

EMPOWERED TO BE AUTHENTIC WITNESS TO ALL

I am sister Celestine Akumu Achari from the congregation of the Little Sisters of St. Joseph (LSSJ). Currently, I stay in our community in Karen-Nairobi as a part-time student. Attending finance track one and two through SLDI has been a very precious moment in my lifetime. A lot has been put across but for me what struck me most is the beauty in the knowledge on strategic planning. Initially, I have been thinking that writing strategic planning for an organization is only the work of professionals who are hired and paid a lot of money and they have to do everything. With such kind of ignorance, I have realized and also remembered how several strategic plans within certain organizations lie on the shelf and are not implemented just because those who manage those institutions do not understand but think it's only a requirement to provide to fulfill some policies when demand be.

From what I have learned I understand Strategic planning as the process of documenting and establishing a direction of my organization or institution by assessing both where the organization/institution is and where it is going. The strategic plan gives me a place to state our mission, vision, and values, as well as our long-term goals and the action plans, we will use to reach them. From my understanding, a well-written strategic plan plays a pivotal role in our organization/institution's growth and success because it tells us and our employees how best to respond to opportunities and challenges around us. Although strategic planning is a process and it takes some time, it is beneficial for everyone in an organization if all are involved. It enables participants to have better ideas of the goals and objectives the organization wants to accomplish and a path to do that which can foster an increase in productivity, performance, and achievements.

At the core of our mission statement is the commitment to the knowledgeable development and personal empowerment that comes from the skills of an excellent substantial ability to think critically, analyze and solve problems, and confidently communicate with others across lines of difference for the benefit of the organization or institution. Therefore, to me, the strategic plan reaffirms our commitment as religious to our mission, vision and builds upon the momentum of the last strategic planning process by focusing on those elements of our institution or organization essentials for sustainable excellence in the increasingly competitive environment around us to strengthen the institution.

Besides, strategic planning keeps an organization on track over time and allows the organization to respond to change while remaining faithful to its mission and vision. The process itself may have as much value to the organization as the final plan since so much can be learned from surveying both the position of the organization and the state of the environment in which the organization operates.

Even though I was strongly inspired by strategic planning, generally, the course has been very interesting. From the beginning, I have learned a lot and discover that they call for my attention to put into practice all I have acquired for the three years because they are effective even in our unique apostolates. The knowledge of quick book has empowered and made easy my knowledge on accounting and double-entry with consideration of cost-effectiveness. Besides, I feel now enlightened on issues about project accounting, grants, donations, and designated funds. It was an opportunity to be empowered more on financial sustainability beginning from the little we have and the ones we resource. For personal life, I am now aware and enlightened about conflict, stress, and negotiation skills which are the reality of our daily living.

As I thank God for this opportunity of learning and knowledge gained, I look forward to utilizing it to: Manage my personal life and be able to be an agent of conflict resolution, negotiator, and stress. Am motivated to go and write a strategic plan for one of our primary school as one way of practice, use my knowledge for the quick book for improving my community accounts as an accountant. To any apostolate given I will ensure that I make my journal on daily expenses so that to update other accounts necessary in the organization. In dealing with people, I will use my knowledge of stress, conflict resolution, and facilitation to build teamwork, unity, and cooperation.

Therefore, I thank God who enabled us to have this course online and do it despite the present challenge of COVID -19. To African Sisters Education Collaborative, I appreciate your effort and hard work towards empowering us within the three years despite the challenges. May God bless you. As we become alumni full of knowledge and skills it's our hope and prayer that we may become authentic witnesses to the people we serve and also empower many in the society beginning with our communities and projects. I also thank our facilitators Sr. Irene and Sr. Penninah, Mr. Daniel, and Mr. Bonface for their patience and good spirit of sharing with us knowledge and skills to use in our future apostolates. I hope that this knowledge will boost me in

my mission and service to others, may God reward you. Thank you all and may God bless you.



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