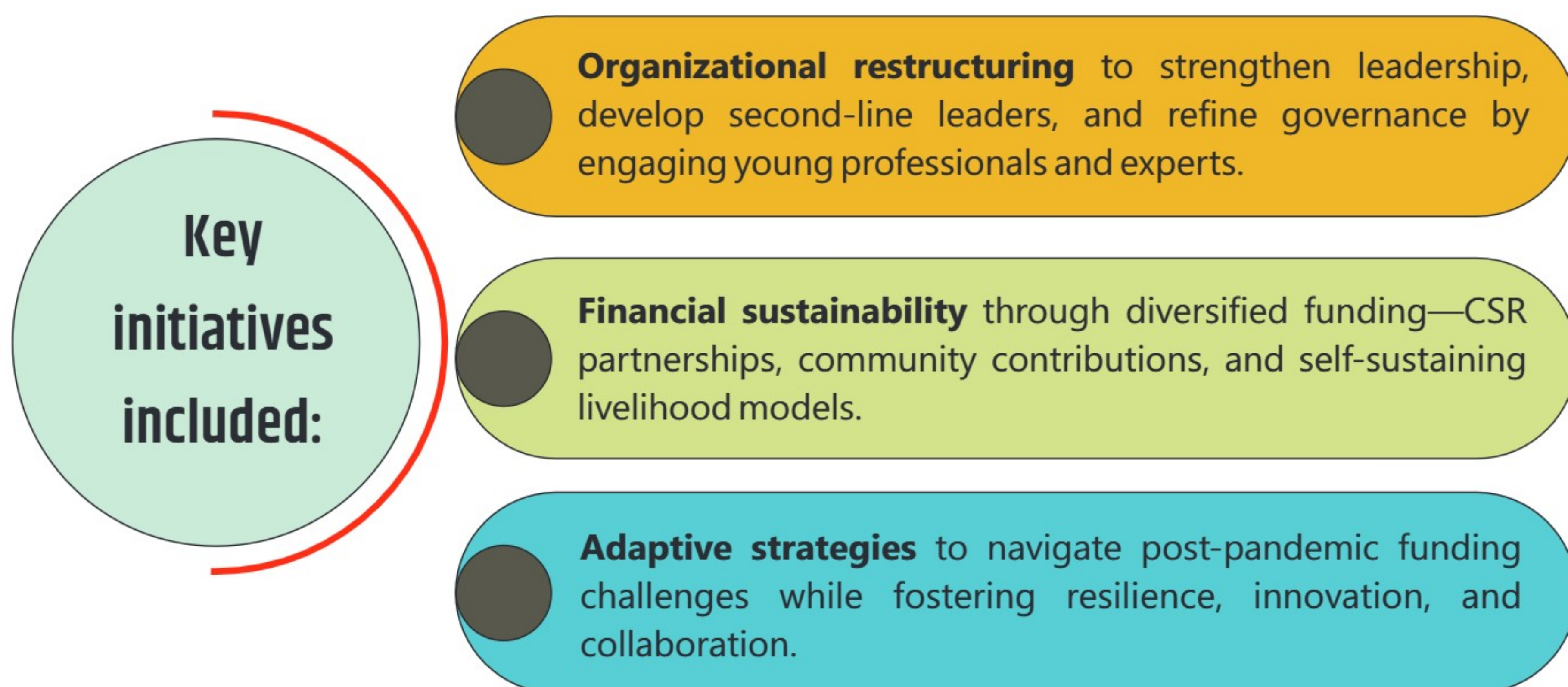
c) Fourth Strategic Plan (2016-2021)

With a 1–2 year gap between plans, YRA launched its fourth strategic plan in 2016, expanding its Livelihood focus to include employability, family income, health, education, water, and sanitation. Cross-cutting themes—Natural Resource Management, Social and Gender Equality, and Good Governance—remained central. The geographical scope was refined for a deeper impact, prioritizing Vidarbha and select areas in Marathwada beyond Parbhani.

