BITA Strategic Plan

2021 – 2025

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BITA: Formation and institutional evolution as a development organization

- Bangladesh Institute of Theatre Arts (BITA) was formed in 1994 by a group of intellectuals, artists and noted development activists who believe in culture as a tool for social change and facilitation.
- BITA since its inception focused its attention more on using culture's strength in sustainable development by incorporating innovative development processes.
- BITA focuses on process based development approach where culture itself is an object and which is more people oriented. Thus a way it contributes other conventional development approach by community driven empowerment process.
- BITA values positive changes in the people's mindset so that they make themselves active about social, cultural, environmental and human rights issues.
- BITA carries out development programs with children, adolescents, youth, disadvantage women and men, older people and ethnic communities in underdeveloped rural, semi-urban, urban areas, and displaced Myanmar citizen in Bangladesh.

  BITA already implemented 51 projects, supported from 36 national and international development agencies. The organization is now capable to provide assistance to carry out cultural motivation & campaign initiatives, youth's skill development and social justice initiatives for other organizations as well. A total of 208 staff and 586 volunteers are involved in implementing the organizational endeavors.
- The organization played pioneering role to establish institutional framework to spread theatre as a development tools in home and abroad. BITA is now linked with many regional and international networks on Theatre and Arts Education.
- Cultural campaign has been out-reached to wider audience. Varied development partners from national to international organization have been realized as a result extended support.
- The organization assimilated newer development agenda and approaches to add more values and potentialities in designing and administering the development initiatives.

  In the course of time, the organization adopted few unique model & interventions like social audit, youth education and employment, digital education for youth, skill and livelihood of older people in local communities and social hub for displaced people and host communities etc.

- BITA's development approach works on few areas of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) including Goals 1: No Poverty, 4: Quality Education, 5: Gender Equity, 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions. BITA will continue to work on these goals and contribute to achieve these goals nationally.
- BITA considers grassroots participation at every tier of organization. BITA arranges grassroots artists' expositions at international platforms at the same time BITA recognizes their voice and concern in organization's growth. A group of grassroots representatives are also involved in BITA's Governing Body.
- This strategic plan is developed based on the achievements of BITA so far and its core competence in view of emerging issues.

Why BITA?

- BITA's experience, achievements and the existing development context suggest its raison d'Etre also for future.
- The communication gap continues to exist as the poor and disadvantaged people yet to have scope to communicate their concerns or receive information of their importance.
- Demanding rights for poor and disadvantage group is still a prime concern in establishing a just and equal society. And BITA's culture based communication tools is a strong media to argue on the issues.
- BITA's innovation in using newer mood of communication i.e. using online based communication approaches could also taken as an advantage for digital connectivity.
- The local level administration is providing necessary support as required by communities, but the poor are not always get an access to information and services. BITA extends support to the government initiatives and in cases collaborate to reach out the left behind group.
- Education and culture itself represents interlink and the gap between two resulted in limited cultural participation of young people, which can cause new forms of violence or unrestness in the society. To bring back culture's strength in educating morals and values, BITA works on Arts Education.
- While the overall situation is critical, the same from religious, ethnic minorities, social discrimination and gender perspective is much more precarious.

- Youth covers a larger percentage in our population. BITA approach has the unique ways of using communication and information tools which enhance youth engagement to build him a visionary and competent human being.
- Alternative and innovative initiatives through cultural modalities and practices have widely been used and observed. BITA will work to incorporate these grassroots and traditional practical at institutional level. Academic linkage is key to develop a secular culture in the society.
- Localization of development concept is more effective for present day context. Organizations like BITA have greater importance for government and donor agencies to render cost effective services for marginalized communities.
- Newer development agenda and approaches have been integrated into organizational working peripheries. The power of adaptability and advancement makes BITA well-equipped to work in the changing contexts, and also in future.

