



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020

**AZAD FOUNDATION**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2015, Azad Foundation in collaboration with a range of stakeholders developed a 5-year strategic plan to set the path for its work in non-traditional livelihood development for resource-poor women.

***Azad Foundation's mission is to equip resource-poor women so that they excel as professionals and/or entrepreneurs, and earn a "livelihood with dignity" in jobs and markets that had traditionally been closed to them.***

Its core programme **Women on Wheels** provides non-traditional livelihoods with dignity to resource poor women. Azad prepares women with meager economic and social capital to become professional and commercial chauffeurs, while its for profit sister company Sakha provides remunerative and safe employment options to women trained by Azad. In this way Women on Wheels also offers safe and alternate transport options to women travellers in selected cities.

The initiative empowers resource-poor women economically and socially, enabling them to access remunerative livelihood, gain control over financial decision-making in their families, build social capital and confidence. Professional women chauffeurs provide safe transport to women in contexts where women's safety is a major societal issue, transform gendered labor markets as well as existing discriminatory gender relations and norms at community and household levels.

### **Achievements to date<sup>1</sup>**

Since its inception in 2008, Women on Wheels has grown into numerous locations in India – with the programme being run in south, east and north Delhi, Jaipur, Kolkata and Indore at the time of writing. Over 630 women became employable by acquiring professional qualifications as a chauffeur, with almost 170 women employed as drivers across Delhi & Jaipur – first ever in the history of these two cities. Many others are in the process of becoming employable across the various training centres in Delhi, Jaipur, Indore and Kolkata.

Majority of the women earning as professional drivers have been able to double or even triple their family incomes. Thanks to gaining remunerative employment together with a sense of empowerment and strengthened agency, women drivers transform into self-sustaining individuals who take control of finances, able to invest into physical assets, education and healthcare – for themselves and their families. Many decided and succeeded in delaying marriage, renegotiating relationships in their families and many found the strength to walk out of abusive relationships.

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<sup>1</sup> Data provided as of December 2015.

Through the programme, lives of hundreds women have been transformed in a holistic manner.

On the wider scale, the initiative enabled more than 3000 women to acquire their basic citizenship papers – without which they could not have begun to even think of any professional employment. It has reached hundred thousands people in resource-poor communities, sensitising them about non-traditional livelihoods and on other important issues related to women empowerment and to create violence free spaces for women. Azad is one of the few feminist organisations that actively engage men to work towards gender equality. It regularly participates in campaigns such as One Billion Rising and 'Safe Delhi Campaign', publicly speaking against the social norms that continue to disadvantage women in all aspects of life. Thanks to successful advocacy of Delhi State Transport Corporation (DTC), Azad has been behind DTC appointing the first ever-female bus driver in Delhi's history.

Importantly, thanks to demonstrating the feasibility of the concept of women drivers, Azad has been able to fuel a growth of similar initiatives and opening of the professional driving market to women.

## **Learning**

Azad's achievements have been guided by learning gathered over the last seven years. We learnt how to adapt our mobilisation and learning methodology to cater to learner's needs and operate in a context still vastly influenced by tradition and social pressures. With a commitment not to compromise on quality of outcomes for women, we learnt a higher than usual financial investment is needed; thus this investment has a high return as women are easily able to recover it after less than a year's work as a chauffeur. We have developed a range of support structures and processes to ensure that even women who face extreme vulnerability and pressures from families and communities are too able to complete the training and take up this non-traditional profession. Most importantly, we have broaden our understanding of what success means – as along the way of becoming a professional chauffeur women experience numerous strands of empowerment and growth, all of which need to be understood and acknowledged.

Driving has proven to be a 'vehicle' for genuine change for resource poor women, providing them remunerative income and also mobility, agency, a 'position of power' in the family and community, among others. Our experience affirmed that to achieve such deeply transformative change; economic empowerment must be interweaved with social empowerment and we must remain committed to original principles of our work:

- A commitment to working with resource poor women
- Working on non-traditional livelihoods that question gender stereotypes and break through gender segregated labour markets

- Working towards livelihoods WITH DIGNITY

**Today, Azad is confident, ambitious and aspires to grow – grow in ways that will help build a supportive ecosystem that will nurture and deepen the presence of women in public transport sector and in other non- traditional livelihood domains.**

**It needs to forge new and strategic partnerships to reach out widely; it needs to continue to reflect upon its own learning and develop new knowledge and analytical paradigms that will influence policy and practice, it needs to engage both with Corporate sector as well as Government in new and meaningful ways; and it needs to build a stronger team that will be able to realize all these aspirations.**

### **Theory of change**

Based on its learning and experience, Azad believes that to achieve desired change in terms of gender equality, five types of interventions are required:

- 1) *promoting and building an environment for gender equality at community level and in the commercial transport sector*
- 2) *supporting more women to adopt non-traditional livelihoods with dignity and engaging men to challenge reproductive-productive and private-public divides*
- 3) *by organising, facilitating and managing a transformative capacity building programme using NTL platform and up-scaling it to new locations through strategic partnerships*
- 4) *undertaking action research, advocating and influencing CSOs, Government (Transport Department), Corporate, and other policymakers towards a more favourable ecosystem for women in NTL with special focus on Women on Wheels, and*
- 5) *mobilising adequate financial resources as well as building effective governance systems and quality teams that respond to the changing institutional and environmental demands*

These will lead to:

- a cadre of community change agents (men and women) who lead and sustain wider community level change processes and encourage more women to take up non-traditional livelihoods
- increased number of resource-poor women earning with dignity in non-traditional livelihoods across various contexts, empowered to transform their lives and lives of those around them
- more cities safer for women



- a collective of organisation working in NTL with a multifaceted expertise and capacity to influence changes in policy and labor environment to further open job markets that have been traditionally closed to women.

### **Agenda for next 5 years**

In order to translate our theory of change into reality, and based on the learning harvested, an understanding of the context and a careful consideration of possible risks Azad has identified four key Strategic Focus Areas and goals to be achieved under each of these.

In the next 5 years, through a range of strategies Azad aims to generate the following outcomes:

#### **Programmatically**

- A cadre of 3600 young women community change leaders who take control over their own lives and encourage and support women to adopt non- traditional remunerative livelihoods with dignity
- 350,000 resource-poor women aware of alternative livelihood options and opportunities in professional driving, their rights and where to seek support if facing gender violence.
- 8000 young girls aware of their right to control their bodies and consider various livelihood options.
- A cadre of 900 young men promoting and facilitating an enabling environment in their homes and communities
- 3955 women employable and at least 2620 earning remunerative employment as chauffeurs and exercising control over their earnings and lives
- At least 4 civil society partner organisations having the capacity to implement WoW
- Availability of robust knowledge on NTL trades especially women transport workers and pathways of empowerment
- Improved policy environment for women's employment in public transport and strengthened gender-sensitive culture in the driving profession
- Increased investment of resources by multiple stakeholders for women's participation in NTL
- Improved attitudes of urban public to female NTL practitioners enabling greater participation, visibility and voice of the resource poor women in NTL professions

#### **Institutionally**

- Increased commitment and competency by Azad's team to deliver across all strategic focus areas identified in this Strategic Plan 2016-2020.
- Effective governance ensuring internal and external accountability
- Effective, efficient and innovative systems of fund raising & management in Azad

## **Strategies**

Under the **focus area one, concentrated on promoting and building an environment for gender equality, which supports women to adopt non traditional livelihoods with dignity and men to challenge concepts of masculinity in their lives**, we will deepen our engagement with communities in basties through collective activities, campaigns, street theatre, and other interventions that engage communities at a large scale. We will design and implement a fellowship programme to prepare young women leaders to be the activists and catalysts for local change, and continue to reach out to young adolescent girls from across classes IX to XII in schools to provide life skills training and exposure to issues related to women and work. We will deepen our work with men, providing workshops, awareness and educational activities that enable men to question gender-based injustice and become part of the 'change community'.