To enhance resource mobilization, YRA introduced a dedicated Communication and Fundraising role. While organizational restructuring and program expansion encountered challenges due to shifting funding patterns and evolving development priorities, this plan established a foundation for adaptive growth and strategic learning.

d) Fifth Strategic Plan (2021-2025)

In 2021, YRA launched its Fifth Strategic Plan with a reinforced commitment to **sustainable livelihoods, climate resilience, gender equality, and governance**. Rooted in the **empowerment of marginalized communities** and aligned with the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, the plan balanced **programmatic expansion** across Vidarbha and Marathwada (Maharashtra) and parts of Madhya Pradesh with a **depth of impact**.



Given its continued relevance, the **Sixth Strategic Plan** builds on this foundation with **targeted refinements** to enhance impact and scalability.

Key observations from this environmental scans assessment include:

Youth and Agriculture:

Agriculture remains an unattractive career choice for youth, primarily due to its perceived complexity, uncertainty, and outdated image. Many graduates lack employability skills, leading to joblessness, while others reject available jobs due to mindset barriers. However, given the sector’s technological advancements, youth-led innovations could drive transformation.

The traditional concept of volunteerism has shifted, impacting the voluntary sector. While some youth remain highly motivated to contribute, many see volunteering differently, affecting engagement and impact.

Evolving Volunteerism

Community Perception and Trust

There is a noticeable decline in trust toward the organization and its facilitators. This shift may stem from inadequate time commitment by karyakartaas, misaligned interventions, or broader behavioral changes within the community. Restoring trust requires intentional efforts in engagement and responsiveness.

Finding the right talent for the right roles remains a significant challenge. The sector faces a shortage of committed and capable individuals, impacting the effectiveness of interventions.

Human Resource Challenges

Recognition of the Social Sectors

The social sector continues to be undervalued, often seen as a supplementary effort rather than a professional field with tangible impact.

The integration of data science and technology for trend analysis and strategic decision-making remains underutilized, despite its vast potential.

Technology and Data Science Gap.

Government Schemes and Dependency:

While some welfare schemes create dependency, many crucial initiatives fail to reach the marginalized. Better convergence of government programs is essential to ensure targeted and effective support.

Short-term project durations and still expecting Impacts. There are unrealistic expectations from the Organization towards the CSR projects.

Difference in Perspectives of CSR

Bottom to Top Approach

There's a need to have a bottom-to-top approach in the execution for a higher success rate and long-term impacts.

There's disparity when it comes to promising SDGs and actual field level implementation. Localisation of SDGs needs to happen. The holistic approach in achieving the goals at every level requires each and everybody's support. Thus Community participation and benefit needs to be emphasized.

Sustainable Development Goals

Addressing these challenges requires a strategic shift in approach, fostering youth engagement, rebuilding community trust, optimizing human resources, and leveraging technology for data-driven decision-making.



4. Key Stakeholders:

a) Local Stakeholders (Grassroots & Community Level)

These stakeholders directly engage with YRA's programs and interventions at the community level.

Target Communities – Small and marginal farmers, landless laborers, forest dwellers, tribals, women, youth, and children.

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) & Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) – Local collectives benefiting from capacity-building initiatives.

Gram Panchayats & Local Governance Bodies – Important for implementing policy advocacy and rural development programs.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) – Collaborators in awareness programs and grassroots mobilization.

Schools & Educational Institutions – Key partners in value-based education, child protection, and skill development programs.

Local Media & Journalists – Crucial for amplifying issues related to governance, livelihoods, and social justice.

Local Businesses & Entrepreneurs – Partners in economic development, rural entrepreneurship, and livelihood generation

b) National Stakeholders (Policy & Development Ecosystem in India)

These stakeholders influence policy, governance, and large-scale program implementation.

■ Government Ministries & Departments –

- Ministry of Rural Development
- Ministry of Women & Child Development
- Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
- Ministry of Jal Shakti (for Water, Sanitation & Hygiene)
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
- NITI Aayog (for strategic development initiatives)

■ State Governments (Maharashtra & Madhya Pradesh) – For implementing state-level development programs.

- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Partners – Indian corporations funding social initiatives (e.g., Tata Trusts, Mahindra CSR, Reliance Foundation, HDFC etc).**
- **National NGOs & Networks / forums**
- **Funding Agencies & Philanthropic Foundations**
- **Academic & Research Institutions –**
 - | **Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)**
 - | **Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) for impact assessments**
 - | **National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD)**

c) International Stakeholders (Global Development & Funding Agencies)

These stakeholders contribute funding, technical expertise, and global best practices.

■ **International Funding Agencies & Donors –**

USAID (United States Agency for International Development)
 UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)
 UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
 European Union (EU) Grants for Social Development
 World Bank & IFC (for rural development & social impact projects)
 Ford Foundation
 Oxfam International



■ **International NGOs & Networks –**

Save the Children (child rights & protection)
 ActionAid (livelihoods & women's rights)
 WaterAid (WASH interventions)
 Global Alliance for Sustainable Livelihoods



■ **Corporate Philanthropy & CSR Foundations –**

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (health & sanitation)
 Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (education & livelihoods)
 IKEA Foundation (climate resilience & women empowerment)



■ **Academic & Knowledge Partners –**

Harvard Kennedy School (policy research on governance)
 London School of Economics (rural development studies)
 International Water Management Institute (for water security research)



Note : The names are give for example purpose and understanding.

Strengths

5. YRA SWOC:

1. Credibility of the Organization in the Sector



Our organization has established a strong reputation in the sector due to its consistent efforts, ethical practices, and impactful programs. Over the years, we have built trust among beneficiaries, donors, partners, and policymakers. This credibility comes from:

Proven Track Record: Successfully implementing projects with measurable outcomes.

Transparency & Accountability: Clear financial reporting, ethical governance, and responsible resource management.

Stakeholder Trust: Recognition and endorsements from government bodies, funding agencies, and partner organizations.

Community Engagement: Strong grassroots presence, ensuring that our work is relevant and impactful.

2. Seasoned, Long-Served, and Ascribed Leadership



Our leadership team consists of individuals with extensive experience and long tenures within the organization. Their deep institutional knowledge and commitment provide stability, continuity, and strategic direction. This leadership structure ensures informed decision-making, strong stakeholder relationships, and effective governance. Ascribed leadership—rooted in expertise, trust, and dedication—fosters a sense of continuity and confidence among our members, partners, and beneficiaries, strengthening our capacity to achieve our mission.

3. Networking Approach



Our organization thrives on a strong **networking approach**, collaborating with a diverse range of stakeholders, including government agencies, other NGOs, community groups, and international partners. This extensive network enhances our **resource mobilization, knowledge sharing, and advocacy efforts**, allowing us to amplify our impact. By fostering meaningful partnerships, we ensure sustainable solutions, expand our reach, and strengthen the collective effort toward our mission.

4. Systems, Policies, and Legal Compliance



Our organization operates on a strong framework of well-defined systems, policies, and legal compliance mechanisms. These ensure transparency, efficiency, and accountability in our processes. By adhering to national and international regulations, we uphold the highest ethical standards. Continuous improvements in these areas strengthen governance, risk management, and operational effectiveness, fostering credibility and long-term sustainability.

Strengths



5. Clearer Vision and Mission

Our organization has refined its vision and mission to provide a clearer direction for our work. A well-defined vision and mission help us stay focused on our goals, inspire our team, and effectively communicate our purpose to beneficiaries, partners, and donors. This clarity allows for better strategic planning and resource allocation, ultimately driving sustainable growth and meaningful change.



6. Flexibility

Our organization embraces flexibility as a core strength, enabling us to swiftly adapt to evolving challenges and opportunities. We proactively respond to external changes, stakeholder needs, and emerging trends, ensuring that our strategies and programs remain relevant and impactful.



7. Capacity Building of the Team Members

We prioritize the professional growth and skill enhancement of our team members by providing regular training, workshops, and learning opportunities. This strengthens our ability to adapt to evolving challenges, implement best practices, and enhance overall organizational effectiveness. By investing in our people, we ensure sustained impact and long-term success in achieving our mission.



