Unit 1

Beginning to Think Strategically about Youth Development Work

Introduction

This Unit will provide the groundwork from which you will eventually develop a strategic plan. It will assist you in creating an environment, within an organization,that is conducive to strategic planning. In addition, this unitwill show you how you can use strategic planning toolsto enhance the management and delivery of services to young people. It will clarify for you the concept of strategic planning, and differentiate it from the concepts of programme planning and project management.   You will be asked, and are expected to complete activities that will require you to reflect critically on the concepts presented and on how these concepts are applicable to your work environment, and to you as a youth development practitioner.   You will be expected to make use of all the Unit readings, to assist you in making informed decisions.   Most importantly, you are expected to interact and collaborate with your online colleagues. Remember learning is a social activity and collaboration plays a crucial role in this course.

Unit 1 Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Clearly articulate what a strategic planning process involves

2. Show the link between strategic planning and successful youth development work.

3. Explain the connections between strategic planning and programme and project management

4. Undertake a stakeholder analysis to identify key stakeholders to be involved in the strategic planning process.

5. Devise strategies to encourage key stakeholders to participate in the strategic planning process.

This unit is divided into two sessions:

Session 1.1: Defining Strategic Planning in the Context of Youth Development Work.
Session 1.2: Creating an Enabling Environment for Strategic Planning.

Unit Readings and Additional Online Resources

Required Readings:

- All About Strategic Planning at http://managementhelp.org/strategicplanning/index.htm
- World Programme of Action for Youth Development 2000 and Beyond – http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf

Session 1.1

Defining Strategic Planning in the Context of Youth Development

Introduction

In this session you will be introduced to the concept of strategic planning and contextualize it in terms of your work in Youth Development. You will explore the issue of why strategic planning can add real value to the work of an organisation, and can help to professionalise youth work. You will also be able to differentiate between strategic planning and programme and project management and see the relationship between all three.

Session Objectives

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

1. Define the term strategic planning.

2. Differentiate between strategic planning, programme management and project management and explain the relationship between the three.

3. Justify the importance of strategic planning an organisation in general and for youth work in particular.

Session 1.1

Defining Strategic Planning in the context of Youth Development Work

Introduction

From your own experiences you should be able to relate to occasions when programmes and activities have been undertaken only to be scrapped because stakeholders realised that these programmes were not meeting the intended goals. In some cases, evaluations that are done on these programmes conclude that it wasn't clear what the original objectives were and that it is hard to determine how successful the programme has been. Common findings in evaluations include statements such as "the goals were unclear", "there were no baselines to measure performance against", "there were no clear indicators of performance", and "there has not been adequate monitoring of the performance of the programme." This is what happens when planning is not thorough, or when programmes and projects are started without a clear strategic planning process. These problems can be avoided if a proper strategic planning process is employed.

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.1

Reading

Read the following article to determine the phases of the strategic planning process.

ALL ABOUT STRATEGIC PLANNING
at http://managementhelp.org/strategicplanning/index.htm

Note the definition used*: "Simply put, strategic planning determines where an organization is going over the next year or more, how it's going to get there and how it'll know if it got there or not."*

Strategic planning is creating the future today. It looks at where you want to be at a given time in the future and, working back from there, determines how best to arrive at that destination from the present location that you are at.

There is an expression that "failing to plan is planning to fail." This is not always true. Sometimes people or organisations that fail to plan do succeed. However, research shows that, overall, having a plan increases the chances of success. Not having a strategic plan is a little like trying to build a high-rise building without having a blueprint - it will be very difficult to know what the building will look like, how much it will cost, what materials and expertise will be needed, and how long it will take to build.

The strategic planning process helps us to prepare our blueprint – it helps us to define what we want to accomplish and to have a better idea of what resources we will need to achieve our objective.

Please note: Planning needs to be clear and specific. In strategic planning terms there is a huge difference between an individual saying: "I want to be rich in the future" and the same individual saying: "In 10 years I would like to be earning a minimum of US$250,000 per year from different sources of income." Later we will look a little more closely at the difference between the first general statement of ambition, and the second more specific statement of what we are planning to achieve. In short, however, we should note that strategic planning requires <u>clarity</u> and <u>precision</u>.

The strategic planning process involves:

Setting clear goals and objectives (defining the future we want to create)

Developing strategies to achieve those goals

Setting clear and measurable indicators and baselines so that we can measure progress towards our goals

Outlining the implementation plan (also called action plan), and

Allocating resources to implement our plans and achieve our goals

Figure 1.1: The Strategic Planning Process

Why do we need to do all of this? Do we really need a strategic plan?

These are reasonable questions; after all, many companies operate without a strategic plan and many people live their lives without having a clear plan for their future. And they seem to get by just fine. Does this mean that there is no need for a strategic plan? No. As we have noted before, while it is possible to move ahead without a plan, having a strategic plan will often help to improve the chances for success. This is because of a number of reasons:

Benefits of having a strategic plan

1. **A strategic plan helps us to define clearly what we want to achieve** and helps to (a) motivate our staff and (b) communicate clearly to everyone what needs to be done. Without this clarity about what the organisation is trying to achieve, some individuals will pursue activities that go against what the rest of the team are working towards. This can, in the worst cases, create conflict. In the best cases it still creates inefficiencies and waste of energy and resources.