Under the **focus area two focusing on providing capacity building programme using non-traditional livelihood (NTL) platform**, we will continue strengthening our programmes in Delhi, Jaipur, Kolkata and Indore and forge new strategic partnerships with partner organisations across India and abroad to enable more resource-poor women in various locations to empower themselves and earn with dignity as professional chauffeurs. As will our residential Women on Wheels Academy further spread the concept across India. We will also pilot new innovative NTLs, and scale up one to provide alternative remunerative livelihoods with dignity to the most marginalised resource-poor women who often lack literacy skills required for driving and other livelihood programmes.

Under the **focus area three, Azad will undertake action research, advocate & influence CSO, government (transport department), corporate and other policy makers towards a more favourable ecosystem for women in NTL with special focus on Women on Wheels**. In collaboration with academic or research institute we will undertake two research studies and an impact assessment study that will help bring into the realm formal knowledge on issues pertaining to women's participation in non-traditional livelihoods, especially driving. We will continue publishing Azad Parindey – a newsletter for women trainees and drivers and develop a range of materials to support our work. We will facilitate a set up of a national collective of organization working in NTL and provide platforms for collective engagement with similar organisations outside India, policy-makers, academics and media to give the sector visibility, pursue common advocacy goals and share learning.

Finally, to deliver all the planned work and achieve the desired outcomes, Azad will build a strong team, growing its workforce to 43 team members, and ensure high retention rates and continuous learning and development of the team. We will undertake self-evaluation of the board and put in place a range of internal policies.

We will reinvigorate and invest into fund raising to ensure that the required 7,982,120 USD is raised timely and effectively, in line with our operational plans.

Azad's internal practice has always been embedded in continuous reflection, evaluation and sharing of what works and what doesn't. The existing review and documentation processes will be strengthened with a new comprehensive MIS and a monitoring tool Girl's Path, which will enable us to better evaluate outcomes of our work experienced by every single trainee.

All our work is guided with a goal of sustainability - be it at the level of the individuals as well as the families/men/communities we engage with as well as of the concept itself and the implementation.

FINAL VERSION

## **ABOUT AZAD FOUNDATION**

- We are a professional feminist organization working across social and religious divides to enable resource poor women to empower themselves by engaging them in viable non- traditional livelihood options
- We are committed to breaking patriarchal boundaries and structures so that the women can exercise control over their lives and live a life of dignity
- We do this through transformative capacity building programs around the self and the skills needed for NTL, based on adult learning principles
- We engage with both men and women in their communities so that both can construct a safe and supportive space for their development.

*We envision a world where all women (in particular, women from underprivileged contexts) enjoy full citizenship, earn with dignity and generate wealth and value for all.*

*Our mission is to equip resource-poor women so that they excel as professionals and/or entrepreneurs, and earn a “livelihood with dignity” in jobs and markets that had traditionally been closed to them.*

Everything we do is driven and based on our values:

- We are inclusive across social, cultural, linguistic, sexual choices and other differences
- We are secular
- We exercise dignity & respect for one and all
- We take responsibility for our learning and our actions
- We are professional about our commitments
- We are transparent and accountable in all our processes



## **AZAD FOUNDATION – AIMS & OBJECTIVES**



**Women on wheels** is a unique social enterprise that aims to provide non-traditional livelihoods with dignity to resource poor women on one hand, while on the other it offers safe and alternate transport options to women travellers in selected cities in India. It is delivered through a hybrid institution structure (Azad Foundation<sup>2</sup> – a not for profit and Sakha<sup>3</sup> Wings Pvt. Ltd. – a for profit institution).

Azad prepares women with meagre economic and social capital to become professional and commercial chauffeurs, while Sakha provides remunerative and safe employment options to women trained by Azad. In doing so, Azad aspires to:

- Challenge the norms that keep poor women at home
- Pilot and establish livelihood choices for resource poor women that are remunerative and that are non-traditional thereby breaking existing gender stereotypes around work
- Demonstrate the indispensability of addressing both economic and social empowerment while working with resource poor women
- Build new roles models for girl children and other women who have been invisibilized in India's urban economic growth

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<sup>2</sup> Refer Annex 1 for the Key Milestones in the Journey of Azad

<sup>3</sup> Refer Annex 2 for a more detailed understanding on Sakha and its relationship with Azad

- Engage with others to show the multiple values of bringing women into the public transport sector

Azad understands “resource poor” to mean all persons disadvantaged economically, socially (based on caste, class, religion, ethnicity and race), by gender, by physical disability, by sexual orientation and choices, by habitat. It recognizes the deeply gendered terrain that has defined economic roles.

By non-traditional livelihoods it refers to activities and means of income-generation which, given cultural norms and practices in a given context, have not been generally available or accessible to resource poor women. Most occupations that are open to resource poor women such as paid domestic work, nursing assistant (*ayahs- caring for the old, the very young and the sick*) are deemed ‘feminine’ first through the trope of gendered division of labour and second, through the perception of lack of skill. While recognizing that both domestic and care work are extremely skilled, Azad’s objective is to expand the set of occupational choices available for women and enable access to what has been understood traditionally as skilled work. Thus Azad began with commercial driving and is looking to foray into others NTLs such as masonry, house painting, electricians etc., most of which are considered “skill-based” and more remunerative than traditional occupations available to women.

The **initiative aims to meet multiple objectives** at the individual, community and state levels:

- Economically, the enterprise aims to equip women to gain a remunerative livelihood with dignity and to exercise control over the incomes they earn.
- Socially, it aims to build a collective of empowered women chauffeurs who will be change agents not just in their own lives, but also in the lives of their families and communities.
- For the wider community it aims to
  - provide safe transport for women in contexts where women’s safety is a major societal issue
  - to challenge gendered labour markets that keep women out of driving and other non-traditional livelihoods by using existing gender norms, prejudices, violence or the threat of it
  - to challenge the existing gender relations in the family and community that invisibilise and marginalize women’s work, identity and capability and deny them opportunities for livelihoods with dignity
  - to engage policy makers and other stakeholders (corporate, media, civil society organisations etc.) towards accepting and enabling women’s entry into non-traditional livelihood arenas especially driving.



## **ACHIEVEMENTS TILL NOW**



Azad launched the Women on Wheels Programme in India in parts of the State of Delhi/National Capital Territory (NCT) in 2008. At the time of writing (January 2016), Women on Wheels has been extended to more areas in South, North and East Delhi, as well as Jaipur, Indore and Kolkata.

Over the last seven years, Azad has been able to successfully establish the idea of a “professional woman chauffeur” - as a commercially viable idea in the transport industry, as a practical intervention to address women’s safety amongst the State and key policy makers and mostly as a realistic aspiration in the minds of the resource poor women themselves.

Additionally, Azad has been able to achieve the following<sup>4</sup>:

### **At the level of individuals**

#### **Economically**

- Where there were almost none professional women drivers across Delhi and Jaipur in 2008, Azad has enabled more than 630 women to become employable by acquiring professional qualifications as a chauffeur.
- Today, almost 170 women are employed as drivers across Delhi & Jaipur – first ever in the history of these two cities. Another 300 are in the process of becoming

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<sup>4</sup> Data as of December 2015.

employable across the various training centres in Delhi, Jaipur, Indore and Kolkata.

- Majority of drivers have become principal earners in their family, contributing to more than a 100% and even a 200% increase in their family incomes.
- Each woman driver has a bank account in her name, understands the use of an ATM and has invested in various saving instruments such as 'recurring deposits', life insurance policies, post office deposits etc.
- Women have been able to invest the income earned in multiple ways; some of them have invested their earnings in building important physical assets such as houses in their own names.
- Most importantly they now have an important voice in financial decision making in their households.