8. Values

Our organization is driven by a strong set of core values, including integrity, transparency, democracy, inclusivity, and commitment to social impact. These principles shape our culture, guide decision-making, and strengthen stakeholder trust. By upholding these values, we foster accountability, ethical leadership, and a shared vision for sustainable growth and positive change.



9. Long and Vibrant History

Our organization has a rich history of service, marked by significant achievements and strong relationships with stakeholders. This legacy strengthens our credibility, fosters trust within the community, and provides a solid foundation for future initiatives. Our experience enables us to leverage past learnings while evolving to meet emerging needs effectively.



10. Working Culture – Openness, Accessibility, and Democracy

Our organization fosters a work culture that is open, inclusive, and participatory. We encourage transparent communication, ensuring that every team member, volunteer, and stakeholder has access

to relevant information and can contribute meaningfully to decision-making. Our leadership approach promotes collaboration and mutual respect, valuing diverse perspectives. By maintaining a democratic work environment, we empower individuals, strengthen teamwork, and enhance overall organizational effectiveness.

11. Financial Transparency



Our organization upholds the highest standards of financial transparency, ensuring accountability and trust among stakeholders. We maintain clear and accurate financial records, conduct regular audits, and adhere to compliance standards. By openly sharing financial reports, budgets, and funding sources, we foster donor confidence, strengthen partnerships, and ensure responsible resource management. This commitment allows us to maximize impact while demonstrating integrity in all financial dealings.

Simple Weaknesses

1. Record Keeping and Documentation

Our organization faces difficulties in maintaining systematic and comprehensive records. Strengthening documentation practices through standardized processes, digital tools, and capacity-building will enhance organizational efficiency and accountability.

2. Technological Awareness & Implementation

Our organization faces difficulties in adopting and integrating modern technology into our operations. Addressing this weakness through capacity building, investment in digital tools, and training will enhance productivity and effectiveness in achieving our mission.

3. Inadequate Expertise

Our organization faces a shortage of specialized expertise in key areas, which can impact operational efficiency and program effectiveness. Strengthening internal capacity through training, strategic hiring, and partnerships will be a focus in the coming years.

4. Monitoring

The organization currently is weak in robust system for documentaing, monitoring and evaluating projects effectively. Strengthening monitoring frameworks, incorporating technology, and enhancing staff capacity will be key to addressing this gap.





5. Project-Based Economy

Our financial structure is heavily reliant on project-based funding. Strengthening financial resilience through diversified funding sources, including unrestricted funds, partnerships, and income-generating activities, is essential for sustainability.

6. Volunteer Cadre

Our organization faces a challenge in maintaining a structured and committed volunteer base. Building a strong volunteer network with clear roles, responsibilities, and engagement strategies is essential to enhance our impact and ensure continuity in our initiatives.

7. Sustainable Funding Opportunities

Our organization faces challenges in securing long-term and sustainable funding. Strengthening fundraising strategies, diversifying revenue streams, and building long-term partnerships will be key focus areas in our strategic plan to ensure financial sustainability.

8. Competitive Approach

Our organization operates in a highly dynamic environment where collaboration is often more beneficial than competition. To enhance our effectiveness, we need to focus on fostering strategic alliances, embracing a collaborative mindset, and leveraging shared strengths for greater social impact.

9. Business Acumen

Our organization excels in mission-driven work but faces challenges in business acumen. Strengthening business skills among our leadership and teams will help us improve decision-making, resource mobilization, and long-term sustainability.

10. Consistency in Fundraising

Our organization faces challenges in maintaining a steady and predictable flow of funds. Strengthening donor engagement, exploring long-term partnerships, and diversifying revenue sources will be key to ensuring financial stability and resilience.

11. Engagement with CSR representatives

Expanding our network and fostering stronger relationships with CSR leaders will be a priority to enhance financial sustainability, resource mobilization, and long-term collaboration for impactful social change.

