



African Canadian Resource Network

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017 – 2021

The Preamble

African Canadian Resource Network (ACRN) is a Saskatchewan based collaboration of community organizations and individuals of African descent. ACRN was founded in 2014 as follow-up to two years of community collaboration coupled with research and consultation on how to establish an enduring organization. While 2015 community conference identified critical areas of needs, 2016 conference focussed on historical and persisting barriers to integration for Canadians of African descent in Saskatchewan province. This conference noted that although there were recorded settlers in late 1890s, integration has been limited with people moving to other provinces, such as Alberta. Our strategies for establishing an enduring organization are directly related to establishing an integrated and enduring community that is equitably engaged and contributing to all aspects of society in this province. We are committed to achieving this goal by advancing Saskatchewan's positive values, policies and initiatives that build on the provincial motto – *From many peoples strength*, and by addressing historical and persisting barriers and challenges to full participation and integration.

Our Strategic Plan

Our strategic plan assists the African Canadian Resource Network in focusing its efforts to fulfil our mission and achieve our vision.

Our strategic plan encourages and promotes a pro-active, results-oriented approach, helps to balance short-term pressures with long-term thinking and permits flexibility to adapt to change.

Our strategic plan enhances the African Canadian Resource Network's capacity to generate new ideas and options, encourages a team approach to strategic decisions and provides a systematic approach to decision-making, accountability and evaluation of progress.

Environmental Scan

Our Future Vision

Our vision reflects the preferred future state for the African Canadian Resource Network. The vision inspires people to work collectively towards achieving that future and creating outcomes that members and others can support.

We imagine a province where Canadians of African Canadian descent have equitable opportunity to be participating and contributing members of society. The African Canadian Resource Network is recognized as a lead capacity development organization and a united voice for member communities and individuals.

Our Mission

The Mission Statement defines the organization's purpose and primary objective. The Mission informs the key measures of the organization's long-term objectives and the goals it works towards.

The mission of the African Canadian Resource Network is to serve as an umbrella organization and a collaboration that addresses the unique challenges and needs of Canadians of African descent, specifically those related to immigration, integration and full participation in Saskatchewan.

What we do:

We provide information and referrals, host events and undertake research to promote programs and policies that support capacity development, full participation and integration.

Our Values (Guiding Principles)

The African Canadian Resource Network is committed to the following fundamental guiding principles. The principles or values guide our organization's behaviours, decision-making processes, actions and the programs and services we provide.

- **Inclusivity**

We believe in one human race and value diversity; we recognize and reject racism and all forms of discrimination.

- **Unity**

We promote unity through collaboration within the African Canadian communities and between the African descent communities and the broader society.

- **Family-centered**

We acknowledge the importance of family in building individuals and communities.

- **Professionalism**

We are transparent, accountable and committed to establishing a positive legacy.

Strategic Priorities

Five interrelated, mutually supportive strategic priorities are at the heart of the strategic plan for the African Canadian Resource Network.

These five Strategic Priorities are as follows:

1. Building a strong organization
2. Branding and public awareness of the Network
3. Mobilizing and developing capacity of individuals and member organizations
4. Serving as a voice for the African Canadian community
5. Establish a functional physical presence in Saskatchewan

Strategic Priority 1: Building a strong organization

Goals: To further develop our financial and human resources in order to have the capacity to hire staff and to develop a centralized office and gathering space.

To ensure organizational excellence through the continued development of governance structure that will contribute to increased long-term stability and sustainability of the African Canadian Resource Network.

Strategies to achieve these goals:

- 1.1 .Develop a policy framework, governance and operational policies as required.
- 1.2 Identify and fully implement a committee structure for the Board and the organization.
- 1.3 Develop and implement a plan to recruit and engage Board members and program volunteers based on their knowledge, skills and abilities.
- 1.4 Provide training for board members related to governance and program and policy implementation.
- 1.4 Develop a budget that reflects the short and long term needs for the organization.
- 1.5 Develop a job description and hiring plan for staff needed to provide support and organization for the organization.
- 1.6 Develop a plan for grant submissions to support the staffing and operational needs of the organization.
- 1.7 Identify space requirements and budget for offices and other operations to support capacity development and to create a sense of physical presence, stability and integration.
- 1.8 Identify potential corporate sponsors and appropriate materials for soliciting sponsorship support for programs, services and events.
- 1.9 Define measurements for monitoring programs and activities to ensure organizational effectiveness.
- 1.10 Implement an ongoing strategic and operational planning process for the African Canadian Resource Network.

Strategic Priority 2: Branding and public awareness of the Network

Goal: To increase, enhance and maintain a positive public profile and awareness of the African Canadian Resource Network and the active engagement of our members in the activities of the organization.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- 2.1 Develop an internal communications plan for the membership with key messages and information on the Network and its purpose and programs.
- 2.2 Establish and maintain contact with key media resources throughout the province.
- 2.3 Develop a public (external) communications plan with key messages regarding the African Canadian Resource Network.
- 2.4 Develop a strategy and implementation plan for increased awareness through social media.
- 2.5 Develop a plan and process to celebrate and promote successes of the African Canadian Resource Network and African Canadians actively involved in their community.

