



WOMEN'S BEAN PROJECT STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2014

I. Introduction

Women's Bean Project wishes to put itself out of business. Perhaps not in the purest sense, but we do aspire to provide services so effective and long lasting that the impact is felt today as well as in future generations. Ultimately, we aspire to break the cycle of poverty, so that the daughters of the women we serve do not need us.

Over the past year, Women's Bean Project's CEO, staff and board realized that we need a new way to think about the work that we do, in order to fulfill our 21st century vision, to respond to new challenges and opportunities, and to align our decisions and actions with our expressed values.

The planning process, by focusing on a desired future and strategies for attaining that future, led us to a strategic plan with two key elements — a vision for the future and an organizational strategy to get us there. This plan is our roadmap for the next iteration of Women's Bean Project.

What began with limited resources and a vision for creating a safe and accepting work environment for women has expanded to a robust social enterprise with a proven business that is a model for others across the country. Over the past twenty-two years, Women's Bean Project has built a legacy of making delicious food products and providing effective services while creating a loyal following of supporters of all kinds across the country. We wish to leverage this history to take WBP to the next level.

Today, approximately three-fourths of the operating budget comes from product sales. We will continue to increase sales with an eye toward creating more employment while we improve our fundraising efforts to help support additional program activities.

We are at a unique time in our history, having weathered the economic downturn with continued growth, with an opportunity to leverage past success, continue to increase the number of women we employ, and build the infrastructure and foundation of Women's Bean Project to accommodate additional growth while we aspire to create greater impact.

We believe it is our responsibility to envision and shape the future for ourselves and our community. We must be attuned to rapid and continual shifts in the environment. According to Focus Convergence,

published by the James Irvine Foundation, “The future will bring a wider array of structural options and a greater willingness to experiment, as well as a heightened demand for accountability and compelling measures of social value. The driving question will be, ‘what do we want to accomplish?’ Successful organizations will move quickly beyond traditional assumptions about how those goals are attempted and think creatively about structural forms, recognizing that different goals demand new solutions.”

In this changing environment, transformation is not optional. Women’s Bean Project is poised to grow and change to meet the demands of the community as well as the demands we place on ourselves.

Assumptions for this Strategic Plan:

1. We will expand our reach and deepen our impact through networks and coalitions
2. We will think more systemically about the challenges we seek to address, about possible approaches and partners
3. Implementation of this plan will be a collaborative, evolutionary, and iterative process
4. Changing the lives of women will continue to be our focus
5. Social enterprise will remain our business model

This plan is intended to help us remain centered in our mission-driven activities; articulate a clear purpose and a compelling theory of change that will drive our activities to build a stronger, more effective organization.

II. Need and Opportunity Analysis/Background and Approach

There are so many factors that get in the way of breaking the cycle of poverty and chronic unemployment. The women at the Bean Project fit the mold: they face multiple personal and economic barriers to self-reliance. Program participants lack marketable skills and stable work histories. Many are single mothers, have histories of public assistance, lack a high school diploma or GED, and many are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Most have histories of incarceration, substance abuse and domestic violence. Women with these backgrounds face enormous challenges to finding and retaining meaningful employment that is so necessary to breaking the cycle of poverty.

Trends/Social Problem

The Impact of Welfare Reform

National welfare reform legislation in 1996 imposed stricter work requirements on welfare recipients and a 60-month lifetime limit on cash assistance provided with federal funds. By 2004 welfare caseloads dropped sharply; between federal fiscal years 1996 and 2004, Colorado’s TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) caseload fell 59 percent. However, while many welfare recipients were able to find employment and leave welfare, many of those who remain are less job-ready. Those remaining on the welfare rolls are “hard-to-employ” meaning they face a broad range of obstacles to employment, such as lacking a high school diploma or GED, having limited work experience, having been exposed to domestic violence, having substance abuse or mental health problems, or having limited English skills. Many people facing these and other problems are unable to find and sustain employment, needing targeted assistance to help them become self-sufficient, including supported employment environments.

In *No One is Unemployable*, Debra Angel and Elisabeth Harney address the assumption that no one has barriers that will excuse them entirely from employment. They focus on identifying barriers, understanding the perspectives of the employer and job candidate regarding the barrier, and then working with the job candidate to develop effective solutions that will satisfy the employer. Women's Bean Project staff and some case managers with whom Women's Bean Project works are trained in this philosophy, giving them the mindset and tools for overcoming barriers. Subsequently, the biggest challenge case managers encounter is finding workplaces willing to accept their clients.