2. **Planning allows us to figure out <u>what</u> and <u>when</u> things should be done**. Without planning, the right activities can be implemented in the wrong way and at the wrong time. (There is a story of a new Member of Parliament in Jamaica who wanted to invest in improving the condition of the roads in a poor rural community in the 1990s.People familiar with the project report that the MP had a clear idea of what he wanted and sent a team of experts and engineers to get estimates and commence working on the road. There was a public meeting where the MP stated his intention to fix the road, as this was part of his campaign promise. There was no real planning or participatory consultation with the local communities. It so happens that the road repairs commenced during the rainy season for that area of the island, and much of the material used for the construction was found to be unsuitable for the soil in the region. At the end of the process, the project had suffered extensive delays and the cost was nearly twice the original estimate because of the delays and the need to change the material. When a member of the local community was interviewed about the project she stated that the community had wanted the project, but because there wasn't proper planning and consultation the MP and his team didn't know the best time to start the project and the type of material to use.)

3. **Planning can reduce risks and facilitate smooth implementation**. It is a fact that most projects will experience some form of challenge during implementation and there will always be unexpected situations that arise and which can set back activities. However, some of these challenges can be avoided or reduced with a proper planning exercise which includes an analysis of the project context and *risks*. Once possible risks are identified, the team can put in place strategies to deal with these risks and other unexpected events. This type of planning is often done in the private sector where many companies use 'what if' scenarios to assess the risk of different situations that may

ariseand then they plan for these situations.(We will deal with risk analysis more extensively in Unit 5). In a youth development programme the same thinking can be applied. For example, the government may want to build a school in a remote community to improve access to education; but it may be useful before starting the project to ask, "What if the parents do not send their children to the school when it is built?" This may lead the team to decide to add new components in the programme to address this risk. The key point is, when we know what we want to achieve we can then think through all the things that need to be done as well as the risks and likely challenges so that we can be prepared for them.

4. With proper planning there is better prioritisation of key activities. In the real world, few organisations will have all the resources needed to pursue all their objectives. Without a strategic planning process to prioritise 'mission critical' activities (the most important activities based on the Mission of the organisation), staff will often end up working on a range of different things and may get distracted by many competing demands. **Planning thus helps to ensure efficient use of time,money and other resources by identifying the priorities for the organisation.**

5. Finally, **planning helps us to determine what success or the future will look like**. This is vital, because unless we know what defines success, it will be extremely difficult to achieve it. When we have a proper plan it can help us to monitor our performance and know whether we are getting closer to achieving our goals. There is an expression, "If you don't know where you want to go, then any road can take you there." The same is true for social or youth development work – unless we know exactly what we want to achieve and how we plan to achieve it, it will be almost impossible to measure whether we are on course to achieve it. Strategic planning therefore always comes with a plan to monitor and evaluate performance (this will be covered in detail in Unit 5).

If you do some research on the topic (e.g. Google "Strategic planning") you will be able to read a number of thoughts and definitions of strategic planning and why having a plan is useful (See, for example, Forbes magazine's short article "Five Steps to a Strategic Plan" here: http://www.forbes.com/sites/aileron/2011/10/25/five-steps-to-a-strategic-plan/)

Some of the definitions may be geared specifically to business enterprises; others may better suit your type of work.What you will notice is that most of these definitions have some things in common.

Here is a simple definition that can be used:

Strategic Planning is:

> **"a process of setting goals, developing strategies, outlining the implementation arrangements and allocating resources to achieve those goals."**(UNDP Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook 2009).

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.2

Locating a Strategic Plan

- In your pre-determined groups, locate a strategic plan which addresses some aspect of youth work either in your country or another country. (Alternatively, you can examine the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services Strategic Plan 2012-2014, which can be found here: http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dys/strategic-plan-12-14.pdf. Look in particular at pages 11-16.) Identify ways in which the plan provides a clear vision of what needs to be achieved and how to get there.

- In the relevant Discussion Forum, post your group's thoughts on what are some of the strong aspects of the strategic plan and what you think could be improved. Be thorough, detailed and focused with your response.

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Now how does all this relate to your work in youth development?

When many people hear the term 'youth development' unfortunately what they think about is 'charity', 'social work' and 'NGO work'. This is partly due to a history of bias in many countries and institutions that tend to place emphasis on topics such as 'infrastructure development', 'health', 'education', 'economic growth' and so forth. Many people do not realise that youth development is not only as important as these other topics, but is also an essential component of them. In societies where youth may constitute more than 50% of the population, economic growth issues must be based on youth development issues. Education is, similarly, a youth development issue, as are health and many others.

Strategic planning can help to better formalise and professionalise youth development work and deepen public understanding of the issues. A strategic planning approach can help stakeholders to understand that 'youth development' is not a general statement of a desire to 'help young people' but a process of analysing the importance of youth to the development of a country, and developing clear and concrete goals, strategies and action plans to address critical youth-related issues that are important to the country. A well-articulated strategic plan on youth development can be a powerful tool for advocacy, partnership building and resource mobilisation. In addition, strategic planning can help all members of the team to better appreciate the importance of the work they are doing, and to become more purposeful and concrete about what they want to achieve over a period of time.

The youth development practitioner will often see him/herself as someone performing activities that will, in the future, help young people to lead more fruitful and rewarding lives. But how do

we translate this broad vision into not only <u>concrete objectives</u> and <u>measurable targets</u> but also into <u>large-scale programmes</u> that can make a major difference to the youth of a country? This is where strategic planning can help.

<u>**BENEFITS TO YOUTH WORK**</u>

We can attempt to summarise some of the main benefits to be derived from strategic planning in youth work as follows:

SUMMARY OF MAIN BENEFITS

1. It pulls together stakeholders to brainstorm and strategise ways to bring about positive change in the lives of young people.

2. It gives youth development institutions and practitioners an opportunity for self-review, to take stock of where they are and to plan strategically to reach their goals.

