



# 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

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# Executive Summary

Since Community Action Network (CAN)'s existing strategic plan is set to expire in 2024, it was time to create a new one for 2025-2029. The new plan accounts for CAN's expansion into sustainability, the success of its growing food distribution program and its creation of CAN Cares.

CAN worked with two Board Fellows through the University of Michigan Ross School of Business's Board Fellowship program from September 2023-April 2024 to develop its strategic plan. The Board Fellows conducted a survey, primary research interviews, and an interactive workshop to better understand stakeholders' opinions on CAN's current work and gather ideas for where it should go in the next 5 years.

From this research, the Board Fellows formulated goals in six areas (within two larger buckets) and a set of steps to reach each goal. These six areas are: program expansion, existing program improvement, evaluation, operations and staffing, fundraising and board.

The following Strategic Plan serves to guide CAN over the next five years. It should be a "living document" that is regularly revisited and adjusted to reflect changing circumstances.



# Methodology

## Survey

*Nov. to Dec. 2023*

- 13 Community Members
- 11 Staff Members
- 10 Volunteers
- 7 Clients
- 4 Members of Partner Orgs
- 4 Board Members
- 2 Donors
- 1 Unpaid Intern
- 1 Observer

Survey questions [here](#). Respondents were asked their perspective on CAN's work, improvement areas, and hopes for the future.

## Interviews

*Nov. to Dec. 2023*

- 5 Staff Members
- 5 Volunteers
- 4 Funders
- 3 Board Members
- 1 Client

Interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes. Respondents were asked for feedback on CAN's current work, areas of strength and growth for CAN. All interviews remained confidential and holistic results are incorporated in the final report.

## Workshop

*March 2024*

- ~25 people representing staff, funders, partner organizations, donors, board members, volunteers and clients

3 ½ hour workshop to brainstorm community needs and solicit ideas for 4 focus areas: expansion, program improvement, evaluation and operations. Feedback synthesized for final report.

## Draft

*April 2024*

- Aggregate information from survey, interviews, workshop and board feedback to produce final deliverable

Deliverable includes 6 focus areas: program expansion, existing program improvement, evaluation, operations and staffing, fundraising, and board

Action items outlined, to be filled out with CAN staff and leadership.



# High-Level Strategic Plan Outline

## Program Growth:

**Program  
Expansion**

**Existing  
Program  
Improvement**

**Evaluation**

## Organization and Infrastructure:

**Operations  
and Staffing**

**Fundraising**

**Board**

# Program Growth

## Program Expansion

### **Integrate CAN's full suite of programs and services at all sites:**

- Sustainability: (1) Build out resilience hubs at 6 locations
- Education: Implement consistent middle/high school curriculum at five locations
- CAN CARES: Expand program to reach adults at 6 locations- implement adult support groups, host annual resource fair(s), identify at least one partner organization for mental health support
- Emergency fund for families: Increase the pool of funds for housing stabilization by 10% each year

## Existing Program Improvement

- Community-Building: (1) Hold 2 adult-focused social events per year per site; (2) Host 4 or more family-based community events per year per site
- Food program: (1) Increase annual pounds distributed by 7.5% each year; (2) Increase financial support for family food needs (10%); (3) Increase personal need items distribution by 5% per year
- Education: (1) Use an evaluation tool to ensure key program components are consistently implemented across all sites; (2) Identify, cultivate, or maintain 5 key partnerships per year that address specific youth development needs

## Evaluation

- Create a process to collect main data points yearly, maintain consistency.
- "State of CAN" metric presentation quarterly
- Systematic eval of all programs (ed, health equity, food security, sustainability, etc.)
- Develop holistic household impact analysis process

# Action Items: Program Expansion

Action	Responsible	Timing	Status
Sustainability: Build out resilience hubs at 6 locations			
Education: Implement consistent middle/high school curriculum across applicable sites			
CAN CARES: Expand program to reach adults			
Emergency fund for families: create a pool of funds for eviction prevention work (basic needs)			

# Action Items: Existing Program Improvement

Action	Responsible	Timing	Status
Community-Building: Hold more adult-focused social events			
Host joint site events			
Food program: (1) Increase annual pounds distributed by 10% each year (2) Increase financial support for family food needs (10%) (3) Increase basic needs distribution			
Education: (1) Ensure key program components are consistently implemented (2) Identify, cultivate, and maintain 5 key partnerships per year that address specific youth develop needs [not currently addressed by CAN]			

# Action Items: Evaluation

Action	Responsible	Timing	Status
Create a process to collect main data points yearly, maintain consistency.			
Systematic eval of all programs (1) Education (2) Health equity (3) Food security [identify categories of food], (4) Eviction utility shut off prevention (5) Sustainability			
Develop holistic household impact analysis process			



# Organization and Infrastructure

## Operations and Staffing

- Create Program Lead position at all education program sites
- Revamp staff onboarding and offboarding
- Proactively measure and improve retention, wellness, and culture
- Develop effective staff evaluation and development plans
- Assess application of Americorps VISTA program
- Increase staff/volunteer diversity to be more representative of CAN's service population in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and gender identity

## Fundraising

- Hold a donor/volunteer appreciation event each year
- Develop intentional outreach strategies for current fundraising events/campaigns per year
- Secure new resources by 10% each year and grow existing partnerships for food distribution.
- Increase broader community engagement by expanding marketing/advertising strategies

## Board

- Revamp board onboarding
- Increase board diversity in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and gender identity to be more representative of CAN's service population
- Create board guidance documents for stewardship
- Develop a set of clear expectations for all board members which includes multiple ways for board member involvement



# Action Items: Operations and Staffing

Action	Responsible	Timing	Status
Create Program Lead position at all education program sites			
Revamp staff onboarding			
Team working session to improve retainment and wellness, build culture			
Develop Americorps VISTA program evaluation			
Increase staff / volunteer diversity			
Volunteer appreciation events			

# Action Items: Fundraising

Action	Responsible	Timing	Status
Hold a donor/volunteer appreciation event each year			
Hold 4 fundraising events per year			
Secure increased funding for food distribution [insert benchmark]			
Increase broader community engagement by expanding marketing/ advertising strategies			

# Action Items: Board

Action	Responsible	Timing	Status
Revamp board onboarding			
Increase board diversity [currently 50% BIPOC, 50% women, aim for 75% BIPOC?]			
Create board guidance documents for stewardship			
Increase board involvement and set clear expectations [set benchmark measure]			