12. Engagement with the local administration

Strengthening this connection will help us align our efforts with local development goals, improve program implementation, and enhance credibility within the community.

SWOC

1. Availability of CSR Funds

CSR funds present a significant opportunity for our organization. This creates potential funding sources for our projects, allowing us to expand our impact, enhance sustainability, and build strategic partnerships with corporate entities. By aligning our programs with CSR priorities, we can secure financial and technical support, strengthen our resource base, and drive long-term positive change in our focus areas.



2. Gold Standard Registry & Carbon Market Access

Our organization has a unique opportunity with the registration of one of our projects under the Gold Standard Registry, a globally recognized certification for high-integrity carbon credits. This opens doors to carbon markets, allowing us to trade verified carbon credits and attract funding from investors and organizations committed to sustainability.

3. Consortium and Network-Based Projects/Programs

One of the key opportunities for our organization is engaging in consortium and network-based projects and programs. By collaborating with multiple organizations, we can leverage shared expertise, resources, and funding, leading to greater impact and sustainability.

4. Convergence of Government Schemes

Our NGO recognizes the potential of aligning with government schemes to scale our interventions. Engaging in public-private partnerships, seeking co-funding opportunities, and actively participating in policy dialogues will help us create a more sustainable impact.

5. Registration on Social Stock Exchange

Registering on the Social Stock Exchange will boost our NGO's visibility, credibility, and funding opportunities. It connects us with donors, partners, and volunteers, enhances trust and transparency, and fosters collaboration for growth. This platform will help strengthen our impact and financial sustainability.

6. Access to Section 8 Company

Leveraging a **Section 8 Company** enhances our credibility, funding opportunities (CSR, grants), and governance. It ensures transparency, legal recognition, and long-term sustainability, strengthening stakeholder trust and partnerships.

7. Growing Investments in the Health and Education sectors

There is a significant increase in investments in the health and education sectors from both public and private sources. This presents an opportunity for our organization to secure more funding, collaborate with key stakeholders, and scale up our initiatives.

6. Staff Attrition

Retaining skilled employees, leading to operational disruptions, increased hiring costs, and potential knowledge loss. To address this, we will focus on staff retention strategies such as competitive benefits, professional development opportunities, a positive work culture, and employee engagement initiatives.

7. The shirkers' mindset

Some individuals avoid responsibility and lack new initiative, affecting productivity and teamwork. To address this, our strategic plan focuses on strengthening accountability, encouraging ownership, providing training, and ensuring leadership commitment. This will help create a more responsible and efficient team.

8. Expansion of the Organization

Growing our organization requires more resources, skilled personnel, and strong operations. We must balance expansion with sustainability, maintain service quality, and adapt to new challenges. Strategic planning and resource mobilization are key to ensuring successful growth.



6. The Sixth Strategic Plan (2025-2030)

Core Purpose: YRA's core purpose is to shape a better human society emphasizing the culture of co-existence and contributing to achieving SDGs by helping peoples to help themselves.

Vision: A better human society with equal opportunities and participation towards sustainability of the Planet.

Mission: To support and facilitate the needy, poor, and marginalized people to make them harness equal opportunities and participate equally, aiming for "No one Leaves Behind".

Thematic Areas of Intervention:

Livelihood: Employability, Skill Development, Food Security, Farm & Non-Farm-Based Livelihood

Climate Change: Soil & Water Conservation, Bio-diversity, Renewable Energy, Natural Resource Management, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Resilient initiatives.

