Golden Future
Organizational Review & Program Evaluation

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Executive Summary

Golden Future is an outreach project aimed at improving the lives of Khayelitsha youth and their community (located near the city of Cape Town, in the Western Province of South Africa). The project was launched in 2007 through the vision of Gary Kalaci, a former student of business and law at the University of Windsor. Recognizing the enormous and prevalent needs of marginalized communities in the Province, Kalaci collaborated with students from various universities in Canada and students from the University of Cape Town to launch the project. The central aim of the project is to facilitate and encourage peer dialogue and learning among the youth in five local high schools1 about a wide range of topics, including health and well-being, relationship-building, life skills, and educational discovery and career planning. The project also works with local business owners in the Khayelitsha community to promote social entrepreneurship and offer strategies for sustainability. Since the organization’s inception, Golden Future has served over 5000 youth, and it includes over 250 volunteer alumni of the project, one-fourth of whom are actively engaged with fundraising efforts to those who participate on-the-ground with the project annually.

In the fall of 2014, Kalaci invited Dr. Pamela Roy to conduct a year-long organizational review and program evaluation of Golden Future, including the observation of volunteers “in action” on the ground in South Africa. With this charge, Roy designed online assessments, feedback forms, and focus-group interviews. She collected and analyzed the data gathered, resulting in the recommendations included in this report. Table 1 summarizes the sources of data that Roy collected between January to May, 2015 with the 28 Golden Future Volunteers that participated in the 2015 trip, and with the Khayelitsha youth and management team members that participated in interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Data Gathering Activity</th>
<th>People Who Participated in the Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2015</td>
<td>Online Pre-Departure Survey</td>
<td>Completed by 28 Golden Future Volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2015</td>
<td>90-minute Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>With 6 Management Team Members</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>Observation of Module Facilitation</td>
<td>Of 28 Golden Future Volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>120-minute Focus Group Interview</td>
<td>With 23 Golden Future Volunteers (the remaining 5 volunteers provided feedback of their experiences via email)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>15-minute Interviews</td>
<td>2 Khayelitsha Alumni Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>Feedback Forms</td>
<td>Collected from 120 Khayelitsha High School Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 2014 – May 2015</td>
<td>Personal Communications &amp; Observation With management team and in training sessions</td>
<td>Pamela Roy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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1 Usasazo Secondary School located at Bangiso Drive, Victoria Merge, Khayelitsha, Western Cape, South Africa; Sizimisele High School located at 20881 Govan Mbeki Rd, Mandela Park, Western Cape South Africa; Uxolo High School located at Mandela Park, Cape Town, 7784, South Africa; Harry Gwala Secondary School located at T3-V4, Cape Town, 7784, South Africa; and Esangweni Secondary School located at Town 3, Cape Town, 7784, South Africa.
The group of 28 volunteers who participated in the project in 2015 was from Winnipeg, Toronto, and Windsor, Canada and New York, New York, USA. These volunteers represented a wide range of disciplinary knowledge, such as business, social work, allied health fields, biology, education, and engineering. Collectively, they spoke 10 different languages and have travel experience to over 30 countries worldwide, both for personal and professional ventures. As dedicated volunteers serving the Khayelitsha youth, they worked in solidarity to raise the visibility and awareness of the project and the peoples of the Khayelitsha community.

**Key Findings**

Golden Future is a thriving organization with unparalleled commitments from its broad base of volunteers, including over 50 volunteer alumni who are actively engaged in strengthening and building upon the momentum of each successive year.

The organizational leadership includes a dedicated group of past volunteers who are committed to ensuring the project’s future. However, *the organization’s growth and sustainability is contingent upon it taking active measures to formalize and professionalize its operations*; recommendations for doing so are provided in this report.