MANDATES

Article 7 of the Constitution of BITA allows BITA

a. Improvement of 'performing arts' in Bangladesh and take steps to arrange exchange of views and practical training at national and international arena.

b. Identification, preservation, documentation and initiation of research programs on the traditional cultural elements, cultural heritage and history of Bangladesh.

c. Search for traditional and customary practice of arts and taking effective steps for their complete revival.

d. Undertake projects to create awareness on cultural heritage, values and history and also projects related to environment, gender, education, health, poverty alleviation and human rights for the overall socio-economic development of under privileged population.

e. Take steps to create awareness among the women and children of under-privileged population about their rights and responsibilities through proper utilization of different disciplines of 'performing arts'.

f. Take initiative to establish a channel of communication between the cultural heritage of Bangladesh and that of other nations in the world.

Mission for 2021-2025

BITA's mission is to be a partner of the poor and disadvantaged people in their culture-based approach of demanding their rights, particularly human rights for poverty alleviation.

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- BITA maintains the cultural approach also in future, where it has comparative advantage.
- BITA's approach should reflect in its work to equip them to demand rights for the poor and the disadvantaged people.
- BITA extends its institutional capacities to promote Arts Education.
- It believes that such a change accompanied with other parallel processes will contribute to poverty alleviation.

Vision

BITA's vision is a society where respect and practice of rights by all is an integral part of life.

BITA believes that such a situation characterizes a state free from human poverty.

Values

Internally, staff members will practice

- Mutual respect
- Gender sensitivity
- Appreciate professionalism at work.
- Team approach based on mutual trust and cooperation
- Accountability at work
- Timely Perform
- Exchange of learning and expertise
- Policies and procedures driven with operational flexibility.

With respect to grass root people, with whom it works for a change, BITA will practice

- respectfulness
- 'we' approach irrespective of their background in terms of status, religion, gender and ethnicity.
- equity and equality
- active empathy
- tolerance and integrity

With respect to GOB, donor, community and others, BITA will

- remain accountable
- practice transparency
- seek partnerships
- build relationship of trust and confidence
- practice democratic behavior
- focus on sustaining results

Guiding Principles

- Correlate culture and development
- Participatory and inclusive
- Foster synergy
- Innovation and amplification
- Innovate newer approaches
- Follow government's policies on women, children and youth issues.
- Institutionalization

Approaches

In order to pursue its mission, BITA's *culture-based approaches* are

- Facilitation of grass root initiatives
- Technical assistance to culture-based institutional initiatives
- Partnership with complementary and similar organizations
- Establishing BCCT as a centre of innovation and knowledge extension on culture, rights and development
- Connectivity with GO-NGO service providing agencies and institutions along with private sector and benevolent people
- Assist Government in few areas to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

- Introducing entrepreneurship for social benefits and organizational sustainability
- Transform cultural approach into digital communication system to support attitude and behavioral change of young population of the country.
- Facilitate intergenerational linkages between older and young generation.

BITA will work together with formal and informal institutions which work for the same group of people and demanding of rights and social justice for them as their vision.

BITA will seek synergies while working together with others.

Performance Objectives

- **Grass-root based mobilization**
- **Collaboration with Institutions**
- **BITA-based**

Grass-root based mobilization

- **Performance Objective 1**: Grass root based mobilization facilitated and the communities become empowered and self-motivated.
- **Performance Objective 2**: Groups are identifying their issues and address them visualizing community driven approaches to the wider audience using local cultural elements and resources for their performance.
- **Performance Objective 3:** Grass root groups locally deal social issues with especially on women vulnerability, child protection, youth leadership and organize events to bring attention of local authorities and influential's.
- **Performance Objective 4**: Members of grass root based groups are performers and have ability to act changes in the society.

Strategies

1. Develop youth focused grass root groups for escalating actions.
2. Identify and engage local skilled persons and other resources in grass root mobilization.
3. Women vulnerability, injustice in the working areas are identified and action taken accordingly.
4. Promote grassroots initiatives at local level.

Collaboration with Institutions

- **Performance Objective 1:** BITA is in partnership with institutional partners expanding its innovation in arts education globally.
- **Performance Objective 2:** Locally and internationally different cultural groups facilitated to spread the force of culture in strengthening communication.
- **Performance Objective 3**: Linkage with relevant institutional initiatives and share BITA's grassroots experiences.
- **Performance Objective 4**: Institutional partners are capable of effective practice of culture as communication tool.
- **Performance Objective 5:** BITA effectively coordinates Government and development agencies to render support on education, prevocational training for youth, humanitarian assistance issues etc.

