Unit 5

Implementing and Managing the Strategic Plan

Overview

You have now completed most of the steps in the strategic planning process and prepared some of the key components of a strategic plan, including the all-important logical framework. In this unit you will concentrate on finalising a few key areas of the planning process as well as working through the implementation and management arrangements for the Plan. Your objective at this stage is to successfully implement the Plan. To achieve this, you have to

1. Address some of the main areas of weakness within your organisation that were identified in your SWOT analysis,

2. Put in place a proper monitoring and evaluation plan, and

3. Continually monitor and evaluate performance and make adjustments as necessary. Your team or organisation will need to remain focussed and ensure that the activities undertaken are in keeping with the results outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Unit 5 Learning Objectives

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

1. Demonstrate a clearer understanding of the link between the strategic planning process and programmes/projects.
2. Create a set of strategies and actions to address key weaknesses in your organisation.
3. Prepare a short risk management action plan.
4. Differentiate the concepts *monitoring* and *evaluating*.
5. Discuss the importance of monitoring and evaluation in the process of strategic planning.
6. Prepare an M&E plan for your strategic plan or programme/project.

This Unit is divided into three sessions:

Session 5.1: Refreshing the Connection between the Strategic Planning Process and Programmes /Projects

Session 5.2: Developing Strategies to address Key Findings from the SWOT and Risk Analyses

Session 5.3: Monitoring and Evaluating the Strategic Plan

Unit Readings and Additional Online Resources

Required Readings:

a. Monitoring and Evaluating at

http://www.civicus.org/new/media/Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation.pdf

b. **Basic Guide to Program Evaluation (Including Outcomes Evaluation)** at http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation-guide.htm.

c. Assessing Change, developing and using outcomes monitoring tools at http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/Resources/CharitiesEvaluationServices/Documents/assessingchange-740-748.pdf

Session 5.1

Refreshing the Connection between the Strategic Planning Process and Programmes/Projects

Introduction

This is a short session to review some of the work we did in unit 1 and to wrap up the connection between the strategic planning process and the programmes or projects developed and implemented to achieve the objectives outlined in a strategic plan.

In unit 1 of this course we explained the main connection between programmes and projects and the strategic planning process. In this session we will do a short recap to consolidate our learning and also to specifically relate programmes and projects to the logical framework.

Session 5.1 Objectives

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

1. Demonstrate a clearer understanding of the linkages among the strategic planning process, the logframe and the programmes and projects of an organisation.

Linking the Strategic Plan and the Log Frame to the organisation's Programmes and Projects

As we stated in unit 1 of this course, a strategic planning process can be done at different levels. It can be done for the overall organisation or for an agency's overall strategy for a country, but it can also be a specific planning process to prepare a new programme or a project. The techniques are essentially the same.

Relationship between higher level plan and programmes/projects

When organisations go through this type of strategic planning process for their overall country strategy, they will often develop programmes and projects afterwards to achieve the results outlined in their plan. For example, most of the major international development organisations

such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the Word Bank, and the UN development agencies (e.g. UNDP, UNICEF) will first develop a country strategic plan or country programme document which sets out their priorities for the country, the major goals and objectives they will pursue in the identified areas, and a results table/logframe summarising the specific results they aim to achieve. These agencies will subsequently develop programmes and projects to achieve the results outlined in their country strategic plan or country programme document. In many cases, the agencies will use the results outlined in their country strategy as the same results for their programmes and projects. In these situations, *the strategic planning process will define the outcomes and output for the programme or project, and also the specific targets to be achieved.* For example, in the United Nations Development Programme, new projects will have the same outcomes as are outlined in the country programme document, and include the same outputs as well. Other agencies, such as UNICEF, often do not even create a new project document; instead they produce a workplan to implement their activities to pursue the outputs and outcomes already identified in their country strategic plan.