### **Socially**

- More than 787 women have benefitted from trainings in – women's rights; self-defence; sexual and reproductive health; English speaking; effective communications; first aid; grooming and map reading and learning key roads and routes. The content and pedagogy have helped them to empower themselves and achieve personal transformation.
- Women have been able to build friendships and a social network of mutual support which have now become independent of Azad. This is a significant social capital (non-familial) that has been built which provides them with new information, connections, support and a space where they belong.
- A remunerative employment coupled with a sense of empowerment has enabled them to transform the life conditions for themselves and their families. Each woman has a dramatic story to share with the world, in terms of the depth of transformation that she has been able to achieve in changing her life circumstances. Women have been able to for instance:
  - a. Postpone their marriages and asserted their right to choose a partner.
  - b. Several of those in marriage have renegotiated their relationships, walking out of abusive relationships, some have successfully negotiated support from spouse and other members of the family in undertaking domestic chores.
  - c. Women (in marriage and outside) have made choices for new relationships of love, taking responsibility for their own lives and happiness.
  - d. Some women have got their homes freed from mortgage, made a pucca house as against a shanty dwelling, or added rooms to ensure a safer and more comfortable habitat.



- e. Several women have invested in health care of parents and family handling not just the financial responsibility but also interfacing with doctors, hospitals, blood banks as the need may be.
- f. Many women have supported education of self, siblings and children, and have become keenly aware of the role education plays in furthering their careers professionally.

The list is long and indeed the women have made irreversible gains as they identified the power and strength within and have used it in their lives in multiple forms. Their confidence, their personality and resourcefulness makes them stand apart as change makers and leaders in their community.

### ***At a wider level***

#### **Challenging norms and safe transport for wider community**

- Azad reached out to more than 500,000 people in more than 165 slums and bastis over Delhi, Jaipur, Indore and Kolkata through various initiatives such as street theatre, film shows, exhibitions, campaigns, group discussions, family visits etc. It has led to a high rate of recall in these bastis about Azad and Women on Wheels initiative. The women drivers have themselves been the best ambassadors towards this as well.
- Azad enabled more than 3000 women to acquire their basic citizenship papers – without which they could not have begun to even think of any professional employment. It has done this by holding camps in collaboration with Unique Identification Authority, and by supporting individuals on a case by case approach to guide, advise and enable to acquire basic documents.
- Azad has actively participated in campaigns such as the “Safe Delhi Campaign”, the “One Billion rising” global campaign that has enabled it to reach out to communities in the slums as well as other social groups and contribute towards a questioning of the social norms that continue to disadvantage women in all aspects of life.
- An action research study to “Understand the Aspirations of young women in the slums” was undertaken by Azad. This is one of the very few studies that aim to understand the minds of resource poor young women in India. Most of the existing literature focuses on young boys while using the term “youth”.
- Azad is one of the few feminist organisations working with women on the ground which has also engaged men from communities to work towards gender equality. The process of change is long and time consuming, but it is a powerful beginning and we hope to have equally dramatic stories to share of men further down the line.

- Azad successfully advocated and was able to influence the Delhi State Transport Corporation to relax some of its norms to recruit women drivers. Delhi State created history in April 2015, by recruiting its first woman bus driver.
- A successful demonstration of the idea of 'Women on Wheels' has also led to a mushrooming of new mainstream industry initiatives eager to recruit women as drivers. All these initiatives offer very remunerative salaries, ensure safety and some as well offer flexibility of working hours. Azad has been very fortunate in being able to contribute to opening up of new markets for women drivers.

Since we started the context around us has changed, partly because of our work and partly due to external factors. New markets have opened up for women drivers, there is huge interest in taking forward the idea of Women on Wheels in new geographies, the new national policy (Skill India) aims to train over 400 million people in different skills by 2022. We also realise that some parts of this context remain despairingly unchanged – the violence against women, the discrimination against women at home and in job markets, the social attitudes generally towards men and women and the challenge of raising money for an enterprise as against a grant.<sup>5</sup>

It is against this backdrop that Azad plans to build on its experience and present its strategy for the next five years. Today, Azad is confident, ambitious and aspires to grow – grow in ways that will help build a supportive ecosystem that will nurture and deepen the presence of women in public transport sector and in other non-traditional livelihood domains. It needs to forge new and strategic partnerships to reach out widely; it needs to continue to reflect upon its own learning and develop new knowledge and analytical paradigms that will influence policy and practice, it needs to engage both with Corporate sector as well as Government in new and meaningful ways; and it needs to build a stronger team that will be able to realize all these aspirations.

We are pioneers in the field and part of being a pioneer means making mistakes and learning from them. In the next section, our learning is discussed in a greater detail.

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<sup>5</sup> Refer Annex 3 for a brief overview of the context within which Azad operates, risks and assumptions

## KEY LEARNING THAT HAS SHAPED OUR WORK



When we embarked upon this journey in 2008, there was no set path for us to follow. Innovative initiatives are very exciting to do, but part of the challenge is to make your own way as you get along – make mistakes, learn and refine. The Azad methodology and practice is rooted in our own experiences, and learning from them. Of course the entire initiative also springs from the cumulative learning of the work done by women's organisations, feminist organisations and those working on livelihoods. We learn from history as we contribute further to making history. It is this spirit of learning that will continue to guide us in our next five years as well.

1. When we began the programme, we assumed (perhaps naively) that by offering a training programme which guaranteed employment we would have a deluge of women trainees and might not be able to handle the demand. Obviously, we had underestimated the force of tradition and culture and social pressure. **We quickly learnt that we had to put in a lot of effort to mobilise young women and our learning methodology will have to adapt itself to a class of 8-15 trainees and not 40-50 as we expected initially.**
2. **We learnt that given the complex process of empowerment<sup>6</sup> that we had taken on, it was beneficial that our batch size was only 8-15.** With larger size, we would have lost many of the nuances and perhaps compromised on the quality and depth of the personal change needed for the women trainees.
3. Originally, we thought that a month's training (double the time Maruti IDTR makes available in its standard training package) would enable women to

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<sup>6</sup> Refer Annex IV for our understanding and definition of empowerment and some other concepts

become chauffeurs – that they would need only minimal practice before they take on the job of chauffeurs. This was not right. **We learnt that resource poor women require much much more training and practice in order to unlearn socially embedded fears and anxieties and gain confidence in themselves as a chauffeur.** A three-four month training plan stretched into 6-8 months and sometimes more.

4. We also learnt that it was going to be more resource intensive to empower women to become professional chauffeurs. We tried and tested this over several different batches and **learnt that when working with resource poor women the pace of learning and the depth of change demands a certain financial investment.** Given that in our understanding economic empowerment had to go hand-in-hand with social empowerment, for us it became 'acceptable' to go at a slower pace to ensure the quality of the experience for the women as well as the quality of their driving
5. **We also learnt that this initial financial investment has a high rate of return and women are easily able to recover the investment after less than a year's work as a chauffeur**
6. Initially we were against providing any stipend for women to learn, but the more we learnt **about the extreme vulnerability faced by women – especially when they are the heads of households- we realised there was a need for a social security scheme** meant to provide support to such households.
7. The reality of violence that most women face almost on a daily basis necessitated a learning component that helped them know about the legal and policy infrastructure that provided them with choices when faced with violence – at home or on the roads. Women have in fact faced little violence on the road. Where they have, they have mostly been able to handle it, sometimes even alone, singlehandedly, at others in groups after the training they received. But the violence women face at home is a different story. More devastating in its impact, and ever present, it stops them from transforming their living conditions. It became clear that many families are willing to forego additional incomes even when they are "more than the existing family incomes" in order not to lose an inch of control they exercise on their women. **We thus learnt that in this sharply polarized urban poverty context, it was very important to build an engagement with families as far as possible while women travel this journey of empowerment. Family Faculty meets (a quarterly meeting of training faculty and the family members) and other events that celebrated supportive families were borne out of this learning.**
8. Linked to the above was also the learning that men from resource poor communities have not had an opportunity to reflect upon their own experiences critically. They have not had the privilege of training and learning opportunities to unlearn socially conditioned behavior and re-learn new behavior. **We learnt that it would help and enable the women if interventions were undertaken with men from amongst the resource**



**poor communities.** Though some work has happened in this area, it remains an uncharted territory. As an innovating institution, Azad has picked up this challenge and its programme of working with men was thus born.

