



2023-2028 Strategic Plan

Suite 800 – Two Bentall
Centre
555 Burrard Street, Box 232
Vancouver, BC V7X 1M8
Tel: 604.687.7220
Toll Free: 1.800.377.3340
Fax: 604.687.7266

cssea.bc.ca



Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction and Purpose	3
2.0 Approach to Developing the Strategic Plan.....	3
3.0 Workshop Framework.....	4
4.0 Internal Environment.....	4
5.0 External Environment.....	5
6.0 Strategic Priority Goals.....	5
7.0 Accountability Framework	6

1.0 Introduction and Purpose

This document sets out the Strategic Plan for the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) for the fiscal year 2023 through the fiscal year 2028 (the Plan). The Plan currently sets forth four Strategic Goals which are to be operationalized with enabling objectives, strategies, high-level timings, responsibilities, resources and key deliverables by the CSSEA Management Team.

The Plan builds on the 2019 -2022 Strategic Plan (the previous plan) developed by the Board, Panels and staff and endorsed by CSSEA's Board of Directors. The plan is also informed by BlueSky consultation session held with the membership on October 25, 2022.

The Plan provides guidance and direction to CSSEA in its leadership role as a trusted resource with acknowledged expertise within the Community Social Services Sector (the Sector).

It was unanimously endorsed by CSSEA's Board of Directors on January 27, 2025 and will now action its goals through an Operational Plan, and provide a measurement of progress on an ongoing basis.

This document is structured following five key themes:

- (i) *Approach* – describes the consultative approach to developing the Plan.
- (ii) *Framework* – provides a roadmap for the organization's journey from its foundation through its maturation.
- (iii) *Environments* – acknowledges the internal and external environment within which CSSEA operates and charts its journey.
- (iv) *Assets* – those attributes which shape its leadership role, contribution and organizational culture.

- (v) *Aspirations* – identifies the priorities to be pursued and the accountability and commitment required to operationalize the priorities and fulfill the Vision.

2.0 Approach: Developing the Strategic Plan

A three-step approach was taken by the facilitators to ensure their understanding of the organization and to provide the opportunity for key stakeholders to contribute their knowledge and experience to CSSEA with a view to building ownership of the planning process and the outcome of that process, namely the Strategic Plan.

The first step was to undertake a background document review as follows:

(i) *Background Document Review*

A document review was undertaken beginning with the document '*BlueSky Session: CSSEA Pre-Strategic Planning Consultation*', held October 25, 2022, and the previous three strategic plans and the mandate of Employer's Associations under the Public Sector Employers Act.

The second step was a rich consultation opportunity by way of individual interviews with the key partners as described below:

(ii) *Pre-Session Participant Interviews*

Interviews were conducted by the Facilitators with Board Members, the CEO and Senior Staff. Panel Chairs were also invited to participate in an interview, should they have wished to do so. The interviews provided a more in-depth understanding of the organization and its governance

challenges, aspirations and perspectives while beginning the process of participant engagement.

The third key step was a facilitated strategic planning workshop:

(iii) *Strategic Planning Workshop*

A one-day strategic planning workshop was held on **March 06, 2023**. Participants included: the Board of Directors; General Services, Indigenous Services and Community Living Services Panels; representatives from funding organizations including Community Living BC (CLBC), the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat (PSEC), Ministry of Children & Family Development (MCFD); and the CSSEA CEO and Senior Management. In total, there were **twenty-three (23)** participants in the Workshop.

3.0 Workshop Framework

The Board Chair introduced the expectations for the session.

His opening remarks were followed by a presentation by the Chief Executive Officer who provided context around CSSEA's statutory mandate and commentary on progress under the previous Strategic Plan.

The planning process continued with the facilitators asking four fundamental questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to be?
3. How do we get there?
4. How do we measure it?

Each of these questions helped identify strategic possibilities that inform the Plan. See figure 1.



Figure 1. The Strategic Planning Process

Question 1: Where Are We Now?

This question defines the current situation; it sets the starting line from which the road ahead will be shaped. It describes CSSEA's purpose and overall intent - the 'why' it exists. This question speaks to CSSEA's mandate under the *Public Sector Employers Act* and government expectations, the mission of the organization, its values and/or its Guiding Principles and current strengths and weaknesses.

Question 2: Where Do We Want To Be?

By knowing where the organization wants to be, an updated future vision can be identified. This future state speaks to the aspirations of the organization through its leadership and serves as a 'guiding light' to follow.

Question 3: How Do We Get There?

While knowing “where we are” and “where we want to be” are major steps forward, they are not enough to achieve the Vision. Equally important is to know how to get there and how to fulfill the Vision. Building upon the answers to questions 1 and 2, priority strategic goals and objectives provide the means to realizing the Vision.

Question 4: How Do We Measure It?

SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) goals provide a measurement of success.

Those questions, paired with proven strategic planning analysis tools such as ‘SWOT’ (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) provide direction in determining both the effectiveness of the organization today in carrying out its role and equally important, the opportunity to better understand the internal and the external environments in which it is operating.