The Impact of the Criminal Justice System

In December, 2005, The Rocky Mountain News reported that Colorado's female state inmate population had grown by 166% in the prior decade. Nationwide, the statistics are that nearly one-third of female inmates are in prison for drug crimes, compared with one in five men, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. A third of females are incarcerated for violent offenses such as murder and robbery. The rate of female incarceration is growing at twice the rate of men.

Women with felony convictions lack the skills needed to get and keep employment, including lack of education and job skills. More than half need substance abuse treatment upon release. Most female offenders have young children and were convicted of non-violent crimes. The number one indicator of re-arrest is being unemployed in the year prior to the arrest. Thirty-six percent of women recidivate within one year. By three years, nearly half will.

The chronically impoverished women who walk through Women's Bean Project's doors are more likely to have experienced incarceration because the Controlled Substances Act, which was established during the crack epidemic of the late 1980's, mandating that the possession of crack carry the same sentence as the possession of a quantity of cocaine that is 100 times larger. It established a minimum mandatory sentence of five years for a first-time trafficking offense involving over five grams of crack, as opposed to 500 grams of powder cocaine. This disparity grew out of both the increased use of crack as well as the trends in violence that accompanied it, particularly in urban areas. According to the US Sentencing Commission, no class of drug is as racially skewed as crack in terms of numbers of offenses, causing more African Americans and Hispanics to spend more time in the prison system. To begin to address this disparity, in August, 2010, President Obama signed the Fair Sentencing Act, aiming to reduce the disparity between sentencing for crimes involving crack and powder cocaine. It is believed that this law will address the larger issue of racial disparities in drug sentencing.

Though the long term effect may be a decrease in felons entering the Bean Project program, for now, a minimum of eighty percent of women applying to the program have felony backgrounds, representing significant barriers to finding employment that are difficult to overcome.

The Impact of Poverty

Once in poverty, women face additional obstacles from men, such as childcare, that trap them. As a result, the US has a greater poverty gap between men and women than any other country in the Western World. In the US, the 2009 federal poverty level was just over \$22,000 per year for a family of four. Perhaps more relevant, the 2008 Self-Sufficiency Standard in Denver County for one adult, one preschooler and one school-age child was \$19.66 per hour, or 2½ times the federal poverty level.

In economics, the cycle of poverty is the “set of factors or events by which poverty, once started, is likely to continue unless there is outside intervention.” The cycle of poverty has been defined as a phenomenon where poor families become trapped in poverty for at least three generations. These families have either limited or no resources. There are many disadvantages that collectively work in a circular process making it virtually impossible for individuals to break the cycle. This occurs when poor people do not have the resources necessary to get out of poverty, such as financial capital, education, or connections. In other words, poverty-stricken individuals experience disadvantages as a result of their poverty, which in turn increases their poverty. This means that the poor remain poor throughout their lives. This cycle has also been referred to as a pattern of behaviors and situations, which cannot easily be changed. (Wikipedia)

Women’s Bean Project observes that women caught in a cycle of poverty are unable to break out. The system, sometimes unintentionally, conspires to keep them in this cycle. Family members and others for which the woman is responsible can also hold her back, either because of her caregiving responsibilities or through actions that put her at risk of relapse or recidivism.

In *Skill and Will*, David Shipler argues that poverty has many related issues, focusing on just one aspect of poverty – like housing – will not affect change. Poverty, in Shipler’s view is a “constellation of difficulties that magnify one another: not just low wages but also low education, not just dead-end jobs but also limited abilities, not just insufficient savings but also unwise spending, not just poor housing but also poor parenting, not just the lack of health insurance but also the lack of healthy households. (*The Working Poor, Invisible in America*, p. 285)

The Impact of the Social Benefits System

In their study *Two Steps Forward and Three Steps Back*, The Women’s Foundation of Colorado described The Cliff Effect—Colorado’s Curious Penalty for Increased Earnings. This quantitative analysis of work supports highlighted a disincentive to improve pay. Many low income families receive benefits (e.g., earned income tax credits, Medicaid, child care assistance) to help cover the cost of basic necessities but, as earnings increase, families begin to lose these benefits. The result? Benefit cliffs can mean that an increase in earnings may not improve a family’s financial situation. In the best case, earnings increase but the family is only marginally better off. In the worst case, parents can work more and earn more, yet their families end up worse off financially because they are no longer eligible to receive a certain benefit.