The project could benefit from transparent recordkeeping, and documentation of fundraising efforts. The project should consider directing donations to plans that will sustain and increase the relevance of the project, with particular emphasis on improving the programmatic experiences of the youth and the communities that Golden Future serves. Chapters should continue to exercise management and oversight of their fundraising efforts; however, a percentage of the funds raised should be earmarked for centralized purposes to support staffing of the project and leveraging programmatic efforts.

**The content development and training volunteers on their modules should be centralized at the management team level.** Module leads should conduct training in-person, when possible. Training should include four broad topics: (1) safety and security, including a review of ethical practices and child-safeguarding policies (2) cultural sensitivity, including methods for effective teaching and learning, (3) module meetings to prepare volunteers for being on-the-ground, and (4) an on-site, day-long retreat in South Africa for all volunteers for the purposes of practicing module delivery and team-building.

**Actionable Recommendations**

The following recommendations are intended to support the growth and sustainability of the Golden Future project as the organization continues to build upon its legacy, and to deepen and leverage programmatic goals and outcomes. The recommendations have been developed by Dr. Roy and incorporate the feedback from all sources of data listed in table. These recommendations have been organized into five broad themes: (1) organizational structure and leadership; (2) curricular and modular development; (3) health, safety, and risk management; (4) community-building and visibility; and (5) assessment and evaluation.
Organizational Structure and Leadership

1. Create an organizational structure, including an executive board that provides strategic direction, leadership and policy development for the project, and a management team that oversees the day-to-day operations of the project.

2. Identify volunteers for the various leadership positions, and disseminate this report widely.

3. Communicate the organizational structure to new and existing members through a chart which delineates and describes the roles and responsibilities of its leadership, and pathways of communication.

4. Create a timeline of the project’s life cycle (i.e., establish a calendar of events that reflect the year-round planning and development of content, training, trip logistics, communication with schools etc.). Socialize the organization to use the timeline for all planning and forecasting purposes.

5. Explore the most appropriate pathway for the Golden Future project to formalize into an organization (i.e., not-for-profit Corporation v. charitable organization, etc.). Create a capacity-building and strategic leadership working group to explore these pathways and take steps to achieve formal status by 2016.

6. Create a centralized recruitment strategy, and update materials so that they align with the vision of the organization. Provide leadership to other chapters on recruitment-related expectations, timelines, and targets.

7. Re-visit the language used to brand the project, and align it with best practices used in research and development work globally. Update websites and content in modules.

8. Formalize a process for the storage and maintenance of all Golden Future related documents so as to build organizational memory.

Financial Structure and Fundraising

1. Create a business plan to secure funding to staff an Executive Director position for the organization, and recruit a qualified candidate to commence duties in January 2016.

2. Form a centralized plan for, and communicate with the organization on how donations raised from fundraising efforts (across all Chapters) will be allocated towards the purchasing of context-specific supplies (e.g., luci lights), programming that benefits the youth learners, and administrative costs (e.g., supporting a paid staff position). Each Chapter should be expected to contribute a dollar value (to be
determined), with remaining funds to be used by Chapters to subsidize the trip. The Chapter contribution should take into consideration appropriate fundraising targets for full-time students v. employed professionals.

Curricular and Modular Development

1. Centralize the development of modules at the management team level. Assign 1 to 2 individuals to lead curricular revisions, in collaboration with the Executive Director who will serve as the content and teaching and learning expert.

2. Use the feedback collected from students in Khayelitsha and the observations on the ground to improve the culturally responsibility of the modules in order to better meet needs of learners.

3. Develop culturally appropriate visual materials and resources for each module, particularly for the health module.

4. Re-orient the education and career module toward a process of discovery for the learners, and work with career experts to create modules that identify relevant and appropriate pathways for transition for this population of youth (i.e., further education, work, or entrepreneurship).

5. Explore appropriate methodology and content for the life skills modules, beyond question-box format.

Health, Safety, and Risk Management

1. Provide all volunteers with a safety workshop prior to arrival in South Africa, to include theft avoidance measures, safety tips, familiarization with the local context, etc.

