

oaktree

Oaktree Strategic Plan

2025 - 2027



CONTENTS

2 Who We Are

6 Theory Of Change

5 Mission & Values

8 Strategic Focus Areas

Oaktree is an Australian-based youth-led organisation dedicated to empowering young people across the Asia-Pacific region to transform their local communities.

We believe in building an equitable, just, and sustainable world by resourcing youth-led initiatives, amplifying diverse youth voices, and shifting perceptions within the international development sector.



WHO WE ARE

Oaktree is a youth-led organisation dedicated to empowering young people across the Asia-Pacific region to transform their local communities. We believe in building an equitable, just, and sustainable world by resourcing youth-led initiatives, amplifying diverse youth voices, and shifting perceptions within the international development sector.

We exist to ensure all young people have the opportunity to become agents of change, addressing local challenges and contributing to global discussions on policy and practice.

Founded in 2003 by a group of determined young Australians, Oaktree emerged as a beacon of youth-driven change in international development. What began as a grassroots movement has blossomed into a dynamic force for global impact.

In our early years, we hit the ground running with hands-on projects in South Africa and Timor-Leste, focusing on HIV education and school construction. Our ambition soared in 2007 with the Zero Seven Roadtrip, mobilising 700 youth ambassadors across Australia to advocate for increased foreign aid – a campaign that successfully influenced government policy. The 2010s saw Oaktree expanding its reach and refining its approach. We empowered youth in East Timor to resolve conflicts, revolutionised education in Cambodia, and tackled unemployment in Papua New Guinea. Simultaneously, we amplified youth voices in policy discussions, submitting proposals to the government and creating policy guides for INGOs.

Today, Oaktree stands at the forefront of youth-led international development. Our youth-to-youth solidarity initiative, the Oaktree Youth Solidarity Fund, supports youth-led organisations across the Asia-Pacific region. From promoting digital literacy in Timor-Leste to addressing environmental issues in Indonesia, we're catalysing change through local youth leadership.

Our advocacy has evolved to champion youth rights on the global stage, pushing for stronger protections and greater youth participation in decision-making processes. At our core, we believe that young people are not just future leaders, but today's essential changemakers.

As we look to the future, Oaktree remains committed to our founding vision: creating a more just world by empowering young people to lead the charge. This strategic plan outlines our roadmap for continuing this vital mission, building on our rich history to forge an even more impactful and sustainable future.





WHERE WE WORK

As an organisation we focus on the Asia-Pacific region. We place particular focus on the region also because of its high population of young people. Many countries in the Asia- Pacific have a large youth population while their civic systems mature. This leads to many long-term problems such as a lack of education, the need to recover from intergenerational trauma of violence and loss, and accompanying cyclica.

Our mission

All young people have the opportunity to transform their local communities to build an equitable, just and sustainable world.

Our Values

Inclusivity & accessibility for all young people

We're committed to breaking down barriers that prevent young people from participating in development initiatives. We design our programs and opportunities to be accessible to young people from all backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances.

Youth empowerment & leadership

We believe in the power of young people to drive change. We actively create opportunities for youth to lead initiatives, make decisions, and shape the future of both our organisation and the communities we serve.

Continuous learning & unlearning

We foster a culture of growth, encouraging constant acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Equally important, we challenge our assumptions and biases, ready to unlearn outdated practices to embrace more effective and equitable approaches.

Diversity & representation

We champion the inclusion of diverse voices and experiences within our organisation and in the broader development sector. We strive to ensure that our team, partners, and beneficiaries reflect the diverse communities we work with.

Adaptability & relevance

We stay responsive to the evolving needs of young people and the changing global landscape. Our approaches and programs are flexible, allowing us to remain effective and meaningful in our work across diverse contexts.

Sustainability

We focus on creating lasting impact in everything we do. This means developing environmentally responsible practices, building resilient communities, and ensuring our initiatives can be maintained and scaled by local youth long after our direct involvement ends.



