

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA

STRATEGIC PLAN

2016 - 2019

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



OUR 2016-2019 STRATEGIC PLAN

WE are a membership-based global human rights movement founded on the idea that every person can make a difference standing up for the rights of others wherever they may be. For decades, we have been seen worldwide as the premier grassroots organization demanding human rights for every person and tackling the most pressing challenges to human rights.

Amnesty International believes that every individual has the power and responsibility to take action and defend the inalienable and indivisible human rights of all people.

This plan, which was developed in consultation with Amnesty International USA members and supporters, is written with a deep understanding of three core realities:

- These are challenging times for human rights;
- We are also in a time of unique opportunity to engage millions more people in protecting and promoting human rights; and
- The U.S. plays a critical role in shaping the global culture on human rights.

Our decisions in setting Amnesty International USA's direction for 2016 to 2019 must be grounded in the realities we face and in the actions we can take to change human rights for the better.

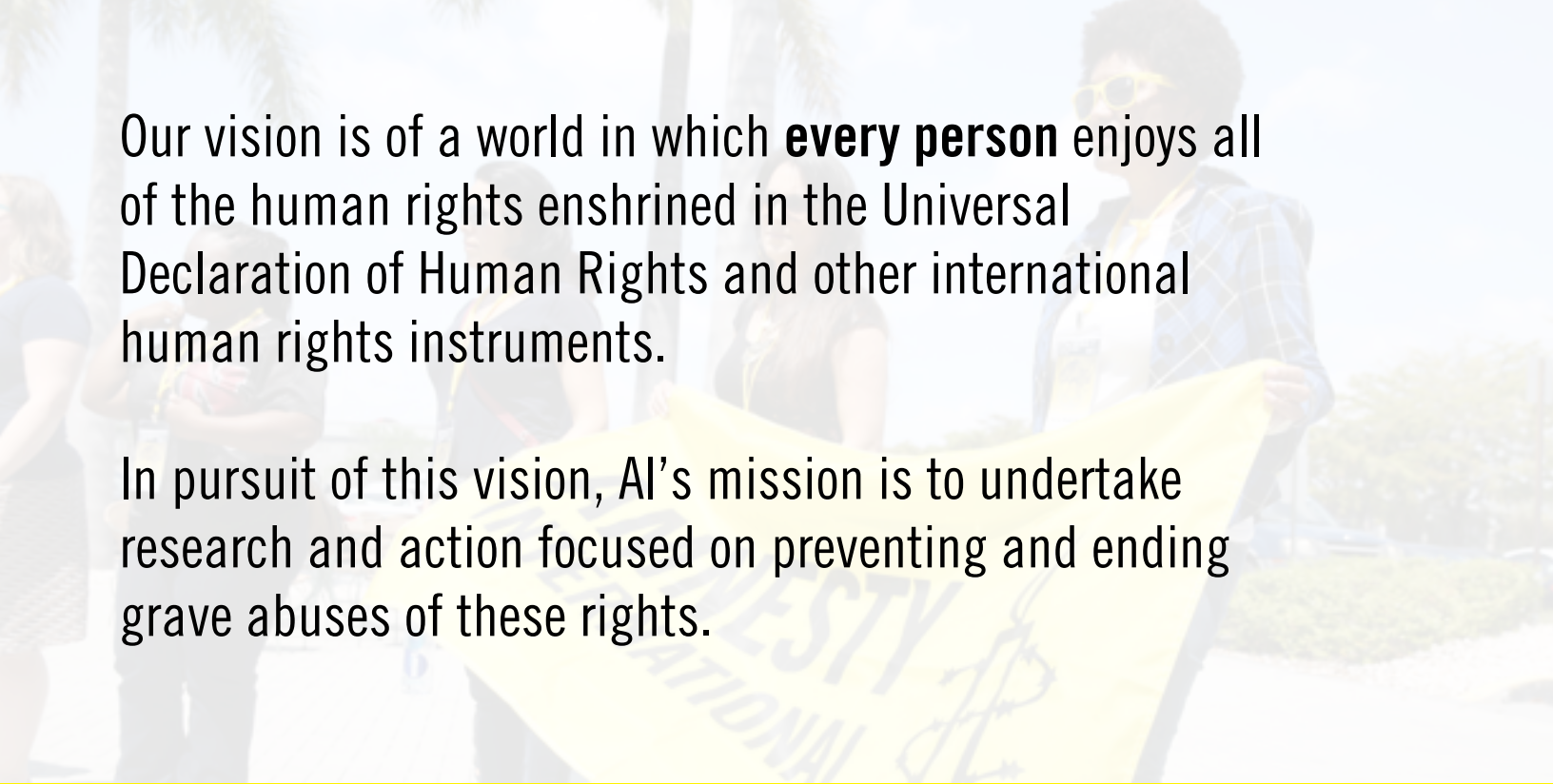
We have long played a key role in advancing Amnesty International's global human rights agenda. The influence of the U.S. government and the U.S. media on countries worldwide places us in a strategic position to take actions where impact may be felt well beyond our national borders.