The Economic Impact of Employment

According to the Social Enterprise Alliance, based on research conducted by economists, the net value of a job created by social businesses such as Women’s Bean Project is at least \$80,000 per year. This figure takes into account a number of primary effects, including direct income, added consumption, social benefits and avoided social costs, as well as a number of secondary benefits. Currently Women’s Bean Project employs approximately 60 women each year who would otherwise not be employed, equating to \$4.8 million in stimulus to the economy each year.

Businesses like Women’s Bean Project are a win-win-win. They offer the public a way to address chronic unemployment, recidivism, welfare dependency, and a host of other challenges. The social enterprise model gives Women’s Bean Project a sustainable way to achieve its mission. As a result, it ushers people with significant barriers into the economic mainstream.

Environmental Landscape

There are few organizations within the community that combine the job readiness and life skills building approach found at Women's Bean Project. Some organizations concentrate only on job readiness skills. Work Options for Women, for instance, provides case management to help ensure barriers are overcome and provides a sixteen-week training course in the culinary field. Their drop-out rate exceeds 50%, though the retention in jobs post-graduation is high. CWEE, the Center for Work Education and Employment, provides classroom education in Preparing for, Finding and Keeping employment.

Opportunity

Overall, we know that the demand for Women's Bean Project services is more than we can provide at this time because of the number of applicants to the Bean Project program. In 2010, Women's Bean Project received in excess of 300 applications for 24 positions. Many of those women had applied multiple times and reported their "relief" and "good fortune" at finally being hired.

Because of Women's Bean Project's model of sustainability and less reliance on grant and donation funding as compared with others providing similar services, the organization holds the key to its own future. Additionally, the organization's reputation for providing high quality, effective services will allow it to continue and build new relationships in the community.

Having proven its model of teaching job readiness and life skills through a social enterprise employment experience, the Bean Project is in a position of strength as it looks to broaden its impact with women to ensure that change sticks. We must do this by both increasing the number of women we affect and making a greater, measurable impact on them.

Vision of Success

We envision a day when women can break out of poverty through employment and social services will enhance rather than impede this process. We aspire to affect women in such a way that their children will not repeat the cycle.

Social, Economic and Performance Indicators

Using today as a starting point, our success in fulfillment of this plan will lead us to more and greater varieties of employment, improved outcome for the program, increased sales and measurement of our impact on the community.

The outcomes we will use to assess progress toward meeting the vision of success include:

- The number of women employed each year
- The number and percentage of graduates each year
- The number of women achieving life skills and workplace competencies while in the program
- Sales growth and customer profitability
- Donation growth and other forms of community support
- Social Return on Investment
- The percentage of graduates moving from the program to career entry-level jobs

- The percentage of women keeping employment 12 months or longer post-graduation
- After collection of data of family history, current family situation, forward motion in areas relating to moving out of poverty and the cycle of poverty
- The number of women who feel they are better off
- Maintained housing
- Alive
- No recidivism
- Contiguous employment
- Increase in earnings, receiving benefits through employer

