



Exit Strategy

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Organizational Profile	3
1. Purpose	5
2. Guiding Principles	5
3. Exit Approaches	5
4. Exit Planning and Implementation	6
5. Sustainability and Local Ownership	6
6. Roles and Responsibilities	7
7. Post-Exit Follow-up and Learning	7

Organizational Profile

Bargad is a youth development organization actively working to promote peace, justice and cooperation amongst the youth¹ in Pakistan. The organization has focused on creating opportunities and amplifying the voices of the youth ever since its inception in 1997, leading to a vast network of around 3000 youth volunteers, known as the Bargad Volunteer Network (BVN) throughout the country.

Bargad's Vision:

Politically, socially and economically empowered youth and women, respect, protect and promote peace and harmony

Bargad's Mission:

- a. Engage vulnerable youth and women in all diversity to their full potential through education, mentorship and innovative interventions designed to enhance their overall well-being.
- b. To invest in youth-led and youth-centred ideas, to convene key stakeholders in the sector and advocate for systems and policy changes that meet youths' needs.
- c. Engage youth to end violence against women.

Bargad has implemented more than 100 projects on youth training², youth mobilization and policy advocacy, including the provision of technical assistance to all the provincial governments of Pakistan, regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and the State of Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) for the formulation of their respective youth policies. These policies have been approved by the provincial governments of Punjab (2012), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2016) and Sindh (2018), and Balochistan (2024) resulting in governments' pledges to allocate 4% budget to sports and youth affairs, 15% on the women employment quota, implementation of the E-Rozgar programs, and on youth participation in the local governments, respectively. Bargad has also conducted Capacity Enhancement workshops on youth development with officials of the youth affairs departments of Punjab, Balochistan and Sindh.

Bargad has a youth network of 782 individuals, civil society organizations and government institutions, with Youth engagements with 64 Universities, 40 Colleges and 35 Higher Secondary Schools.

The organization has previously partnered with 26 membership based student organizations and 15 Youth Groups over Pakistan; producing the largest pool of researches and publications on

¹ Adolescents: 12-19; Youth age bracket in Pakistan: 15-29

² Since 2003, the organization has trained 7880 youth activists and young faculty only through training workshops and peer sessions in issues of social development.

various aspects of youth than any other civil society organization in Pakistan, while also pioneering a youth track of peace and diplomacy in the South Asian region.

The hallmark of the organization is that its core youth volunteers participate in all aspects of the projects - from action-planning to project execution, while also mapping in the course of its work; issues as well as challenges identified by the youth across the country³.

³ The Youth in the mapping is part of the Youth Cohorts in the districts where Bargad has actively worked or is presently working.

1. Purpose

This Exit Strategy provides a practical framework for concluding or transferring BARGAD's projects and initiatives in a responsible and sustainable manner. It aims to protect programme achievements, maintain stakeholder confidence, and support the continuation of appropriate benefits after BARGAD's direct involvement ends.

The strategy applies to projects, community initiatives, youth hubs, networks, and partnerships implemented or supported by BARGAD. The scale and form of each exit shall depend on the nature, duration, resources, and commitments of the relevant programme.

2. Guiding Principles

BARGAD's exit planning shall be guided by the following principles:

- **Early planning:** Exit arrangements should be considered during programme design and reviewed throughout implementation.
- **Local ownership:** Relevant youth groups, communities, partners, and institutions should participate in planning the transition.
- **Sustainability:** Priority should be given to maintaining useful services, relationships, skills, and programme benefits where reasonably possible.
- **Capacity development:** Local structures should be prepared to assume agreed responsibilities before handover.
- **Transparency:** Donors, partners, staff, communities, and beneficiaries should receive timely and accurate information about the exit.
- **Responsible handover:** Records, knowledge, assets, relationships, and responsibilities should be transferred through documented arrangements.
- **Do no harm:** The exit should avoid creating unnecessary disruption, unrealistic expectations, or unmanaged financial and operational obligations.

3. Exit Approaches

Depending on the programme, BARGAD may adopt one or more of the following approaches:

- **Phase-down:** Gradually reduce activities, staffing, or financial support while local capacity and ownership are strengthened.
- **Handover:** Transfer agreed responsibilities, services, knowledge, or assets to a capable community structure, partner organisation, public institution, network, or other appropriate body.

- **Integration:** Support the inclusion of successful programme activities or approaches within an existing institution, network, or public-sector system.
- **Closure:** Conclude activities when continuation or transfer is not feasible, ensuring that contractual, financial, administrative, and communication requirements are properly completed.

4. Exit Planning and Implementation

Before concluding a programme, BARGAD shall, where applicable:

1. Review programme achievements, outstanding commitments, risks, and activities that may reasonably continue.
2. Consult relevant donors, partners, staff, community representatives, youth groups, and beneficiaries.
3. Identify capable individuals, groups, networks, or institutions that may assume agreed responsibilities.
4. Provide appropriate orientation, mentoring, documentation, or capacity-building support.
5. Determine the arrangements for programme records, equipment, assets, partnerships, and beneficiary information in accordance with donor agreements and BARGAD's policies.
6. Communicate the exit timeline, responsibilities, and limitations of BARGAD's continuing role.
7. Complete required programme, financial, donor, audit, contractual, and administrative obligations.
8. Document the handover or closure and retain the relevant records.

Exit arrangements should be proportionate to the size and complexity of the programme. They should not create commitments that BARGAD, its partners, or local stakeholders cannot reasonably fulfil.

5. Sustainability and Local Ownership

Where programme activities are expected to continue after BARGAD's exit, the transition should promote local ownership and institutional sustainability. Depending on the programme context, this may include:

- Establishing or strengthening representative local governance and management structures;
- Developing the leadership and organizational capacity of youth groups, community organizations, networks, or partner institutions;
- Maintaining appropriate relationships with government departments, universities, technical institutions, businesses, civil-society organizations, and community groups;
- Transferring relevant knowledge, systems, records, relationships, and responsibilities;

- Supporting the continuation of useful services such as skills development, mentoring, employment linkages, enterprise support, community engagement, and access to information; and
- Exploring realistic sources of local income or institutional support, including service fees, facility use, training, certification, enterprise-development services, partnerships, or other contextually appropriate arrangements.

Sustainability arrangements shall be based on local capacity, stakeholder demand, available resources, and the nature of the programme. BARGAD shall avoid transferring responsibilities or financial obligations that the receiving structure cannot reasonably manage.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Director shall oversee exit planning, ensure compliance with Board decisions, donor agreements, and organizational policies, and approve the operational arrangements for handover or closure.

Programme, finance, operations, and administrative staff shall complete their respective programme, financial, contractual, asset, documentation, and communication responsibilities.

The Board of Directors shall be informed of significant exits and shall approve any matter requiring Board authorization, including the transfer of substantial organizational assets, major institutional commitments, or closure decisions with material implications for BARGAD.

7. Post-Exit Follow-up and Learning

Where appropriate and within available resources, BARGAD may conduct limited follow-up with the receiving partner or community structure to review the continuation of agreed activities and identify any emerging concerns.

A brief completion or exit note should record:

- The approach adopted;
- Responsibilities and assets transferred;
- Outstanding matters, if any;
- Key results and lessons; and
- Recommendations for future programmes