

## AWB STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2024

### VISION, MISSION, AND PRINCIPLES

#### Vision

A world where a quality higher education is available to everyone.

#### Mission

We help people in the developing world realize their dreams through higher education because education is the key to a flourishing society and a sustainable world.

#### Principles and Focus

- *Capacity Building*  
We believe that the best way to support a country's development is to contribute to the ability of its institutions to drive progressive change.
- *Focus on Higher Education*  
We believe that higher education is essential to a country able to offer its citizens a prosperous, healthy, just, and sustainable society. Our focus is on building quality and capacity in degree-granting institutions.
- *Focus on Providing Support Where Most Needed*  
We believe that we can have the most impact by working in the poorest countries and regions in the world. Our work centres on countries that are low or medium in the UNDP Human Development Index.
- *Focus on Collaboration with Partners*  
We believe in supporting the needs of developing countries as they see them. We develop long-term relationships of mutual respect with our partners in the developing world; our partners propose and design our projects.
- *Focus on Sustainable Impact*  
We believe in having a long-term, sustainable impact. Our projects leave a lasting legacy of increased capacity and quality.
- *Focus on Volunteers*  
We believe that the best work comes from true, passionate volunteers who have a high level of expertise. Volunteers who contribute their skills and wisdom are essential to our projects.

## **AWB'S ACTION PILLARS**

AWB's work is demand driven, responding to specific requests for support from our partner institutions. Shaped by this directive, AWB projects reflect local rather than externally-defined needs, priorities and capacities and therefore are likely to be relevant, impactful and sustainable.

Thus, the particular characteristics of an AWB project are defined by our partner institution, not by AWB. However, there are a number of areas that are especially important to building the capacity and enhancing the quality of higher education. We identify these areas as AWB Action Pillars and monitor the extent to which our projects contribute to each of them.

1. *Develop Academic Programs*  
We work with faculty to design programs that connect with relevant content needs.
2. *Teach the Teacher*  
We work with partner faculty to improve the competencies of post-secondary educators.
3. *Build Research Capacity*  
We engage in programs to enhance the research skills of faculty relevant to local problems and opportunities.
4. *Build Non-Academic Support Systems*  
We work with faculty and professional staff to develop effective locally relevant policies and procedures in support of their work.
5. *Build Capacity for Student Success*  
We work with partner institutions on initiatives to achieve broad student life outcomes not directly articulated in teaching and learning objectives. These may include initiatives to create learning environments that would enable every student to succeed.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2022-2024

AWB will focus on its five action pillars. Details of our plans for each action pillar are given below.

### Action Pillar 1: Develop Academic Programs

1. *Improve living conditions and well-being*  
AWB will develop programs for local professionals and leaders to improve conditions in areas such as health, education, technology, infrastructure, commerce and civil society.
2. *Collaborate with partners*  
AWB will help identify needs and provide volunteer support for development of program objectives and curricula.
3. *Develop locally relevant programs*  
AWB will effectively deploy resources to apply the best global thinking to local programs.
4. *Provide ongoing consulting*  
AWB will collaborate with partners on program modification and development to meet changing needs over time.

Progress Indicators:

- Partner satisfaction
- Program implementation within 5 years
- High levels of graduate employment
- Accreditation by local agencies/colleges

### Action Pillar 2: Teach the Teacher

1. *Recommend teaching methods*  
AWB will advise on optimal teaching approaches, online and live, for existing and proposed programs.
2. *Develop teaching competencies*  
AWB will support volunteers in providing teaching training at the partner's location – pedagogy, curriculum, assessment.
3. *Provide ongoing support for teaching*  
AWB will follow up on training with additional materials, mentoring, and workshops.
4. *Provide gap teaching but only where it builds local capacity through mentoring and co-teaching*

Where local faculty are not available, AWB will selectively support volunteers in teaching courses as part of a program to build local capacity. Progress Indicators:

- Partner satisfaction with teaching training
- Number of faculty trained
- Participant evaluation of training sessions
- Learning outcome assessment

### **Action Pillar 3: Build Research Capacity**

1. *Mentor research faculty in partner institutions*  
AWB will develop faculty research skills through courses, workshops, and joint projects.
2. *Identify research needs*  
AWB will consult with partners on research questions that have local impact.
3. *Apply scientific thinking to challenging problems*  
In collaboration with partners, AWB will use rigorous methods to understand local phenomena.
4. *Disseminate findings locally and globally*  
AWB will contribute to knowledge and applied problem solving through online and offline publications, conferences, etc.

Progress Indicators:

- Partner faculty publications
- Citations of partner faculty
- Partner satisfaction

### **Action Pillar 4: Non-Academic Support Systems**

1. *Target administrative challenges*  
AWB will consult with partners to understand where administrative operations need to be established or improved.
2. *Develop leadership*  
AWB will provide training, coaching, and mentoring of administrative leaders at partner institutions.
3. *Develop administrative self-sufficiency*  
AWB will impart skills in running the system through coaching and mentoring.

Progress Indicators:

- Partner satisfaction
- Student satisfaction

- Participant evaluation of workshops

### **Action Pillar 5: Build Capacity for Student Success**

1. *Develop initiatives to increase student retention*  
AWB will help partner institutions to develop and implement strategies for engaging students to increase completion rates.
2. *Develop programs to increase students' generic skills necessary for post-degree employment.*  
AWB will mentor faculty in curricular and pedagogical approaches for enhancing students' employment readiness skills.
3. *Develop skills in teaching and learning in online and blended learning environments*  
AWB will build capacity in online teaching and learning where technology infrastructure allows.
4. *Help partner institutions to develop projects for promoting mental health and accommodating disabilities.*  
AWB will collaborate with partner institutions in developing services that enhance students' mental health and promote accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

#### Progress Indicators:

- Student engagement
- Increased student retention
- High levels of post-degree employment
- Increased use of technology in teaching and learning

## OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

Operational support for the five action pillars includes the following:

1. *Organizational Development*  
Enhance organizational development, including planning for succession readiness.
2. *Promotion*  
Build the AWB brand and relationships with other organizations.
3. *Fundraising*  
Build relationships with large and small donors.
4. *AWB Network*  
Expand the Network of Canadian post-secondary institutions and forge links between them and those in developing countries.
5. *Flexible and Effective Project Delivery*  
Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of AWB's work and reduce our environmental impact by a flexible approach to project delivery, involving blended or entirely online activity.
6. *Volunteer Experience and Exposure*  
Facilitate relationships between academics in developed and developing countries.  
Facilitate community building amongst our volunteers and between our partner institutions.

**Approved:** November 9, 2021

**To be reviewed:** Annually