

L I O N GUARDIANS



STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2018



Our unique approach to wildlife conservation that blends traditional knowledge, modern science and cultural values has resulted in definitive, measurable impacts across East Africa.

Based on these impacts and lessons learned, we are entering a new phase. While we will continue to adapt and test our conservation tools on the ground, we will sharpen our focus on consolidating, building and sharing our knowledge to widen our impact and influence on strengthening conservation capability throughout East Africa and beyond.

Over the next two years our strategies will keep us responsive in an ever changing context and enable us to broaden our effect on lions, other wildlife and the communities that live with them.

Over the past decade, we have seen how people and lions can coexist. Our team has also witnessed first-hand the impacts of the rapid increase in human populations causing lion range and habitat to disappear dramatically. Now our work has become even more critical within this rapidly changing context. To respond to the growing challenges faced by both lions and the neighboring communities, we must continue to adapt our focus and streamline our efforts so we can maintain and amplify our impact. To do this we aim to consolidate and optimize our efforts and embed renewed energy and sustainability into our approach.

This short document provides an overview of our strategic focus over the next two years as we evolve both as an organization and as a dedicated team, to meet these ever-growing challenges.

The methods we have developed for reducing human-lion conflict and ensuring lion survival have recorded considerable success. We have observed the near elimination of previously high levels of lion killing and have documented a concurrent increase in the lion population of the Amboseli ecosystem. Since our inception, we have helped communities avoid millions of dollars in potential losses through the recovery of lost livestock and we have now coached and trained over a thousand East Africans, the majority of whom are community members with little formal education.

Our strategic plan invests in the expertise and professionalism of the Lion Guardians team and the enthusiasm and knowledge of the broader conservation community.

The actions laid out in the next few pages, are part of a process to secure the long-term and broad-scale survival of lions and other wildlife. As the old adage goes – “Change is the only constant”, Lion Guardians continues to adapt and respond to new challenges and the changing contexts of global wildlife conservation, people and lions based on the opportunities and the needs and proficiencies of our team.

LION GUARDIANS IMPACT

- An average of 90% reduction in lion killing
- Over \$3 million in lost livestock found annually
- Community rangelands transformed from sink to source lion population
- 1000's of East Africans trained





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Leverage our existing knowledge-base to develop cutting-edge conservation tools while sustaining our effectiveness in Amboseli.

Lion Guardians Amboseli is where we developed our leading field-level methodology for working with local communities to dramatically reduce lion killing. Today, the context is very different from our beginnings in 2007; we need to continue to innovate in order to stay relevant and effective within our core site and beyond as threats to lions are changing across their remaining rangeland.

Lion Guardians Amboseli provides a perfect laboratory. Here, we have a strong and mature team who are able to quickly prototype and test new ideas in the field. We have the support of an engaged community that understands and has experienced the benefits of conservation. And lastly, we have over a decade of scientifically gathered data that will allow us to develop new tools that address contextual changes and can be adapted to situations across the world.

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Continue to help communities, preserve cultures and save lions.
- Develop and implement effective and innovative conflict mitigation methodologies as context changes (e.g., culture, environment) which can be broadly applicable and scalable to other countries and species.
- Conduct field-based scientific research, in particular studies that explore the changing ecological and cultural contexts and test specific conflict mitigation strategies and adaptations to the Lion Guardians model.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR NEXT TWO YEARS

- Maintain a stable lion population in Amboseli-Tsavo ecosystem (current levels are 3-4 lions/100 sq. km).
- Test and analyze results of specific conflict mitigation techniques and incorporate into core site in Amboseli with the aim to adapt to other sites across African lion rangeland.
 - Mock hunts.
 - Close monitoring and mitigation of chronic problem lions.
 - Community member involvement of various age-sets beyond the warriors.
- Continue to market the Amboseli program internationally and increase local marketing for knowledge sharing.
- Implement robust (and practical) risk management processes to respond to the changing operational environment. For example, address key risks such as personal injury in a remote location.
- Implement practical and robust stakeholder management planning and monitoring processes for effective running of the Lion Guardians organization.

2 Widen our impact from local to global and inspire conservation organizations and communities to enhance and build their capabilities using our unique approach.