Strategies:

1. Demonstrate organizational capability and resources to wider organization and bodies
2. Develop joint plan of actions with varied organizations for innovation, continuity of work relation and replication.
3. Facilitate constructive engagement of citizen in promoting national agendas and emergency issues.
4. Explore ways and opportunities of connectivity through mutual trust and cooperation
5. Sharpen and publish organizational capacity to work in diverse situation.
6. Prepare organization's aptitude to support Government's initiatives for SDG.

BITA-based Objectives

- **Performance Objective 1**: BCCT is a centre of nationally and internationally recognized specialized institution for development education and training on culture, rights and ICT integrating the community needs and emerging development agenda of national and international arena.
- **Performance Objective 2:** BCCT is a centre for action research for new communication-based development approaches in the area of water, environment, climate change and energies and works on cultural heritage, health, hygiene and communication for development.
- **Performance Objective 3**: BITA has an efficient and effective management and operational mechanisms, and is achieving the changes defined as results.

Strategies

1. Develop promotional activities for exploring market opportunities of BCCT.
2. Provide technical assistance and strengthen collaboration with relevant organizations.
3. Promote employment and cultural heritage-based IGA activities.
4. Customize expertise and materials of organization in terms of existing opportunities and prospects in and outside of country.
5. Develop capacity and opportunity based business plan for organization
6. Highlight benefits of private sector through promotional activities in getting support and cooperation
7. Popularize BITA concept and accomplishments in Development

Internal Analysis of BITA

BCCT establishment

- So far, a management policy for BCCT formulated and yet to fully practicing.
- BCCT as a Trust yet to function properly.
- Sufficient fund is not available to run BCCT
- The use of land has not been reached to desired utilization.
- The facilities are more available for public attraction, but proper marketing yet to channelize.
- Strong publicity measures are still missing.
- Strong publicity measures for BCCT are still missing
- Complete office setup yet to plan to establish office at own premise.

Financial Management

- BITA remained donor dependent. The alternative source of income is explored in limited extent but yet to take dependable shape.
- The accounting system is still manually operated in few cases. Electronic accounting system fully to operate.
- Delayed fund clearance from the government makes sometimes financial management impossible.

Human Resources

- Senior management is having difficulty in line/staff management. More professionalism is required.
- The existing monitoring practice is not professional enough.
- A more updated monitoring mechanism needs to be in place.
- The human resource allocation is not balanced.
- Line Management gap still exists between Executive Director and Project Managers. A senior Manager/ Director need to be appointed for providing project team's support.
- Staff motivation for challenging work needs to be increased.

Policies

- The staff members should be more policy and procedures oriented.
- Child Safeguard Policy, Gender Policy, are already in place, but yet to decentralized and practiced at sub offices.
- Central management and cost centre's operating mechanism to be improved for better coordination.
- Staff benefits schemes yet to be functional.
- Risk Management Focal Person and role in line with guideline needs to be determined.
- Organization's Contingency plan needs to developed.

Governance

- EC members have capacities to contribute and needs to be tapped further
- Considering program coverage, Youth representation needs to be increased.

The strengths and weaknesses suggest that BITA

- Restructures its organization adding a second line of management and an M&E cell,
- Opts for more active human resource management and development initiatives,
- Introduces policies for decentralization,
- Encourages effective governance
- Reinforces measures for internal fund generation