9. Trapped within the dominant mind-set of reporting on percentage of “successes”, defined narrowly “as women who gain employment”, Azad’s focus was on the women who were ‘completing the learning journey and becoming drivers’. So we lost out on the changes and transformation that might have been happening with the women who had been part of the learning journey but had chosen to “walk-out” at different intervals. We realized and learnt this through stories that would reach us of what some of the women who had walked out were able to do in their lives. We caught a glimpse of them on facebook or whatsapp messages of women drivers, or in their narrations. And we made a very important learning – that every woman who joins Azad and walks the path of learning and growth, gains from this experience, and the gains need not be directly co-related to the length of the journey walked. **We learnt that we needed to broaden our own understanding of what “success” means and in the process give credence to, acknowledge and learn from even those women who choose to leave this learning journey. We have also learnt from our experience that some of them choose to walk back in once they have addressed whatever needed to be addressed.** One of the first things we changed after this was our language. We started calling them “walk-outs” rather than “drop-outs and currently we are in the process of adapting a tool, “Girl-Path” borrowed from EMpower, to help us engage with this new understanding.
10. Though Azad started off with a clear intention of working on economic and social empowerment, the transformative potential of “driving as a livelihood” was not fully internalised by the team in the beginning. Driving has proven to be a 'vehicle' for genuine change for resource poor women, providing them remunerative income and also mobility, agency, a 'position of power' in the family and community, among others. **And we learnt as we reflected on the “deeply transformative” changes we witnessed that their choice of driving itself attacks the heart of patriarchy.** Denying women mobility, and keeping them inside homes, is a powerful tool to subordinate them and keep them subjugated. Driving gives them unimaginable mobility, and the feeling of power as they become comfortable on the roads and in public spaces. Further the bonds they forge with other women in the organisation and outside become rich sources of information and support, enabling them to challenge existing norms and growing from strength to strength.
11. **We learnt that women who had come into Azad to seek help for themselves, became help providers to other women by offering safe transport solutions.** And this shift in identity has also contributed to their redefining of themselves and in feeling a sense of agency.

12. **We have learnt through our experience and this has been validated by listening to our stakeholders (refer MANTHAN)<sup>7</sup> that our “secret sauce” has been the manner in which we have been able to integrate our work on economic empowerment and social empowerment.** The ingredients are:
- A commitment to working with resource poor women
  - Working on non-traditional livelihoods that question gender stereotypes and break through gender segregated labour markets
  - Working towards livelihoods WITH DIGNITY
- For us it is not sufficient that a woman has been able to earn remunerative salaries, equally important is whether she has been able to gain a greater degree of control over her life and body.
13. Witnessing the trajectories of empowerment of every woman trainee and/driver (a lot of this has been documented through stories, case studies, short films, pictures etc.) **we have learnt that projects and programmes can facilitate the process of empowerment. However, once people realize the ‘power within’ and realise the ways they have been held back in society,** the process gains a life of its own. The trajectory of empowerment can be initiated but then it moves with a power and will of its own, depending on individual agency and its everyday dynamic negotiations with various institutions such as family, workplace, community and state.. It is a very nuanced process – containing within itself vignettes of empowering and disempowering experiences. We cannot and do not even desire to control the trajectory of empowerment once it is triggered.
14. The recognition that Women on Wheels – Azad & Sakha - have received, the high media acceptance, the opening up of the markets and the entry of mainstream car industry players offering women driven car services, the historic entry of the first woman driver in Delhi State Transport Corporation driving a bus – all of this indicates that in the short span of 6-7 years Azad has been able to establish and demonstrate the idea of a woman professional chauffeur - its viability and commercial scalability. However, **we realise that to be able to impact the ecosystem such that it becomes an irreversible social change process<sup>8</sup>, we need to scale up the idea and build more allies.** It is this learning that is prompting Azad to now consider initiating and building new strategic partnerships.
15. We have not been able to consistently put as much effort in lobbying with the Government and other policy makers. We know that it take a lot of persistent effort to create a small space in the policy arenas. **We have learnt that it is**

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<sup>7</sup> Refer Annex V to read more about the process of preparing the strategic plan.

<sup>8</sup> Some examples of irreversible social change process are - when it became okay for women to educate themselves; when it became okay for women to work outside their homes; when it became okay for women to contest elections... in the same manner, when it would become okay for women to become drivers and they would not remain an oddity, an exception, a great news item we would consider that to be then an irreversible social change process.

**important to have a dedicated resource in the team to undertake this task.**

16. These are some of the important learning that has moulded the growth of the programme. It is important to acknowledge here that the breaking of barriers outside has also been closely related to breaking of barriers within for many of the team members and, therefore, the **learning and growth of our Team is closely linked to our work undertaken with the women.**

FINAL VERSION

## **OUR THEORY OF CHANGE**



Azad believes that –

- 6) *by promoting and building an environment for gender equality at community level and in the commercial transport sector*
- 7) *by supporting more women to adopt non- traditional livelihoods with dignity and engaging men to challenge reproductive-productive and private-public divides,*
- 8) *by organising, facilitating and managing a transformative capacity building programme using NTL platform and up-scaling it to new locations through strategic partnerships,*
- 9) *by undertaking action research, advocating and influencing CSOs, Government (Transport Department), Corporate, and other policymakers towards a more favourable ecosystem for women in NTL with special focus on Women on Wheels, and*



*10)by mobilising adequate financial resources as well as building effective governance systems and quality teams that respond to the changing institutional and environmental demands,*

Azad will be able to

- Build a cadre of community level change agents (men and women) who will empower themselves and become resources for the communities to continue to challenge gendered social norms and form support groups of men and women that lead and sustain wider community level change processes. They will encourage more women to take on non-traditional livelihoods with dignity.
- Facilitate increased numbers of resource poor women, across cities and geographies, to empower themselves by becoming professional or commercial drivers and by undertaking other non-traditional livelihoods with dignity, earning remunerative income.
- Facilitate a web of organisations that will further promote and practice the idea of Women on Wheels demonstrating its viability and applicability across contexts. It will contribute to making these cities safer by providing alternate transport options. It will lend its transformative pedagogy to the practice of organisations working with other NTLs as well.
- Deepen its practice in the field of bringing women into transport and continue to work as a laboratory to explore other non-traditional livelihoods that could provide remunerative livelihoods with dignity to resource poor women and pilot and demonstrate at-least one livelihood other than driving.
- Build a collective of organisations that works with resource poor women in non-traditional livelihoods to enhance collective learning, create new knowledge and use this to influence state policy and the functioning of labour markets.

RISK MANAGEMENT				
Type of risk	Likely impact	Likelihood	Importance	Measures put in place to mitigate
<b>Security of women drivers</b>				
Azad/Sakha driver hurt in an accident while on job	<p>Serious impact on the affected woman and her family; likely to affect her views and decision to continue working as a driver</p> <p>Negative publicity on professional women chauffeurs and Azad/Sakha. This could discourage women to join the programme and clients to use Sakha cars.</p>	Medium	High	<p>Provision of counselling</p> <p>Provision of legal support</p> <p>Support to file report with police immediately</p> <p>Crisis management procedure to be put in place</p>
Trainee/driver attacked on the way to or from a training /job	<p>Serious impact on the affected woman and her family; likely to affect her views and decision to continue working as a driver</p> <p>Significant impact on other trainees/drivers that might decide to pull out of the programme/job</p>	Medium	High	<p>Provision of counselling</p> <p>Provision of legal support</p> <p>Support to file report with police immediately</p> <p>Safety protocols incorporated into the training modules and ensure they are visible and available to all trainees and drivers</p>
<b>Funding – Individuals and organizations supporting the idea of women professional and commercial</b>				