This is therefore one way in which agencies connect their strategic plan with their programmes and projects – they simply use the programmes and projects as tools to achieve the results already outlined in their country strategies or country programmes. This is also generally how private sector companies operate: once a corporate strategic planning process has been undertaken and all the major goals and targets have been identified, different divisions and units are informed of their targets and given resources to implement their own programmes and projects to achieve those targets. Figure 5.1 below shows this model, where programmes are designed based on the outcomes already agreed upon, and projects are developed with the same outcomes and outputs. In this model there is full alignment of the programmes and projects with the strategic plan/logframe as these programmes and projects are simply vehicles to achieve the results already defined. In these models, the project staff will usually have flexibility in terms of the activities they choose and the inputs they use, but they must work towards producing the already defined outputs and outcomes.
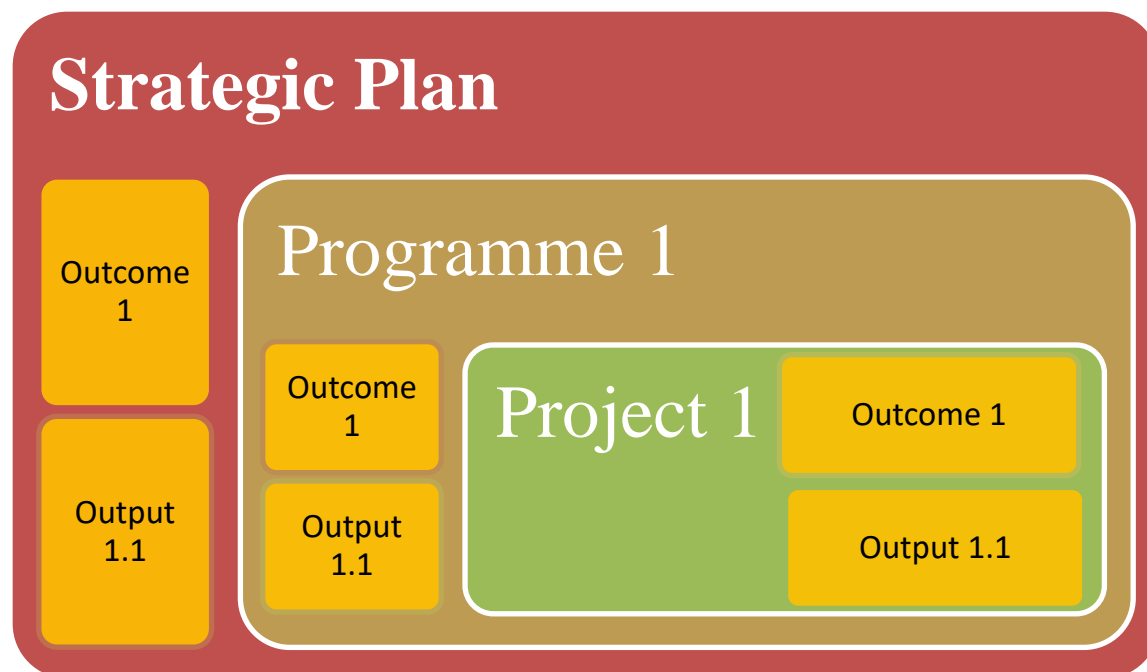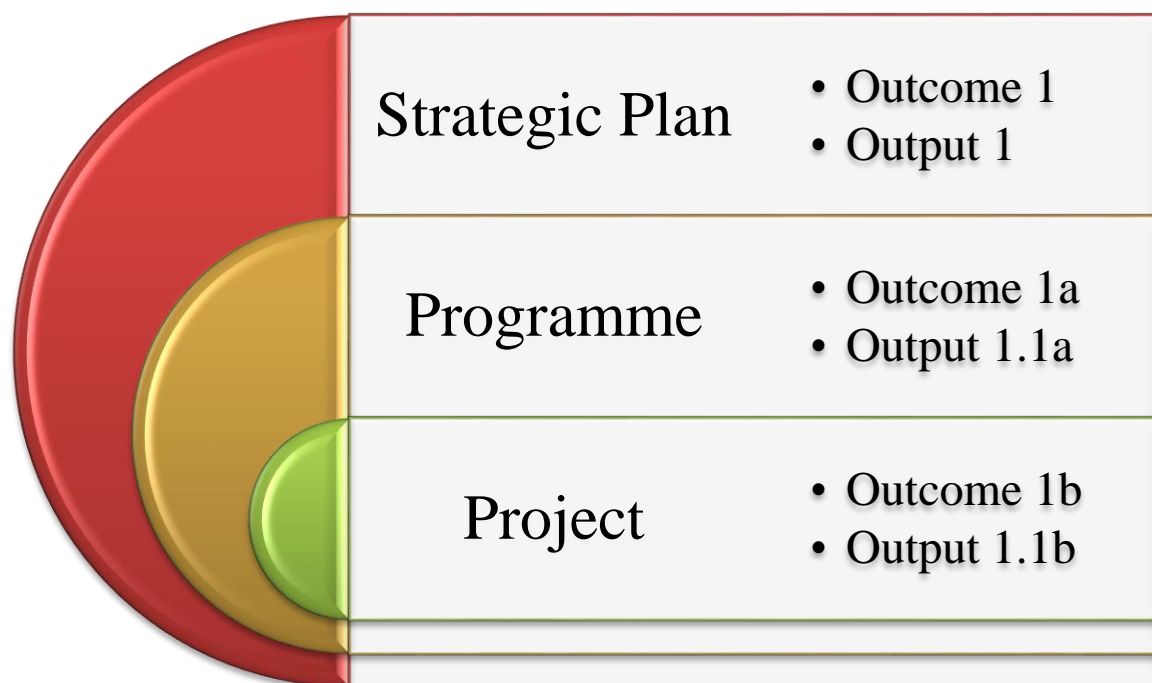
Figure 5.1: Full Alignment Model