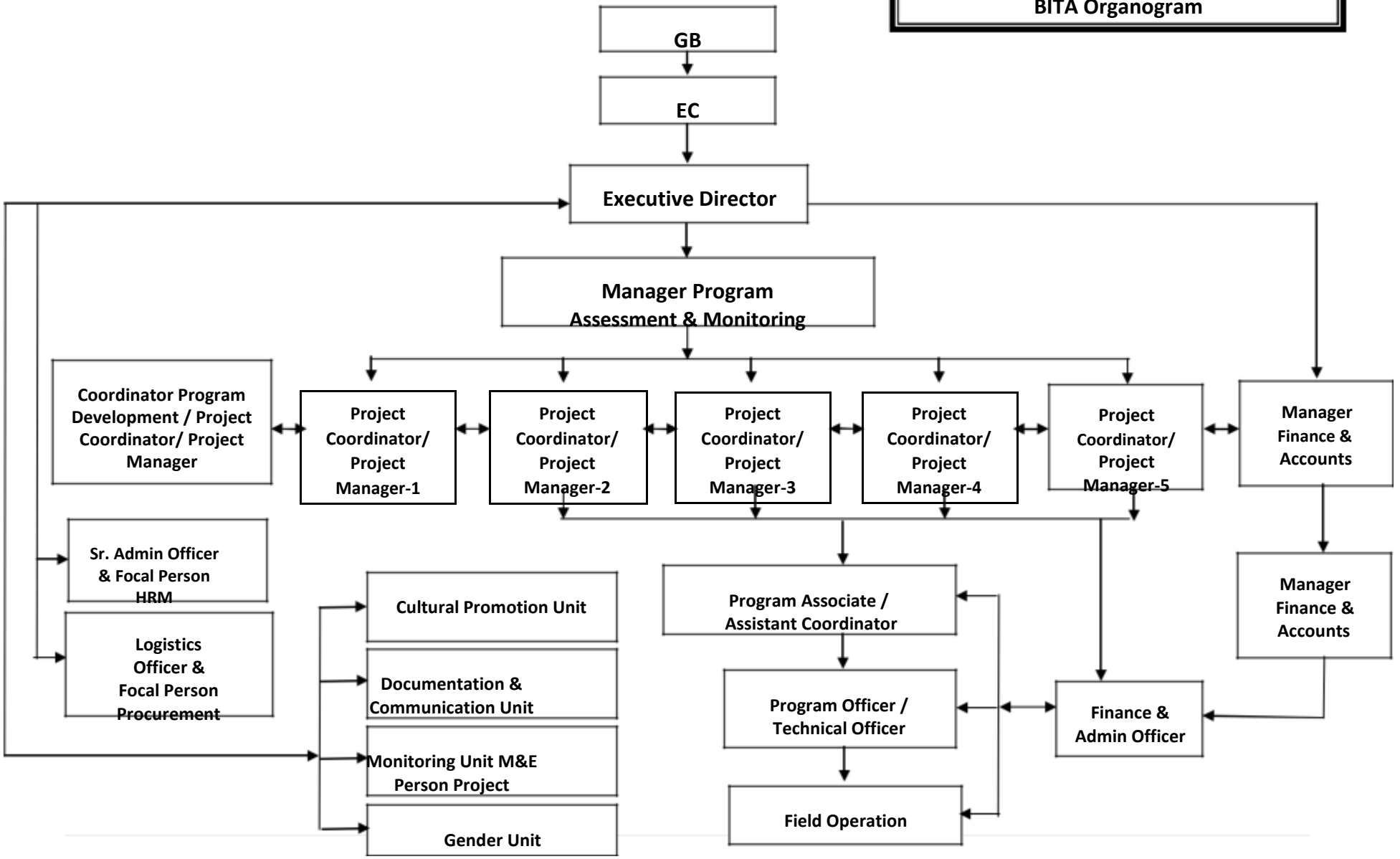
Organization and Coordination

BITA differentiates its organogram according

- Field-based programme
- Collaboration Programme.
- Sponsorship and Entrepreneurship Programme

The structure up to Mid-level looks as follows:

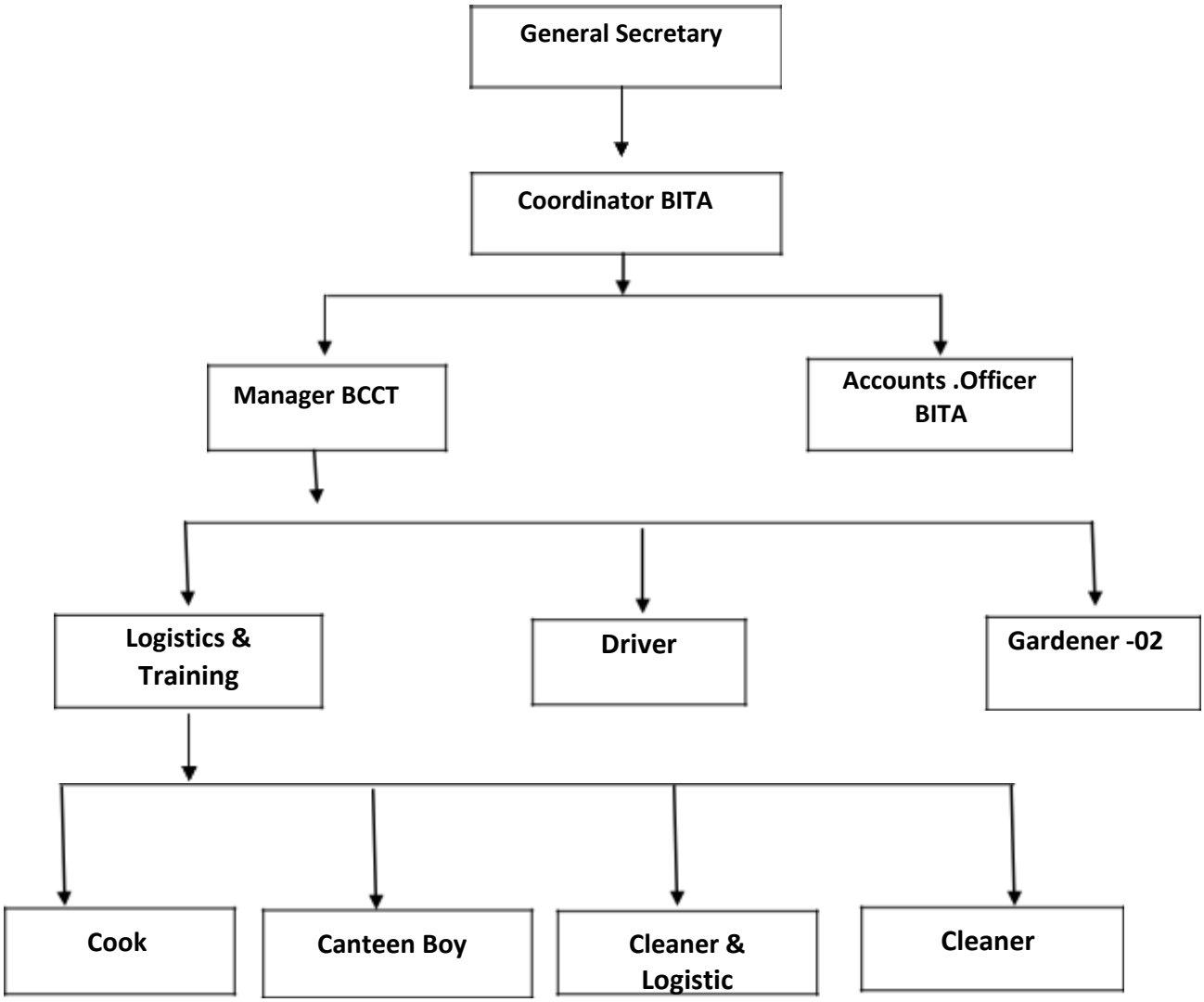
BITA Organogram



BCCT will have its own set-up in terms of

Administration and finance,
Accommodation and facilities
Canteen management and
Training/workshop manager.

Organogram of BCCT (Proposed)



Risks and risk management strategies

Risk Category 1 (Grass root based)

- BITA assumes that the grass root people if encouraged and motivated by will put voluntary efforts for the institutional framework.
- It furthermore expects that people will cooperate in spite of sometimes problematic context.

Strategies

- While selection of working areas and stakeholders local context to be consider where GO, NGO relations, local people's development attitude, local resources are identified.
- Emphasize on the motivational work especially on women vulnerability and gender based violence, youth empowerment and ethnic minorities are considered.

