

## “Access for All” Strategic Plan – 2017-2019

1. The completion of the previous strategic plan focused on the extension of the program’s activity, along with recognizing the significant accomplishments that have been achieved over the past few years, brings up the need for a process analysis of the opportunities and challenges the program is facing now, as an infrastructure for the writing of a new strategic plan.

The mentioned diagnostic process reveals that there are some **ongoing challenges**, including: the continuous necessity of fundraising and the financial instability of the program, the issue of preserving and strengthening the relations with the academic institutes, the effort to make the welfare agencies committed to meaningful collaborations, the partial involvement of government offices and the requirement to expand the solutions we create for program participants during the program and after completion. On top of all these, there is the need to prove the program's benefits and effects to variety of stakeholders, at various aspects.

Along with these challenges there are **various opportunities**, including: the enhanced government funding, targeted to meet the objectives of government offices; the establishment of high quality collaborations with new welfare agencies, civil society organizations and the business sector, in order to have a wider and more diverse solutions system, including leveraging significant collaborations with leading municipalities to create community impact, which promote the program's vision and objectives. All while utilizing the program's operative stability and the unique outcomes it achieves year after year.

2. In order to meet the challenges and to utilize the opportunities mentioned, we determine a main objective for the new strategic plan:

Within two years, the “Access for All” (AFA) program will launch and operate an overarching program to establish personal and familial measurable change, applied to selected life aspects of program participants. The program will cooperate with the municipality and governmental authorities, the academic institutes, the business sector and civil society organizations, by nurturing meaningful partnerships and collaborations among all parties involved.

This main objective reflects the priority that the various stakeholders have – to focus on deepening the program's impact, in a way that result in a meaningful reality change in participants' lives. This objective was chosen over the alternative of focusing on quantitative growth in the number of participants at each existing academic institute or adding more academic institutes to the program.

3. This specific objective offers a framework to examine new activity areas as well as principles and criteria the program should meet.

Activity areas should meet **three main criteria** to fit with this objective:

- a. Activity areas should be perceived as essential and central in the lives of both the participants and the instructing-students.
- b. Activity areas should have quantifiable outcomes and impact and should be present as a stable and significant reality change at the participants' and their family lives.
- c. Activity areas should be perceived as vital by the funding and budgeting stakeholders and should ensure long term funding.

4. Various activity areas were examined under these criteria, alongside an analysis of the unique solutions AFA can provide at different aspects, compared to other solutions and agencies already operating and providing similar services.

The examination process included meetings with senior government officials, and with several associates and stakeholders. Additionally, a survey among the former and current program participants was conducted.

After narrowing and prioritizing the list of fields, three main topics that meet all criteria were selected:

**"Learning Family"** – expanding educational coverage to participants' family.

**Healthcare** – enhancing awareness to health disparities and improving accessibility to solutions at this field.

**Technological literacy** – improving participants' skills at a technology-rich environment (i.e., digital devices and Internet).

The development of responses at these three topics will be at the center of the strategic plan and are specified below.

5. **"Learning Family"** - the expansion of the program's educational coverage was chosen due to the understanding that AFA is primarily an educational program, which provides accessibility to learning and to higher education. Therefore, adding more family members to the circle of beneficiaries of various educational opportunities will enable the utilization of the program's benefits and its uniqueness among the participants. The target audience of this field are participants' spouses and children, and parents of younger participants.

The operating principle of this area is shared and ongoing programs offered to participants and their family members, in which we will strengthen values of learning and persistence, by holding family activities both at the university and at the community, in addition to the regular program.

This kind of activities will lead to significant exposure of the entire family to higher education and to variety of educational opportunities. Furthermore, this activity will have a direct influence on participants' children, as it will support their functioning and

accomplishments at school. It is also likely to strengthen participants' parental ability to guide their children appropriately at their studies.

At this area we can recognize diverse associates including the Ministry of Education, the "National Program for Children and Youth At Risk" of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services, the Ministry of Social Equality, various academic institutes, neighborhood schools, and philanthropic foundations focused on children and youth at risk.

- Healthcare** - findings indicate that people from low socioeconomic status are at greater risk to be less healthy and exposed to more health risks. Moreover, they might not exercise their medical rights and suffer from inaccessibility to advanced medical responses. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the awareness of health disparities and to enhance accessibility to health services.

The principles of operation for this area will engage in raising awareness to health risks and healthy lifestyle, in addition to enhancing accessibility to medical services at the fields known to have substantial health disparities (nutrition, smoking, dental health, vaccinations and periodic inspections), and exercising medical rights.

The plan to be devised at this area will provide services to both participates and family members and will take place in the universities as well as in their communities. Services will be offered by government offices, Health Maintenance Organizations, health professions academic institutes and various community organizations providing medical services and support exercising health rights.