The second approach is one in which agencies undertake another smaller strategic planning process to prepare their programmes and projects even after developing an overall country strategy. They may find that the analysis in the overall country strategy is too general, and that at the point of developing a specific project they need to do a deeper analysis and have further consultations with a specific set of stakeholders. They may also revise or create a new set of results and a project specific logframe. In these situations, the agency is essentially going through another strategic planning process but at a lower level to ensure greater specificity in their analysis and in the solutions they come up with.

In this model, agencies may give staff flexibility to define their own outcomes and outputs - as long as these new outcomes and outputs contribute to the overall goals and outcomes of the strategic plan. This is the model which applies, for example, between the UNDP corporate strategic plan, which is developed in New York, and the Country level strategy documents that each country office develops. While each office defines its own outcomes and outputs based on the planning process done within the country, these outcomes must be similar to, and generally in line with, the corporate outcomes of the organisation BUT it does not need to be the same outcome. At the programme and project level separate planning exercises can take place, and stakeholders may be given room to word their outcomes and outputs differently. The idea,

nonetheless, is that the programme and project results are helping to achieve the overall strategic plan results.

Strategic Plan	• Outcome 1 • Output 1
Programme	• Outcome 1a • Output 1.1a
Project	• Outcome 1b • Output 1.1b

Figure 5.2: Partial Alignment Model

Both approaches are acceptable; agencies simply choose the option which they believe work best for them within their context. (For example, some UNDP country offices adopt the UNICEF approach of not creating a new project document but only using a project workplan to go along with their country programme documents, while other offices still find it useful to create specific project documents in addition to their country programme documents. The organisation allows both practices.)

You will therefore need to decide, within your own organisation, whether, after preparing an overall strategic plan, there is still a need for a similar planning process to develop your programmes and projects.

Programmes – Outcome; Projects - Output

In unit 1 we also noted that programmes are usually used to pursue results at the outcome level, while projects are used to produce outputs. (We stated: "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.")

For some organisations, the higher level results in their logframe would be used as the basis for developing one major programme or a few programmes. For example, the organisation may either have one "Youth development" programme, or it could have a "youth employment programme" and a "Youth wellness programme" to cover the two main dimensions of work (on unemployment and on drugs and criminality). Then, the organisation would have a series of projects addressing different issues identified from the problem tree and results map, and which would usually appear as outputs in the logframe. For example, it may have a youth skills training and education project, and also a youth counselling project and so on. There are no hard and fast rules: the general idea is that your 'programme' will be the overall set of actions to pursue your longer term results (outcomes and impact level), while the projects will seek to produce the specific outputs in your logframe.

Session 5.1 Summary

In this short session we summarised the relationship between the strategic planning process and programmes and projects that an organisation develops to pursue its objectives. We explained the different approaches used by organisation: some, maintaining one overall planning process and using projects and programmes as tools to achieve the precise results in the overall strategic plan; and others conducting new strategic planning processes to develop the results for the lower level programmes and projects.

Session 5.2

Developing Strategies to address Key Findings from the SWOT and Risk Analyses

Introduction

In this session we will continue to 'close the loop' on some of the earlier units in this course. In unit 3 we had undertaken a SWOT analysis to identify key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the internal and external environments of your organisation. The result of this exercise was captured in Section 2 of your Workbook (Activity 3.8). Also, in unit 4, you conducted an analysis of the risks and assumptions of your logical framework (Workbook section 4, activity 4.5). These exercises have provided extremely valuable information, but as of this point we have not yet made full use of the information. This session is intended to address the question of how we should utilise this information in the strategic plan.

Session 5.2 Objectives

The objective of this session is, simply, to help you to understand how to incorporate the findings from the SWOT and Risk/Assumption analyses into your strategic plan.

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

1. Demonstrate a clearer understanding of the relationship between the SWOT analysis and the Strategic Plan.

2. Formulate key actions to address some of the findings from the SWOT analysis.

3. Identify key risks that require specific attention.

4. Develop risk mitigation strategies for identified risks.

Filling the Gaps

The logical framework section of most strategic plans and programme/project documents captures the development or programmatic results that the organisation is pursuing. It is a clear, succinct statement of what the organisation aims to achieve to show that it is performing in line with the expectations of its clients and stakeholders. You will note, however, that in both project documents and strategic plans there are many other sections outside of the logical framework or results matrix. We have already mentioned one of these sections – the situation analysis – which is a narrative section which does not get reflected in the logical framework. Many plans/project documents will have other sections as well, such as a Strategy section, a Management (sometimes called Implementation) section, a Partnership section and, often, a Risk management section.