Lion Guardians is the only approach in East Africa that blends local people's traditional knowledge of the environment with modern wildlife conservation to protect lions. The model's strength, sustainability and innovation comes from its ability to incorporate indigenous culture and knowledge and develop intuitive methods that empower communities to invest in the protection of their lions as a livelihood strategy, now and for future generations.

Our positive track record has resulted in Lion Guardians' services becoming increasingly in demand by other conservation organizations from around the world, including countries like Namibia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, India and Tunisia. Some are interested in implementing Lion Guardians type projects in their areas of operation, others are interested in learning about specific aspects of the model such as lion monitoring or community engagement in conservation.

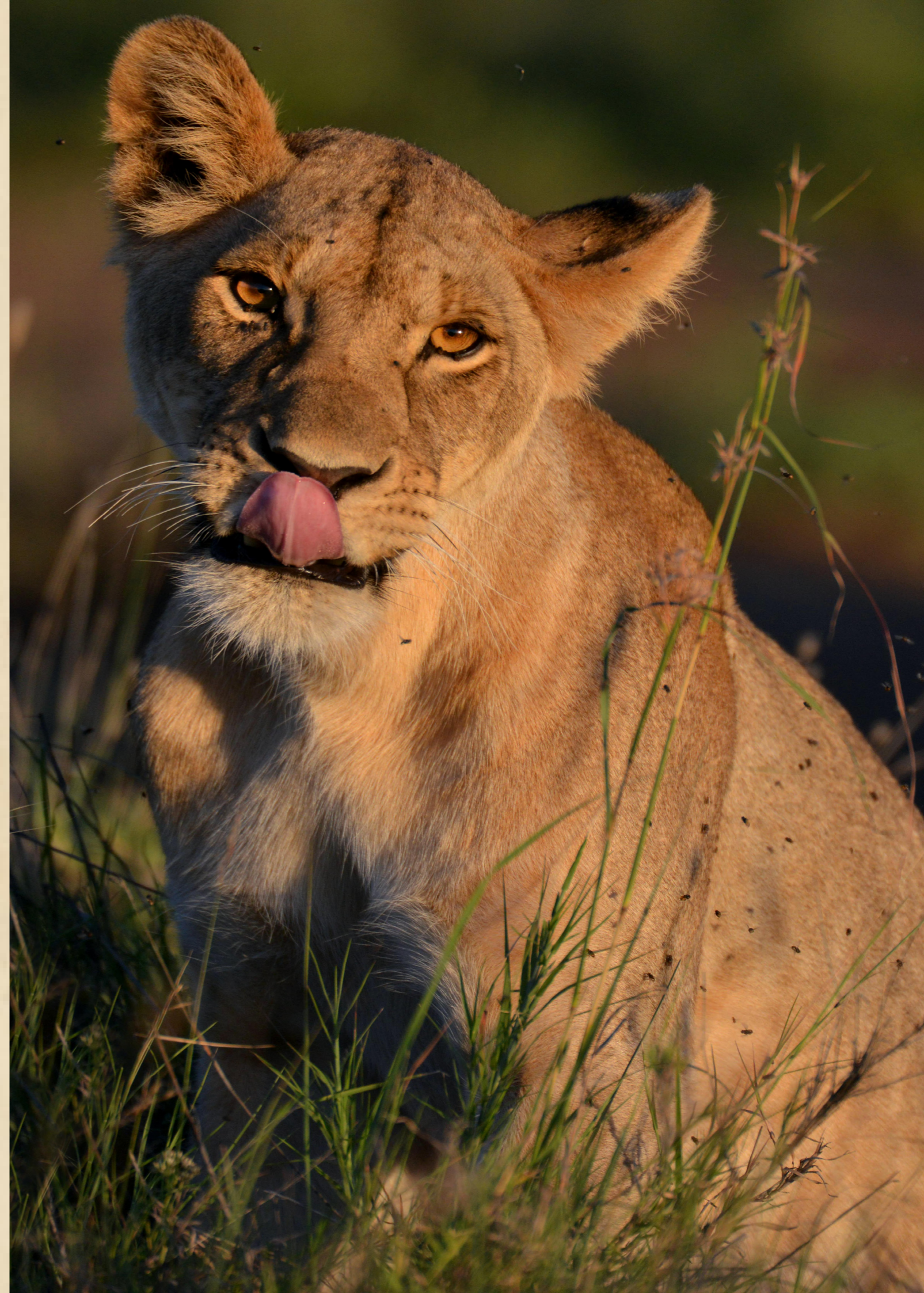
As a small team with specialized capabilities, the most effective manner in which we can share knowledge and address the demand of these organizations is through customized coaching and training. A broader delivery model will allow us to widen our impact from a local to a global scale, from lions to other wildlife species all while creating a new sustainability stream.