At the same time, we must pay special attention to the human rights needs and opportunities that are present within the United States. It is vital to our standing as a human rights leader and to our relevance as a thriving social change organization that we pursue an action agenda that resonates with audiences in our own country and shows our commitment to being truly global in AIUSA's reach and focus.

We have an opportunity – an imperative – to harness our capacities and assets not only to fight human rights abuses, but also to forge a national and global culture that demands the protection and promotion of human rights. This will not be achieved quickly but we are committed to this vision. This plan sets us on the path toward this culture and positions us for impact and success along the journey.



OUR VISION & MISSION



Our vision is of a world in which **every person** enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.

In pursuit of this vision, AI's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of these rights.

WHO WE ARE

AIUSA fights human rights abuses wherever they occur, mobilizing people, researching abuses, and aligning with affected communities to create a world where human rights are understood, respected and protected.

We as Amnesty International USA are an integral participant in a global movement that mobilizes more than seven million members and activists around the world. We work with more than one million members and supporters in this country to take action toward local, state, and national levels of governments and at international fora to promote our worldwide human rights agenda.

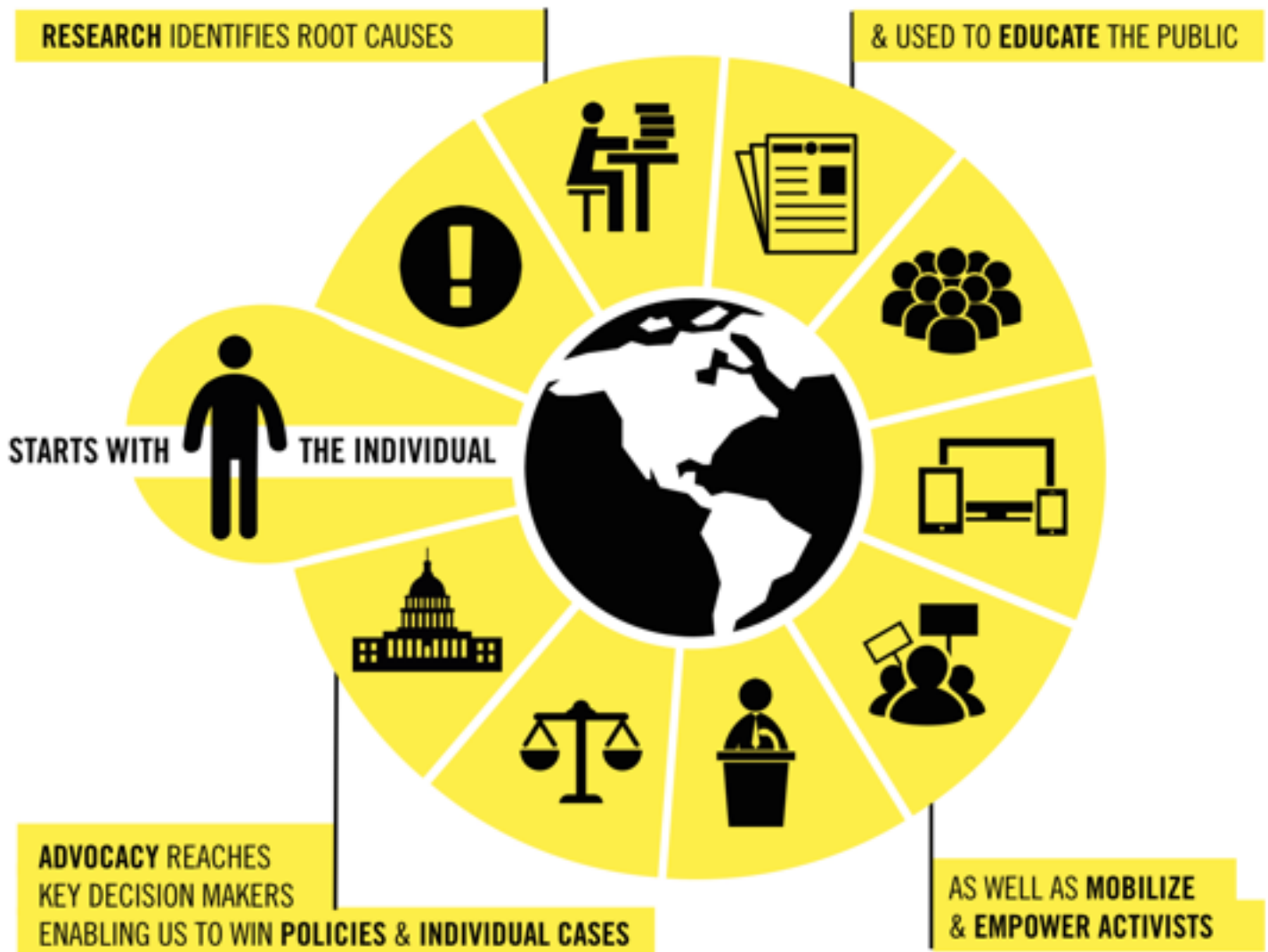