There is no hard and fast rule on which sections a plan must have and what issues need to be dealt with in each. For our purposes, we will focus on two sections: Management and Risk.

It is common practice to address key internal management issues in the management section of a strategic plan. These internal management issues will generally include the main weaknesses of the organisation uncovered from the SWOT analysis or from previous client satisfaction surveys and analyses.

How will we become more efficient? How can we strengthen our human resource capacities and get the right people in the right positions? Which business processes do we need to improve – procurement, recruitment, accounting, finance, administration, IT? Why do our clients think we are slow and bureaucratic? How do we change this perception? These are just some of the range of issues which could be addressed in the management section.

In addition, the management section can also outline how the organisation plans to organise itself to achieve its strategic plan. It could, for example, explain the roles and responsibilities of different units and departments, outline what changes in organisational structure will take place, announce major new initiatives such as a major roll-out of a new management information system, describe how it plans to strengthen capacity in certain critical areas and so forth.   Table 5.1 illustrates some examples of key management issues to be addressed.

Table 5.1: Examples of Key Management Issues

Finance	Operations	Human Resources	Products/Services
•Cost efficiency •Revenue generation •Cost recovery	•Business process improvement (procurement etc) •Innovation •Customer relationship management	•Staff recruitment • Learning •Training •Ethics	•New business development •Product improvement •Service quality improvement

From the outline of the UNDP Strategic Plan reflected in the box below, you can see that the organisation has dedicated a section 5 of its new Strategic Plan to what it calls "Institutional Effectiveness", which is essentially the management section of the plan. (The plan can be downloaded here: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/UNDP_strategic-plan_14-17_v9_web.pdf).

UNDP Strategic Plan, 2014-2017
Changing with the World

Helping countries to achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion

Contents

The UN Population Fund, UNFPA, also does the same. Below is an extract of the "Operational Effectiveness and Efficiency" section of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, which can be downloaded here: http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/about/strategic-direction.

Read the extracted section below. Note the range of issues addressed.

Organizational effectiveness and efficiency

1. For this comprehensive approach to reform to succeed, UNFPA will have to continue to strengthen its internal management and operations. The organizational effectiveness and efficiency (OEE) section of the IRF contains the foundational elements of the management and development effectiveness work of UNFPA that enable the attainment of development results. A set of three outputs has been developed, as follows:
    a. Enhanced programme effectiveness by improving quality assurance, monitoring, and evaluation;
    b. Improved mobilization, management, and alignment of resources through an increased focus on value for money and systematic risk management;
    c. Increased adaptability through innovation, partnership, and communications.

2. Significant efforts have been made in recent years to strengthen the quality of the Fund's programming, such as by introducing quality assurance mechanisms. UNFPA will continue to focus on ensuring that country programmes are of a high quality and will ensure that programme monitoring is elevated as a priority, such as through a collaboration with UNDP and UNICEF to strengthen real-time monitoring. Evaluation will be an important area of focus for the coming period, **with the establishment of an independent Evaluation Office.**

3. Other organizational priorities discussed above – such as preparedness planning for humanitarian crises and regional support to country offices – will also be tracked under this output. A final dimension of the output is transparency, which is linked to commitment that UNFPA has made as a signatory to the International Aid Transparency Initiative as part of a broader push around improving aid effectiveness.

4. The second output places particular emphasis on ensuring value for money in UNFPA operations and on systematizing approaches to risk management. Risk management is increasingly important in a complex world, and UNFPA is still in the early stages of establishing the systems and culture that will enable the organization to appropriately handle risks of all types – contextual, programmatic, or institutional.

5. **One key element of risk management is the diversification of the funding base**: UNFPA has experienced considerable growth, but remains heavily dependent on a limited pool of donors, and must therefore redouble efforts to generate resources from new sources. As a reflection of the priority accorded to this issue, **additional human resources are being added at the regional level to build new partnerships** and generate additional resources from non-traditional sources.

6. Improving human resources management is another key focus. **The performance of the organization continues to be impacted negatively by vacancies in key positions**, so the emphasis will be on to efforts that can address this. For example, specialized human resource staff will be placed in regional offices for the first time, and key country offices (e.g., those in the red quadrant) will benefit from additional operations staff.