3. It provides a clearly articulated Vision and Mission for the institution, defining concrete outcomes and activities to guide the work of the organisation. A clear vision and mission in turn helps to foster loyalty, motivate staff, and enhance commitment from all participants to the identified outcomes.

4. The process helps to enhance the organization's awareness of its operating environment.

5. It serves as a guide in decision making for all levels of planning.

6. It facilitates the optimum use of scarce resources.

7. It serves as a tool for monitoring performance and achievements.

Now, before we turn to look at how the process is done, let us take a few moments to look at the relationship between strategic planning and programme and project management.

Programmes, Projects, and the Strategic Planning Process

All programmes and projects must be guided by a strategic planning process. As was noted above, the strategic planning process helps to identify the major goals, objectives and targets of the organisation, but these goals, objectives and targets will need to be achieved through the implementation of action plans, initiatives, programmes and projects.

Many persons confuse or are confused by the terms "programmes" and 'projects", and end up using them interchangeably. This is understandable, partly because sometimes very large projects are referred to as programmes in the public sector, and also because the difference between a programme and a project can be considered small. But programmes and projects are different.

One easy way to remember the difference is to look at how programmes and projects are dealt with in many international development agencies. For example, in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), each of their country offices will have a <u>Programme Department</u> that oversees the work of many projects. Staff in the Programme Department are called Programme Managers and Programme Officers, while the staff working on the projects in the field are Project Managers and Project Officers.

UNDP adopts essentially the same definition of a project as used by the Project Management Institute (PMI). By the PMI's definition, **a project is "a temporary group activity designed to produce a unique product, service or result."** (Source: http://www.pmi.org/About-Us/About-Us-What-is-Project-Management.aspx)

Note that by this definition, a project is temporary; it has a defined beginning and end time, and therefore has a clearly outlined scope and set of resources. A project will have a few well defined set of results that it needs to achieve, and this will be the responsibility of the project manager and his/her team.

A programme, on the other hand, is usually much longer term and will often have more resources and may not have a set time limit. Programmes normally include a number of projects. For example, the Ministry of Education may have a programme to improve education performance in the Western region of a country. Under this programme the Ministry may have five or more projects. There could be a project to build new schools and rehabilitate old schools in the Western region, as well as a teacher training project, an ICT in schools project, and so on. Each of these projects would have their own project managers, and all these project managers would report to one Programme Manager or Programme Coordinator.

According to the same Project Management Institute, The Standard for Program Management, 2nd Ed., "A programme is a group of related projects managed in a coordinated manner to obtain benefits and control not available from managing them individually. Programmes may include elements of related work outside of the scope of the discreet projects in the programme."

While the project manager's main job is to ensure that his/her project performs well and delivers the defined results, the job of the programme manager is to ensure that all the projects are working well to deliver the aggregate results planned. Using our Ministry of Education example,

the project manager for the school building project will be mainly concerned with ensuring that the schools are built properly to standard and within cost. The programme manager, on the other hand, will be mainly concerned with ensuring that once the schools are built and the teachers are trained and the ICT systems are put in place etc., that there is an improvement in student performance in the Western Region. This is the same in UNDP where Project Managers are concerned with producing the outputs of their projects while Programme Managers try to ensure the achievement of the broader outcomes agreed with the government. (Outcomes and outputs will be defined more thoroughly in the next Unit.)

In UNDP's Programme Department they may have a Governance Programme Team which oversees 5 or 6 governance projects. Similarly, the Environment Programme Team may have 8 or 10 environment related projects in their portfolio.

In summary, projects deliver outputs or small parts of the overall set of results ("pieces of development change) while programmes are designed to create outcomes or longer term development change. A project deals with one or a few deliverables. For instance, you may be actively involved in a construction project which aims to give construction skills to unemployed youth in a particular district.   However, this project just happens to be one of many such projects which include agro processing, information technology, welding, motor mechanics etc. Together, these form the Youth Skills Training Programme of your organization.
Table 1.1 illustrates the main differences.

Table 1.1: Differences between Project and Programme

PROJECT	PROGRAMME
- Temporary - Defined beginning and end - Clearly outlined scope & set of resources - Few well-defined set of results - Delivers outputs - Manager's main job – project well performed & defined results delivered	- Much longer - No set time limit - More resources - Includes a number of projects - Designed to create outcomes or longer term development change - Manager's main job – all projects working well and planned aggregate results delivered

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.3

Play Video

1. **View Youtube Video Project Definition** by Phillip Simon at
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cepkY5E6wEc. This presentation details all
   the necessary requirements of a project.

TIP: Make notes of the key components of a project and the strategic planning process
behind preparing a project.

2. **View**Youtube Video **What is a Project** by MakingProjectsWork at
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YA4IxHa18o   Pay close attention to the few
   pointers given and note them down.

3. **View**Youtube Video **What is a Project** by spacePM.
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Alg4Tp7LXy4

Between the three videos you have a listing of the main characteristics of a project. **Read
what a project** is at http://www.youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-
partnership/documents/publications/T_kits/3/2_project.pdf. (If you encounter difficulty
in accessing thedocument from this link just google "What is a project" and the link will
pop up and you can get it fromthere). It will serve you in good stead as we continue this
session.

TIP: Do not be tempted to either skip these videos or not make detailed notes while viewing.
The videos provide critical information which will assist with your success in this course.