Amnesty has a particular focus on individuals – both as the targets of human rights abuses and as the activists for change. We don't just list statistics or relate data; we work to resolve individual cases and we share personal stories to show the impact of human rights, inspire action and make change. For us human rights are very personal and very real.

Our niche is reflected both in what we do and how we do it. As a grassroots organization, we are committed to democratic principles of governance and decision-making.

HOW WE MAKE CHANGE

AIUSA engages diverse people and communities in strategic campaigning, advocacy, organizing, and public education designed to influence decision-makers to take actions that promote and protect human rights.

We begin with a focus on the individual – both the case that illustrates a larger pattern of abuse as well as the individual member who takes action for human rights. Our researchers identify the root causes and consequences of the human rights violations. This research is used to educate the public and key decision-makers and to engage grassroots supporters. The mobilization of Amnesty activists, along with direct advocacy and public education work, enables us to win changes in laws, policies, culture, and on the individual cases themselves.



OUR VALUES

ACTIVISM AND IMPACT

We believe in the power of people and the inspiration of action.

We are results-oriented; we focus our efforts on effectiveness and impact. We employ a people-centered approach to human rights promotion and protection. We elevate individual stories and cases to focus on systemic human rights violations, and we engage individuals to take action against those violations. This approach lifts up the voices and engagement of our membership, our partners, and those in affected communities.

RESPECT AND SOLIDARITY

We value diversity in our work and our movement. We recognize and care for the rights and dignity of others.