7. With regard to financial management, considerable progress has been achieved over the past several years, such as improving audit performance and reducing overdue fund accounts. **The organization has managed to contain management costs**, and this has been a guiding principle for the preparation of the integrated budget. At the country-office level, focus will remain on ensuring robust selection and oversight of implementing partners.

8. The last element of the second output is the alignment of resources. The strategic plan sets out an ambitious agenda to improve UNFPA, and this can only succeed if the human and financial resources of the organizations are put behind the changes, so the progress in implementing the business model will be tracked carefully.

9. **The final output is derived from the recognition that UNFPA must become more adaptable, flexible, and nimble if it wishes to have an impact in a world that is increasingly complex and fast-moving. To date, flexibility in the use of resources has not been a hallmark of the organization, so this will be strengthened**.

Note also that the section also introduces the issue of risk management and the organisation has flagged its dependence on a limited pool of donors as a risk that needs to be addressed. It has also set out some actions to begin dealing with this issue. You can either create a specific section in your plan outlining the major risks you see and your strategies for dealing with them, or integrate risk management within your management section.

You will recall that from your results mapping exercise, you had identified a range of risks and assumptions. Most these would have been reflected in your Logical Framework. To recap: in the results map or in the logframe you would have looked at each level of result from activities to output to outcome to impact and asked the following questions:

What could potentially happen that could prevent us from

- **Doing these activities?**

- **Producing these outputs?**

- **Achieving these outcomes?**

- **Realising this impact?**

The answers to these questions would have been written on the results map and in the logframe and labelled 'risks'.

In your management section of your plan, you rarely will need to deal with all these risks. What some organisations do is use a risk assessment technique to select the major risks to include in their strategic plan. The technique looks at (a) the probability of the risk occurring (Tab.5.2), and (b) the potential impact the risk would have if it occurred (Tab.5.3). Based on these two factors, the highest probability/highest impact risks are selected (Fig.5.3).

Table 5.2: Risk Probability

Probability of risk occurring

Score	Rating	Likelihood of occurring
5	Expected	>80%
4	Highly likely	60% - 80%
3	Likely	40% - 60%
2	Not likely	20% - 40%
1	Slight	< 20%

Table 5.3: Assessment of Potential Risk Impact

Risk impact

Score	Rating	Impact on our programme	Impact on our operations	Impact on safety and security of our staff	Impact on our Reputation	Financial impact?
5	Critical	Critical impact that could jeopardise all our results	We would be unable to run our office	Could cause loss of life to our staff, or clients, etc	Event could damage our reputation almost irreparably	Costs to recover could be beyond our resources
4	Very high	Significant impact on many of our results	Significant disruptions in our operations for a long time	Could cause significant injuries or damages to staff/property	Event could serious hurt our image or reputation over the medium term	Very high cost to our organisation
3	High	Significant impact on a few of our results	Significant disruptions in our operations but for a short time	Could cause some damages and injury to personnel/property	Potential short to medium term impact on our brand and reputation	High cost to the organisation
2	Moderate	Moderate impact on our results	Moderate level of disruptions in our operations	Moderate impact on property, equipment and other assets	Moderate expected impact on brand/reputation	Moderate cost to the organisation
1	Low	Low impact on our results	Low level of disruption to our operations	Low impact on infrastructure, equipment and other assets	Low expected impact on brand/reputation	Low cost to the organisation
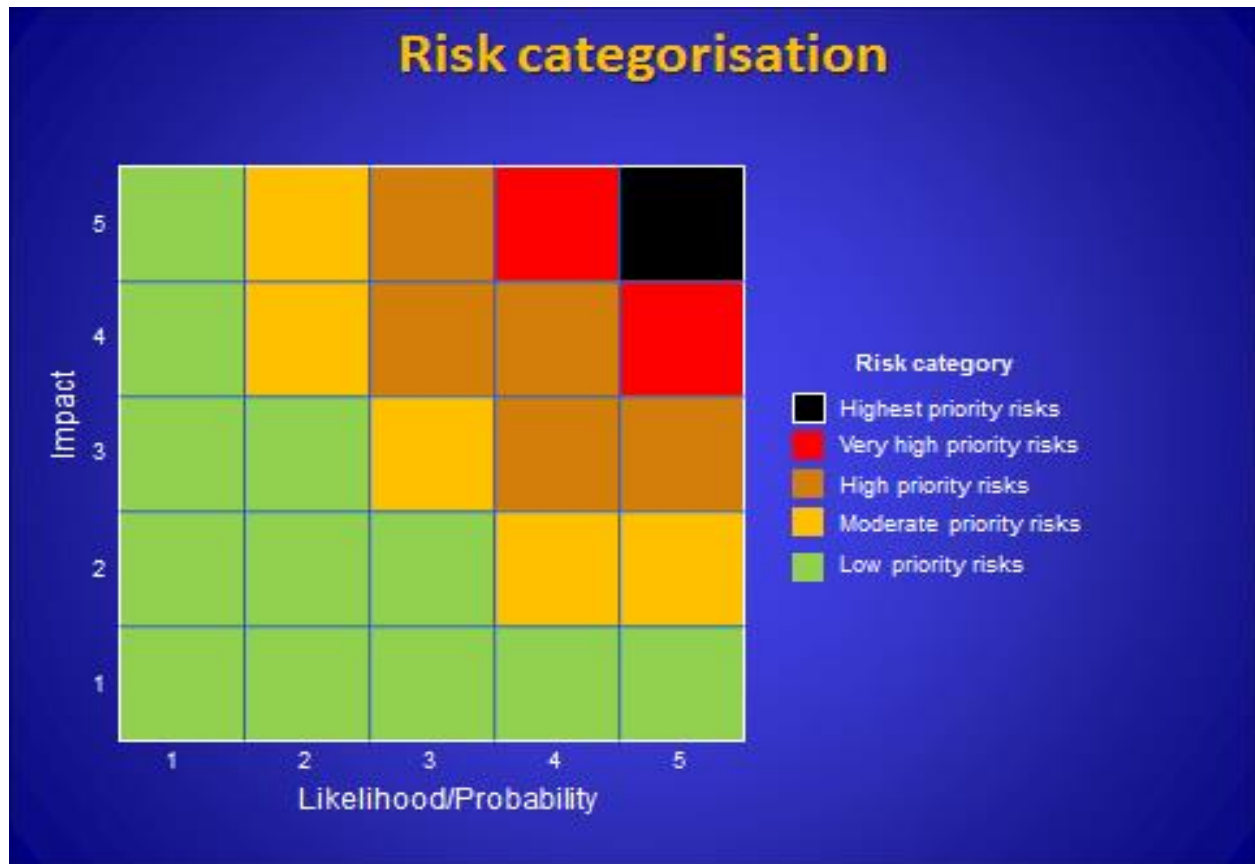
Figure 5.3: Risk Categorisation Matrix