*Azad Foundation: Strategic plan 2016-2020*

drivers remain few				
Not enough funding raised from institutional donors to deliver on the objectives/targets	Azad not to be able to scale up the programme as planned and deliver on the targets	Low	High	<p>Appoint a full time Fundraising post/s to maintain and build new donor relations</p> <p>Detailed fundraising strategy built and implemented from January 2016</p>
Low awareness of Azad's work amongst potential individual donors in India	Awareness and understanding of organisation's work correlates to consideration of individuals to donate; hence low awareness levels might affect ability to reach fundraising targets from individual donors	High	Medium	<p>Implement targeted fundraising strategy reaching potential donors through philanthropic foundations and utilising celebrity supporters, investing into building profile cost effectively through SEO and PPC and media exposure</p>
In the UK and US markets extremely high competition for charity donations	Might affect ability to reach fundraising targets	High	Medium	<p>Implement targeted fundraising strategy reaching potential donors through philanthropic foundations, focusing on donor retention and increasing life time value, and increasing status on Global Giving</p>
<b>Partnerships</b> - Expansion of WoW is dependent on partnerships with suitable partner organisations to implement the programme				

*Azad Foundation: Strategic plan 2016-2020*

Not enough suitable partners on board to escalate WoW as planned	Delivery on targets might be impacted	Low	High	Azad team has already reached out to a number of potential partners and received numerous requests for cooperation. However, potential scoping out work to be delivered in year 1 to allow sufficient time for finding new partners if required.
Partner organisations implementing WoW not in accordance with agreed operating procedures	Delivery on targets might be impacted  Potential risks to Azad's good reputation	Low	High	Ensure detailed due diligence checks, briefings and regular monitoring and visits to all partner organisations
<b>Data protection and management</b>				
Loss or stealing of business critical data	Loss of details of trainees and drivers would significantly affect operations  Azad has responsibility for data privacy and security and would breach its liability	Low	High	Invest into a shared drive and ensure all business critical data and information are securely stored and managed  Develop data management protocols
<b>Sustainability and profitability of Sakha</b>				
Sakha not able to be financially independent and profitable	Sakha closing  Lack of safe employment opportunities for drivers trained by Azad	Low	High	Exploration of and expansion to new markets and commercial partnerships with other cab service providers



*Azad Foundation: Strategic plan 2016-2020*

<b>Staff recruitment and retention</b>				
Not enough quality staff members attracted as required	Delay in delivering the programme until staff found / replaced			A recruitment plan and strong recruitment process in place
High turnover of staff				Ensure engagement of the team by providing regular training, and learning and development opportunities
Loss of key staff members	Expertise lost	Medium	Medium	Knowledge management system, put in place to ensure knowledge not lost

## SETTING THE AGENDA

In order to translate our theory of change into reality, and based on the learning harvested, an understanding of the context and a careful consideration of possible risks Azad has identified four key Strategic Focus Areas.



**OBJECTIVE 1: PROMOTE AND BUILD AN ENVIRONMENT FOR GENDER EQUALITY WHICH SUPPORTS WOMEN TO ADOPT NON TRADITIONAL LIVELIHOODS WITH DIGNITY AND MEN TO CHALLENGE CONCEPTS OF MASCULINITY IN THEIR LIVES**

**Outcomes**

- A cadre of 3600 young women community change leaders who take control over their own lives and encourage and support women to adopt non-traditional remunerative livelihoods with dignity
- 350,000 resource-poor women aware of alternative livelihood options and opportunities in professional driving, their rights and where to seek support if facing gender violence. As a result, at least 70% of the sensitised women would claim their rights and challenge gender violence in their household and contact relevant organisation/s for support. It is expected approximately 30% of the overall enrollment for WoW will be a result of the work of community change leaders, and additional number of women will enroll for another NTL programme to be piloted by Azad.
- 8000 young girls are made aware of their right to control their bodies and consider various livelihood options.
- A cadre of 900 young men promoting and facilitating an enabling environment in their homes and communities.

**Indicators**

- 5905 numbers of young women enrolled for Women on Wheels
- 1,771 (30% of the total target) enrolled women report to learn about the WoW programme from a community change leader
- 245,000 (70% of all women reached) women report they have claimed their rights and challenged gender violence and sought help as a result of the work of community change leaders
- Number of young girls actively participating in Azad Kishori sessions and report changes in attitudes and awareness
- Men in the Azad run groups report that they stopped making decision on behalf of girls and women based on baseline data
- Men in the Azad run groups report that they started sharing care-giving, child-rearing/ parenting roles and home management
- Men in the Azad run groups report that they started raising voice against all forms of violence in their communities

This strategic area, primarily focuses on our work with the communities. It emerges from our understanding that for sustainable changes to happen in the individual lives of resource poor women a deeper and more permanent engagement is required with men and women in the communities. Thus it combines intensive work with individual

men and women, while also undertaking community level campaigns and collective activities with them. A lot of progressive policies fail in the face of rigid, unchanging social and cultural attitudes especially when it comes to discriminatory practices based on gender, caste, religion and other differences. Azad will therefore:

- Continue to work through collective activities, campaigns, street theatre, and other interventions that engage communities at a large scale
- It will also conduct a fellowship programme to prepare young women leaders who will be the activists, and catalysts for local change
- Additionally, it will expand its work with men in the communities, focusing on behavioural change such that safe and supportive spaces can be built in communities for women.

*Over the next five years, Azad will work towards building community based change agents – women and men, who will be available to the communities as information resource and catalysts of local change. They will work within their communities to consistently question, challenge, support and set up role models for a more gender just and equal society. We will do this through a structured young women's leadership programme; through Azad Kishori 9 se 12 programme that reaches out to adolescent young girls in Government and community schools, and through deepening our engagement with men using theatre, sports, campaigns and other creative community interaction engagements. We will seek collaborations with other partners working in similar domains to help build collective energies that trigger processes leading to individual and community level social change.*



**OBJECTIVE 2: TO ORGANISE, FACILITATE & MANAGE A TRANSFORMATIVE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME USING NTL PLATFORM AND UPSCALE IT TO NEW LOCATIONS THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

Outcomes	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ 3955 women employable and at least 2620 earning remunerative employment as chauffeurs and also exercising control over their earnings and lives</li><li>➤ At least 4 civil society partner organisations having the capacity to implement WoW</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Numbers of women gaining employability/employment as chauffeurs, as per the set targets</li><li>➤ Number of women earning remunerative incomes</li><li>➤ Women demonstrating control over income</li><li>➤ Women demonstrating control over their lives, eg. making decisions about marriage, work, children education</li><li>➤ WoW becomes a viable and demonstrable idea in different areas.</li></ul>

Through Women-on-Wheels, Azad has been able to demonstrate successfully a high impact, transformative capacity building programme. While it will continue to further refine, expand and build on the Women on Wheels programme, it will also explore another NTL (apart from driving) for resource poor women that it could upscale. The rationale for this stems from the fact that some of the most underprivileged and resource poor women do not have the basic literacy skills required for driving. Most skill based programmes currently sponsored by Government and other institutions also require secondary education as a basic qualification. This leaves out a very vulnerable group of women who have either dropped out early from school or could not pursue education due to various reasons. Given that new markets are opening up for women chauffeurs, it is the right time for Azad and in keeping with its pioneering spirit to continue to experiment with and pilot another NTL that might benefit more vulnerable women. In the next five years it intends to:

- Qualitatively deepen its implementation of WoW in places where it will be implemented directly by Azad (Delhi, Jaipur, Kolkata). Azad will also continue the pilot on Women on Wheels Academy (a residential training programme undertaken in collaboration with partners from different cities across States, located in Jaipur) for another two years before it evaluates and learns from the experience. Based on that it will decide its future outcomes.
- Build strategic partnerships across India and internationally to take the idea of Women on Wheels into different geographies to reach out to many more resource poor women and give the idea of 'women in public transport' a

critical visibility and demonstrate its applicability and need towards providing safe and alternate transport services in different contexts.

- Explore at least three new NTLs, pilot two of these and scale up one that provides remunerative livelihoods with dignity to resource poor women (those who are more vulnerable amongst this group).

