



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS VISTHAR 2024

FACILITATED BY
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Executive Summary

This report details the progress of the Organizational Development (OD) Process facilitated for Visthar, covering three significant meetings held on May 16, May 28, and June 11, 2024. These meetings focused on reassessing the organization's vision, mission, and strategy, as well as setting the groundwork for a sustainable future through leadership transition and alignment of programs with global development goals.

Participants engaged in meaningful discussions about the challenges faced by Visthar in a rapidly evolving socio-political environment and laid out actionable steps to ensure long-term impact, financial sustainability, and community engagement. This report summarizes the discussions, key decisions, action points, and recommendations for the Board of Trustees (BoT) to consider.

Detailed Report

1. Introduction

Visthar, a social and educational trust based in Bangalore, has undertaken an Organizational Development (OD) process aimed at refining its mission, programs, and governance structures. Over the last 35 years, Visthar has worked to address issues of social exclusion, gender discrimination, and ecological crises through grassroots advocacy, transformative education, and community-based initiatives.

The purpose of this process is to ensure that Visthar remains relevant and impactful, especially in the context of its work with marginalized communities and aligns its goals with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. Leadership transition planning and strategic realignment were also a major focus of the discussions, given the upcoming retirement of the Executive Director in 2025.

2. Workshop Participants

The workshops and meetings involved key stakeholders of Visthar, including the founders, trustees, and senior leaders. The list of participants is as follows:

- David Selvaraj – Founder and Executive Trustee
- Mercy Kappen – Executive Director & Member, BoT
- M. Francis – Director – Finance & Admin. T
- Nazar P.S. – Associate Director
- Augustin K. – Accounts Manager
- Asha Shirady – Asst. Director
- Peter Yorke – Facilitator and Consultant

3. Meeting Summaries and Deliberations

3.1 : Organizational Transformation and Current State Review

Meeting on May 16, 2024

Agenda:

1. Introduction and Opening Remarks
2. Review of Current Organizational Status
3. Vision for the Future
4. Organizational Structure Review
5. Key Priorities and Action Items.

Key Discussions:

- Introduction: Peter Yorke, the facilitator, opened the session, emphasizing the need to record the outcomes and discussions for an ongoing, detailed assessment. He reiterated Visthar's 35-year history and its relevance today in the context of its evolving role.
- Review of Current Status: David Selvaraj and Mercy Kappen presented an overview of Visthar's activities, including its advocacy for marginalized communities, gender equity programs, and sustainability initiatives. The need to address capacity constraints was discussed, with a special emphasis on decentralization.
- Vision for the Future: The discussion centred around refining Visthar's vision statement to emphasize peace, justice, and community sustainability. Participants noted the importance of having short-term, actionable goals considering the rapidly changing environment.

Action Points:

1. Develop a business plan for the Feminist Resource Centre and Child & Youth Resource Centre.
2. Address staffing challenges by appointing full-time personnel to manage key programs.
3. Conduct strategic planning sessions focused on immediate milestones and 18-month goals.

3.2 Vision and Mission Alignment

Meeting on May 28, 2024:

Agenda:

1. Refining Vision and Mission Statements
2. Program Structure and Strategic Planning
3. Internal and External Collaborations.

Key Discussions:

- **Vision and Mission Refinement:** Building on the foundation set in the previous meeting, participants revisited Visthar's mission statement to ensure it accurately reflects its work on social exclusion, gender discrimination, and ecological crises. The updated mission emphasised using transformative education as the primary tool for achieving these goals.
- **Program Structure:** Visthar's programs were restructured around three main pillars:
- **Social Exclusion and Gender Discrimination:** Community-based programs focused on marginalised communities, especially Dalits, Adivasis, and women.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Efforts to address ecological crises through sustainable practices and education.
- **Transformative Education:** Capacity Building and educational initiatives
- **Strategic Planning:** The importance of aligning programs with the organisation's vision was discussed, with a particular focus on setting measurable goals. Each program will have clear milestones to track progress.

Action Points:

1. Finalize and present the revised Vision and Mission to the Board of Trustees for approval.
2. Draft a plan to integrate measurable goals into each program, ensuring alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. Enhance collaborations with civil society and corporate entities.

3.3 Leadership Transition and Final Strategy Framework

Meeting on June 11, 2024:

Agenda:

1. Finalizing the Leadership Transition Strategy (LTS)
2. Approval of Strategy-Program-Project Framework
3. Next Steps for Program Implementation.

Key Discussions:

- Leadership Transition Strategy (LTS): A comprehensive Leadership Transition Strategy was presented, outlining the process to identify and onboard a new Executive Director by 2025. This process includes the establishment of a search committee to vet candidates and an interim period of mentoring by the outgoing director.