Mission

All young people have the opportunity to transform their local communities to build an equitable, just and sustainable world.

oaktree

THEORY OF CHANGE

Goals

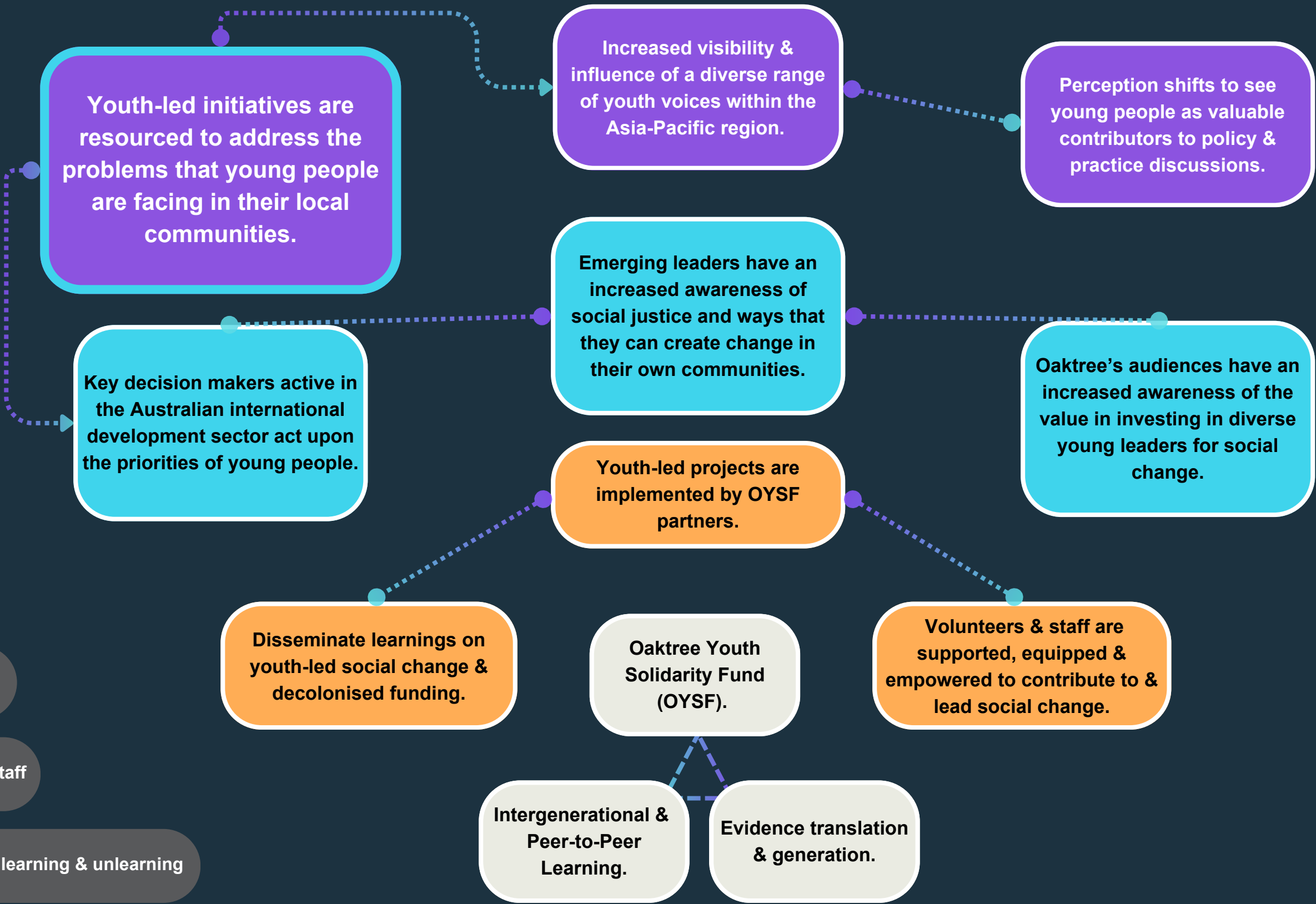
Long term outcomes

Short term outcomes

Activities

Foundations

- Partnerships
- Mobilising sustainable resources
- Sustaining Oaktree volunteers & staff
- Research, monitoring, evaluation, learning & unlearning





Seven Outcomes Four Focus Areas Three Activities

Outcome

- 1. Youth-led initiatives are resourced to address the problems that young people are facing in their local communities through the Oaktree Youth Solidarity Fund (OYSF).
- 2. Youth-led projects are implemented by OYSF partners.