Women, Children & Youth Development:

Value Education, Health, Quality Education, WASH



Programmatic Interventions:

- Sustainable agriculture and protective irrigation
- Soil & water conservation.
- Conservation of Natural Resources (Land, Water, Forests)
- Bio-diversity Management
- NTFP based livelihood
- Small ruminant base livelihood
- Health and MCH
- Quality Education
- WASH
- Non-farm micro-enterprise
- Financial inclusion
- Programs around women and child welfare.
- Youth Employability through Skilling
- Renewable energy promotion.
- Research & Evaluation Studies

(Themewise distribution of these interventions should be presented)

Operational Strategy Orientation:

YRA will focus on the following operational strategies

- i) **Facilitate exercising rights by focusing on government schemes convergence & Entitlements.**
- ii) **Capacity Building** of Community-based organizations, Local sub-committees & Local Self Governance.
- iii) **Direct facilitation:** YRA will remain as a facilitating organization during this strategy plan. Various processes will be adopted in capacity building till the organizations and instructions become self-dependent.
- iv) **Cadres at the grass-root level:** Youth and women will be selected based on leadership qualities; those who could play the roles of Community Resource Persons (CRP). They will be trained for the required project.
- v) **Replicating and scaling up the “Development Models”:** YRA has evolved certain development models as demonstrations that could be replicated and scaled-up in other parts of the state. YRA will focus on that during this plan.
- vi) **Need-based livelihood programs:** Innovative, local, environment-friendly, and need-based livelihood activities will be promoted.
- vii) **Demand creation & Trust Building:** The poor and marginalized people are not aware of their rights and demands. We will make them aware so they will demand their development.
- viii) **Increase youth involvement:** through internship, volunteering, and small assignments.
- ix) **Focus on Behavioural Change Communication:** Attitudinal change among people has to be focused through BCC.
- x) **Four level interventions:** Capacity building at the individual level, facilitating implementation at the community level, networking at the regional level, and policy recommendations at the national level.
- xi) **Capacity building of staff (Karyakarta):** Major focus needs to be on building the capacity of the team in terms of perspective building and future association.
- xii) **Networking & Collaborations:** YRA is engaged with various issue-based networks, nationally and statewide. It has been win-win for both YRA and the networks and so YRA will continue this relationship with the networks and alliances.



Geographical area:

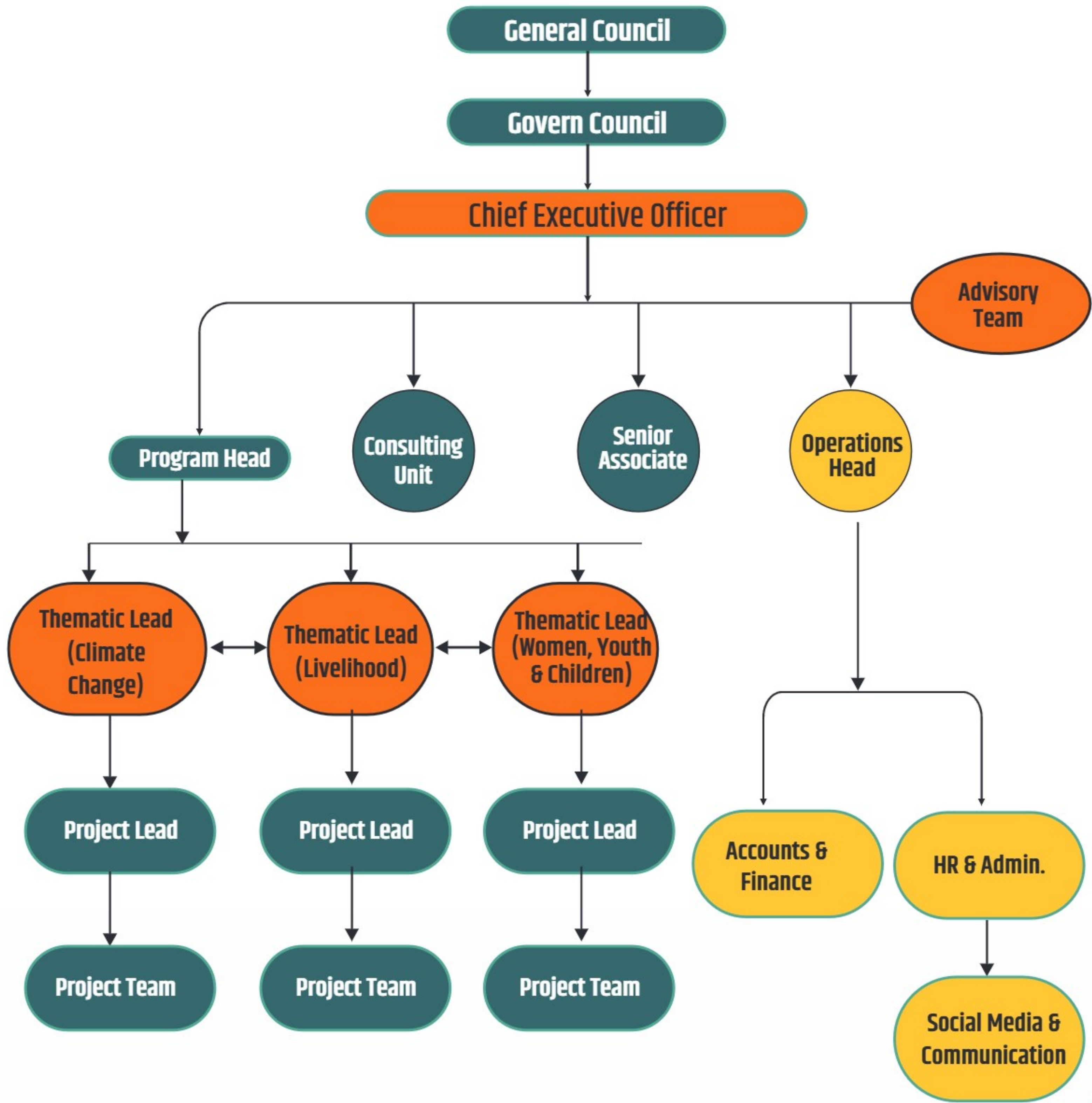
As per the new strategic plan and strategies, we would focus mainly on **Maharashtra & Madhya Pradesh.**