Regarding the funding of this area, we will examine collaborations with business companies targeted at promoting public health as part of their corporate social responsibility.

7. **Technological literacy** - AFA aims to provide access to knowledge among disadvantaged sectors. The information revolution and the Internet use expanding require those who wish to learn and develop themselves to acquire and master diverse technological skills. This change is not limited to the field of knowledge and learning, but also applies to the fields of employment, profession obtaining and job applying. All these depend today on the employee's skills level at computer applications and technology platforms mastery. Therefore, enhancing the participants' technology skills, especially at the aspect of learning and employment, turned into so crucial and essential target.

A large segment of the program's participants is characterized by low skills level of using the Internet and other technological applications. This state is an obstacle for both self-learning and employment promotion and requires us, as a program, to implement actions targeted on acquiring such skills as an integral part of the curriculum and also to provide supplementary qualifications to those participants who suffer from substantial technological disparities and have difficulties doing basic activities at rich technology environment (such as running a computer or searching information on the Internet).

Furthermore, improving these skills will enable better parental supporting, while the participants would not be disconnected from the learning in their children's schools, which is based on these skills.

The plan to be devised at this area will include a creation of technological learning environments and various levels of qualifications for the participants. The plan will be designed and put into operation in collaboration with varied organizations which specialize at this field.

8. Alongside these three main areas, two secondary areas will be promoted within the strategic plan:

First - **achievement of therapeutic and rehabilitation objectives**, which will be set for each participant once joining the program.

These therapeutic objectives can be related directly to the participation in the program but could also be related to wider and more prolonging therapeutic objectives. These personal objectives will be set by welfare agents, together with their referred participants. Over time, we will monitor the achievement of the objectives and deepen the professional dialogue with our professional partners in order to expand the program's impact over the participants and to establish the recognition of the importance and necessity of the AFA program.

Second - the area of **exercising rights** at diverse life domains. This issue has arisen following participants' reports of critical gaps between economic, employment, social and healthcare rights they merit by law, and their actual actualization. This area is overlapping with the area of healthcare, and is based in part on the technological skills of participants (e.g., their ability to learn about their rights and exercise them through various means) and receiving help from various organizations.

- Integrating the **instructing-students** at the strategic plan - the instructing-students are also a target population of the program, alongside the participants. Although the current strategic plan prominently focuses on program participants, the instructing-students have an important role in shaping the strategic plan and in its implementation. Alongside continuous improvement in the training and guiding that the students receive throughout the year, there is a significant need to continue the process of impact on students over the years of personal and professional development in their later adult lives.

Therefore, it is especially important to expand opportunities of social engagement available for students after the year in which they are teaching at the program, and thus integrate meaningful social involvement at their professional development.

Accordingly, the program's alumni instructing-students will be integrated into the development and the leading of the different fields mentioned. These activities will take place within the framework of the program's alumni community, which will be expanded to give a comprehensive response to the further development of the students and will serve as an accelerator for various social initiatives.

10. **The Outline to implement the strategic plan** includes several key steps - during the next six months a detailed work plan for the implementation of each field will be written. As part of the plan writing process, impact extent of the activity, funding options, compatibility and relevance of each activity to the participants, collaborations with various organizations, development time required for new activities, development costs and running costs will be explored.

At the end of this phase selected activities will be developed and preparation for their operation will be done while making the organizational adjustments required.

Starting in the academic year of 2017/18 we will launch the operation of the various activities with gradual implementation into the program.

11. The planned implementation will keep the following principles:

- All solutions and areas implementation will be holistic. That is, it will not be a substitute for existing curriculum, but will complement it and enrich it with added values. Subsequently, all solutions developed will use the uniqueness of AFA and its relative advantages in relation to target audiences and collaboration with other organizations.
- The application will be gradual, while preserving the quality of the existing program and depending on the stability of the program in terms of resources availability and geographic reach.

- Finally, in order to meet the objectives of the strategic plan, the efforts of the organization will be focused on development and implementation of the activities by recruiting support from all partners, employees and the Advisory Board.

12. A key part of the plan implementation is verifying its positive results and impact on the participants. Therefore, the **program evaluation process** will continue to measure and establish the benefits and impacts following participation in the program, as well as to establish the program's logical model. The research and evaluation process will examine various aspects of the application and implementation of the strategic plan and will continue to be a helpful tool for decision making by the program management and the Advisory Board.

Proof of the program's long-term effects on participants, together with findings that support the fulfillment of funding bodies' objectives, will support a future examination of quantitative and qualitative expansion of the program.

13. Fulfilling all elements of the strategic plan, while keeping the operating principles set forth in this document, will allow AFA to continue to be Israel's leading organization for disadvantaged adult populations. The implementation of the plan will promote funding and support from government agencies, philanthropic foundations, and business companies, in the activities and goals of the program and will greatly expand its cooperation with various organizations involved in the achievement of the program's vision.



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