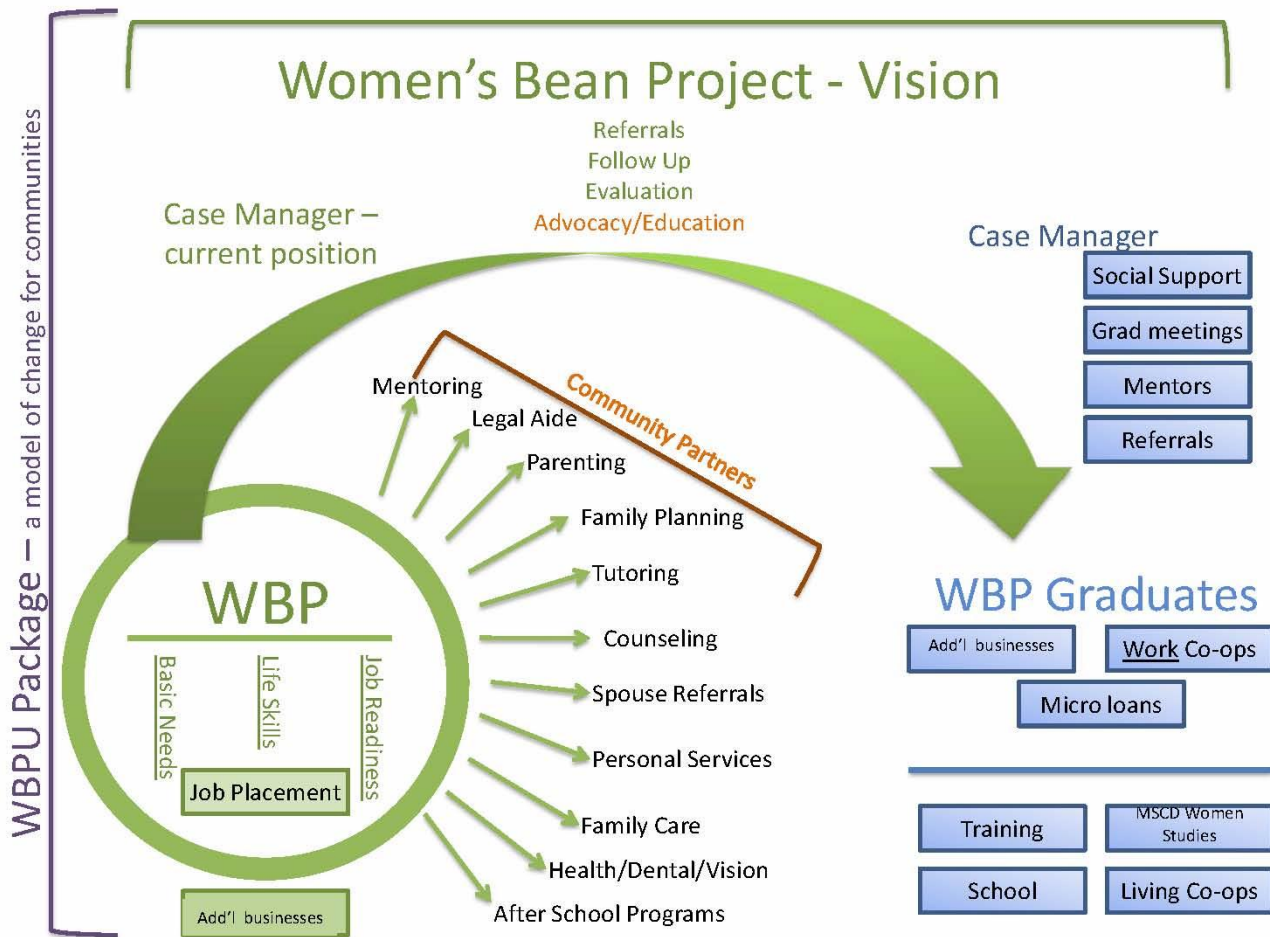
Post graduation, our follow up touch points will be six months, one year, and eighteen months. We will assess whether longer follow up is needed and realistic to achieve. Our hope is that these metrics will be to help us track our organizational effectiveness as well as the women's progress toward self-sufficiency. To that end, we will monitor whether or not these are the correct metrics and modify if we believe they are not

Operating Model

Women's Bean Project feels that the model currently employed largely fulfills its intended purpose: to teach the skills needed to move women to career entry-level jobs. Changes to the operating model that may be necessary as the plan is implemented will be dictated by the desire to have greater, longer lasting impact and to affect the cycle of poverty. The Bean Project plans to work from its current strengths as a starting point and improve and expand from there.

Additional underlying assumptions should also be considered: That the Bean Project is creating a model that could be exported and that the work being done locally creates a ripple effect outside of our immediate community.

To this end, the development of the following model will be explored to help achieve our aspirations.