*Towards this Azad will seek partnerships, strengthen networks, train a pool or trainers nationally and internationally, develop a blended curriculum that has digital as well as directly delivered modules and can be replicated easily. It will develop partnership protocols, put in place systems that foster sharing and learning in mutually respectful ways. It will develop a resource centre that will provide support, coordinate and facilitate learning.*

FINAL VERSION

<b>OBJECTIVE 3: TO UNDERTAKE ACTION RESEARCH, ADVOCATE &amp; INFLUENCE CSO, GOVERNMENT (TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT) CORPORATE AND OTHER POLICY MAKERS TOWARDS A MORE FAVOURABLE ECOSYSTEM FOR WOMEN IN NTL WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON WOMEN ON WHEELS.</b>	
Outcomes	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Availability of robust knowledge on NTL trades especially women transport workers and pathways of empowerment</li> <li>➤ Improved policy environment for women's employment in public transport and strengthened gender-sensitive culture in the driving profession</li> <li>➤ Increased investment of resources by multiple stakeholders for women's participation in NTL</li> <li>➤ Improved attitudes of urban public to female NTL practitioners enabling greater participation, visibility and voice of the resource poor women in NTL professions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Increased public expressions of interest by Government and other stakeholders about bringing women into driving and other NTLs</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Increased presence and visibility of women in non-traditional livelihood domains</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Investment per woman increasing in training programmes on NTL for women.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Private companies sponsoring women to train for NTL and providing employment opportunities for them</i></li> </ul>

The strategic focus three mandates Azad to engage with policy makers – Government, Corporate, donors, academics etc.- to influence and engage them on the basis of evidence from the ground of how resource poor women could successfully acquire (non-traditional and remunerative) livelihoods with dignity. Azad will therefore:

- Undertake regular analysis of its work, research, documentation and bring out in the public domain knowledge and learning that can be used to influence, advocate and lobby for policies and practices that are more sensitive to the livelihood related needs and requirements of resource poor women in urban areas
- Will facilitate a coming together of organisations working towards providing non- traditional livelihoods to women to build a collective of practitioners who identify policy gaps and engage and advocate at various levels together.
- Will engage proactively with relevant ministries and departments of State Governments, National Government, and other policy makers to keep abreast

of the policy context and continue pushing a pro-resource poor agenda on policy tables for women.

*Though Azad has had only seven years of experience on the ground, however, given that it has been a pioneer in bringing resource poor women into the public transport industry, it has the potential to also be a knowledge leader in this domain. It will work as a resource centre keeping abreast with the market changes and development and monitor these on a regular basis to audit their gender friendliness. It will connect with others also working in the non- traditional livelihood domain to build a collective of practitioners of a transformative training and learning pedagogy that offer remunerative options for livelihoods (non-traditional) with dignity to resource poor women. It will produce formal knowledge outputs targeted to communities, practitioners as well as policy makers. In doing this, it will ensure that the resource poor women themselves become their best advocates.*



OBJECTIVE 4: TO MOBILISE ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES AS WELL AS BUILD EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS AND QUALITY TEAMS THAT RESPOND TO THE CHANGING INSTITUTIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS	
Outcomes	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Increased commitment and competency by AF team to deliver across all strategic focus areas identified in this Strategic Plan 2016-2020.</li><li>➤ Effective governance systems in place ensuring internal and external accountability</li><li>➤ Effective, efficient and innovative systems of fund raising &amp; management in Azad</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Competent staff recruited as per the recruitment plan, with each role filled within 2 months of the role becoming available.</li><li>➤ Annual retention rate kept at 80%</li><li>➤ Internal mechanisms of review and planning in place by end of Year 1 &amp; followed.</li><li>➤ All required statutory reporting undertaken in time according to the donor reporting schedule and internal review timelines.</li><li>➤ Annual and overall fundraising targets met</li></ul>

The fourth Strategic objective relates to strengthening of AF as an institution. For Azad to be able to deliver on all the promises it has made to itself, Azad will need to develop itself as a more robust organisation.

- There will need to be in place a competent and committed human resource. While Azad already is a team of 25 persons, we envision this number to reach upto 50 to support the work over the next five years. (refer Organogram)<sup>9</sup>.
- Azad will ensure its internal governance mechanisms – management by the Board, institutional policies, review and reporting systems as well as statutory reporting will be streamlined better towards creating a work system that is effective and efficient while also maintaining a spirit of innovation and flexibility.
- Azad will strengthen its partnerships with existing donors and reach out to new and different donors that are aligned to its strategic plan and vision.

*Towards this Azad will ensure its members are provided opportunities to learn and reflect – inside the organisation and others that might be available in the sector. It will ensure not just an external audit but also regular internal audits to ensure that its practice is compliant with its own internal policy. It will engage with its donors at a strategic level – to also be able to reach out to their partner networks and offer itself as a resource organisation where possible. It has in place a fund raising strategy and*

<sup>9</sup> Refer Annex VI for an Organogram indicating current and planned new positions

*will implement it, refine it and work with it to ensure it is able to raise adequate resources for itself, as well as for the national collective and support the partners also to raise funds towards their non- traditional livelihood programmes for resource poor women.*

FINAL VERSION

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION



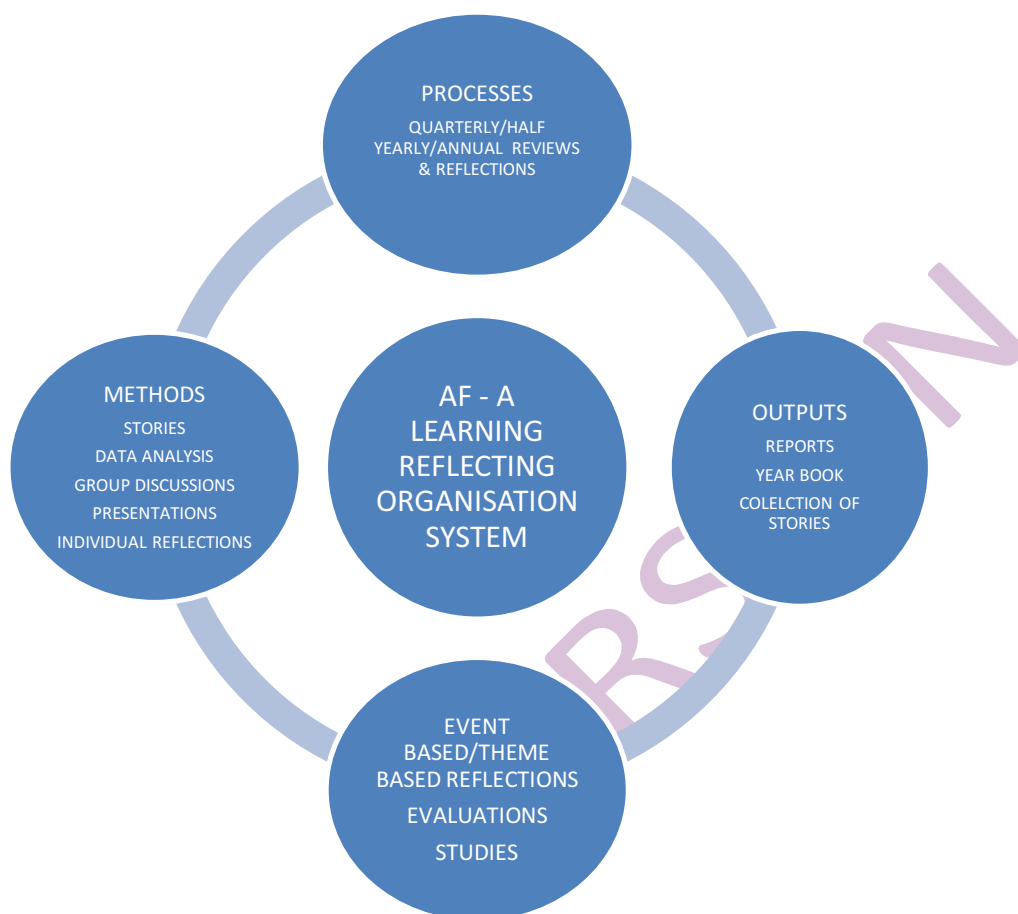
The primary purpose for AF to have inbuilt monitoring and evaluation processes is to ensure the organisation has a reflective and learning work culture.