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.4

Reading

READ the article **WHAT IS A PROJECT AND WHAT IS A PROGRAMME** at
http://www.antsprojects.co.za/prince2-articles/80-what-is-a-project-and-what-is-a-
programme.htm

Answer these questions **(TRUE/FALSE)**without looking at your readings or the videos above:

1. A project and a programme can be considered the same.
2. A programme idea must precede the project.
3. A project does not need to have a clear set of goals and objectives
4. A project manager manages one project but a programme manager manages many projects
5. The same methodology is used for project and programme management.

Now go back to your readings and compare the answers. Are you on the right track? **(Hint, please be careful with your response to question 4).** If you have any doubts or questions please discuss with your peers online or consult your tutor.

Returning to the link between the Strategic Planning exercise and Programme and Project Management, you should be able to now see a few relationships. **The first** is that the strategic planning process will often define the 'outcomes' or goals and objectives for the programme or project, and also the specific targets to be achieved. Let's look back at our example with the Ministry of Education. The goal or outcome of the programme was "to improve education performance in the Western region". This goal would likely have been set after a strategic planning exercise to look at the major priorities for the Ministry and what it wanted to achieve for the coming years. The specific targets for the programme and projects would also have been set during this process.

Second, the Ministry's team would likely have brainstormed and identified some of the major projects or initiatives that were needed to achieve their goal/outcome. The strategic planning process, therefore, provides the framework for developing the programme and identifying the specific projects that are needed.

Globally, donors are requiring project and programme results to be linked into a country, sector, or agency programme result framework or strategy. In essence, donors rarely want to feel that they are only funding a small project; they want to see how their contribution fits into a strategy and contributes to long term results. So, when a donor or other stakeholder asks the question, "What is this project about?" the answer should not start with explaining the details of what activities and outputs the project is designed to produce. Instead, the response should indicate that the project is part of a strategy and a programme to achieve certain outcomes. We should also indicate what other activities are taking place and then address the specific contributions that the project is making. This way the donor or stakeholder will know that there is a broader strategy in place to achieve certain objectives, and the project falls within that strategy.

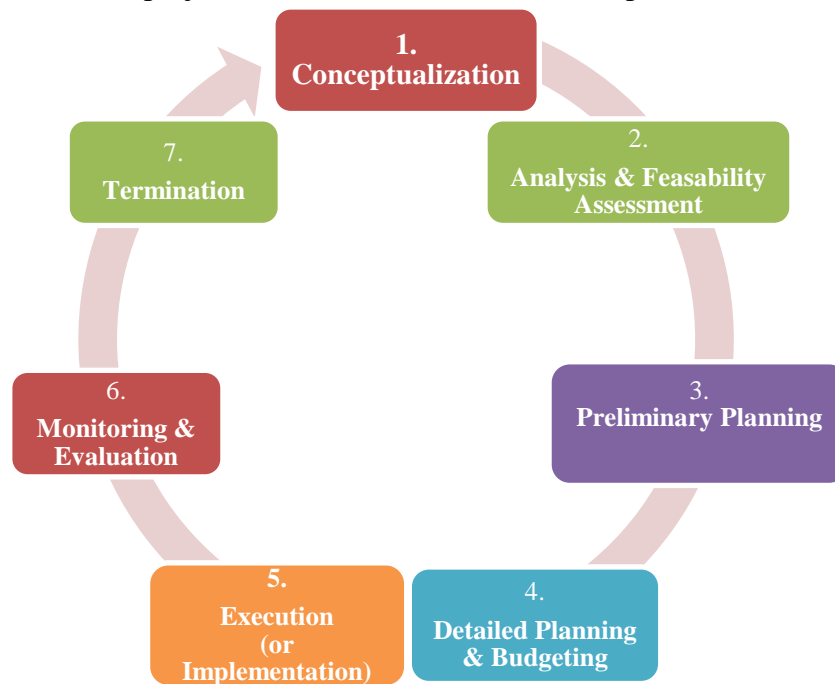Both programmes and projects have the same seven distinct phases:

Figure 1.2: Seven Phases of Programmes & Projects

It is vital that in the conceptualisation, analysis, and planning phase of the programme or project a strategic planning process is used.

Now let us take a moment to examine the World Programme of Action for Youth Development which can be accessed at http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf. This comprehensive document covers what may be considered all the major issues that are and will continue to confront youth in the future.   Some of the priority areas may not be pertinent to our country/region, but others like Education, Employment, Health, the Environment, Drug Abuse, Juvenile Delinquency, ICT, among others, will need attention now and in the future.

Obviously, all these priority areas may not be ranked high on your country's own national priority ratings.   You/your institution would therefore have to review them and come up with a listing of the top five or six areas (or even fewer, given the available resources) that would be given consideration during the life span of your planning cycle.   This is usually between three and five years in the first instance.

Governments generally operate on rolling 3-5 year national plans. These national plans are the strategic plans that guide national budget formulation every year.   If any serious attention is to

be given to Youth Development Work, then it needs to be addressed in that national Strategic Plan. You need to remember that Youth Development programmes compete for scarce resources with other national programmes which are highly visible, like infrastructural development. Unlike these, Youth Development Work is more formative in nature and like Social Services, is not always seen as being tangible. You therefore have to plan for Youth Development and show how the actions you intend to undertake will translate into significant positive change in the future, not only for the youth, but for the country as a whole. This is the only way that you will be able to justify the use of scarce resources and gain the goodwill and support of those who wield power of any kind.

In the next unit we will look further at the issue of selecting priorities to focus on in your strategic planning process. For the rest of this unit we will turn to the issue of gaining support for your strategic plan.