Social Impact Strategies

We have identified major actions we will take to carry out our mission and to strengthen our operating model while working toward achieving our vision of success:

1. Continue to provide direct service and employment to Program Participants and partner with other organizations to address the Program Participants' families more holistically
2. Advocate for changes in policy that create the Cliff Effect

We will take direct responsibility for:

1. Employing increasing numbers of women
2. Providing case management while Program Participants are going through Women's Bean Project primary program
3. Exploring ways to stay involved with the women over a longer period of time through engagement in out-of-Bean-Project employment and alumni activities
4. Case management after graduation or finding partners to provide this service

We would like to consider:

1. Employing women over a longer period of time with a less intensive program model, through Bean Project-related entities

2. Providing opportunities for other types of employment post-graduation, such as assisting in the formation of co-operatives
3. Engaging graduates in activities such as an emergency loan fund

HYPOTHESIS

Women come to the Bean Project wishing to change their lives by breaking out of chronic unemployment and poverty into continuous, productive employment. There are people and systems that conspire to prevent this change from occurring. We believe that with more comprehensive case management for women and their families as well as continuity/involvement with Women's Bean Project over time, we can help women make lasting change that will ultimately prevent her children from repeating the cycle.

III. Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Women's Bean Project strives to break the cycle of chronic unemployment and poverty by helping women discover their talents and develop skills by offering job readiness training opportunities.

With this stepping-stone toward success, the women will be able to support themselves and their families, and create stronger role models for future generations.

Mission

Our mission is to change women's lives by providing stepping stones to self-sufficiency through social enterprise.

Statement of Guiding Principles

OPPORTUNITY

We help women help themselves. We provide opportunities for our participants to discover their talents and develop skills to join the workforce and build a better life.

SERVICE

We strive to "do well by doing good." We are a social enterprise that believes it is a basic human right to live a stable, healthy life. We serve our supporters, partners, participants and communities by delivering quality products with innovation and efficiency.

TRANSFORMATION

Our efforts transform more than the individual woman. The seeds of hope in one woman weave threads of success that expand to families and communities with a reach that touches individuals worldwide. From program participants and vendors to customers, donors and volunteers, their transformations make a difference.

EMPOWERMENT

Using the tools we provide, women are empowered to change their lives. Our supporters are empowered with the knowledge that they have contributed, not only to the self-worth and self-sufficiency of disadvantaged women, but also to the broad-reaching benefits our communities reap.

SUSTAINABILITY

Instead of a one-time handout, women acquire the tools needed to sustain themselves and their families for a lifetime. We believe in nurturing economic sustainability for our program participants and partners, being ever-mindful of our impact on the environment.

IV. Goals and Strategies

Overall, to fulfill our vision and mission, in accord with our beliefs and values, we embrace the following six goals that will provide a framework for our strategic plan and guide our activities from May 2011 through December 2014. Each department has an overarching goal and several strategic objectives to be accomplished to achieve that goal. Each Strategic Objective is broken into Phases, acknowledging that there can be many steps involved in or dependencies for accomplishing the objective.

Additional work may be required that is not currently set out in this plan, such as feasibility studies or assessments of investments required to reach our goals. As appropriate, these steps will be added.

From this plan a dashboard will be created to help us monitor our progress toward the goals.

GOAL 1: ENHANCE PROGRAM SERVICES DELIVERY SYSTEM

Strategic Objective #1.1: Assess overall program components from selection through curriculum to graduation and implement indicated changes to ensure effectiveness

- Phase One: by July 2012, Complete comprehensive program assessment
- Phase Two: by July 2013, implement indicated changes

Strategic Objective #1.2: Develop an internal job placement program component to complement partnerships with other agencies and companies

- Phase One: by July 2012, develop a job placement component
- Phase Two: by July 2013, form partnerships with employers who will commit to hiring graduates

Strategic Objective #1.3: Develop a comprehensive evaluation system to measure women's progress while in the program, and follow-up tracking to measure long-term changes in graduates as well as the social return on investment.

- Phase One: by July 2012, assess evaluation tools used to measure women's progress and make indicated adjustments
- Phase Two: by July 2012, develop and implement a follow up tracking system

- Phase Three: by June 2014, gather data that is useful for SROI analysis

GOAL 2: ENHANCE FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRENGTH TO ENSURE THE LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN'S BEAN PROJECT

Strategic Objective #2.1: Create an operating reserve

- Phase One: By December 31, 2011, determine actual amount to be placed in reserve and define use of reserves
- Phase Two: By April, 2012, determine how reserve could be seeded through operating budget set-aside
- Phase Three: June 30, 2012, with the Development committee, create strategy and implementation plan for building on reserve through donated income

Strategic Objective #2.2: Improve financial management through analysis, evaluation and measurement

- Phase One: by May 31, 2011, identify software, developer and cost of integration to convert to an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to allow for full integration of materials management, inventory, accounting and customer relationship management
- Phase Two: by September, 2011, convert to ERP system in time for 2011 holiday season
- Phase Three: by March, 2012, analyze pricing and margins by channel and make changes as needed for FYE 2013 budget
- Phase Four: by December 31, 2012, assess profitability by customer and make changes as needed for FYE 2014 budget

Strategic Objective #2.3: Develop a secondary banking relationship

- Phase One: by October, 2011, define what is needed from secondary relationship
- Phase Two: by December 31, 2011, identify prospective banking partners
- Phase Three: by May, 2012, meet with prospective banking partners and select one for secondary relationship

Strategic Objective #2.4: Develop a Social Return on Investment Analysis (SROI).