We seek to operate within a framework of understanding and combating privilege and oppression to achieve rights and dignity for all people. We work in collaboration with those who suffer human rights violations and those who seek the fulfillment of the Universal Declarations of Human Rights, including One Amnesty. We practice a culture of respect and civility toward one another.

ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY

We take responsibility for our actions and proactively demonstrate that we understand that we work with and on behalf of others. We perform consistently to explicit standards and seek to achieve and inspire excellence.

We strive to live up to our commitments, to be fair and transparent in our work, to act consistently with our principles and to fulfill our obligations as a legal entity and as part of the global human rights movement. We measure and assess ourselves against our values. We use our resources cost-effectively to achieve the biggest impact possible.

WE WILL WORK TO



SECURE EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL

All of our campaigns and programs apply an intersectional lens to address issues of discrimination and inequality in the protection of human rights. This overarching goal will be advanced through all three of our campaigns (noted below) and our core programs.



PROTECT PEOPLE IN CONFLICT AND CRISIS

We have long-standing experience in crisis response and protecting the rights of refugees and others fleeing violence. We will campaign to secure the rights of refugees and migrants (Global Campaign), around the world and within the United States.



ENSURE EVERYONE KNOWS & CAN CLAIM THEIR RIGHTS

We will continue to advocate for prisoners of conscience and other individuals at risk, and we will fight the shrinking space for activism and human rights defenders around the world. We will work to free prisoners of conscience and to stop the surveillance and harassment of defenders by government agencies.



HOLD HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSERS ACCOUNTABLE

We will seek to hold law enforcement agencies and other government officials accountable for protecting the right to life and security of person. We will demand criminal justice reforms to stop the disparate treatment of communities of color by the judicial system and by law enforcement. We will demand accountability for the human rights crisis of gun violence

OUR CORE PROGRAMS



We will continue specific core work where we have deep expertise, long-standing commitments and capacity

We will also continue to play our vital role within the global Amnesty movement in engaging the U.S. government to make the protection and promotion of human rights a critical element of both its foreign and domestic policy.

Our staff and member leaders collaborate as appropriate to carry out this work. For additional areas of work where staff capacity is not currently available, such as LGBTQI rights and Business and Human Rights, member leaders play a particularly pivotal role in advancing key projects.

As part of our commitment to having a significant human rights impact, we will develop tools to evaluate our work across all of our goals, and staff and membership will discuss those evaluations and learn from them together.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS



At the end of 2019, we will be a stronger more influential, and more diverse organization with greater capacity to achieve human rights impact. We will achieve this by focusing on these key areas:

BUILD OUR CAPACITY FOR ADVOCACY IMPACT

Expand our constituent activist base: We will develop and grow a network of member advocates in Congressional districts across the country who engage with their elected officials.

Increase AI's influence: We will couple the constituent power of our members with the expertise of our advocacy, program and communications staff to create a potent capacity to influence U.S. policy. We will explore innovative ways to further build and flex our advocacy muscle.

Sharpen our tools for member advocacy: We will build the capacity of our members by providing them with the information, tools and training they need to effectively lobby for human rights.

Scale up our capacity for state-level advocacy: We will work across departments and member structures and groups to build our ability to mobilize at the state level on both federal and state legislative initiatives.

INCREASE AWARENESS/UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND VISIBILITY OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

To achieve the long-term culture change we seek and to help win human rights victories, our communications strategy will deepen public understanding of human rights issues and Amnesty's work through reframing the narrative on key issues, reaching key audiences (especially youth and people of color), engaging traditional and new media, employing evocative content/material, and engaging influencers including artists, key media and pundits, and others.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS



GROW, DEVELOP AND DEEPEN AIUSA'S MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

We will focus on activist and member engagement, recruitment and retention as key indicators of “growth” in our base. We will focus especially on member structures and leaders (including local groups) as a strategy to engage and inspire our grassroots base. We will work to keep volunteer leaders and groups engaged, trained and active, moving up a ladder of activism. This will include special outreach to youth activists before they leave school to maintain their connection with the organization. Staff will collaborate with volunteer leaders to develop and promote member training and leadership opportunities.

