

FOUNDATION FOR OMOMIAN CULTRE, EDUCATION & ARTS SERVICES (FOCAS CANADA)



STRATEGIC PLAN (2023 - 2026)



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD STATEMENT

FOCAS embarked on a strategic planning process from August - December 2022. This involved multiple conversations with staff and board members; carefully reviewing our vision, mission, and values; and crafting strategic priorities for the next 3 years.

We reflected on where we've been, what we've learned, and what our strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and challenges are at this point in time.

This was an excellent opportunity to explore how FOCAS makes unique contributions to supporting, empowering, and advocating for newcomers and refugees. In the next three years, we commit to building:

- consistent, reliable funding for the organization so its core work is sustainable and there is a solid foundation to grow from
- solid, reliable internal systems for FOCAS, and
- programs that further FOCAS' vision and mission

We look forward to working with all community members and stakeholders to make this vision a reality.

On behalf of the staff

**BEDRI K.
MOHAMMED**
Executive Director

On behalf of the board

**MOHAMMED
ABAZINAB**
Board Chair

VISION & MISSION

OUR VISION

Newcomer and refugee community members trust their new home, actively participate, grow, contribute, and are resilient in their settlement and integration journey. Our vision is a community-driven and sustainable FOCAS, where newcomers engage in an authentic exchange of culture with other newcomers and Indigenous communities and have strong cultural connections between Oromia and Canada.

OUR MISSION

To empower, inspire, and instill confidence with newcomer and refugee community members, leading to learning excellence.

To bridge the gap and advocate for the rights of community members who experience inequities.

To build communities that can visualize and realize pathways to educational, economic, cultural, and social success.

Although the term "newcomer" is sometimes used to refer to *both* immigrants and refugees who have been in Canada for less than 5 years, FOCAS uses "refugee" in addition to "newcomer" throughout this document to highlight the unique and important work we do with refugee populations



VALUES

At FOCAS, we value

INCLUSIVITY: we are always working towards authentic inclusivity. We value and respect differences and seek to create environments where all people can participate.

EMPOWERMENT: we cannot empower/share power/build power with communities/clients/community members unless we are responsive to their needs and strengths. We know that communities are always changing and growing. Empowerment means being innovative in how we listen, respond to issues, develop programming, and work with each other. This often requires boldness, as empowerment means changing the status quo power structures that currently create marginalization for many community members, staff, volunteers, and/or partner organizations.

INTEGRITY: we have integrity if we work with honesty and transparency. It should be clear for everyone (staff, volunteers, partners, and clients/community members) what we are doing and what we hope to achieve. Demonstrating accountability to staff, funders, partners, and community maintains our integrity as an organization.

POSITIVITY: is an indicator that we are operating as a healthy organization. We seek solutions and continuous improvement – we build positive pathways for our work. If our staff, board, and volunteer work culture is not one of positivity, then it is time to examine how and why we work together and if our goals are the right ones.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (2023-2026)

FOCAS has identified five strategic priorities for the next three years.

1. Organizational Sustainability and Healthy Growth
2. Education and Learning Excellence
3. Sponsorship and Meaningful Resettlement
4. Community Economic Self-Sufficiency
5. Building Networks and Relationships - Locally,
Nationally and Internationally

In the pages that follow, we have outlined the *critical* and *important* goals and actions that FOCAS will pursue from 2023-2026. This does not mean that other goals and actions do not have relevance for FOCAS but we believe that achieving these goals and actions *first* will set up FOCAS well for expanding and deepening its work in the future. And, of course, all plans can change depending on the influences on the charitable/non-profit sector and the context affecting our organization at any point in time. This plan is a guide and a tool but is not meant to limit what FOCAS might do or achieve in the next three years.

STRATEGY 1: ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTHY GROWTH

This strategy relates to building consistent, reliable funding and other resources for the organization so its core work is sustainable and there is a solid foundation to grow from. It is also about building solid, reliable internal systems for FOCAS. It involves actions like organizational policy, HR, and training.

GOALS AND ACTIONS

- Explore and embark on social enterprises
- Expand the membership
- Apply for casino, bingo, and other fundraising programs
- As a new charitable organization, build relationships with local donors
- Develop work documents such as bylaws, payroll, hiring documents, receipt books, bank cheques, etc.
- Strengthen the work of the board of directors by defining operational policies and procedures for election, establishing a succession plan for the Executive Director, performance evaluation, systems to ensure compliance, etc
- Financial policies and procedures are established, all staff trained, accounting software is in place
- Regular training of staff members. We will create a training program and a consistent schedule for training and updating our services.

STRATEGY 2: EDUCATION AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE

This strategy involves building resilient, independent, and growing communities through educational programming and supporting groups in ways where they are directly leading their development and growth.

GOALS AND ACTIONS

- Partner with women's, youth, and other groups in ways that empower them directly. Support their learning and entrepreneurial activities.
- Empower school-aged children and youth through tutoring and mentoring.
- Production and publication of educational materials. These materials will be mostly in Afaan Oromo. Young newcomers need bilingual learning materials while learning English.
- Organize English-speaking Oromo youth to stay connected to culture, language, and other community resources for their educational and employment success.
- Start adult language and computer literacy programs.

STRATEGY 3: SPONSORSHIP & MEANINGFUL RESETTLEMENT

This strategy continues the pivotal role FOCAS has in the sponsorship and resettlement of refugees. FOCAS strives to put the right plans and actions into place so all newcomers can realize their hopes and dreams -- in the current moment -- and into the future.

GOALS AND ACTIONS

- Establish a settlement/sponsorship department.
- Grow our SAH (Sponsorship Agreement Holders) program and expand to nationwide if the contextual factors are right to do so
- Work in collaboration with SAH Counsel and IRCC to assist refugees and newcomers to properly resettle in Canada.
- After a settlement/sponsorship department is in place:
Form sponsorship and settlement programs: economically and socially empowering immigrants and newcomers from their arrival date. Helping them to settle properly and provide them with necessary support

STRATEGY 4: COMMUNITY ECONOMIC SELF- SUFFICIENCY

This strategy is about establishing a community economic development approach where newcomers and refugees are driving their own pathways to resiliency and self-sufficiency.

GOALS AND ACTIONS

- Continue to offer food security programs, as a way of meeting basic needs, so newcomers can then take the next steps for employment, secure housing, etc.
- Support the women's group and youth groups to establish and grow their entrepreneurial ventures (such as the women's group catering business). Support other groups as the opportunity arises.
- Help community members to engage in business, wealth creation and invest in their future here in Canada

STRATEGY 5: BUILDING NETWORKS AND RELATIONSHIPS - LOCALLY, NATIONALLY & INTERNATIONALLY

This strategy is about creating strong community bonds and networks. These networks might be with other agencies in the community-serving sector in Edmonton or with agencies who do similar work to FOCAS nationally and internationally. We believe in drawing on and learning from the resources and knowledge that already exists and partnering where it helps to create more efficient and effective services for newcomers and refugees. We also know that newcomers and refugees who have strong bonds and linkages -- with each other, with Indigenous communities, with other groups in their "host" community, and with other agencies and systems -- have a better experience of integration.

GOALS AND ACTIONS

- Create partnership with up to 20 sisterly organizations
- Support the Oromo Sports Clubs
- Participate in National and International Oromo Education conferences and symposiums
- Attend and deliver (as part of FOCAS programming) conferences, workshops, seminars, and symposiums.

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