Risk Category 2 (Institution-based)

- BITA assumes that its institutional partners will be cooperative.
- It expects that the partners, particularly the strong culture-based institutions, will sustain despite limited resources and present changing context of communication.
- BITA thinks it would be possible that emerging CBOs, local cultural groups, clubs will not be dependent on material support from BITA.

Strategies

- To formulate ground rules and specified roles & responsibility of the member organizations in the networking and coalition;
- To reflect the identity of every organization uniformly in collaboration activities
- To adopt a provision in BITA to support localization process
- To develop linkage with service provider for ensuring referral service for stakeholders.

Strategic Monitoring and Learning

- AS BITA's achievements are more qualitative, project's midterm and yearly progress review and impact study and case studies to be done professionally.
- People will perceive the degree of rights and social justice experienced and enjoyed and thus mentions their degree of satisfaction.
- BITA will develop its M&E cell to measure qualitative changes following indicators mentioned under each strategy.
- It will establish strong linkage with the project to permanently review the plan to achieve the objectives of the organization.

Capacity Ranking of BITA

Subject	Present Ranking					Justification	Area of Improvement
	1	2	3	4	5		
Community Mobilization				■		• Community mobilization tools are present, • Community Acceptance • Skill Resource	• Proper documentation • Implement exit strategies
Cultural Campaign					■	• Campaign and Process • Experience • Resource Person • Recognition	• Proper Documentation
Community Group Form			■			• Formation Process • Experience • Resource Person	• Proper Documentation • Review mechanism • Sustainable Plan
Human Rights Culture Based Training					■	• Module • Resource Person • Residential Facility • Experience	• Promotional Plan • Proper Documentation • Training Unit • Collaborative Plan with respective Organization
Design and Carry out right based programme				■		• Conceptually Understanding • Capacitate & Skill Manpower • Experience & Results • National & International recognition	• Promotional materials • Process Monitoring Plan • Proper Documentation
Research			■			• Documentation • Field exercise	• Skill team • Area of Scope

Institutional Capacity Building						• Technical Expertise • Experience & Results • Module • Potential Donor • Unique Innovations (Social audit, Social Hub, Communication for Development, ICT Mobile learning centre)	• Recognition from institutional partners about these models. • Proper documentation and writing for promotion
Advocacy						• Technical Expertise • Local Level Experience	• Determine advocacy issues • Effective advocacy plan • Proper Documentation & • Rapport building with media
Child Protection						• Conceptual Understanding • Organization Mainstream • Strong organizational Linkage • Diversify Working Area • Technical staffs • Child safeguard Policy	• Linkage with cultural promotion and Organization • Process Documentation • Align child safeguard policy with other policy
Policy on Gender						• Technical Staff • Written Policy	• Organization's capacity building • Develop Gender Matrix in
Employment based Education –Vocational Education						• Technical Staff • Innovative trade • Conceptual understanding • Trade module • Vocational center guideline	• Incorporate with organizational sustainability plan • Database • Promotional Plan • Process Documentation • Determine area of advocacy
Human Resource Management						• Manual	• Execution Plan • Improvement plan • More practice with the organization • Feedback & response

Fund Raising						• Improve Funding Mechanism	• Need team building • Unit formation • Technical staff increase • ToR Finalize • Need Collective effort
Finance						• Manual • Good team work	• Improve Electronic Documentation • Strengthen team building • Unit formation • Technical staff increase
Sustainability						• Strategic Plan	• Determine area of Sustainability • Need team building • Resource & Capacity
Youth Engagement						• Proper guideline • Innovation for youth • Digital expertise and experience • Online guideline	• Date base • Youth safeguard guideline • Govt Youth Policy review
Communication for Development						• Communication module • Skill resource • Proper methodology	• Technical resource • Database • Unit formation
Education						• Accelerated learning module • Skill teachers • CChild Friendly Space Facilitator	• Urban Education • New funding • Increase linkage with Government.
Risk Management						• Strategic plan	• Increase conceptual understanding • Determine Focal Person • Capacity building