The following sections of this Plan reflect the answers to those questions.

4.0 Internal Environment: Mandate, Guiding Principles and Mission.

CSSEA provides collective bargaining, labour relations (LR), human resources (HR) services and benefits oversight to its members and associates throughout the community social services sector consistent with its mandate, as defined in 1994 under the *Public Sector Employer’s Act* as follows:

- *To assist the Public Sector Employers’ Council (PSEC) in carrying out any PSEC objectives and strategic directions of the Council*
- *To Act as the bargaining agent for its membership*

- *To coordinate human resources practices, collective bargaining, benefit administration, and compensation for non-contract employees in the social services sector.*
- *To foster a positive environment with social service sector unions*

4.1 The Internal Environment

CSSEA is a relatively small organization with dedicated and knowledgeable staff whose focus is on providing members with core LR and HR services. Their strengths include technical knowledge, responsiveness, experience, and strategic insight; a strong communication department; good relationships with government representatives and unions; sophisticated and trusted data collection systems that support decisions in collective bargaining and ongoing utilization by stakeholders.

Conversely, CSSEA continues to experience insufficient funding resources with no base funding increases for over a decade; a challenging recruitment and retention environment resulting in service continuity challenges.

4.2 Guiding Principles

The Planning Group confirmed the current Guiding Principles as the aspirations and the day-to-day expectations of conduct they have for CSSEA in delivering its services to its members and government. The Guiding Principles are:

We value the work of our member agencies and recognize the contribution members make to their communities and the people they serve.

We deliver quality services in a professional manner with honesty and respect.

We facilitate a positive, productive and diverse labour relations environment within the social services sector.

We endorse and promote the principles of Truth and Reconciliation.

We work collaboratively with our members and government, value member input and support and promote open and honest communication.

We are committed to best practices and seek to develop innovative solutions to labour relations and human resources issues.

We recognize that we are a multi-employer association organized in three distinct divisions and we strive to balance the interests and aspirations of member agencies with government policy.

We believe employees are our most important resource and support them to be the best they can be.

4.3 Mission

As a mission statement speaks to the organization's purpose, CSSEA's Mission Statement reflects its legislative mandate and its Guiding Principles.

After much discussion, there was consensus on the following:

Mission

To advance best practices in Human Resources and Labour Relations and act as a trusted advisor to our membership and government for the community social services sector.

5.0 External Environment: Vision.

5.1 External Environment

In asking Question 2. 'Where do we want to be?', an understanding of the organization's external environment was undertaken by way of the SWOT analysis focusing on opportunities and threats. That SWOT analysis painted an external environment as follows:

- CSSEA is operating in a highly diverse and complex sector
- Members continue to be faced with a number of external pressures to provide more services in an increasingly tight fiscal environment
- Government policy continues to evolve and mature. Funders and legislated bodies such as BC Government ministries and PSEC will continue to evolve service delivery models and human resource approaches to best support services in times of labour and skill shortages
- Funding organizations have different approaches, models and data requirements
- Increasing complexity and volume of reporting requirements give rise to the need for improved data collection
- Talent attraction, retention and succession planning is an accelerating challenge in the sector
- While not part of CSSEA's mandate, management and excluded employee compensation is a paramount concern to member agencies, particularly compression and inversion in relation to bargaining unit employees, threatening the viability of the sector and increasing the risk to quality service delivery
- As CSSEA has been forced to be more entrepreneurial, as evidenced by the Associate Membership initiative, resources will require attentive balancing to ensure it is not to the detriment of core services
- The sector is encouraged by government to share services and partner with other employers' associations and service

providers such as CSSEA's IT contract with PSEA.

5.2 Vision

Having undertaken an assessment of the external environment by way of the SWOT analysis, revisiting CSSEA's Vision below was undertaken.

After much discussion, the following proposed Vision statement was formulated:

Vision

A sustainable, resilient and engaged social services sector workforce

- Completing the assessment of the White Paper on membership in coordination with Government; and
- Furthering its leadership role in a coordinated HR strategy for the sector.

2. Adopt and embed Reconciliatory actions into CSSEA activities.

3. Leverage available technology to better collect data and support the strategic HR delivery of CSSEA member services.

4. Build HR capacity and knowledge in CSSEA's members by leveraging both technology and effective member relations.

6.0 Strategic Priority Goals

Having undertaken an analysis of both the internal and external environments, the question is 'How do we get there?'

The answer is through the identification and implementation of strategic priority goals which will give life to the organization's Mission and Vision. Not just any goals but goals that are:

1. Feasible (doable)
2. Impactful (make a difference) and
3. Timely (address the need and the opportunity)

6.1 Goals for 2023–2028

The following strategic priority goals were developed by the participants in the planning session:

1. Broaden CSSEA's impact in the sector by:

7.0 Accountability Framework

The enabling step in the Strategic Planning Process is the development of an accountability framework.

Operationalizing the Strategic Priority Goals through tactical decision-making and the alignment of resources will be undertaken by the CEO and CSSEA's Management Team.