- Phase One: by June 2012, define desired end product and methodology by benchmarking to others in industry
- Phase Two: by June 2014, complete research of costs and community benefits
- Phase Three: by December 2014, calculate SROI for Women's Bean Project

Strategic Objective #2.5: Create a Business Development Committee consisting of board and community members

- Phase One: by August, 2011, identify members and invite to participate
- Phase Two: by October, 2011, conduct first meeting of newly formed business development committee

- Phase Three: by April, 2012, define criteria for seeking out new opportunities and evaluating those that come to us and develop a system for vetting them
- Ongoing: Identify new opportunities and conduct feasibility analyses

Strategic Objective #2.6: Develop a facilities plan to accommodate Growth Plans

- Phase One: by September, 2012, find expert to review current facilities constraints, both overall and seasonally
- Phase Two: by February, 2013, develop facilities plan that addresses current resources and plans for future needs based on organizational growth and plans

GOAL 3: DEVELOP MARKETING AND SALES SUPPORT TO REACH THE VISION

Strategic Objective #3.1: By the end of 2014, achieve the following revenue goals (we assume for this goal that we will set-up criteria for evaluating and assessing new product lines and markets)

- \$2M in food product sales
- \$500K in jewelry sales
- \$250K in a yet to be determined product line or channel

Phase One: by February 2012, use data provided from ERP system to complete a customer research to profile customers in all sales channels and identify 3-5 additional product lines or channels

Phase Two: by June 2012, create extensive list of new prospective customers utilizing profiles and develop sales plan for pursuing them. Document results to understand closure rate and pipeline needs

Evaluate Annually: keep sales incentives in line with targeted performance

Strategic Objective #3.2: Create an integrated Marketing Communications Plan for each target market to allow laser focus on growth

Phase One: by July 2011, hire Marketing Manager

Phase Two: by September 2011, develop integrated marketing communications plan for holiday season

Ongoing: Based on experience and data collected through the ERP system, update the plan annually

Strategic Objective #3.3: Define our brand and determine the strategy by product line based on the brand definition

Phase One: by September 2011, engage Marketing Communications committee to develop a plan for evaluating Women's Bean Project's brand

Phase Two: by March, 2012, complete brand evaluation and develop criteria for acquisitions and associations with other companies based on this brand identity

Phase Three: by August 2012, develop a plan for leveraging current brand and building national brand based on evaluation

Strategic Objective #3.4: Be a nationally recognized brand (we will create benchmarks for what that would look like)

Phase One: by August 2012, develop benchmarks to measure impact of national brand, based on work defined in Strategic Objective 3.3.

Ongoing: evaluate national brand progress on a quarterly basis

Strategic Objectives #3.5: Optimize our technology to get the best evidence-based information for marketing and sales decision making

Phase One: in June and July 2011, work ERP developer to define needs from ERP system and convert to new system by September 2011

Phase Two: by February 2012, begin using data in ERP system to forecast sales and focus sales efforts

Phase Three: identify areas of future growth

Ongoing: Utilize CERM system to plan marketing initiatives and sales efforts

GOAL 4: SUPPORT THE GROWTH IN PROGRAM OPERATIONS THROUGH CONTRIBUTED FUND DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Objective #4.1: Refine our communications regarding gifts vs. product sales for donors, customers, and corporations

Phase One: by Feb 31, 2012, survey donors and customers

Phase Two: by July 31, 2012, create standard language for communication re: donations/purchases.