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Develop and share conservation tools and best practices based on our decade of research and field-based community conservation programs at multiple sites.
- Build the Resource and Learning Center: a physical and virtual space which centralizes and consolidates our knowledge, data and information allowing for sharing on a global scale.
- Provide customized coaching and training to conservation organizations.
- Work to sustain engagement and enhance skill sets (specifically literacy and conservation) at the local community level to foster pro-conservation behaviors.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR NEXT TWO YEARS

- Develop a business case and plan for the Resource and Learning Center that builds on existing training materials and infrastructure.
- Effectively market the Resource and Learning Center and its services to interest five to ten new and impactful organizations by 2018.
- Provide customized coaching and training services to a minimum of five organizations by 2018.
- Assess quality of delivery to adapt and enhance services and processes for maximum conservation impact.
- Extend coaching services beyond conservation partners to academia, community members and networks.





3 Achieve an impactful research agenda focused on building conservation capability.

One of the key elements of our success to date has been a strong science-based approach and our subsequent ability to utilize applied research to advance conservation. This inherent core competency sets us apart from other conservation organizations or research groups, as it is generally difficult to marry the two disciplines and achieve high impact as we have done.

Delivering a strong and influential research agenda with practical implications, will allow Lion Guardians to continue to innovate successfully and increase our impact. It will also create a platform for Lion Guardians to contribute to broader scientific and conservation discussions and help to build conservation capabilities in the academic arena.

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Deliver a research agenda that complements our existing data and adaptations to our model.
- Become a key contributor to scientific and conservation discussions through publications and engagement with academia.
- Provide learning opportunities for peers and students.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR NEXT TWO YEARS

- Clearly document and develop a research agenda that leverages existing data and focuses on adaptations to our model and wildlife conservation challenges more broadly.
- Secure short-term funding to realize this agenda by mid-2016.
Identify and target relevant stakeholders in academia.
- Establish LINC as a key tool for broad-scale conservation.
- Design and document customized capability-building services.
- Perform a step-by-step process to identify gaps in documentation so the model can be fully documented and shared, reducing risk of inadequate implementation of model by other projects/organizations.
- Implement a practical process to capture lessons learned and incorporate it into our coaching and training services.

4 Build a sustainable, effective, and nimble organization that can respond and adapt to strategic challenges and opportunities by addressing the organizational supporting pillars.

The success of Lion Guardians in achieving our vision lies in the hands of the team that we have built and the organization and financial structures that support it. We are a small closely-knit team of highly committed individuals and as we move to increase our impact, we need to ensure we do it in a sustainable manner for the team, the organization and our financial health.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Secure a safe and healthy workplace and promote long-term organizational sustainability (i.e. >90% retention rate).
- Deliver efficient and standardized processes specifically for administrative and management functions to build Lion Guardians' internal skills and information tools platforms in order to provide the technical knowledge and skills needed to execute, improve and monitor its programs.
- Continue to recruit the best-in-class to deliver effective on-the-ground conservation. Take a structured and proactive approach to managing risk and stakeholder engagement.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR NEXT TWO YEARS

- Redesign and reallocate administrative and management functions to allow senior management to focus on key objectives.
- Implement a robust and practical stakeholder and risk management process.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Increase overall revenues from existing donors to support our organizational sustainability.
- Strengthen long-term financial viability through multi-year commitments and cash reserve/endowment.
- Grow and diversify networks of donors and other sources of funds.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR NEXT TWO YEARS

- Develop clear financial targets and goals to achieve our strategic plan, including the development of an endowment to support our knowledge sharing practice.
- Leverage existing donor network to grow and diversify funding sources.
- Focus on high impact donors and ensure long-term viability.
- Secure our operating reserve to match one-year of full operations.
- Utilize our skillset and knowledge to develop further avenues for funding.