Based on this analysis risks categorised in the high-highest priority regions can be selected for discussion in the plan.

Some organisations use risk management templates/tables to summarise the risks identified, the category of the risk, and the actions to be taken and so on. Below is a sample of a risk management table.

Table 5.4: Risk Management Matrix

List of risks by category		Main actions to address risk (risk mitigation)	Timeframe	Responsible person	Next review date
High	Risk 1				
	Risk 2				
	Risk 3				
Medium	Risk 4				
	Risk 5				
	Risk 6				
Low	Risk 7				

Note from the table the inclusion of a "Next review date" column. This is important in risk management: you need to periodically review and update your risks. The frequency can be decided based on the nature of the risk and whether there have been major changes in the environment. In development agencies, there is often a mandatory review of project progress every quarter, along with a review of the risk matrix or risk log as it is sometimes called.

UNIT 5 LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.1

- Select three of the weaknesses identified from your SWOT analysis and write a short management strategy outlining the actions you will take to strengthen your organisation in these areas. This should be the same organisation that you had selected for the SWOT analysis. You should have a minimum of three sentences for each weakness, and a maximum of 1 page for the overall strategy.

- Prepare a list of at least 6 main risks facing you organisation/programme. (These can be taken from the logframe you had prepared before, or you can prepare a new list for your current organisation or an organisation with which you are familiar). Use the risk analysis tools outlined above to analyse the risks and place them in a risk categorisation matrix similar to figure 5.3 above.

- Use the risk management matrix (Table 5.1) and outline a set of actions to address 3 of the high-highest priority risks identified, along with the timeframe for taking action.

- Post your 1 page management strategy along with your risk management table on the discussion board for comments by your peers. Comment on at least two other postings by your peers. Make any changes to your work based on the feedback received.

Opportunities and Threats

While we will not do any work on these it is useful to know that Opportunities and Threats are often dealt with in a section of the plan dealing with strategy. Again, opportunities and threats often relate to things outside of the control of the organisation, and are not direct results that will be included in the Logframe. As such, we need to keep track of these and have a strategy to address them. In this strategy section you would outline the kinds of actions you would employ to take advantage of the opportunities in the environment. For example, let us say that climate change has become a major issue and donors are putting a lot of fresh resources in this area. There could be an opportunity for your organisation to formulate certain youth development programmes that address climate change issues. But you may need to make certain changes in your organisation, bring in new skills, enhance learning, and begin to develop partnerships with players in the climate change/environment sector. You would therefore outline these actions you intend to take to benefit from the opportunity in your strategy section.