Strategic Objective #4.2: Improve our information systems to allow for growth of donors and moves management

Phase One: by July, 2011, create tools needed to transfer data to new system

Phase Two: (timeframe): by September, 2011, convert to ERP system

Strategic Objective #4.3: Increase the role of the business community with WBP through

Phase One: by Dec 31, 2011 develop increased sponsorship opportunities for local and national businesses

Phase Two: by April 30 2012, increase sponsorship dollars at Ready, Set, Grow to \$40,000 (a 53% increase year over year)

Strategic Objective #4.4: Commit to raising 25% of operating budget each year, as determined by product sales

Phase One: by April 30, 2012 Secure 100% underwriting of Ready, Set, Grow through sponsorship (see also Phase Two of 4.3)

Phase Two: In conjunction with Program Department, determine dollars needed for increased program services. Based on this information, create major gifts plan by June 30, 2012.

Strategic Objective #4.5: Support the finance committee in achieving its goal of creating an operating reserve

Phase One: By June 30, 2012 Work with Finance Committee to create strategy for building on reserve through donated income

Phase Two: By October 30, 2012 Develop language for prospective major gift/planned giving donors around need for operating reserve

Strategic Objective #4.6: Create a planned giving program

Phase One: by June 30, 2011 staff will attend the CPGR planned giving symposium

Phase Two: by August 30, 2011, identify next steps for planned giving efforts and develop plan

GOAL 5: ENHANCE OPERATIONS TO IMPROVE BUSINESS EFFICIENCIES, LOWER COSTS AND BETTER UTILIZE RESOURCES

Strategic Objective #5.1: Implement an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system

Phase One: by May, 2011, identify system to be used, developer to implement the system and cost of implementation.

Phase Two: by Holiday Season 2011, implement the ERP system

Phase Three: by March, 2012, identify changes needed to the ERP system and implement changes by Holiday Season 2012

Strategic Objective #5.2: Create and document protocols for Shipping and Receiving

Phase One: by Holiday Season 2011, document all protocols for shipping and receiving, ensuring needed features are built into the ERP system

Phase Two: by June, 2012, identify and implement changes needed to systems for effective, accurate and cost effective shipping and receiving

Strategic Objective #5.3: Identify ways to utilize internal labor resources in additional ways, such as drop shipping/order fulfillment and outsourced manufacturing

Phase 1: by March, 2012, understand costs and create criteria to easily assess opportunities for outsourcing labor

Phase 2: if feasible, research possible outsourced co-packing relationships, invite others to contact us

Phase 3: working in tandem with the sales department, create operational systems for drop ship relationships as needed

GOAL 6: ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT IS IN PLACE TO ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS

Strategic Objective #6.1: engage in advocacy to address the disincentive presented to our target population

Phase One: by May 2012, identify ways WBP could get involved in advocacy and for which issues

Phase Two: by July 2012, get board approval to participate in specific advocacy

Phase Three: by May 2013, develop and implement plan for identified issues

Strategic Objective #6.2: develop a staffing plan to address the changes planned for the Bean Project during this plan

Phase One: by February, 2012, update all job descriptions with actual roles and responsibilities, noting skills and opportunities with current staff members

Phase Two: Each year during the budget cycle thoroughly evaluate existing staffing levels and determine need for additional staff or changes in roles in responsibilities. With this information we will anticipate changes needed in staffing in response to changes within the organization.

Strategic Objective #6.3: Develop a sustainability/social responsibility report that audits Women's Bean Project's consistency with its Guiding Principles and identifies areas for improvement

Phase One: by July, 2011, apply for grant from ERM Group to conduct a pro bono audit of sustainability/social responsibility

Phase Two: this phase will be dependent on receipt of the grant, but will consist of performing the audit

Phase Three: upon completion of the audit, take recommendations and incorporate into a plan to improve as needed.

V. Conclusion

In order to succeed, this plan must be used – the ideas in it must be tried and tested, and progress of goals tracked, measured, evaluated and refined. Feedback will be provided to all parties responsible for implementing this plan, ranging from staff to Board members, and to external entities helping achieve these goals. Accumulated experience and ongoing discussions about values, goals and strategies will allow the plan to continue to be relevant and to change and adapt to new conditions.

We are optimistic that the approach described herein will both provide the powerful and positive impact on the community, while ensuring the financial strength of the organization. We look to this plan to provide a signpost for future staff members and Board members, being fluid and flexible to respond to the ever-challenging constant of change.

After adoption of this plan by the Board of Directors and staff members, a dashboard will be created to help us monitor our progress on a consistent and ongoing basis as we work toward fulfillment of this plan.