Constituency:

Special Focus on rural and tribal youth, women, children, and men from the deprived, vulnerable, poor, marginalized, and unorganized communities such as small & Marginal farmers, landless laborers, forest dwellers, and schedule/ nomadic tribes will be included in the YRA's constituencies for the fifth strategy plan.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

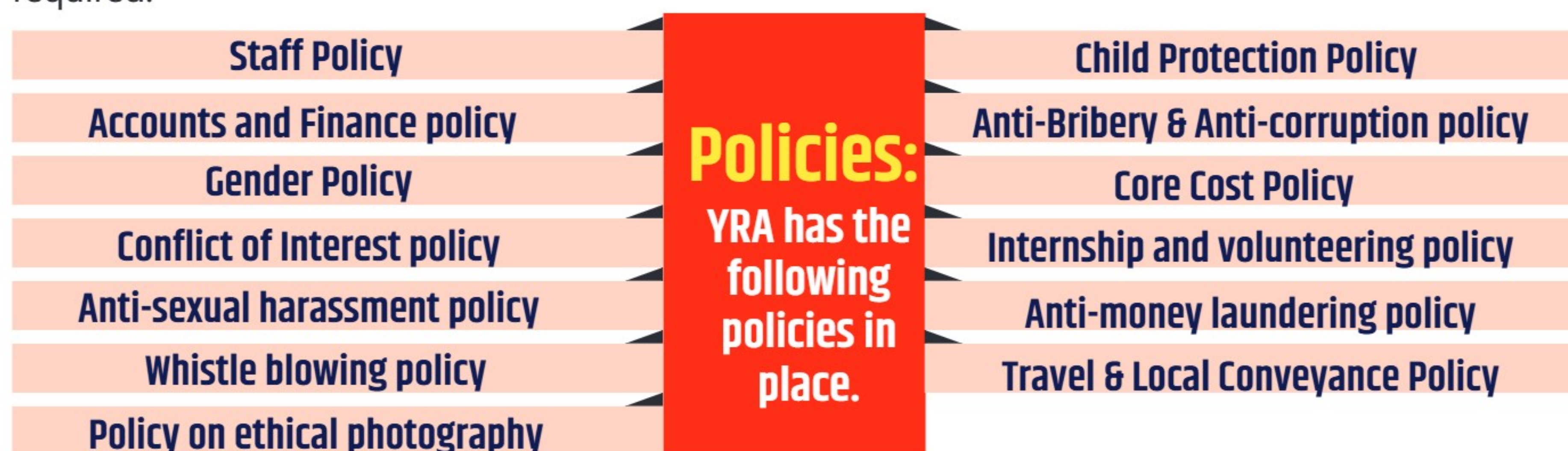
Organizational Flowchart



Governance:

The review of members in the governance will be done at the beginning of this plan. More numbers of members, especially young professionals, will be included through the proper process. Explore members working on Climate Change.

A special advisory team is to be formed which will provide experts and other services as and when required.



Link : <https://yraindia.org/policies/>

All the policy documents will be reviewed in the first year for any amendments according to the changes in the environment. All the staff will be given due orientation on all the policies of the organization. A mid-term review of policy and practices will be conducted once a year in the presence of Governing members. Necessary steps will be taken as per discussions and decisions every year.

Systems:

There are systems developed with regards to administration, human resources recruitment, performance appraisal, salary payments, daily monitoring, monthly reports, monthly/ quarterly project reviews, quarterly staff workshop and so on. All such systems will be checked, reviewed in the beginning of the plan and decided on the frequency of reviewing each of the systems and followed strictly.

The ERP system of Aasra is to be followed organization-wide. Internal communication systems to be developed and used for efficiency and team building. Core Group, PLT (PDT &PMT), Coordinators Forum, will be strengthened. Use of technology to be increased for updating the existing systems or introducing new ones.

Leadership:

The leadership transition marks a significant shift in the organization's journey. As planned, Mr. Datta Patil will step down from his leadership role in **September 2025**, ensuring a smooth transition to the newly identified leader, **Mr. Devraj Patil**. The structured **exit and handholding process** will commence **in April 2025** and continue until **September 2025**, facilitating knowledge transfer,

mentorship, and continuity in governance. In **October 2025**, Mr. Devraj Patil will formally assume leadership, driving the organization's vision forward. This transition aligns with the strategic commitment to fostering sustainable leadership and ensuring a seamless progression toward the next phase of growth and impact.

Human Resources:

In the sixth Strategic Plan, special attention will be given towards human resources as it has been an area which is significantly weaker than others. Emphasis and alteration in the recruitment process to onboard the right candidates will be given. A special advisory team will be formed composed of various subject matter experts who would contribute towards organizational growth. A very simple structure in the human resources will be followed to avoid hierarchy and bring the highest accountability.

Financial Resources:

1. **Self-sustainability models:** Income-generating activities have been started in DHARA yet profitability isn't achieved. This can be a source of income in a self-sustainability drive.
2. **Community Contribution:** Most of the individual family and community-level activities, resulting in direct benefits, can contribute as 'Community Contribution' to take care of a minimum part of the core expenses of the organization.
3. **CSR & iNGO Partnership:** Focused plans to partner with different CSR to be made. Dedicated team to work on exploring partnership. CSR support / iNGO for Core cost or Organizational development is to be explored especially old partners.
4. **Revolving funds:** The revolving Fund could be developed to continue implementing "Common Minimum Programs" or "Core Programs" such as women's empowerment, kitchen garden, child rights, facilitating exercising the government flagship programs etc. No concrete results in the past were observed, still, we will explore in the current plan.
5. **Individual donations:** Individual donations and charity collections will be tried through different methods
6. **Fundraising Activities:** Last year, Swaranjali was hosted to expect fundraising, but not much could be achieved; focused efforts will be taken.

Conclusion:

The Governing Council Meeting held on **28th June 2025** has mandated this sixth strategy plan and the annual plans for each financial year will be derived and implemented respectively. Every year the plans will be reviewed by the SMT- Senior Management Team and PLT- Program Leadership Team and Governing Council members. The last financial year of this strategy plan will be **April 2029 to March 2030**.





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