Strategic Framework:

The group approved the final strategic framework linking strategy, programs, and projects with specific indicators of impact. This will help track the success of programs such as the Feminist Resource Centre, Bandhavi, and CREA, KKS, and Sustainability Initiatives, all aligned with specific SDGs



Revised Vision, Mission and Strategy

Vision

Democratic, just and sustainable communities with gender and social equity.

Mission

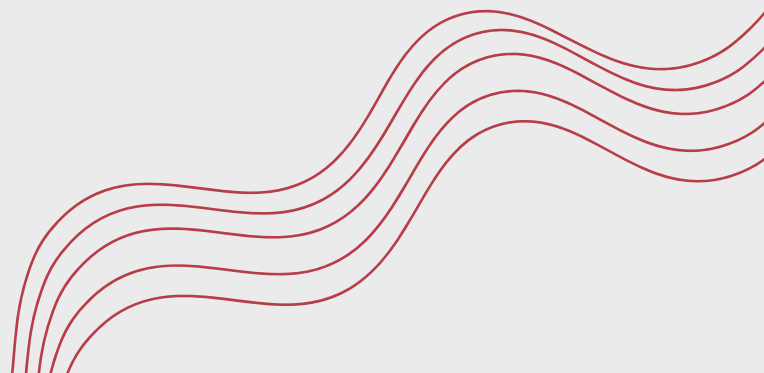
Empower communities and institutions to challenge gender inequality, social exclusion, and ecological crisis, through transformative education and advocacy.

Strategies

- We uphold the values of the Constitution of India, which we believe reflects values that are universal. We echo Dr. BR Ambedkar's emphasis on liberty, fraternity and equality in our programs, policies, and governance.
- As a civil society organization, we work independently and collaboratively with individuals and institutions (including governments and corporates) who share our values.
- We support Social Movements, CBOs, FBOs, and Educational Institutions.

Action Points:

1. Implement the LTS: The Board of Trustees will oversee the formation of the search and selection committees to ensure a smooth transition by the end of 2025.
2. Finalize program milestones and assign Specific Points of Contact (SPOCs) to ensure accountability for each key program.
3. Ensure programs continue to align with SDG indicators, with regular reviews and adjustments as needed.



4.Strategic Framework and Next Steps

4.1 Program and Project Alignment

Strategy	Programme	Projects	Indicators of Impact
Enabling and empowering children and youth from marginalized communities	Child and Youth Resource Centre (CYRC).	1. Bandhavi 2. CREA, KKS, SSS – K&B, VRS 3.Coaching – NIOS Centre	1. Whether it meets the three P's of UNCRC 2. SDG 01, 04, & 05
Fostering sustainability Practices	Sustainability models and frameworks.	1. Agro-ecological practices. 2. Water conservation. 3. Recycling and upcycling. 4. Bhoomi Habba	1. SDG 11, 13, 15,
Promote gender equality and women's empowerment.	Feminist Resource Centre.	1. Capacity building 2. Research & documentation 3. Campaigns	1. SDG 05
Promoting counter-cultural communities	Centre for Counter cultural practices.	1. Study Circle 2. Festivals/ celebration 3. Special Interest Groups 4. Publications	1. SDG 16

The OD process outlined a clear structure linking strategy to programs and projects, ensuring that each initiative contributes to measurable outcomes.

Key projects include:

- Bandhavi (Residential Empowerment Program for Girls at Risk)
- Child and Youth Resource Centre
- Feminist Resource Centre
- Sustainability Initiatives

Each program will align with specific SDG goals, such as SDG 5 for gender equality and SDG 13 for climate action.

4.2 Leadership Transition

A critical outcome of the OD process was the creation of a Leadership Transition Strategy (LTS), which includes the following steps:

1. Search Committee Formation: A search committee will identify candidates for the role of Executive Director.
2. Mentoring and Transition: The outgoing Executive Director will mentor the selected candidate over a 12-month period.
3. Board of Trustees Approval: The BoT will approve the leadership transition framework and monitor the process.

4.3 Capacity Building and Financial Sustainability

The OD process also emphasised the need for capacity building and financial sustainability through:

- Internal Training Programs: Investing in training staff to improve program execution and management.
- External Collaborations: Expanding partnerships with corporate entities for volunteer programs and CSR initiatives.

5. Conclusion

The Organizational Development process at Visthar has laid the groundwork for ensuring the organization's long-term sustainability and continued relevance in addressing key social, gender, and environmental issues. With a clear strategy, a roadmap for leadership transition, and well-defined program goals aligned with the SDGs, Visthar is well-positioned for future growth and impact.