Focus Area

Turning the OYSF into a foundational product of Oaktree

Activity

The Oaktree Youth Solidarity Fund (OYSF)

Strategy

In this new strategic period, Oaktree will position the OYSF as our foundational product. Over the next three years, we will integrate key partner learnings into our evidence generation and dissemination efforts. This involves:

- 1. Redefining Oaktree's role within the OYSF
- 2. Annual OYSF grant distribution
- 3. Establishing learning-focused partnerships
- 4. Continuously improving the OYSF based on partner feedback
- 5. Embedding learnings into our peer-to-peer model
- 6. Facilitating peer learning between Oaktree and other youth-led organisations in the Asia-Pacific

By documenting insights on youth-led social change and decolonised funding, we'll strengthen our ability to influence key decision-makers to prioritise the issues young people are facing. This approach will amplify our impact and position Oaktree as a leader in youth-driven development.

Outcome

3. Emerging leaders have an increased awareness of social justice and ways that they can create change in their own communities.
4. Volunteers & staff are supported, equipped and empowered to contribute to and lead social change.

Focus Area

Refocusing and engaging Oaktrees Volunteer base

Activity

Intergenerational and Peer-to-Peer Learning

Strategy

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Oaktree and a core focus for this strategic period.

Our volunteer development strategy includes:

1. Connecting volunteers with mentors
2. Evaluate the success of our volunteer model
3. Facilitating intergenerational learning
4. Continuously investing in volunteers' knowledge and skills

Our goal is to ensure all Oaktree volunteers and staff feel supported, equipped, and empowered to lead social change. By nurturing the next generation of change-makers, we aim to increase awareness of social justice issues and empower young people to create positive change in their communities.

Outcome

5. Raise Oaktree supporters' awareness of the value of investing in diverse young leaders for social change, especially in youth-impacting areas.
6. Disseminate learnings on youth-led social change & decolonised funding.

Focus Area

Clearly articulating who Oaktree is and how it has changed

Activity_

Evidence generation

Strategy.

Oaktree evolves continuously to meet the changing needs of young people in the Asia-Pacific. While we must always continue to grow like our namesake, we must also ensure the roots of who we are is easy to understand.

Our focus is to:

1. Clearly articulate who we are and what we stand for
2. Demonstrate the value of investing in diverse young leaders
3. Make the evidence generated from the OYSF and peer-to-peer learning universally accessible

By refining our message and broadening our reach, we aim to engage supporters and empower young people across the Asia-Pacific with valuable, accessible knowledge and resources.

Outcome

7. Key decision makers active in the Australian international development sector act upon the priorities of young people.

Focus Area

Ensuring Oaktree is Financially and Operationally Stable

Activity_

Evidence translation

Strategy.

Stabilising and growing our core operational model is essential for Oaktree's sustainability. Our funding is intrinsically tied to the value that key decision makers in international development place on the priorities of young people. Due to our flexible funding model, Oaktree is unable to access funding from more traditional sources, such as the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and must seek alternative arrangements.

For this reason, we will:

1. Regularly engage with the sector on the value of untied and decolonised funding
2. Advocate for and secure investments in young people
3. Demonstrate the impact of youth-led movements

By increasing understanding of youth-led initiatives like ours, we aim to pave the way for diverse funding sources for youth-led movements across the sector.



oaktree

**All young people should have the
opportunity to transform their local
communities to build an equitable, just
and sustainable world.**

355 William Street,
West Melbourne VIC 3003

hello@theoaktree.org
www.oaktree.org

    @oaktreeau