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.5

> Consider the priority areas in the World Programme of Action for Youth which you just visited. From this, create a priority list of 3 that would be considered by your country. You would need to discuss with your colleagues at your place of work. Give some justifications for why you chose the 3 areas. Remember these should be those you believe would have the greatest impact on the lives of young people and your country in the future. Post your response in the Discussion Forum and then compare your choices with that of your online colleagues.
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Session 1.1 Summary

In this session we focussed on the process of strategic planning. We agreed that it is a method of looking at the future we want to create and putting in place the plans and programmes to create that future today. We noted that strategic planning is best done as a participatory process involving a range of stakeholders. We also looked at the contemporary situation of youth development work and the growing acceptance of it as a distinct body of work. We looked, nonetheless, at continuing biases towards other national priorities such as infrastructural development and discussed why it is important to use strategic planning to build a case for investment in youth development. We looked at how the strategic plan would enable you to better position youth development work on the national agenda.

We also explored the connection between strategic planning and programme and project management. In the next session you will learn how to create an environment that will be receptive to the strategic planning process.

Session:1.2

Creating an Enabling Environment for Strategic Planning

Introduction

In this session you will focus on the internal and external environment within which you operate, and will devise ways to transform these into environments suitable for successful strategic planning. Using information that you already have, you will be able to identify stakeholders in both your internal and external environment. You will also devise ways to engage these stakeholders and build partnerships with them.

Session Objectives

By the end of the session, you will be able to:

1. Explain the term *enabling environment.*

2. Identify key stakeholders and the support they may need to participate in the planning process.

3. Examine the key areas of the internal and external working environment to see where you need to garner support.

4. Devise a strategy to persuade key stakeholders to participate in or support the Strategic Planning process.

The Enabling Environment

It is a fact that not all working situations lend themselves to forward thinking and planning. The concept of strategic planning is relatively new to Youth in development work. This is largely because this specialization is just coming into its own. For a long time it was seen as a relatively minor sub-discipline within the Social Services. Many social workers dealt with youth concerns as part of their general routine. Now that Youth Development work has emerged as a discipline in its own right, efforts are being made to formalise methods and approaches to youth work and the kinds of strategies needed to create the enabling environment necessary for its success.

Youth development work is about creating a world of opportunities for youth.   The Pan African Youth Council puts it succinctly:

> *For society, youth work tackles systemic challenges that may hinder the development of youth, combats disadvantages and enhances the contribution of young people to their national development. In essence, youth work identifies desired developmental outcomes for young people and determines practices that need to be in place to achieve these outcomes.*
> http://panafricanyouthcouncil.org/youth-work/

As stated before, a strategic planning process can provide a key starting point for articulating a vision, strategy and set of programmes for youth development. But this requires an enabling environment. We can consider an enabling environment to be one that allows for the free flow of ideas on youth development, which creates room for legislative, policy and strategic planning frameworks to be put in place, and in which appropriate resources are made available to implement youth development strategies and programmes. This environment must exist both internally and externally. There are, however, many obstacles to creating this environment. In addition to the point raised earlier in relation to the relative newness of the discipline of youth development, we can add these other obstacles:

Obstacles to creating an enabling environment for strategic planning on youth development

1. Key decision makers may not see the need for a strategic plan or planning process. They may be accustomed to simply coming up with new programmes and projects and submitting these for funding and implementation.

2. Not everyone is open to the idea of participatory planning. They may consider a participatory planning exercise as a threat to their authority as it subjects their ideas to the scrutiny of others and to a democratic decision-making process.

3. Many people are unfamiliar with the ideas and concepts involved in strategic planning, such as *performance targets*, *outcomes*, *indicators*, and so forth. They may therefore oppose the introduction of these new alien ideas, or they may not see the need for, or value in adopting them.

4. The strategic planning process forces the organisation to seriously assess itself, its performance to date, its values, mission and purpose. This can be uncomfortable. People may say that things have been working well and there is no need to undergo such a review process.

5. Costs may be involved in undertaking a strategic planning process.

In short, a strategic planning process implies changesin the organisational culture, from a business-as-usual culture of doing routine activities to a more structured and systematic process of setting goals and targets, monitoring performance, and using data to inform decisions and make changes. This may require **change management**.

How do you tackle these challenges,secure the buy-in of key stakeholders, and also assist the organisation to adjust to this change?

You should recall some of the techniques that were discussed in earlier courses within this programme. See in particular the change management sessions of **YDEW2004 Management and Leadership Skills for Youth Work**. In that module it was noted that effective leaders know that successful adoption of change or innovation is possible when steps are taken to ensure that change is developed and presented in a way that is not merely accepted, but is embraced by all. The key to success is to ensure that change is not merely imposed but accepted, and that there is commitment and 'buy-in'.

This is, of course, more difficult to achieve in practice than it might seem, and finding a critical mass of 'adopters' or allies can be hard. In many change processes a key strategy is to find 'champions' as well as both formal and informal persons from both inside and outside the organisation who can help to influence the process in favour of the desired change.

In practical terms one question you might be faced with as a Youth Development practitioner is this:

> *"If the Minister/Permanent Secretary/Department Head is not receptive to the idea of introducing a strategic planning process, who might be able to help influence a change in that person's behaviour?"*

Of course, it may not be one person whose behaviour may need to be changed; it might be the entire department.

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.6

- Exercise: think of a situation that you were in where your boss/head of department was not in favour of a particular course of action. What techniques did you use to try and influence his/her behaviour?

- Post your comments on the discussion board and compare strategies with other colleagues. Comment on other colleagues' strategies, make suggestions, or simply try to find out the outcome and what they felt worked and why. Focus your response on the techniques and strategies,

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In most situations people use informal means of trying to influence change. They may try simple techniques such as speaking with their boss and colleagues, or drafting a concept note outlining the merits of adopting the desired course of action/change. In many organisations, however, this process is approached in a more systematic and scientific manner. This is common in political environments where lobbyists are used to try and influence key stakeholders and agendas, but also in various international development agencies which invest in using different methodologies to influence behaviour change among certain target groups in order to create an enabling environment for their programmes.

Two of the main approaches used in these organisations are:

(a) Stakeholder analysis to identify persons who can influence change and develop ways of engaging these stakeholders; and

(b) Environment scanning to understand the internal and external environment and what needs to be done to create an environment for change.

These two techniques overlap and are mutually supportive. Let us look at the core ideas behind each.

Stakeholder Analysis

This is a technique used by leading UN organisations such as WHO and UNFPA to analyse key stakeholders critical to creating an enabling environment and pushing forward reforms. Look at the following quotation from the World Health Organisation's **Guidelines for Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis 1999:**

> *Stakeholder analysis yields useful and accurate information on health reform stakeholders. This information can be used to… develop action plans to increase support for a reform policy; or to guide a participatory, consensus-building process.*(http://www.who.int/management/partnerships/overall/GuidelinesConductingStakeholderAnalysis.pdf)

Note: WHO's Stakeholder Analysis instrument was developed in partnership with Harvard University and is used in a range of international development agencies.

The tool is the starting point of the process. As the WHO guidelines states,

> "To increase support or build consensus for reform, policy makers and managers must take additional steps following the stakeholder analysis. They should use the information generated by the stakeholder analysis to develop and implement strategic communication, advocacy, and negotiation plans or to hold consensus-building workshops."

You should note that while the Stakeholder Analysis method is often used to identify key stakeholders needed to support reform process, the same technique can be used to identify stakeholders who should be involved in planning a programme or project. There are many uses for the tool.

Below we describe the basic steps involved in conducting a stakeholder analysis. The first step is to identify all the possible stakeholders who may be important for creating an enabling environment for the strategic planning process. One of the reasons for writing this list down is to ensure that no one is left out. This is one of the benefits of formally undertaking a stakeholder analysis – it encourages critical thinking about all the persons or organisations that may be important to a process.

In many stakeholder analyses, a table, such as the one shown below, is used to show which stakeholders are important to be involved and what is their level of influence. Both formal and informal stakeholders from in and outside the organisation should be included. In some cases the stakeholders may be individuals while some may be institutions.

(Explanation: "importance" in the table means "how important is it to involve this stakeholder for this particular issue". Or, put another way, "Based on what we are trying to do, and who are our beneficiaries, how important is it to involve this stakeholder?" It does not mean "how important is this person or institution in the society". Hence, if you are planning a youth development activity, the local youth club may be very important as a stakeholder, even though they may have very little influence or power. Likewise, a certain individual may not be a very important stakeholder for the activity, but he/she may have a lot of influence which is needed – e.g. the media in the table: they are not crucial to the design of the programme and will not benefit from it, but they may be needed to help influence youth to participate in the programme.)

Table 1.2: Stakeholder Analysis (Rural Areas)

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS TABLE (Illustration- Programme on Improving Youth Employment in Rural Areas)		
Stakeholders (examples)	Importance	Influence
Ministry of Education and Youth	5	5
National Employment Training Agency	5	3
Social Development Agency	5	4
International donors	1	3
Chamber of Commerce	3	3
Private sector Association	4	4
Disabled Youth Association	5	1
State Microfinance Agency	3	3
Citizens Organisation's	3	2
Media	1	5

Others		
Others		

Table uses a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being the highest

(The table above is modelled off stakeholder analysis tables used by various organisations. Table 1.3 below shows another variation of the table using Position on Issue and Influence on Issue as the two main parameters. You can decide which is more useful for your purpose.)

Table 1.3: Stakeholder Analysis (Position/Influence)

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS						
Position on Issue				**Influence**		
Oppose		Support		Low		High
Stakeholder name	Level	Sector	Position		Influence	
Office of the Prime Minister	National	Political		Oppose		High
Universities	National	Academic		Support		Medium
Main political parties	National	Political		Support		High
Church umbrella organization	National	Religious		Indifferent		Low
NGO group (e.g. watchdog)	Local	Non- profit		Support		Low
Private sector organization(s)	National	For profit		Indifferent		Low
Minority group representative	National	Non- profit		Support		Low
Youth umbrella organization	Local	Non- profit		Support		High
International org/ donor	National	Donor		Low support		High
Citizens Organization's	Local	Non- profit		Support		Medium
Women' organization	National	Non- profit		Low oppose		High

In the next step in the process you would develop a matrix capturing the various stakeholders based on the combination of their importance and influence. See diagram 1.3 below for an example.
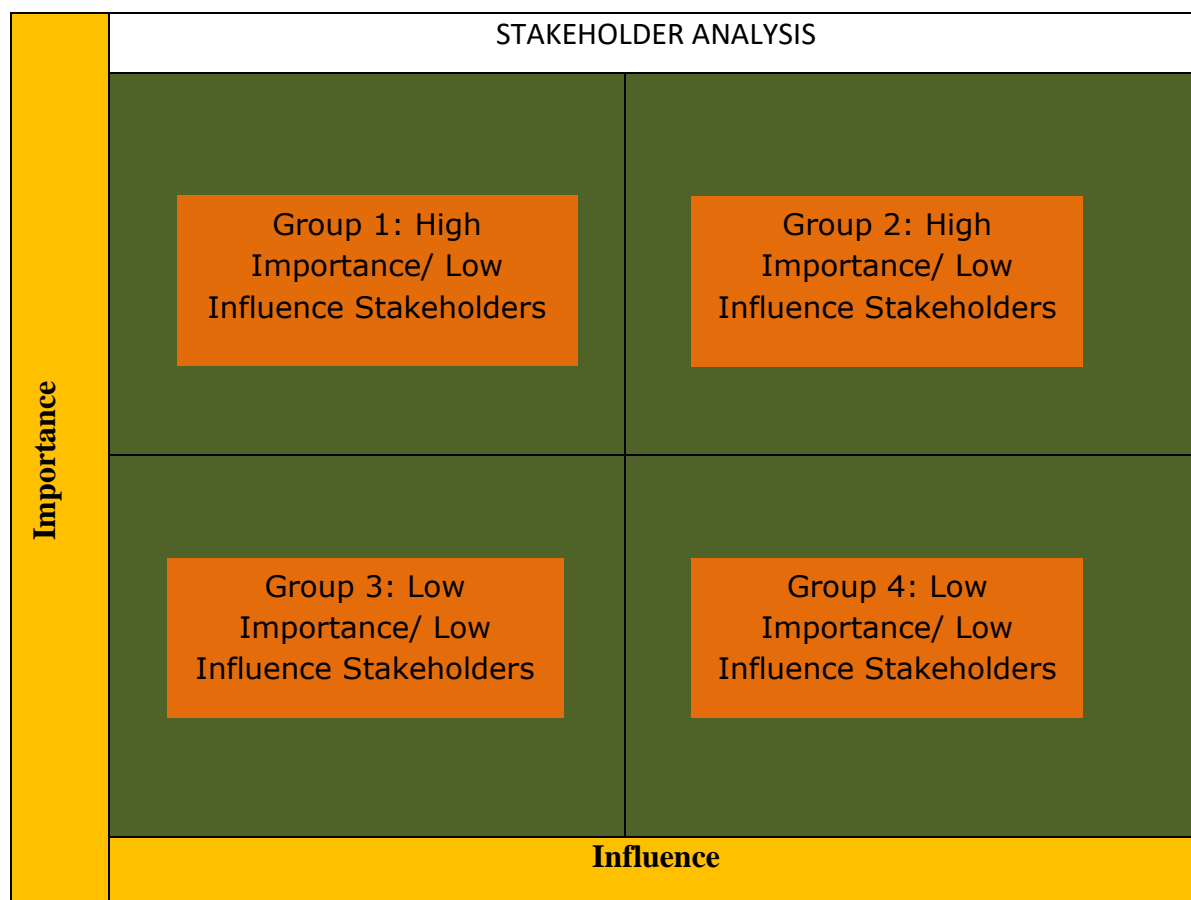
STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS	
Group 1: High Importance/ Low Influence Stakeholders	Group 2: High Importance/ Low Influence Stakeholders
Group 3: Low Importance/ Low Influence Stakeholders	Group 4: Low Importance/ Low Influence Stakeholders

Figure 1.3: A Stakeholder Importance/Influence Matrix

Group 1 Stakeholders

In this quadrant you would insert the names of the individuals or institutions that are very important to the success of your programme but who may have little influence on the overall process. By way of example, our rural youth employment programme will be successful if it includes not only able bodied youth but also youth with disabilities. This group is very important to the programme. However, they may have very little influence to shape either the design or the implementation of the programme. We consider this group/association highly important but not very influential. In stakeholder analysis exercises these category 1 groups are often listed as those who may need special attention and support in order to ensure that their interests are protected, and that their voices are heard. Similarly, if we are thinking of this in the context of creating an enabling environment for strategic planning, perhaps the Unit/Department Managers in the Ministry are very important to the process as they will need to understand and implement

the strategic plan. They may, however, not have much influence in terms of who makes the decision to adopt a strategic planning process.

Group 2 stakeholders

This quadrant includes stakeholders that are very important to the programme because they are both important and influential. We label these'partnership stakeholders' as we often need to build alliances with them. Using the same example, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry where the strategic planning process will be introduced may be both very important (he/she must buy into the idea and implement it) and influential (without his/her support the exercise may not be possible). We would therefore need to find a way to get him/her on-board as a partner.

Group 3 Stakeholders

These stakeholders are not considered to be important to the programme and also do not have much influence on its success or failure. They often do not play a major role in the overall process.

Group 4 Stakeholders

Quadrant 4 stakeholders are often not needed for the programme. They are not particularly 'important' to the activity as it is not designed for them and we may not need them to participate in it directly. We may also not need their inputs into what is being designed. However, they may exercise significant influence. There have been real world cases for example, where in a Ministry, an 'informal leader', such as the political advisor to the Minister, was not 'important' from the standpoint of being directly involved in the day to day work or plans within the Ministry, but was very instrumental in terms of being able to get an issue on the Minister's agenda. If we are to be able to create an enabling environment for strategic planning on youth development, we must consider these types of allies.

Do take a moment to review the matrices and ensure that you understand the distinction between 'importance' and 'influence'. Think of initiatives you may have worked on in the past and see whether you can mentally identify stakeholders who would fit within each of the respective categories.

Remember that once you have identified critical stakeholders who are important to your strategic planning (or programme/project planning) process and who can influence change to support your objectives you will need to follow this up by taking active steps to engage these stakeholders and gain their support and commitment.

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.7

> In your groups, think of a major youth development activity that you may have been involved in or are aware of, then try to identify 3 or more stakeholders in both the *high importance/low influence* and *low importance/high influence* categories. Write a summary of the youth activity and outline the stakeholders.
>
> Post to the Discussion forum – one post per group.

Environment Scan: the Internal Environment

We can now look briefly at scanning the environment. Let's begin with the internal environment.