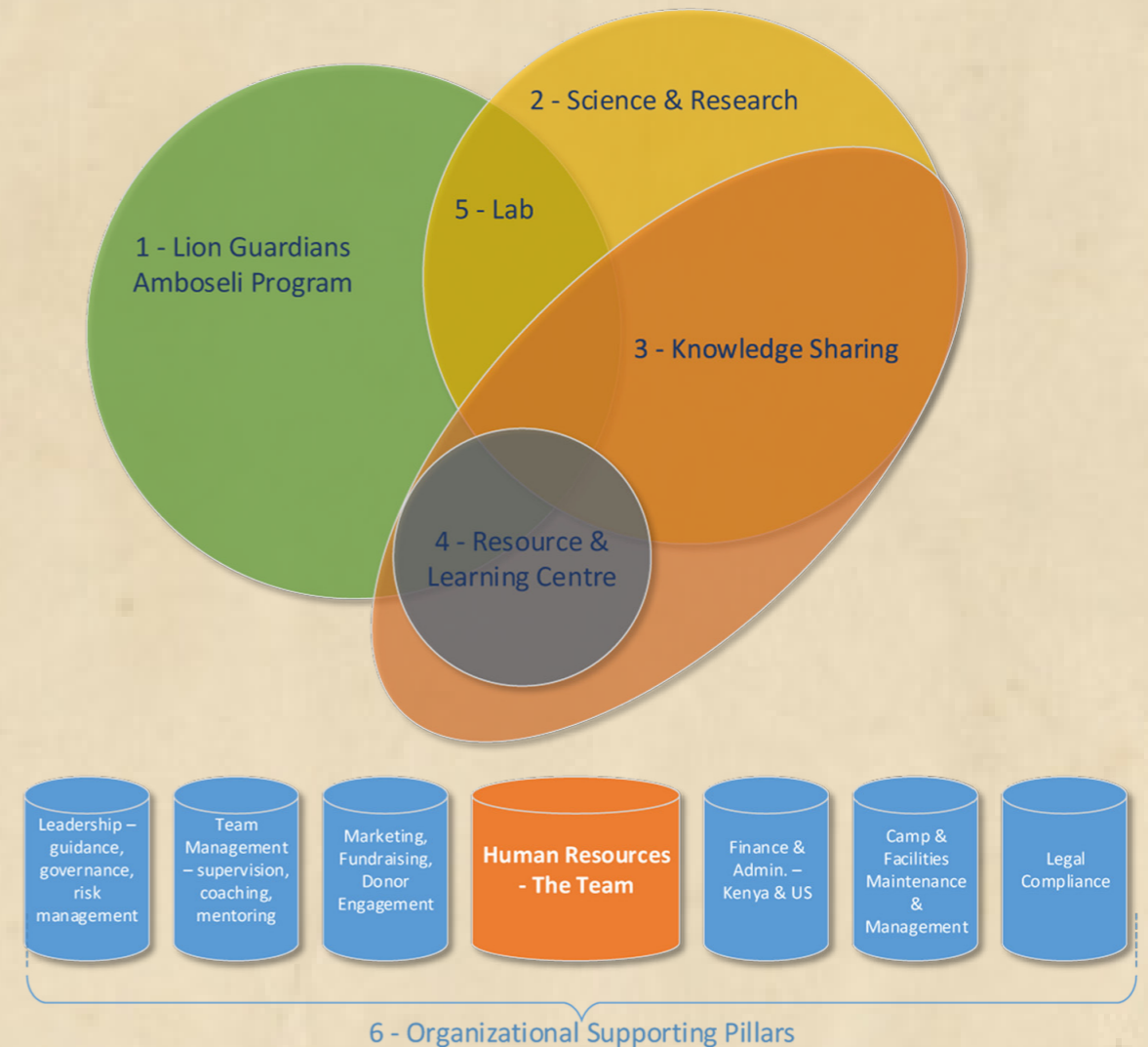
TEAM SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Develop a robust and practical set of leadership and management capabilities (skills and tools).
- Proactively attract, support and develop high-quality staff.
- Engage all staff in key strategic developments to deliver high-quality and effective conservation.

KEY PRIORITIES FOR NEXT TWO YEARS

- Actively monitor team motivation to ensure staff retention and growth.
- Develop and document a robust internal communications process.
- Develop clear definition of roles and responsibilities of senior management.
- Based on role definition, build a practical performance management system.
- Develop personal maps for professional development of Lion Guardians management team.
- Engage in targeted coaching and mentoring of each other and also provide access to external support.



This diagram illustrates our refined vision



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