We encourage sharing of 'what didn't work'; 'challenges faced by the team'; as well as the 'wow' moments. We use the opportunities provided by collective reviews and reflections and other team meetings to harness our ability to address those that we can, navigate around those we cannot change.

An operational plan is developed each year by all the teams that establish the activities that will be undertaken, coverage, expected outputs etc. Reviews are an opportunity to reflect upon these as well and to revise the plans or the efforts as the need may be.

We document these processes to serve both institutional memory as well as to share with the larger collective of partners and supporters, including the donor partners these experiences.

Learning thus becomes the responsibility of each individual as they try to work in the practice-reflect-practice rhythm.



Azad has in place the above processes and a collection of outputs as mentioned above in the diagram. A lot of informal space is also created through 'reflective conversations' where younger team members are able to share and learn from the more experienced members and sometimes the other way round as well.

Azad has not had an external evaluation undertaken so far and intends to definitely do so over this strategic plan period.

Our achievements and financials are published in annual reports available on request, and on Azad website. We also regularly report back to donors evaluating and analysing effectiveness of the work against the set objectives and targets. Azad has not had an external evaluation undertaken so far and intends to definitely do so over this strategic plan period.



### **A woman's path**

Azad is in the process of adapting a monitoring tool called "A Woman's Path"<sup>10</sup> which will track the progress of the women we work with in a more participatory and inclusive manner. It is a tool that will enable the women themselves as well as the team to visually identify obstacles that prevent each woman from fully participating in the programme and celebrating every single struggle that she is able to overcome. It enables a mapping of each individual struggle, validating each individual achievement, without having a "given benchmark" against which some pass and others fail. 'A Woman's Path' then respects the agency of women and the fact that they may choose to walk in or out of the programme due to their life circumstances.

As a learning organisation Azad will continue to use existing tools/spaces and also seek out new ideas that might help to capture the complexity of the work in different ways to both monitor ourselves against our commitments and also to be able to harvest new knowledge based on ground level experiences.

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<sup>10</sup> Adapted from the "Girl Path" developed by EMpower and its partners

## **ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT**

Azad understands that its ability to translate into reality the commitments of this strategic plan depend directly on its human resource capacity and institutional processes. A team that is competent, committed to the vision and goals and has its values aligned to institutional values will not just be able to implement the plan in letter but also in spirit.

Azad aspires to build such a team. It believes that transformative work with resource poor women can only happen when the team is also working on itself – questioning, learning, growing and breaking its own internal barriers and limitations. It also aspires to build an institutional culture where every person in the Organisation internalizes the values and spirit of the work we do, and is able to communicate it to the world outside. A feminist professional institution - that is inclusive, secular and works in ways that respects the inherent dignity of every person.

We realize this is not an easy task, given the diversity of experience, understanding, and contexts that each person brings. Thus Azad intends to strengthen the following at the level of personal and inter-personal growth:

- A strong recruitment process that ensures appropriate staff is in place. A human resource planning has been undertaken for the next five years keeping in mind the demands of the strategic plan.<sup>11</sup>
- An induction process that helps provide a first level grounding to team of the context and work of Azad.
- A regular annual basic training in fundamental concepts and values of Azad
- Ensure that every staff has an average of 15 days of training delivered either in-house, or off-site based on a training needs assessment and analysis undertaken by the leadership team.
- Retreats, annual or biannual to strengthen team building and self development.

Currently, Azad has in place policies on Human Resources, Finance and Audit, Provident Fund and Gratuity, Anti-sexual Harassment, among others, to guide its transactions internally and with partners. It will ensure these are followed and reviewed on a regular basis.

### **Governance:**

Azad has a very active and supportive Board<sup>12</sup> that meets at least twice a year. The Board approves the policies and plans of Azad. It provides advice and guidance

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<sup>11</sup> Refer annexure VI for an Organogram

<sup>12</sup> Refer annexure VIII for a updated list of Board members

where required and ensures all statutory compliances. The Board also intends to put in place a self- review mechanism that will help the Board to review its own role against a standard set for itself.

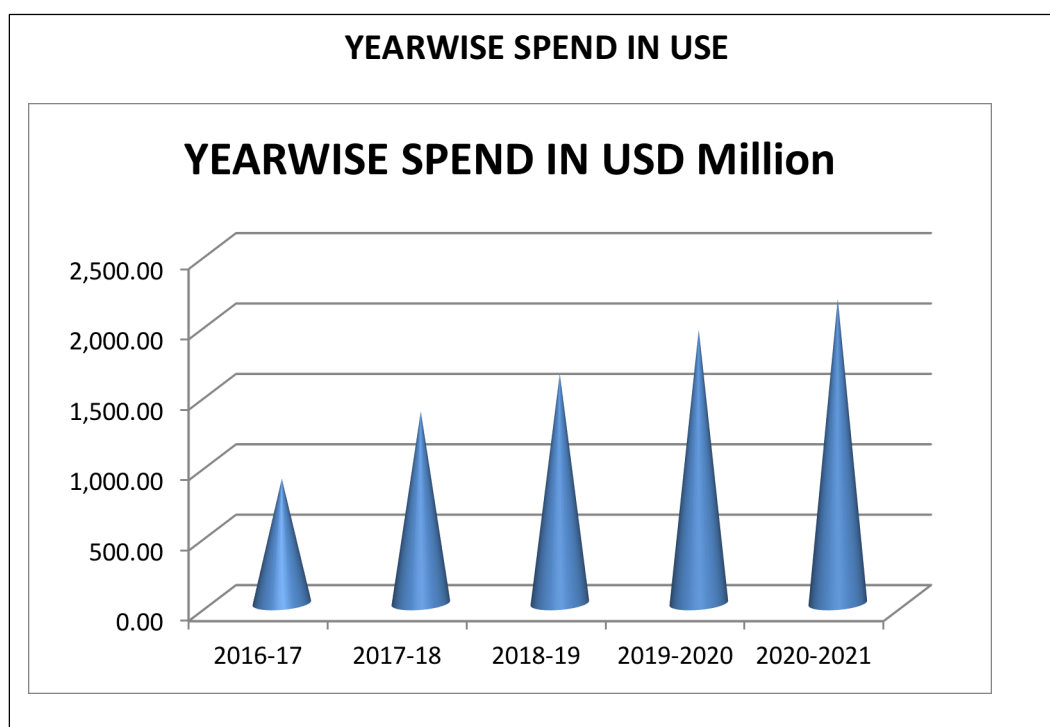
A core leadership team comprising of the Executive Director, the Programme Directors and the Finance Director provides the vision to the overall programme and leadership to execute this in reality. It is the policy making body that ensures the work and functioning of Azad stays coherent to its stated vision, mission and values.

We intend to put in place a programme leadership team that will constitute of members of the middle management level across locations. The role of this team will be to share about the practice, challenges, new learning and to take responsibility for creating a culture that ensures mutual respect, dignity and a positive environment that handles team members' internal conflict, disagreements etc.

Azad has till now worked in a collaborative and shared leadership paradigm and will continue to strengthen this. As an organisation it will endeavour to create spaces for shared learning and growth for all its team members.

## RESOURCE PLANNING

The implementation of the given strategic plan will require a total resource outlay of approximately 79,82,120 usd<sup>13</sup> over the next five years. Over the next five years the expenditure grows steadily taking into account programme expansion as well as inflationary costs.



In terms of financial growth, Azad's journey could be divided into three stages as of now. The beginning; the taking off; and growth stage. Table below provides an average annual expenditure in each of these stages.