Your internal environment consists of your organizational structure, your institutional culture and all the other little things that may be unique to your institution.   It includes the way the institution operates formally and informally and what is generally accepted as the norm within the organization.

If we accept that you cannot, by yourself, craft and execute a strategic plan, then you will need to examine and understand the internal environment to see how best to execute change.   You will need to win people over, get them to buy into the process, and also get the internal environment to support the change you are after. This may require culture change, which means: raising awareness, introducing new internal policies and guidelines, new incentives to reward behaviour and so forth. Many organisations fail to follow-through on making these wider internal changes and, as a result, the change that is introduced does not become sustainable.

Note that people are generally more receptive if they have been consulted and/or involved in a change process. This may mean changing the way things are done in your organization/institution and making it more participatory. As the manager/driving force behind that change (e.g. being the person promoting a new strategic plan), you will need to be able to sell it in such a way that your colleagues and stakeholders see something in it for them or see the benefits for the organisation.   They need to see how they fit into the broader picture and how the success of the Plan is also their success.

This will require more than a one shot meeting or exercise.   You may need many meetings and focus group sessions to get everyone on board. You should not expect 100% acceptance immediately.   When you have convinced more than the majority you can proceed forward; some others will likely join when they see success because people generally want to be on a winning team. But do remember to put in place other measures that can help to institutionalise the change.

Points that can be raised to persuade colleagues internally of the need for change:

1. The funding environment has changed, and donors (private sector, international agencies, etc.) now need to see clearer strategies with concrete objectives and targets

2. There have been important changes in the demographics of the country and/or certain social issues are now much more on the national agenda. As such the department or organisation will need to come up not only with new projects but a new comprehensive strategy.

What other arguments could you put forward to persuade your co-workers and supervisors of the need for a new strategic plan? Share your ideas with the group online.

UNITN 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.8

- Prepare a power point presentation to be presented to the staff of the youth institution you represent/work with, putting forward the case for the need for a strategic plan for the institution. Create a video of yourself making the presentation and post it to the Online Discussion forum. Watch and comment on the video posts of at least two other colleagues. After reviewing the comments on your own presentation, fine tune it and submit to your tutor. This will be a graded activity for this Unit.

Environment Scan: the External Environment

The next step is to tackle your external environment. Your external environment is made up of institutions and forces outside of the institution that can affect its performance   For the most part, this will involve dealing with outside agencies (often these will be institutions that control resources that you may need).These institutions could include financial institutions, local and regional project funders, other development agencies, potential employers of youth, education and training institutions and the Government through its various agencies.

Before you begin to engage with these external institutions and individuals you will need to prepare yourself, and be clear and convinced about what you aim to propose and what you require from them – whether their participation on resources. You should be able to explain to each stakeholder why their participation is important and what benefits it will bring. Remember, in an age where people are very busy and many competing demands on their time, we must be professional and convincing in making a case for their involvement in our processes or programmes.

UNIT 1 LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.9

> In pre-assigned groups prepare an outline of the main arguments you would use to persuade three different groups of stakeholders – youth organisations, donors, and private sector agencies – to participate in your upcoming strategic planning exercise. This should be 1-2 pages. Post your proposal online for discussion. Comment on the posts of other groups.

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Unit Summary

In this Unit you were able to define Strategic Planning which we said wasa road map to lead an organization from where it is now to where it would like to be in five or ten years.

You also looked at the strategic planning process within the context of youth development work to see how it could create value to clarify to stakeholders what we want to achieve, to motivate staff, and to mobilise resources among other things.

We explored the critical importance of conducting a stakeholder analysis to identify actors who are both important and influential for the strategic planning process. We also looked at ways to engage these actors and ensure their participation. We also underscored the importance of ensuring that strategic planning is participatory and creates space for a variety of different voices.

We worked with a Stakeholder Analysis model used by many international development agencies to help create an enabling environment for strategic planning within their organisation. We also conducted a brief analysis of the internal and external environment to see what actions are needed to garner support.

In the next Unit we will begin the actual strategic planning process, starting with creating our Vision and Mission statements and articulating core values pertinent to youth Development Work.

References

Most references are fully cited in the Unit or given as recommended reading at the beginning. The following additional documents were used as core preparation material for the Unit and overall course:

1. International Trade Centre **RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT GUIDE AND TOOLKIT, available at http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/About_ITC/Where_are_we_working/Multi-country_programmes/Pact_II/RBM%20Tools%20and%20Guide-Fev%202011-FINAL.pdf**

2. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) **RBM Handbook on Developing Results Chains (2000), available at http://www.mosaic-net-intl.ca/documents/RBM%20HANDBOOK%20ON%20DEVELOPING%20RESULTS%20CHAINS.PDF**

3. United Nations Development Group **RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK (2012), available at http://www.undg.org/docs/12316/UNDG-RBM%20Handbook-2012.pdf.**

4. United Nations Development Programme **HANDBOOK ON PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS (2009), available at http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guidance.shtml#handbook**

5. Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs **Results Management in Norwegian Development Cooperation, available at http://www.norad.no/en/tools-and-publications/publications/publication?key=109837**

6. OECD **Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, available at http://www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf**

7. Asia Development Bank, **Introduction to Results Based Management**, available at http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2006/Introduction-to-Results-Management.pdf

8. The World Bank, **Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System**, at http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2004/08/27/000160016_20040827154900/Rendered/PDF/296720PAPER0100steps.pdf

9. Glenn Farrell, **Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation at the Commonwealth of Learning**, available at http://www.col.org/PublicationDocuments/pub_MEHandbook_web.pdf