2. Create an incident report and reporting mechanisms to follow up on safety-related issues that occur on the ground.

3. Establish a clear set of guidelines for how volunteers should act: ethically, appropriately, and responsibly on the ground. These guidelines should also reflect a balanced approach to time spent in South Africa, and proper emphasis on volunteer work.

4. Work with local providers to offer alternative programming activities in the evening, such as traditional cooking or dancing classes, meeting local university professionals or young professionals, etc.

5. Continue to plan hotel accommodations in areas of the city that are safe and accessible to local amenities, and that meet the needs of the project.
6. Continue to disseminate a pre-departure package that includes safety tips, travel advice, local emergency contacts, and provide all volunteers with a list of travelers prior to departure.

7. Consider the holistic health and wellness of volunteers on the ground by offering freedom of choice for evening activities, more affordable restaurant options, and free periods to re-energize from long days.

Community-Building and Visibility

1. Organize a one-day retreat for the board, management team, and chapter presidents, to be held in Toronto in September annually for the purposes of team-building, goal setting, communication strategizing, and planning.

2. Create pathways for greater involvement of local South Africans in the project. For example, teachers who are similar in age and background to the learners can serve as volunteers with the project by (1) being paired with each module to develop locally relevant content, (2) sharing their journey and story with the youth while on the ground, and (3) interacting with Canadian volunteers while on site for a deeper and more meaningful volunteer experience.

3. Explore ways in which to create a more varied experience for volunteer by way of engaging with schools in other townships in Cape Town, beyond Khayelitsha, and perhaps even in other more economically disadvantaged provinces, such as Eastern Cape and Gauteng.

4. Consider the advantages, challenges, and opportunities for embedding community-building initiatives into the project’s scope such as working with a local NGO that aligns with the vision of the organization.

5. Explore relationships with ABSA Bank and other local South African enterprises to cost-match Canadian fund raising and deepen programmatic offerings for volunteers.

Assessment and Evaluation

1. Integrate assessment and evaluation into the core fabric of the organization, beginning with the creation of a new position on the executive board for an Assessment Chair. The Chair would work with the Executive Director to manage data, monitor assessment efforts, and produce reports twice a year to document learning.

2. Adopt formal language in the recruitment materials that require volunteers to actively participate and engage in organizational assessment efforts.
3. Create a “bio” form for volunteers to complete and share with all volunteers traveling to South Africa so as to initiate early team-building practices.

4. Solicit funding to support a pilot project to understand the effectiveness of Golden Future’s work on the learners and the local community. Use the findings to adapt and modify the project. Present findings locally, nationally, and internationally as applicable.

5. Develop a comprehensive plan to systematically track the accomplishment of the students who have participated in the project, such as matriculation into colleges and universities, or gainful employment. Other ways of capturing the project’s success will also be explored.

6. Continue to build upon the 2014 blog to capture learning and share the Golden Future volunteer stories widely.

Acknowledgements

A sincere thank-you to Gary Kalaci for the opportunity to learn about and engage deeply with the Golden Future project from observation to participation on-the-ground to involvement in co-facilitating training sessions with volunteers throughout the year. I am also grateful to Faustina Kalaci for her support and providing me with a holistic view of the organization’s operations and history – without which I would not have developed a comprehensive understanding of Golden Future. Thank you also to Stephanie Martin, Gillian Dingle, and Faustina and Gary Kalaci for their input in and review of this report. This report would not have been possible without the cooperation of the 2015 Golden Future volunteers who participated in the numerous data gathering activities in Canada and in South Africa, as well as the 2014-2015 management team members who provided their historical perspectives about the project. Perhaps the most critical to this report were the Khayelitshana students who shared their stories openly and willingly with me, and through their feedback forms – I hope that the project’s programs and priorities continue to be shaped and influenced by the valuable insights that you have offered about your livelihoods and experiences in the classroom.