We envision investing in and testing different approaches, including a “grassroots project” that will focus on improving AIUSA's support of community-level activism and on enhancing the role and capacity of AIUSA activists. This project will explore the role of activists, members, volunteer leaders and partners in our efforts to mobilize and organize broadly to achieve human rights impact. With Board approval, this project will launch in the spring of 2016 with a plan for growth developed by the end of the year.

INCREASE RESOURCES FOR AIUSA AND THE GLOBAL AI MOVEMENT

AIUSA will seek to raise our net income from \$21 million in 2016 to \$30 million in 2019, by concentrating our fundraising efforts where we will have the highest long-term impact. We will seek to create a culture of philanthropy in AIUSA that encourages all staff, Board members and volunteer leaders to support the organization's efforts to grow membership and resources to support the work.

PARTNER COLLABORATIVELY WITH AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GLOBALLY

We will continue to play a key role in advancing AI's global agenda. We will participate fully in discussions across the movement, helping to shape a direction that ensures Amnesty International's continuing effectiveness and relevance in protecting and promoting human rights. We will seek out strategic opportunities to collaborate with Amnesty sections in other countries and with our colleagues at the International Secretariat to advance programmatic and organizational objectives.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ENHANCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) WITHIN AIUSA

We will continue to enhance the diversity of our membership, staff and leadership to reflect the richly diverse population of the United States. We believe that this commitment is integral to remaining a relevant and impactful human rights organization.

We will invest in developing:

- A membership and staff reflective of a wide diversity of communities, including, but not limited to: diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation/identity, disability, socioeconomic class, culture, religious beliefs, age and educational status
- Participation of diverse communities in AIUSA at all levels, including the AIUSA staff, Board and member leadership
- An action agenda that addresses issues of critical concern to diverse communities within the context of AI's mission
- Outreach strategies to reach communities underrepresented in AIUSA with the goal of understanding which human rights issues are most important and relevant to these communities, as well as what place, if any, they see AIUSA playing in supporting these issues

ADVANCE BEST PRACTICES OF ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

We are committed to the highest standards of accountability, transparency and integrity. We will achieve measurable advances in implementing Amnesty International's global Core Standards for governance and management. We will enhance the Board's effectiveness and efficiency through a continued focus on strategic direction and governance.

FOSTER INNOVATION AND EVALUATION

Our drive for excellence will be fostered by a spirit of objective evaluation, including data and innovation. From advocacy to governance to the management of our physical facilities, we will seek ways of working that make us stronger at what we do.

We will examine our impact and set benchmarks to evaluate its effectiveness. We will courageously evaluate the external perceptions of AIUSA and its human rights impact and measure success in achieving specific goals. We will gather, analyze and report data relevant to our goals and benchmarks in order to improve our human rights impact. We want to create a safe space for innovation that can enable creative and honest ideas to take us into the future.

As described earlier, we will explore ways to utilize our conferences for greater impact, such as possibly convening AIUSA's Annual General Meeting in Washington, DC more often to better advance our advocacy and human rights impact. We also would like to explore using state meetings rather than regional conferences as the more locally accessible forum for member training. The governance aspects associated with regional conferences could be moved online, a course of action already undertaken by some AI sections.

EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT INFORM AIUSA'S STRATEGIC PLAN

Around the world, we are witnessing unprecedented attacks on human rights, while also seeing historic new opportunities for organizing and defending human rights. Within the context of world events, Amnesty International will lead global campaigns designed to mobilize activists on every continent to bring about change. This section identifies where and why AIUSA seeks to impact human rights concerns from 2016 to 2019.