Most of the *threats* you identified in your SWOT analysis should have translated into *risks* in your risk analysis exercise, but some will not. Usually, threats that may directly impact your organisation or programme should be classified as risks. Threats, as we stated before, are things in the external environment which may adversely impact on the organisation and the work that it does – these could include new government policies and regulations, shifting donor priorities, political uncertainties and changes in administrations, social upheavals, new competitors, technology changes and the like. As you can see, most of these are also 'risks' to the organisation and its programme. In general, therefore, we would expect most of the threats to be aligned to the risks identified, and for the risk management strategy section of your plan to address these issues as one.

Session 5.2 Summary

In this session we focussed on developing responses to some of the issues that were identified in the earlier SWOT analysis and from the risk and assumptions exercise. The session was intended to ensure that we have a complete strategic plan that not only outlines the major results we plan

to achieve but also our strategies for dealing with new external opportunities and threats, as well as the weaknesses in our internal environment.

The session provided an overview of a typical risk assessment methodology used by many public and private sector organisations, and showed how to prepare a simple risk management plan.

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Session 5.3

The Importance of Monitoring and Evaluating the Strategic Plan

Introduction

In this session you will develop an understanding of the terms 'monitoring' and 'evaluation'. You will learn how to differentiate between the two and identify when and how to use each of these tools. You will also have the opportunity to configure at least one of these tools to suit the work that you do. Finally you will have the opportunity to review literature on the topics and critique them.
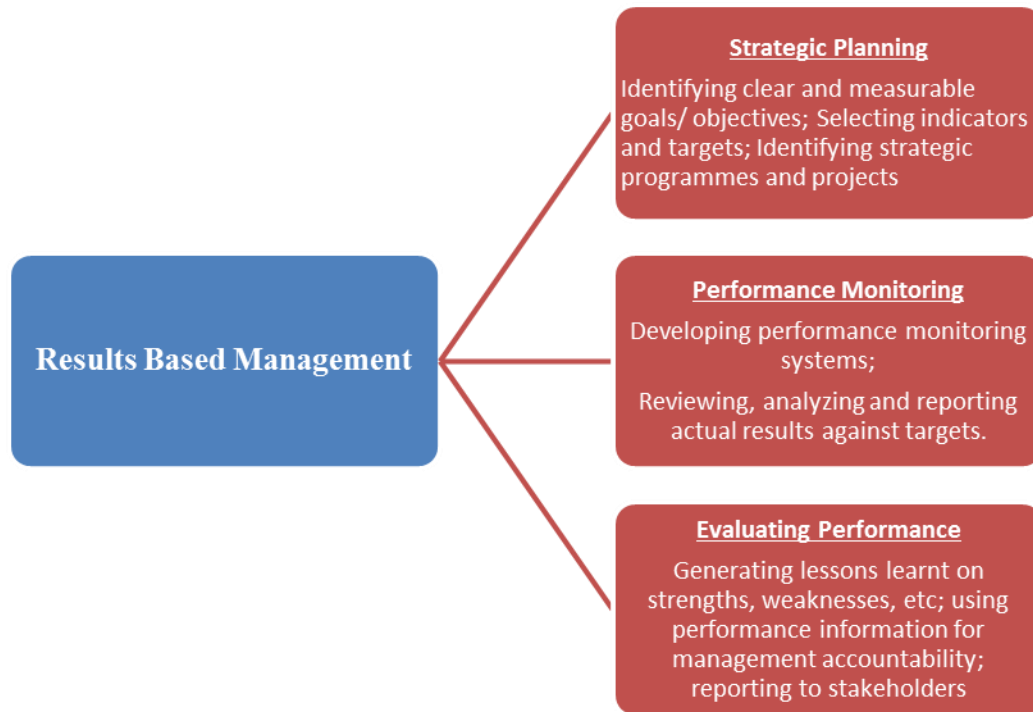
Session 5.3 Objectives

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

1. Explain the difference between monitoring and evaluation.

2. Discuss the importance of both concepts to Youth development work.

3. Formulate an M&E plan for your strategic plan or programme/project.

Monitoring or Evaluation

Throughout this course we have dealt with strategic planning as an element of Results Based Management (RBM). We noted earlier that RBM is a cycle that includes Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. We always need to ensure that the three components are considered together: it is pointless developing a strategic plan or a programme/project document with our planned results without also having a monitoring and evaluation arrangement in place to help ensure that we achieve those results.

Strategic Planning
Identifying clear and measurable goals/ objectives; Selecting indicators and targets; Identifying strategic programmes and projects

Performance Monitoring
Developing performance monitoring systems;

Reviewing, analyzing and reporting actual results against targets.