Strategic Priority 3: Mobilizing and developing capacity of member organizations

Goals: To increase the organizational capacity of member organizations.

To enhance the active, energetic participation by member organizations and their members in the programs and activities offered by the African Canadian Resource Network.

Strategies to achieve these goals:

- 3.1 Develop a contact list for all current and potential member organizations across the province.
- 3.2 Develop and implement a process for the identification of needed skill development within the African Canadian Resource Network and the member organizations.
- 3.3 Develop a plan for training and development of member organizations.
- 3.4 Create and distribute a master list of special events and activities of interest to the member organizations.
- 3.5 Encourage regular participation in cultural events such as Mosaic, Folkfest and cultural days throughout the province.

Strategic Priority 4: Serving as a voice for the African Canadian Community

Goal: To develop materials and information that can be presented to decision makers at all levels that addresses the needs for government policy that will assist immigrants to more fully integrate into mainstream Canadian / Saskatchewan society.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- 4.1 Develop a plan for researching the needs of African Canadians specifically as those needs relate to the mandate of the Network.
- 4.2 Develop a position paper which outlines the unique needs of African Canadian immigrants in Saskatchewan.
- 4.3 Research the historical records of Africans in Saskatchewan for possible use in school curriculum.
- 4.4 Develop a plan to meet with policy makers and decision makers at all levels of government annually.

Strategic Priority 5: Establish a functional physical presence in Saskatchewan Creating a cultural facility to serve the African Canadian community

Goal: To take initiatives towards developing a physical presence that can serve as administrative space as well as serve as community resource centre.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

- 5.1 Develop a concept plan that would outline community needs and uses.
- 5.2 Develop a plan that includes space requirements, amenities, operations and potential costs.
- 5.3 Identify possible locations and operating costs.
- 5.4 Undertake concrete steps to establish acquire physical spaces to meet the needs of member communities.

Desired Outcomes

This organization is established to build community and to make connections. We have set firm goals and identify our desired results -- they include:

1. Evidence of established connections and partnerships for organizations and individuals (referrals, resources, social and economic capacity development, empowerment – reducing isolation and loneliness).
2. One to two position and policy papers on the community based on research implemented in collaboration with established institutions aimed at improving accessibility and removal of barriers and to support human, social and economic development.
3. Evidence of strengthened leadership – at organization level for both the African Canadian Resource Network and for member organizations as well at individual levels - through functional boards, successful projects implementation and civic participation.
4. Improved intercultural and multicultural understanding- through established mentorship and collaborations at organizational level.
5. .Strengthened African descendant cultural organizations able to participate in annual cultural festivities in different centres (Mosaic, Motif and Folk fest) and other Art – Dance performance (more than entertainment) throughout the province.
6. Annual Africa Day Events – combining capacity development with intercultural collaboration and hosted in different centres of the province targeting the diverse African Canadian communities in Saskatchewan.
7. Improved understanding and access of public services by members of the African Canadian community enhancing integration in Canadian/Saskatchewan society.
8. Involved and engaged youth – through bilingual programs (English and French) and collaborations that build self-esteem, positive self-identity to reduce isolation for youth and strengthen families.
9. Increased number of member organizations and individuals of the African Canadians Resource Network; and active volunteers.

Current Board (2015/2016):

Chair: Christine Lwanga Dr.

Vice Chair: Isabelle Knapnang Dr.

Finance (Treasurer): Ercoph Bongomin

Communications (Secretary): Isaac Kwasi Egyir (in Saskatoon)

Director (Governance): Paulin Apapila (in Moose-Jaw)

Director (Membership): Akinsola Omolola

Director (Settlement & Integration): Abdi Gure

Director: Francios Ebrottie (responsible for Francophone voice)

Past Chair: Meka Okochi Dr.

Member Organizations:

The membership of this organization includes the diversity of individuals and African descent community organizations in Saskatchewan. It includes those who have lived in Canada for many generations and first generation immigrants from the African continent, the Caribbean, the Americas and other diaspora. During 2015 and 2016 operations we have collaborated with over 20 community organizations. The current active community member organizations are:

- The Saskatchewan African Canadian Heritage Museum Inc. (SACHM)
- Prairie Somali Canadian Community Inc.
- Sudanese Cultural Association of SK Inc.
- The Sask. Congolese Network Inc.
- Acholi Community Association of Sask. Inc.
- Uganda Canadian Assoc. of Saskatchewan Inc.
- African Food and Cultural Festival Inc.
- Daughters of Africa Inc.
- Africains Francophones de la Saskatchewan Inc. (CAFS)
- (up to 10 other organizations in the process of becoming members – part of 2015 and 2016 community mobilization work; many more are in other and smaller cities)

African Canadian Resource Network is grateful for the Sponsorships of:

