

Unit 2

An Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

Overview

In the previous unit we spoke about the strategic planning process and why it was important to youth development work. We will now begin to look in greater detail at what is involved in Strategic Planning.

In this unit we will cover the overall process of creating a Strategic Plan, looking at all the key steps that need to be taken and the major components of a plan. The unit will contextualise strategic planning as an element of a results-based management framework, and also show why planning has to be *circular* and not *linear*. The unit will also outline the concept and key elements of a strategic plan and begin formulating two of those key elements – the Vision and Mission statement of the organisation. You will also see the relationship between strategic planning and the creation of a logical framework.

We will also spend some time discussing the importance of using participatory approaches to strategic planning.

Please read all the recommended material for the Unit as these will help to deepen your understanding of the subject. Some components of strategic planning, particularly the logical framework, can be difficult to grasp at first. Extensive reading, discussion with colleagues, and consultation with your e-Tutor can help.

Unit 2 Learning Objectives

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

1. Demonstrate understanding of the connection between strategic planning and the Results Based Management approach.
2. Explain all the major steps required to prepare a Strategic Plan.
3. Identify all the key elements or components of a Strategic Plan.

4. Undertake a preliminary draft of a Vision and Mission statement for your organisation (we will refine these techniques in later Units.).
5. Assess the logical framework model and its relationship to the Strategic Plan.
6. Articulate the key reasons why a strategic planning process should be participatory.

This unit is divided into three sessions:

Session 2.1: Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

Session 2.2: Key Steps in the Strategic Planning Process

Session 2.3: The Participatory Approach to Strategic Planning

Readings and Resources

Your readings and resources for this unit are as follows:

a) **Required Readings:**

All About Strategic Planning at <http://managementhelp.org/strategicplanning/index.htm>

- b) Psychology Today, *Vision and Mission: What's the difference and why does it matter:* <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/smartwork/201004/vision-and-mission-whats-the-difference-and-why-does-it-matter>

- c) A Guide to the Logical Framework Approach at <http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Evropa/ShowDocument.aspx?Type=Home&Id=525>

You may also find the following quite useful:

- d) Results Management in Norwegian Development Cooperation: A practical guide here [file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Results%20Management%20in%20Norwegian%20Dev elopment%20Cooperation.pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Results%20Management%20in%20Norwegian%20Development%20Cooperation.pdf)
- e) Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Glossary of Development Terms: <http://www.oecd.org/site/dacsmpd11/glossary.htm>
- f) The Gates Foundation, *“Sure, We Can Build a Better Toilet. But Will People Use It?”* <http://www.wired.com/2012/08/gates-foundation-toilets/>
- g) Horace Levy et al, *“They cry 'respect'! Urban violence and poverty in Jamaica” (UWI Library).*

Session 2.1

Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

Introduction

This session is designed to walk you through the main concepts, steps and components of strategic planning and to continue to show the relationship to programme and project management. From the session you should leave with a clear view of what the strategic planning process entails, and some key points to bear in mind with respect to strategic planning.

Session 2.1 Objectives

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

1. Distinguish between strategic planning and a strategic plan.
2. Explain core principles and concepts involved in strategic planning.
3. Identify the core components of a strategic plan and the main steps involved in preparing the plan.
4. Explain what is a logical framework and its relationship to strategic planning.
5. Draft key results for a logical framework/strategic plan.

Core Principles Involved In Strategic Planning

Let us begin by looking at some core concepts and principles involved in strategic planning.

We should also start by noting that there is a distinction between ‘strategic planning’ and ‘strategic plan’. In this course we have deliberately used the term ‘strategic planning’ instead of ‘strategic plan’. The difference is subtle but important.

Dynamic not Static.

Strategic planning emphasizes that this is a dynamic and ongoing process, not an end. While a strategic plan, which is a finished product, is one of the main outcomes of strategic planning, the

idea is that the plan must become a ‘living document’, which can be adjusted, reviewed, and revamped as needed. Planning is also a culture – it’s a way of doing business in an organisation. In some organisations a planning process is done every year. In technology companies, planning may be done every three months because the environment changes rapidly. In these organisations it is not very useful to maintain a focus on a strategic plan document, as this may become obsolete quite quickly.

An effective strategic planning process requires constant monitoring, feedback, learning and improving. Any plan that is put in place must be regularly reviewed and modified based on the lessons learned through monitoring and evaluation (we will discuss this in detail in Unit 5). Similarly, future plans should be developed based on the lessons drawn from the past.

Note the following quote from the Gates Foundation on how they do strategic planning:

“In each of our divisions, we develop goals and strategies before allocating resources and making investments. We continually collect and share data on our progress, reflect on lessons learned, and make course corrections as needed. Essential to this process is ongoing dialogue with our grantees and partners—which is embedded throughout our strategy lifecycle.”

Source: <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/How-We-Work>

Please note the reference to a strategy *life cycle* and the fact there is a continuous process of reviewing and reflecting. We will elaborate on this in the next concept dealt with below.

Circular not linear

Second, it is very important to bear in mind that the strategic planning process is circular and not linear. It is a *cycle* which involves evaluating-planning-implementing-monitoring-adjusting-implementing-evaluating-planning... and on and on. This is why we often refer to a *life cycle* approach – because the process is living (dynamic) and circular (cycle).

Note that we also began the process with ‘evaluating’ or assessing. **Our starting point in planning is not what we want to achieve, but where we are now.** We must first understand our environment, our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities etc. before we can set clear and meaningful goals and targets for where we want to be in a certain time frame. By way of example, a private sector company that wants to increase its market share and brand recognition must first analyse its internal and external environment, the competitive landscape, and its own resources before it can move into the stage of setting a clear target for a certain date. You can also think of it in terms of a patient sitting in front of a doctor asking, “How can I gain 10 pounds by December?” As you can imagine, the doctor will first want to know how much the patient currently weighs, whether there are any health issues, what is the patient’s mental state etc, before discussing what may or may not be an appropriate amount of weight to put on. In short,

for us to know whether our goal will be realistic or appropriate, we will first need to know where we are now. This is why, in virtually all project documents, you will see a *situation analysis* at the start of the document. This analysis defines the current context and challenges before the objectives of the project are set.