- **UNPRECEDENTED NUMBERS OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CONFLICT AND CRISIS:**

Conflicts, extreme levels of violence, and lack of resources (inequality/poverty) have forced more than 60 million people to leave their homes and seek safety in other parts of their own and other countries. There are more people on the move now than at any time since the Second World War. Every day, there are large numbers of people fleeing their homes in Syria, Afghanistan, Burma, Central African Republic, Guatemala and El Salvador, for example. States receiving refugee and migrant populations have failed to respond consistent with their human rights obligations, resulting in thousands of preventable deaths and tens of thousands in unnecessary and punitive detention. States are too often responding to refugee and migrant movements with xenophobia and criminalization, rather than assistance to people in need of protection. Alongside this, local and national political figures are using xenophobic and nationalist rhetoric to justify the mistreatment of people on the move.

- **SHRINKING SPACE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND INDIVIDUALS AT RISK:**

The calls for greater freedom and human rights protections in many countries around the world (eg Egypt, Venezuela, Malaysia, and the United States) have given way to growing insecurity for human rights defenders and civil society. In many parts of the world, as people claim and defend their rights, attacks on peaceful protesters, prisoners of conscience, dissidents, journalists and writers, and civil society organizations – organizing online and offline – are growing. While government surveillance of those suspected of terrorism or other crimes can be appropriate, the boundaries of government actions have blurred as agencies have collaborated with corporations to gather vast quantities of data from and about a vast range of people, including those of different political views, religious beliefs, or level of social activism.

- **LACK OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY:**

Long an area of focus for Amnesty International, police accountability has become a high profile issue in the United States following the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and a growing focus on police use of lethal force. It is estimated that over a thousand people are killed each year by the police in the United States, and African Americans are disproportionately impacted. All 50 states and Washington, DC, fail to comply with international human rights standards on police use of lethal force. In addition, the mass incarceration of communities of color, particularly African Americans and Latinos, and the increased targeting of undocumented immigrants for detention, has led to increasing demands for reform of discriminatory police practices directed at people of color. With public consciousness around the issue beginning to increase, we have an opportunity and obligation to further expand public awareness and to seize the moment to achieve legislative and policy reforms at both the state and federal levels of U.S. government.

- **PROLIFERATION OF SMALL ARMS FUELING A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC OF GUN VIOLENCE:**

Easy access to firearms has created human rights crises across the globe affecting the right to life and security of the person. In Brazil, for example, the number of homicides by firearm (over 56,000) was greater than the number of conflict deaths worldwide for every year between 2004-2009. In the United States, more than 11,000 people are killed each year and African Americans are disproportionately impacted by this violence (African Americans account for 55% of gun homicide victims yet represent only 13.6% of the population).] The numbingly regular occurrence of gun violence across the Americas has reached a tipping point where growing numbers of people – from those in affected communities to those living in the White House – are demanding actions that will stem this violence.

- **RIISING INEQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION:**

A gulf of inequality continues to hamper the ability of many of the world's population to enjoy their rights. In many cases, women have less economic and political power than men, even in countries where rights are well protected, and gender-based violence creates further barriers to equality and the full enjoyment of human rights. For many who face multiple types of discrimination – for example, a combination of prejudice based on race, ethnicity, religion, Indigenous status, migrant status, gender or sexual orientation – the impact can be particularly severe. Amnesty International must continue its fight for equal rights for all.

This strategic plan summarizes how AIUSA will conduct its work over the next four years. It describes AIUSA's vision, mission, theory of change and core values that are the framework for AIUSA's actions.

It also sets out the campaigning focus, additional areas of work, and organizational development goals for the next four years. This is not an implementation plan. The implementation plan, which will be developed after the strategic plan is approved, will describe specific benchmarks, desired outcomes, and how resources will be allocated and applied over the next four years. AIUSA's strategic plan will not remain static. The progress and plans will be reviewed over the course of the implementation in order to consider new information and developments internal and external to the organization that may affect the direction and desired outcomes.



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