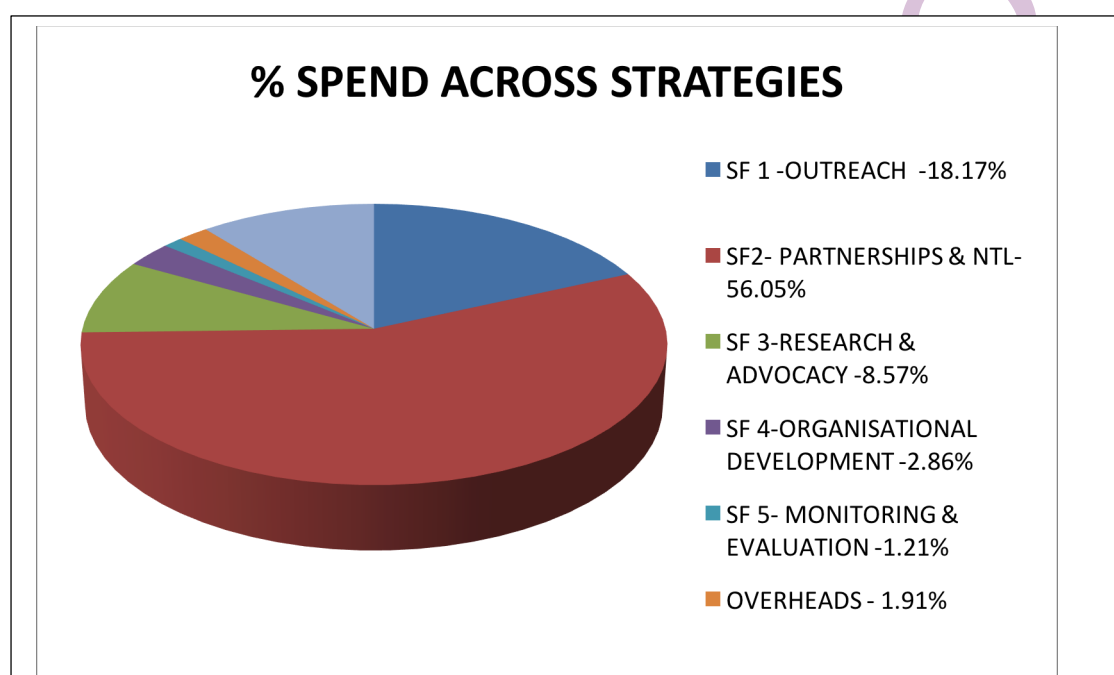
	THE BEGINNING YEARS	'TAKING OFF' YEARS	GROWTH YEARS
YEARS	2008 – 2011	2012-2015	2016 - 2020
AVERAGE ANNUAL BUDGET (USD)	43,770	3,17,940	1,596,424
% increase		626%	402%

<sup>13</sup> Considering 1 usd = 64 INR at current rates

As per the current plans, Azad will see a 60% increase in 2016 (assuming it is able to raise all funds as required) and a 54% increase in 2017. The spurt then tapers off to a 19%, increase in 2018 & 2019 and 11% in 2020. The increase in the first two years of strategic plan will enable Azad to make investments in human resources, partnerships and undertake ground work which will serve as building blocks for the growth over the next five years.

## **SPENDING AGAINST STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

A percentage spend against each strategic objective is indicated in the pie chart below.



Almost half of the funding outlay (56%) is earmarked for implementing the Women on Wheels, directly across Delhi, Jaipur, Kolkata and Indore; for the residential Women on Wheels Academy in Jaipur, and for taking forward the Women on Wheels across at least five geographies in India and one internationally, through partnerships. With this investment we aim to enrol at least 5,900 women, make nearly 4,000 women employable and bring 2,620 women into the transport sector over the next five years. This remains the core and the ground on which all our other efforts build.

18% funds have been earmarked for our engagement with the communities and building cadres of young women (3600) and men (900) as community level change agents



8.5% of funds are towards strategic objective 3 that comprises of advocacy, influencing and research work.

14% approximately is towards institutional salaries, overheads and monitoring and evaluation.

## **RESOURCE MOBILISATION**

The following table gives a status of current institutional donors and the nature of relationship with each.

### **CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL DONORS**

Oak Foundation	Currently under a three year strategic commitment extending upto December 2017.
Human Dignity Foundation	5 year strategic core grant support up until the end of 2020/2021 secured (last grant)
EMpower	In principle committed for the long terms (approx.. ten years) though yearly approvals required given their fund raising mechanism
AJWS	Committed for the long term, also requiring yearly approvals. One year strategic core grant for 2016 secured
Planetera Foundation	Committed for the long term and has just launched a global appeal for fund raising where one of its partners is Azad Foundation
COMO Foundation	Just begun the relationship with core support towards one senior position. Expressly interested in a long term relationship
Royal Netherlands Embassy	Currently supporting only for a year, with no assurance for continued support but to be decided on year-on-year basis.
C&A Foundation	One of grant for 2016 secured. Conversations for a more strategic partnership initiated.
Mahindra Finance	Currently supporting for 16/17, expressed interest for longer-term support.
GlobalGiving	Long term, enabling raising funds from individuals and gives access to one off project-related grants.

Azad will make efforts to maintain upto 20% of its funding in the form of local (indian) funds. It will also try to maintain that none of its grants be more than 60% of its institutional budget. Azad has developed a detailed fund raising strategy<sup>14</sup> over this year and intends to as well support it with a full time staff to ensure the institutional targets can be adequately addressed.

<sup>14</sup> Refer Annex VII for a fund raising strategy developed by Azad in 2015.

## SUSTAINABILITY



Azad understands sustainability in multiple ways. We consider sustainability at the level of the individuals and of the families/men/communities that we have engaged with. Likewise, we understand sustainability at the level of the concept and of the implementation.

**At the level of the individuals**, the gains of the transformative training for resource-poor women, as also for young leaders/mobilizers, can never be taken away from them. After acquiring a new way of looking at oneself and/in relation to the world, there would be no looking back for any of the women involved. However, we understand moving ahead as a more circuitous, spiral process rather than as a straight linear curve of development. The skills obtained may be useful through employment with Sakha Cabs-for-Women or through other employers. The income generated by those who qualify as professional or commercial drivers is adequate to support oneself and family.

**At the level of the families/men/communities**, continued outreach and mobilizations for gender awareness would ensure discussion, debate and analysis of issues that would offer new perspectives of looking at women's roles, women's identities and gender dynamics. In such scenario, inter-generational change and the realization of gender equality will be a real possibility. Our strategy of building a cadre of community level change agents is intended to ensure a sustainable change in the overall environment amongst the communities that Azad does and will engage with.

**At the level of the concept**, it has been shown that Women-on-Wheels is replicable. WOW started in Delhi in 2008 and is now in 4 States altogether. There are more requests for expansion within India and in other countries. Mainstream taxi services have set up their women-driven cabs-for-women units, employing women trained by Azad. The first bus driver with DTC in Delhi was likewise trained by Azad.

**At the level of implementation**, Azad works with a diverse group of organizations already in communities as also with various partner organisations and networks in the country working on NTL, gender issues, men's engagement, young women, etc. It is considered a thought-leader given its ground-breaking work. The social enterprise model being used by Azad-Sakha partnership for Women-on-Wheels allows for a self-sustaining vision although, admittedly, the commercial partner (Sakha) has a challenge in terms of breaking even. We also realise that even if it did break-even, the profits will be required for expansion of Sakha into different markets. Donor-funding allows Azad to reach out to more communities and train more resource-poor women. We are cognizant that Azad needs to diversify its funding base to ensure that it is not dependant on any single donor as well as target building of funding reserves through other fund-raising means. Azad will also aspire to find creative ways to lease premises or build its own infrastructure so that it is able to bring down the costs of training substantially (incurred in the form of office or training space rentals). It aspires to build a corpus fund over the next five years that will also enable it to manage donor transitions and other sudden changes in the environment.