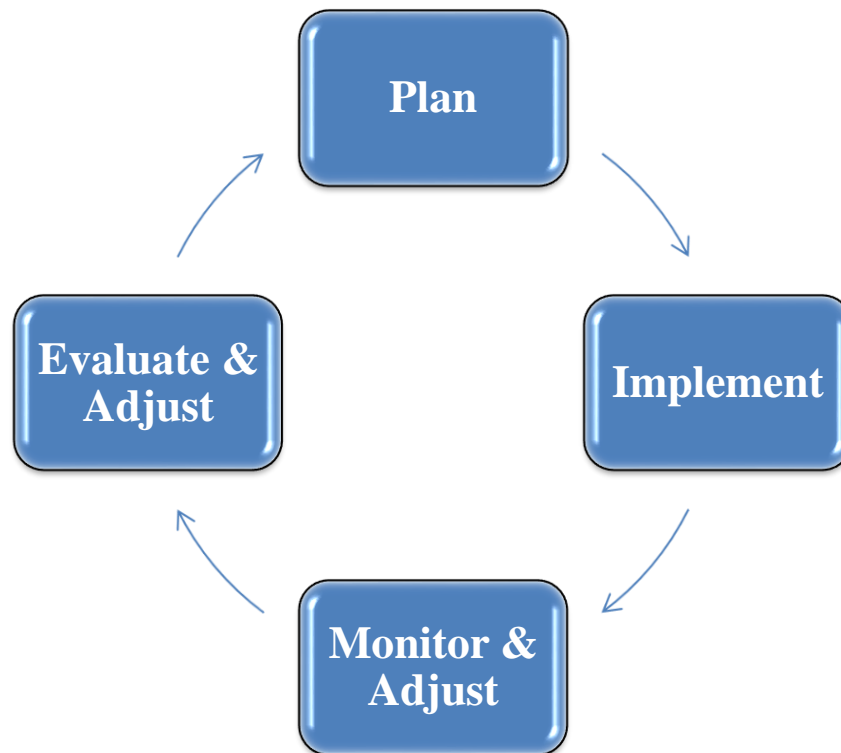


Figure 2.1: The Strategic Planning Cycle

UNIT 2 LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.1

In your own words, write a paragraph or two explaining Figure 1. Post your writing to the Discussion Board.

Component of Results Based Management

The third concept is that strategic planning is part of Results Based Management (RBM).

In general terms, RBM can be defined as a broad management strategy which is aimed at achieving improved performance and concrete results in an organisation.

RBM, sometimes referred to as Management by Objectives, is an effort to make an organisation more purposeful in defining what it wants to achieve, monitoring its performance, and organising itself in a manner that will ensure that it actually achieves its objectives.

In the diagram below we can see Strategic Planning as a sub-set of the RBM process. The overall RBM process includes *Strategic Planning*, *Monitoring* and *Evaluation* to achieve results. (You should also be aware that Results Based Budgeting is part of Strategic Planning. In YDEW 2004 you learned about Results Based Budgeting and how to align budgetary resources to the goals and objectives that the organisation is pursuing. This is therefore part of the same RBM process.)

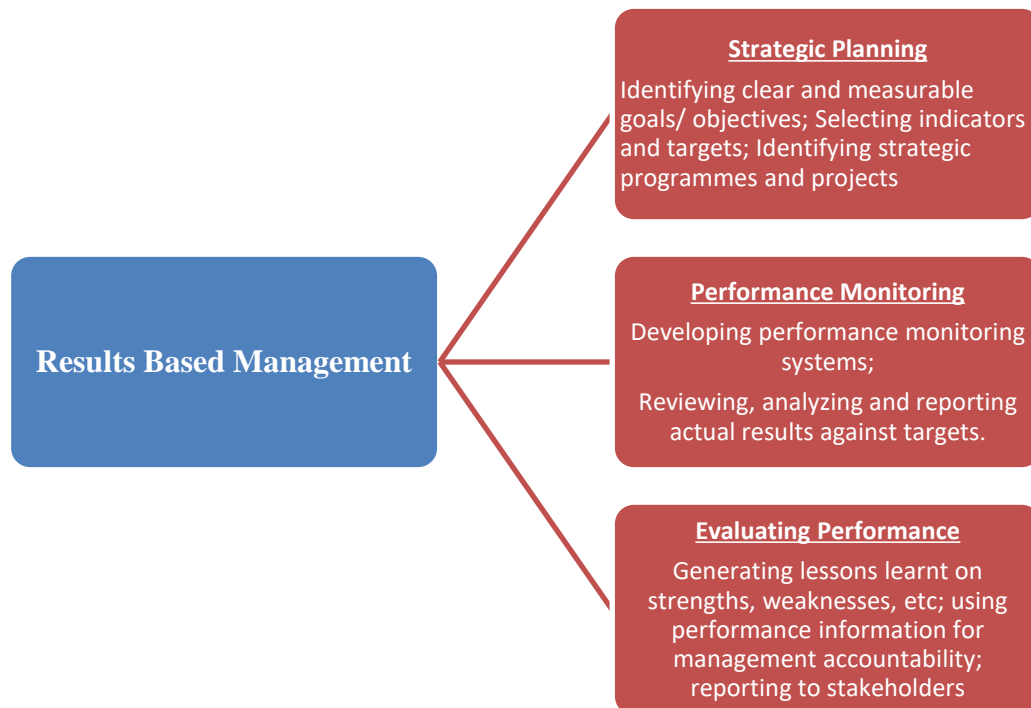


Figure 2.2: Results-Based Management

Now that we have looked at some of the key concepts of strategic planning, we need to examine

Strategic planning is a process of determining “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.” (From article, *All About Strategic Planning*), at <http://managementhelp.org/strategicplanning/index.htm>

what are the major components of a strategic plan. We have previously stated the following:

This, however, is a general statement. In unit 1, we said that meaningful strategic plans must be as clear, concrete and measurable as possible. Strategic planning must lead to something which is actionable, and must set a clear work plan for staff to follow. When we leave the strategic planning process, everyone must be clear on what the mission and goals of the unit, organisation, programme or project are, along with what are the specific targets to be achieved and the strategies to be pursued, among other things. Strategic planning must provide a blueprint that the staff can use as a reference in their work.

In an organisation that is developing its first strategic plan, the process will involve defining:

1. A vision
2. A mission
3. Major goals
4. Specific objectives (often called *Outcomes*)
5. Major *Outputs* and initiatives to be pursued
6. Activities
7. Concrete *targets* to be achieved
8. Strategies to be used (e.g. strategy for building partnership)
9. Risks and Assumptions

This, of course, is a general outline. Some organisations may already have their vision and mission and may focus on the goals and objectives for a specific new programme. (We should also note, however, that many organisations that already have a vision and mission still find it useful to review these every few years based on changes that may have taken place in their internal and/or external environment. This is what we call a test of **relevance** – making sure our vision and mission is still relevant to the current times.) In some strategic planning processes, goals may be called impacts, objectives may be called outcomes, outputs may be called initiatives, and so forth. Also, while some strategic planning processes go to the step of defining activities, inputs, and costs, others do not, and a separate implementation plan may be drafted. Many strategic plans include risks and assumptions but some do not.

You will also note that organisations may add a range of other components, including ‘core values’ ‘guiding principles’ ‘strategic priorities’ and so forth. And most plans include a section

dealing with internal management improvement strategies (we will cover this in Units 3 and 5). There is no set formula as to what components should be included.

UNIT 2 LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.2 (Reflection)

Before going forward let us pause here and reflect on what we have learned thus far about the concept of Strategic Planning and the main components of a Strategic Plan. Write a one page summary of the key points learned thus far in this Unit. Post your summary to the Discussion Forum.

The model we will use in this Course will focus on the components outlined in the diagram below. Figure 2.3 outlines the major components of the typical strategic plan. These are the things the strategic planning process is designed to produce. Now, please take note of the following point: the strategic planning process will lead to the preparation of a set of results including goals, outcomes, outputs, indicators, baselines, targets, activities, and so forth. These results are what are also referred to as a Logical Framework.

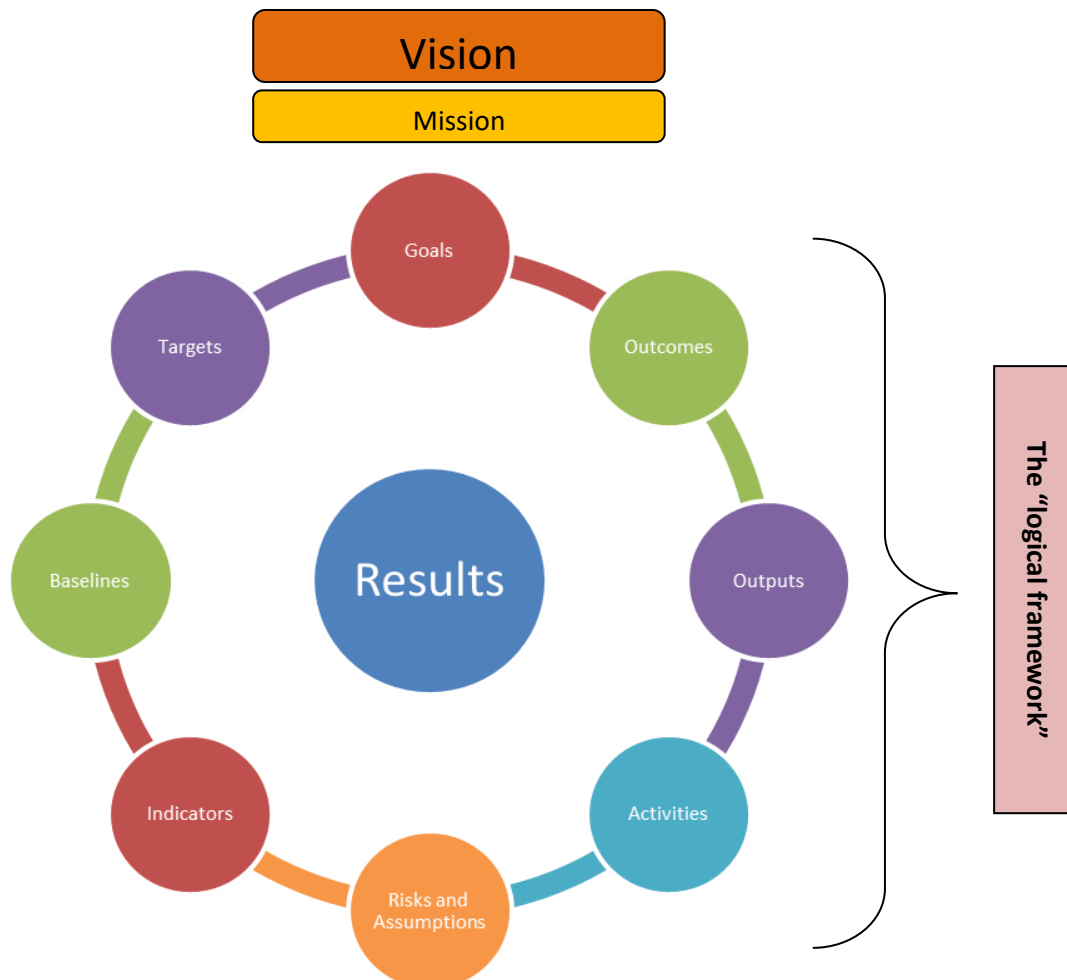


Figure 2.3: Components of the typical Strategic Plan

When people refer to the logical framework model they are most often referring to the components of the diagram that fall below the vision and mission; that is, the goals, outcomes, outputs, activities, indicators, baselines, targets, risks and assumptions. Why is this referred to as a Logical Framework (or LogFrame for short)? It is because a logical framework is seen as the *logic* behind your strategy for achieving your goals and objectives. A logical framework matrix or table is what the strategic planning process produces to show how we will get from implementing activities to producing our immediate outputs, and how these immediate outputs will then lead to the outcomes and our eventual goal. The logic model basically says, *if* we do certain activities and our assumptions are true then those activities should produce the outputs we have in mind; and *if* we produce those outputs, and our assumptions at that level are true then this should help us get to our outcomes/objectives, and so forth. That is the logic; hence Logical Framework. It is important to understand this point before you move on.

There are many examples of a Logical Framework in use. While they all have the same basic structure and logic, you will often find different terms being used. Throughout this unit we will stick to a few terms and provide some definitions for these terms. We will get back to this shortly, but please take note of it.

In this next diagram (fig. 2.4), we show the key components in a slightly different form to explain another point. You will note that we have excluded the indicators, baselines and targets but included activities and inputs. As stated before, some plans will not include all the details of activities and inputs, but some will (all should have indicators, baselines and targets.)

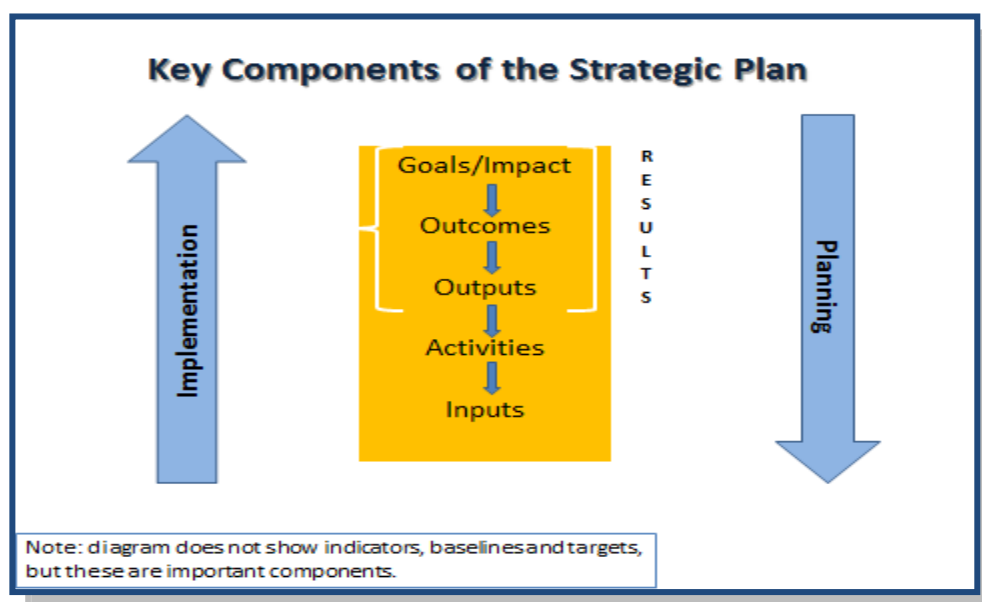


Figure 2.4: Key Components of the Strategic Plan

What we would like you to note is that strategic planning starts from defining goals and impacts and works down to outcomes, outputs and activities. However, when we implement our programmes we begin with inputs and activities and work *up* to ensure that these produce outputs which in turn lead to outcomes, which in turn should contribute to our goals and long term impacts. In essence, we plan with our goals in mind, but implement by starting with the concrete activities needed to produce results in a step by step manner.

Now let us use a few minutes to define some of these terms and components, starting with vision and mission. We will start with a definition of the two concepts drawn from Mind Tools which points out that mission statements and vision statements do distinctly different jobs:

Definition 1

Mission statements define the organization's purpose and primary objectives. These statements are set in the present tense, and they explain why you exist as a business, both to members of the organization and to people outside it. Mission statements tend to be short, clear and powerful.

Definition 2

Vision statements also define your organization's purpose, but they focus on its goals and aspirations. These statements are designed to be uplifting and inspiring. They're also timeless: even if the organization changes its strategy, the vision statement can often stay the same."

Source: http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_90.htm

UNIT 2 LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.3 (Reading & Commentary)

Read the following article from *Psychology Today* on the difference between vision and mission: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/smartwork/201004/vision-and-mission-whats-the-difference-and-why-does-it-matter>.

Write a clear statement of the vision and mission of a fictitious youth development organisation that you work with. Post this on the online discussion board and comment on the vision and mission of at least two of your colleagues.

Now, take a look at the vision and mission of two organisations, one a for-profit entity and the other a not-for-profit

General Motors:

Vision:

"GM's vision is to be the world leader in transportation products and related services. We will earn our customers' enthusiasm through continuous improvement driven by the integrity, teamwork, and innovation of GM people."

Mission:

"General Motors is a multinational corporation engaged in socially responsible operations, worldwide. It is dedicated to provide products and services of such quality that our customers will receive superior value while our employees and business partners will share in our success and our stock-holders will receive a sustained superior return on their investment."

United Nations Development Programme

Vision:

"To help countries achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion."

Mission:

"United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 177 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and its wide range of partners."

Note that in both examples the vision tries to describe the future we want to create, while the mission generally speaks about how we work and the things we do.

Formulating the vision and mission are therefore key components of the strategic planning process. These shape the overall purpose and direction of the organisation for both internal management and staff as well as external stakeholders. Once these are in place then we can move to looking at the short and medium term goals and objectives etc.

As noted before, the strategic planning process also entails defining clear outcomes, outputs, indicators, baselines and targets (the logical framework). This work will often take a bit of time as many stakeholders may not be familiar with the terminologies and methodologies in developing a logical framework.

The following definitions are fairly generic and based on a variety of definitions used by different international organisations. If you would like to know a good place to start in researching these definitions you can consult the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) which has attempted to create a global glossary. You can see their definitions of a range of development terms here:

<http://www.oecd.org/site/dacsmpl11/glossary.htm>. You can compare this with USAID's glossary of terms here: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADO820.pdf.

Table 2.1: Concepts and Definitions

Result	Definition
Goal/Impact ¹	Impact refers to changes in the lives of people or long-term development condition of the country or region. Or we can define the goal/impact more concisely as the Ultimate benefits to the country and its people . Example 1: Reduce the percentage of Barbadian youth who are unemployed by 2020. Example 2: There is a significant improvement in the health and education status of the Indigenous people of Papua New Guinea (PNG) by 2030.
Outcome	Outcome refers to a short- to medium term change in the development condition of a country . Another definition is: The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs . Example 1: Increased training opportunities available to Barbadian youth by 2018. (Note that the outcome is part of the process of getting to the impact – meaning, with increased training opportunities plus other things, youth will have jobs and there will be a reduction in youth unemployment.) Example 2: expanded social protection scheme and social services covering the majority of Indigenous people in PNG by 2020. (Again, the idea here may be that as part of trying to reach the goal of ensuring that the indigenous people are healthier and more educated, the government may need to put in place a better social protection system for these population groups, so that they can have access to health care).

¹Sometimes goals are differentiated from impact. We have combined the two here for simplicity as impacts will generally be the same as your goal or will be extremely closely related. You can, however, feel free to treat them separately. We will talk more about goals in Unit 4.

Output	<p>Outputs refer to The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. Example 1: Redesigned national youth training programme and curriculum developed in partnership with the private sector. (Note that the output addresses something concrete which is produced. Outcome refers to some of the effects that come from having produced those outputs.) Example 2: New national social protection policy drafted. Example 3: Comprehensive database and management information system put in place to facilitate more efficient targeting of social assistance to the poor and Indigenous people of Papua New Guinea.</p>
Activity	<p>An activity can be defined as a specific action or process undertaken over a specific period of time by an organization to convert resources to products or services to achieve results. Activity example: Organise workshop and recruit consultants to draft new national social protection policy.</p>
Indicator	<p>Indicators are qualitative and quantitative measurements of results. Indicators are used at the goal/impact, outcome, and output levels. Impact level example: % of young people 15-24 who are unemployed. Outcome level example: % of Indigenous people in PNG who are enrolled in the social protection scheme and are receiving benefits. Output level example: Level of progress in developing a new social protection policy (qualitative measure), or % implementation of the comprehensive database and MIS (quantitative). It is often said that indicators (as well as results) should be SMART:</p> <p>Specific: Is the indicator specific enough to measure progress towards our result? Measurable: Can we actually measure this result? Is data available? Attainable: Is the result that the indicator is aiming to measure actually achievable? Relevant: Is the indicator the most appropriate or relevant to measure the result? Time-bound: Does the indicator (or target) provide a clear time frame for when the result will be achieved?</p>
Baseline	<p>The baseline tells us where we are now (or at a specific point in time) in relation to the indicator. (The target tells us where we want to be in the future.) Baselines should be established for the indicators set at the impact, outcome and output levels. An easy way to think about indicator, baseline and target is this: let us say that an individual has a personal goal to increase his/her weight. The indicator would be <u>actual weight</u>; the baseline would be his/her <u>actual weight</u> is 160 pounds as of June 12, 2014; and the target would be to achieve an <u>actual weight</u> of 180 pounds by January 31, 2015. So, going back to our examples above, for the impact indicator which states “% of young people 15-24 who are unemployed” the baseline could be “As of February 2012 (date of last official statistics) 14.7% of young people 15-24 were unemployed. (Note that the indicator, baseline and target have to be</p>

	completely consistent. So, if the indicator says <i>percentage</i> then the baseline must be <i>percentage</i> . In this same example, we would not want a baseline that says “As of February 2012 300,000 young people were unemployed – this is neither a % nor is it clear whether these 300,000 young persons are in the 15-24 age group.”)
Target	Target refers to the specific measurable result, expressed as a value of an indicator , that a project or programme is designed to achieve. Again, targets would be set for the indicators at the impact, outcome, and output levels. Using our same example above re the impact indicator “% of young people 15-24 who are unemployed”, the target could be “11% or less of youth 15-24 unemployed by 2020.” (It is also possible to set yearly targets along the way to achieving the 11% by 2020. So we could have 14% by 2016, 13% by 2017 etc.)
Risks	Risks refer to a future event which is beyond our control and which may impact the achievement of objectives. Example: The existing government may lose the next election and there is a risk that the new government and Minister may not see the social protection policy as a priority.
Assumptions	Assumptions refer to things that need to be in place for us to achieve our results (or for our programme or project to be successful). These things are normally also outside of our control, but we believe there is a moderate to high probability that they will occur. Assumptions are positive – we assume they will happen and help our programme. Risks are negative – we think they might happen and negatively affect our efforts. Example: We assume that once the national youth training curriculum is developed the government will allocate the resources it has pledged to finance the national training programme. (Note here that we assume that the government will follow-through on its commitment; however, if there was an upcoming election or a planned change in the Minister, this assumption could be changed into a risk.)

UNIT 2 LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.4 (Practice)

Practise drafting results statements! You work in a youth development organisation that provides a variety of services to young people, including skills training, literacy, guidance and coaching on healthy living, etc. Your organisation works in 4 provinces in the country. Prepare (a) one draft impact statement with an indicator, baseline and target; (b) one outcome statement with an indicator, baseline and target; and (c) two output statements with indicators, baselines and targets. (In Unit 3 you will have additional opportunities to draft results statements. Try to get good at it, as there will be a graded assessment later in the course.)

Table 2.2: Sample Results Statements for unit 2.4 Learning Activity

Impact Statement	
Indicator	
Baseline	
Target	
Outcome Statement	
Indicator	
Baseline	
Target	
Output 1	
Indicator	
Baseline	
Target	
Output 2	
Indicator	
Baseline	
Target	

Post your sample online.

The aim of this part of the session has been to give an overview of some of the core components of the strategic plan. In essence, these are the things that you will produce from the planning process. As noted before, you can also include other components such as ‘core principles’ or ‘core values’ (we will cover these in Unit 3). In many strategic planning processes, the results matrix (logical framework) will also include detailed activities, inputs and costs. We will not go into details on the activities, inputs and costs as these have been covered in the course on Results

Based Budgeting. Here, our emphasis is on the overall planning process and what it needs to produce. We will now move on to look at the steps we need to take to get to the point where these main components are produced.

Short note

What is the relationship between programmes, projects and the results outlined above? In Unit 1 we indicated that strategic planning is vital for setting the goals and objectives for our projects and programmes. In practice, one of two things normally occurs: either (a) the strategic planning exercise is used to design a programme or project, or (b) a strategic plan is produced and then programmes or projects are developed to implement the strategic plan. In either case, the planning process is vital for determining what programmes and projects are developed to achieve. (We will show concrete examples of this later in the course once we have developed the main components of our strategic plan and logframe.)

Secondly, in development circles we often say that a programme is designed to achieve outcomes while projects are designed to produce outputs.

Session 2.1 Summary

In this session we have covered the core concepts of strategic planning, explaining how the process works and what it produces. We have delved into the relationship between strategic planning and Results Based Management (RBM), showing how planning is one of the three main elements of RBM.

We have also spent a little time discussing the core components of a strategic plan – vision, mission, goals, outcomes, outputs, activities, indicators, risks and assumptions and so forth. This was accompanied by some initial exercises to practice drafting some of these results.

The session also explained what is referred to as a Logical Framework or Logframe and how this relates to strategic planning and the components of a strategic plan.

Next, we will move on to look at how we plan for a strategic planning process.

Session 2.2

Key Steps in the Strategic Planning Process

Introduction

In this session we will be looking at how to plan for a strategic planning process. This is an important exercise given that most strategic planning processes will take place over many days or weeks and involve a wide range of stakeholders. In order to ensure that the process is done right and we come away with a useful strategic plan, we need to plan how the process will be executed. From the session you should leave with a good understanding of how to prepare for a strategic planning process.

Session 2.2 Objectives

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

1. Explain the importance of planning for a strategic planning process.
2. Identify the key activities that will be involved in planning to initiate a strategic planning process.
3. Formulate a work plan for a strategic planning process.

Planning to Plan

Now that you have an idea of what the strategic planning process will produce, a key activity is to prepare a work plan for the strategic planning process. Most strategic planning processes will take time, and may require multiple meetings and inputs from a variety of stakeholders. It therefore helps to have a work plan to set out how and when different activities in the planning process will be done and how much it will cost.

The diagram below outlines the key steps in the overall process. In subsequent Units we will walk you through how to conduct these processes and produce the components of the strategic plan. For now, we will focus on understanding what needs to be done and planning to get it done.

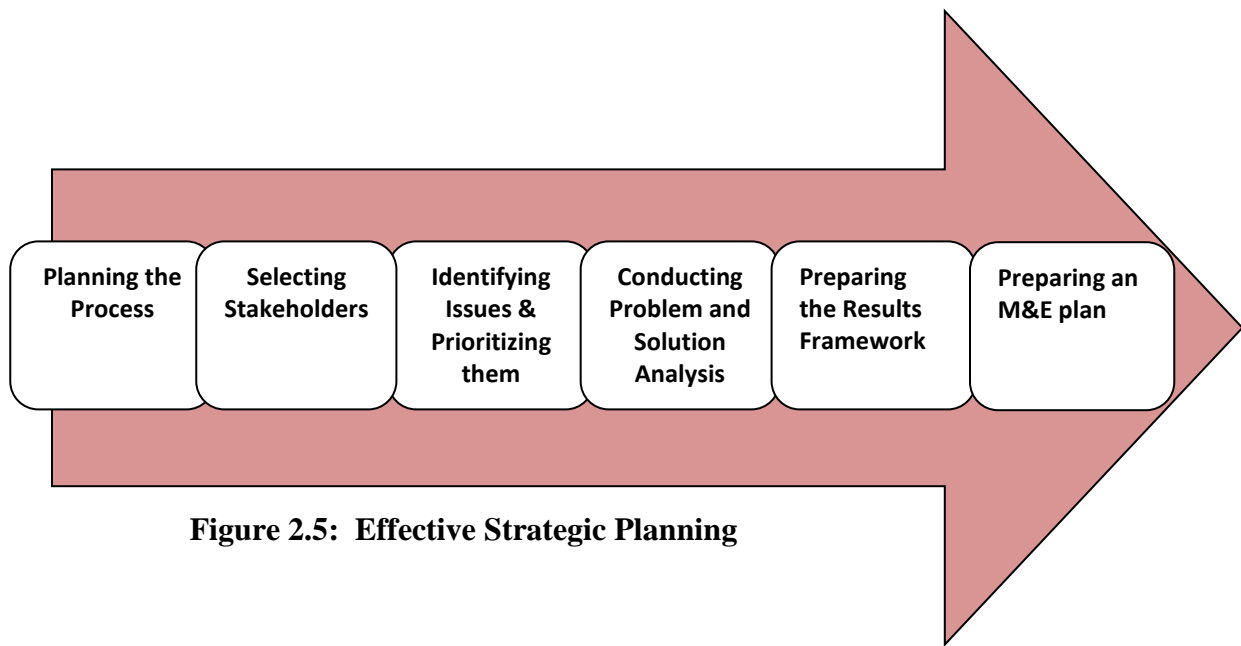


Figure 2.5: Effective Strategic Planning

UNIT 2 LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.5 (Redrafting)

Redraft the diagram above to reflect the same information but with your own creativity. Share your diagram in the Learning Exchange.

The Process Explained

The following explains the process illustrated above.

1. Planning the Process

By planning the process what we mean is that the individual or team that is organising the strategic planning process should prepare a simple outline of the activities, schedules and resources needed. The team should consider:

1. The time frame to complete the strategic planning exercise and to develop the strategic plan (or programme/project)
2. The major milestones – i.e., dates when major parts of the process need to be completed in order to ensure that we produce the plan within the expected time frame.
3. Which stakeholders will be involved, how they will be selected and when, and what needs to be done to ensure their participation.

4. How participatory the process should be, given the context within which stakeholders are operating (See Session 2.3 below to help make the decision on how participatory the process should be.)
5. The resources needed for the planning exercises (For example, facilitators, venues, resource persons, important speakers, etc.)
6. Who will be responsible for the different elements of the planning process (For example, for organizing workshops, inviting participants, contracting facilitators, etc.)
7. How much it will all cost.

Table 2.3 provides a rough outline of a work plan.

Table 2.3: Rough Outline of a Work Plan

What needs to be done	Who will do it	When will it be done	Inputs and costs	Notes
Preparation of TOR for facilitator	Programme coordinator	May 15, 2014	\$0	Draft TOR needs to be cleared by Perm Secretary.
Initial brainstorming	Programme coordinator	May 22, 2014	\$0	Junior minister is travelling June 4-21.
Identification of stakeholders for vision, mission and core values	Strategic Planning team	May 22, 2014	\$0	
Invitation to stakeholders	Admin Associate	May 25, 2014	\$0	Letter needs to be signed by Minister or Perm Secretary
First planning workshop on vision, mission and core values	Strategic Planning team	June 12, 2014	1 facilitator and 1 rapporteur. Venue. \$2,000	Venue needs to be suitable for youth participants.
Second planning workshop: identifying impacts and outcomes	Strategic Planning team	June 19, 2014	1 facilitator and 1 rapporteur. Venue. \$3,000	
Etc.				

The table above is a very rough outline of a work plan that can be used to plan the overall strategic planning process. Please treat this as illustrative. If you would like to see a more

detailed and formal template that can be used, please download the following:
http://ontario.cmha.ca/files/2013/01/Strategic_Planning_Process_Template.doc

Important note:

It is crucial when developing vision, mission, goals, outcomes, and core principles and values to have the senior management/leadership of the organization involved in the process. When you prepare your work plan you should therefore pay attention to the schedules of key decision makers to ensure that they are available for these stages of the process. Technical teams can be assigned to draft outputs, indicators, baselines and targets later, once these higher level results are defined. (Even then, the technical team would need to bring these lower level results back to the wider team for review and validation.)

2. Selecting Stakeholders

This topic was covered in Unit 1 and a model that can be used for stakeholder selection was presented. The same approach can be used for selecting stakeholders for the strategic planning process. In session 3 below, we will look further at the importance of involving stakeholders and making strategic planning a participatory process. What you should note in your workplan is when and how stakeholders will be selected, and by whom.

3. Identifying and Prioritising Issues

In this step of the process the strategic planning team will conduct a situation analysis (which may include SWOT analysis) and consult with a variety of stakeholders to (a) identify all the issues affecting youth, and (b) prioritise from the list the key issues that the organization will try to address. Unit 3 will cover this process.

4. Conducting Problem and Solution Analysis

Once we have prioritised the key issues, we will normally hold a series of meetings to drill further into the issues, to better understand the causes of the problems and identify the most appropriate solutions. This process will be covered in Unit 4 where we will begin to work from the priorities to construct solutions which will later be presented in the form of a logical framework (set of goals, outcomes, outputs etc.)

5. Preparing the Results Framework (LogFrame)

This is when we get to the point of seeing the final product of the strategic planning exercise – the actual strategic plan with its logical framework or set of results (goals, outcomes, outputs, assumptions, etc.). The solutions identified from the previous step will help to define the results along with the performance indicators and targets.

6. Preparing an M&E plan

Some organisations will also prepare an implementation plan and a monitoring and evaluation plan to accompany the strategic plan. We highly recommend having an M&E plan, so time should be set aside to prepare one. (The preparation of the M&E plan will be covered in detail in Unit 5.)

Session 2.2 Summary

In this short session we have looked at the importance of preparing a work plan for the overall strategic planning process, and the need to think through the entire timeline of events, resources needed and so forth. We have also highlighted the importance of planning around the schedule of important stakeholders so that they can be involved at critical junctures in the planning process.

Now that we have reviewed the key steps necessary for completing a strategic planning exercise, we will look briefly at the question of how participatory the process should be ideally.

Session 2.3

Strategic Planning as a Participatory Process

Introduction

Why does planning need to be participatory? The answer to this question may seem obvious to many persons, especially those who have traditionally been involved in youth and community development issues. The reality is, however, that many strategic plans, programme and project documents are developed behind closed doors or with the involvement of only a small group of stakeholders. Similarly, many large scale programmes are initiated on the directive of a senior, authoritative figure, such as a Minister or Executive Director in an organization without much if any, consultation. These decisions are rarely questioned, because often times it is seen as the prerogative of the senior official to make those decisions. At times people are also simply afraid to question the decision.

Sometimes these programmes work out reasonably well; but sometimes we realize that the ideas, while good, could have been improved by adopting a participatory approach and getting other ideas and perspectives. And, of course, sometimes the programmes turn out to be spectacular failures due to the lack of participatory approaches in their design and implementation.

This session is intended to address the question of how important is stakeholder participation to producing a high quality strategic plan.

Session Objectives:

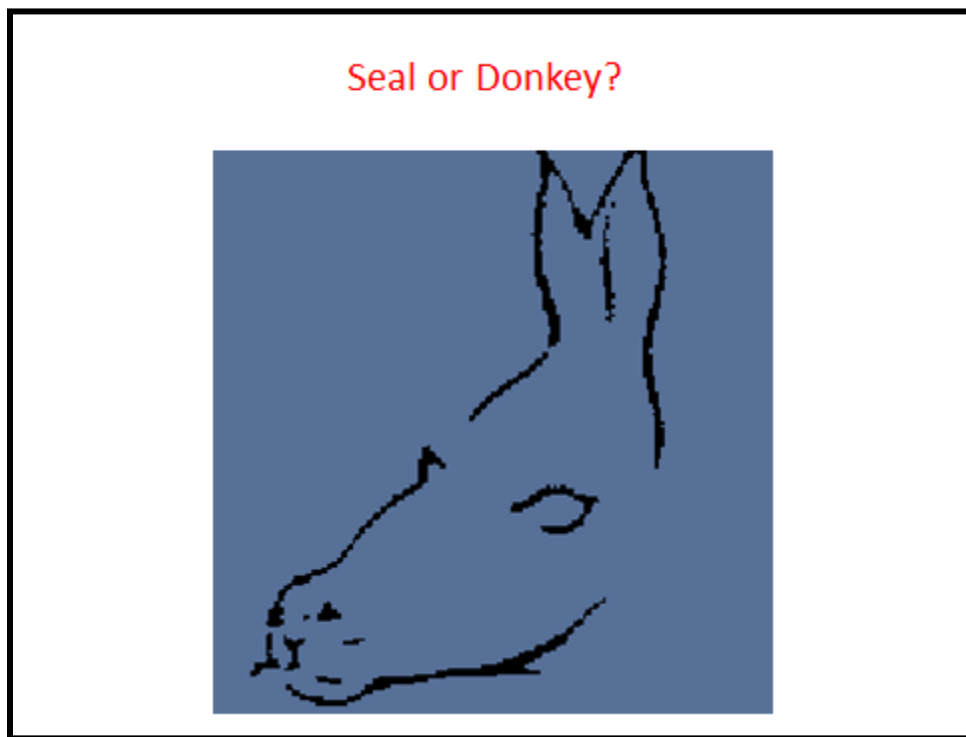
The objective of the session is to help you to understand the critical importance of participatory planning. At the end of the session you will be able to:

1. Explain why it is important to have different perspectives in a strategic planning process.
2. Provide clear examples of how failure to make a strategic planning process participatory can lead to failure.
3. Discuss some of the changes taking place in the field of development that show a greater leaning to partnership and participatory models.

Benefits of Participatory Approaches

Why do participatory approaches generally lead to better results? The simple answer is that each person sees the world differently and each unique perspective is important when we are working towards the development of a society. People often say that engineers see the world through *structural* lens, economist through *numeric* lens, and sociologists through *people* lens. A politician, a farmer, a youth, a teacher, an engineer, a mathematician, a youth worker, etc. may all see the same reality but interpret it differently based on their position, their experiences, their training, their needs, their personality types, and so forth. It does not mean that some are right and some wrong – what it means is that we simply have different viewpoints and these different viewpoints can be valuable in a strategic planning process.

Different perspectives help to enrich our understanding of the world and get us to understand that two people can look at the very same thing and see something different. Some of you may have seen the images below before. They are often used in training sessions to illustrate how different people see different things in the same image.



What do you see on the picture -
Old or Young Woman?



Let us try and apply this to something practical.

A common mistake many development organisations and individuals have made is to assume that because they believe a particular solution to a problem is good, then the beneficiaries will accept the solution. This is an error the Gates Foundation has come across in some of its research. In one particular case they found a situation where experts had developed a clean cooking stove for poor families whose health were suffering from using 'dirty' stoves (these are often traditional wood burning stoves that emit a lot of smoke inside the house). The experts thought they came up with a brilliant solution. However, the people for whom the stoves were designed didn't use them, and continued using their old stoves which caused health problems. Below is an excerpt from an article written later on the project:

Over the past few decades, charitable organizations, NGOs and governments have encouraged people to replace dirty stoves with clean ones. On the surface, this seems a straightforward task. It's not hard to make a relatively affordable, clean stove, and from a developed-world perspective, it's hard to understand why anyone wouldn't use one.

Nevertheless, even in areas where cleaner alternatives have been heavily promoted, dirty cook stoves remain ubiquitous.

"You have new technologies that in the lab prove to be very attractive. In theory, it seems fantastic," Mobarak said. "But in reality, nobody seems to like them."

Please read the full article by the Gates Foundation, ***“Sure, We Can Build a Better Toilet. But Will People Use It?”*** which can be downloaded here: <http://www.wired.com/2012/08/gates-foundation-toilets/>

Now, what went wrong?

Let’s look at another case, which could begin to offer us some insights.

In the late 1990s a group of researchers working in Inner City Kingston, Jamaica came to a similar realization. The researchers went into the inner cities to do a study on what poor inner city residents wanted from the rest of society. Their expectation was that the residents would have prioritized things such as jobs, more police to maintain the peace, better social services and so forth. To their surprise, none of these issues was at the top of the list. In their ground breaking paper published later, the researchers revealed that the number one need expressed by poor inner city residents was ‘respect’. ***“They cry ‘respect’! Urban violence and poverty in Jamaica”*** (available on Amazon, UWI Library), shattered common assumptions, and showed that while most outsiders thought jobs and violence would have been the most important issues to the poor residents, the residents themselves were looking for something else. Can you begin to see how the two different perspectives could potentially affect the design of a project in the inner city? Let’s look at one other case that brings everything together.

A few years before the study ***They Cry Respect*** there was in fact a government project to build toilets for inner city residents. This was because various government officers who had visited the area had noted the serious lack of sanitary facilities. It was found, however, that after the toilets were built, no one used them. When asked why they were not using the facilities various community members indicated that the toilets, while needed and well-designed, were placed at a public location such that other people would see them when they went to use the toilets. This robbed them of their dignity, so they did not use the toilets. Their self-worth and pride were far more important than having improved hygiene!

In many other studies researchers have found seemingly ‘strange’ behavior by the poor. For example, in another case, researchers were puzzled by the fact that poor people who didn’t have enough food did not spend the extra money they received on buying food. Look at this quote from one such research:

“We asked Oucha Mbarbk what he would do if he had more money. He said he would buy more food. Then we asked him what he would do if he had even more money. He said he would buy better-tasting food. We were starting to feel very bad for him and his family, when we noticed the TV and other high-tech gadgets. Why had he bought all these things if he felt the family did not have enough to eat? He laughed, and said, “Oh, but television is more important than food!”

(From the Foreign Policy journal article ***More Than 1 Billion People Are Hungry in the World, But what if the experts are wrong?*** Available at

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/25/more_than_1_billion_people_are_hungry_in_the_world

The simple truth is that people see the world differently, and rarely do we all share the same needs or value the same things. In the case of the family mentioned in the Foreign Policy article, they recognized that they were poor, saw the need for more food, but also thought they needed entertainment. Is this wrong? Often times policy makers think of the poor as simple beings waiting for more assistance and food, but we find that they are human beings that don't want to simply live their lives eating dull boring food. They too want to be entertained.

These are just a few examples of how something that seems obvious to some people turned out not to be the needs or priorities of others. Given the opportunity, the government would spend extra money on buying more food for the poor but the poor themselves would have used that money for entertainment. This is the same way people will design a project differently based on their needs, values, and priorities.

Over the past decade the world has also been seeing a rethinking of global development models based on this realization that the same way different individuals may have their unique views and contributions, different countries may also have unique contributions to development. For fifty years starting in the 1950s most international development agencies saw the world in terms of Donor countries and Recipient countries– the idea was that developing countries in the South only received aid, while the aid and the expertise all came from the North. Today new approaches are evolving based on partnerships of mutual respect between North and South countries. These new approaches recognize that developing countries also have rich experiences, expertise and resources that they can share with other countries – in essence, development solutions can also come from the South. Therefore, both Northern and Southern countries can partner and jointly come up with ideas – gone are the days when it was felt that all good ideas must come from consultants flying in from the North.

These examples point to the need to rethink our views on development and the importance of participation and creating space for different stakeholders to contribute their own ideas –and space must be created for the poor, the marginalized, the vulnerable, and the voiceless because they too may have extremely useful ideas and perspectives to contribute.

The world is changing. And if we are to pursue development – of youth or a community or country – we will need to recognize that there are many stakeholders with valuable thoughts and ideas that can help to inform the creation of those solutions. It can be a deadly conceit to think that we know all the answers, or to rely on the views of only people who we believe think like us. As we go forward in preparing to initiate a strategic planning process let us therefore step back and take a very critical look at the range of potential stakeholders. A key question to ask yourself is, “Whose views do we normally not hear?”

Tips:

- We can use the same stakeholder analysis outlined in Unit 1 to identify stakeholders to be involved in the process. A key issue is how to ensure the participation particularly of stakeholders who normally do not have a voice. We should therefore also develop a plan to engage these stakeholders.
- An important part of planning is determining priority issues that the organization will address. The process may also lead to the development of major programmes and projects. As we start the process we should therefore ask, “Whose priorities will we be working on?” Also, we should ask ourselves the question, “Even if we all agree that the issue is a priority, do we all agree on how it should be addressed?”
- We should also note that participation does not end once the strategic plan is formulated or the programme/project is designed. Participation during the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages is equally important and can be quite valuable. It is for this reason that many organisations also invest in things such as Beneficiary Impact Assessments, Citizen Monitoring of Service Delivery and other tools to gather feedback from stakeholders to inform changes to their programmes and plans.

UNIT SUMMARY

This Unit has provided a general overview of the Strategic Planning process. We noted that strategic planning must be dynamic, not static, and circular not linear. We also noted that strategic planning falls under the general umbrella of Results Based Management which includes Strategic Planning, Performance Monitoring, and Evaluation.

We also provided a general overview and definitions of the key components of a Strategic Plan – the Vision, Mission, Goal/Impact, Outcomes, Outputs, and Indicators, Baselines, Targets, Risks and Assumptions. It was pointed out that these components, particularly the results from the Outcome level downwards, are what are normally referred to as the Logical Framework or LogFrame. While a Logframe may take different forms, include different components, and use different terminologies, we noted that all logframes essentially explain the *logic* of our plan to get from our activities to our goals and objectives.

The unit also underscored the importance of preparing a work plan for the overall strategic planning process. While some strategic plans, perhaps for a small organisation or unit, can be done in a short period of time, most plans are formulated over the course of a few weeks or even months. It is therefore important to plan for the process and be aware of the schedules of key stakeholders who should be involved at specific points of the planning process.

Finally, the unit outlined the importance of making the Strategic Planning process participatory – providing examples of cases where plans went wrong when important stakeholders were not properly consulted, and when experts assumed that they knew the solutions to people’s problems.

We will return to most of the ideas, concepts and definitions covered in this unit in the subsequent units as we begin the actual process of strategic planning. This will provide an opportunity to deepen your understanding of the topic and gain further hands-on experience working with them.

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](http://www.intracen.org/uploadedFiles/intracenorg/Content/About%20ITC/Where%20are%20we%20working/Multi-country%20programmes/Pact%20II/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/WDSPContentServer/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
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