Evaluating Performance
Generating lessons learnt on strengths, weaknesses, etc; using performance information for management accountability; reporting to stakeholders

Figure 5.4: Results-Based Management (see Unit 2)

Once we begin to implement our plan we will need to monitor performance to ensure that we are on track. Also, we will find that things change; new risks and opportunities emerge, partnerships change, stakeholder interest and priorities change, there are changes in the strengths and weaknesses in your organisation, and so on. This is something we can summarise simply as REALITY SETS IN. We live in a dynamic world and situations in the environment change constantly. Therefore we need to constantly monitor and evaluate performance and the changes in the environment and, importantly, make the necessary adjustments to our plans and programmes.

Checking the progress of your plan at intervals is what we refer to as **monitoring. Monitoring** is an ongoing process. The Business dictionary defines it as:

> "Supervising activities in progress to ensure they are on-course and on-schedule in meeting the objectives and performance targets."
> http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/monitoring.html

The operative words "supervising activities in progress" immediately suggests that monitoring takes place while the plan or programme/project is in operation.

How and what do you monitor? The 'what' should be clear by now:

1. The major results outlined in your logframe/results table

2. The priority risks identified

3. Progress on your management improvement strategies

4. Overall changes in your internal and external environment that may impact on your organisation or programme/project.

How you monitor is slightly more complex. There are a variety of tools and methods that can be used, including meetings with key stakeholders, field visits to see physical progress, surveys (especially to assess client/beneficiary satisfaction with results), progress reports, data gathering, and others. It is not uncommon for a monitoring process to include:

- Annual review meetings

- Quarterly review meetings

- Quarterly progress reports

- Quarterly field visits

- Commissioned surveys and reviews (e.g. an independent mid-term project review)

- Half yearly spot checks (these are financial spot checks to ensure that rules and procedures are being followed. This ensures that when an audit is done later, the programme/project is already in compliance with procedures. We can treat this as Operational Monitoring.)

It is important that as part of the strategic planning process time is set aside to prepare a proper M&E plan for the Strategic Plan/Programme/Project.

Your M&E plan should, at a minimum, clearly outline (a) what you are monitoring (and evaluating), (b) when you will monitor (and evaluate), (c) who will be responsible for the monitoring (or evaluation) activity, and (d) how much the activity will cost.

Monitoring needs to be scheduled, and the process of collecting information should be based on pre-determined markers/milestones to track progress towards reaching results. Whatever is learnt from the process of monitoring is used immediately to inform decisions and actions as the activities of the project or programme continue.

In short then, **monitoring is about ensuring that we are moving towards achieving our objectives.** If results are not materialising as we planned, then we will need to sit with our stakeholders (donors and clients especially) to analyse why the programme/project is not progressing as planned, what corrective actions may be needed to bring things back on track, whether any changes are needed in our strategy, and so on. While monitoring can be used for imposing performance penalties, this should not be the main reason for using monitoring. For example, if your project team feels that you will use the monitoring information in a strict manner to fire non-performers or penalise staff, then they may develop a practice of concealing information when things are not going well. This can be counterproductive. Monitoring needs to be open and candid, and you must be able to gather honest, reliable information on what is really happening. This is the only way you will be able to make changes in your programme and also learn from failures and errors. It is therefore vital that you try and create an atmosphere in which monitoring is seen, first and foremost, as a tool for learning and performance improvement and then, secondarily, as a tool for rewards and punishment.

Important note: In the 1970s and 80s monitoring was often focussed on activities and outputs. Since then, most international development organisations have adjusted their M&E practices to maintain a strong focus on outcomes, and they use output and activity data to help measure

whether they are progressing towards their desired high level results. One of the most famous expressions in M&E is **"YOU GET WHAT YOU MEASURE."**

UNIT 5 LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.2 – Reading Research

Read the following short extract from a Harvard Business Review article:

"A loose consensus has formed around the idea that basing CEO pay on, say, five years of stock returns would eliminate some of the reckless decision making that led to the Great Recession. But I suspect that even if you could build a compensation plan that focuses on long-term shareholder value, you'd solve only part of the problem.

That's because such a scheme still ties CEOs' motivation to one fickle number—company share price—and assumes that pay alone motivates chief executives to perform.

Any number of things can motivate CEOs—peer recognition, for example, and even a desire to change the world. In fact, CEOs usually have all the money they need. Why then does it seem that they care more about stock value and the compensation it produces than those other forms of motivation?

The answer is almost uncomfortably simple: CEOs care about stock value because that's how we measure them. If we want to change what they care about, we should change what we measure.

It can't be that simple, you might argue— but psychologists and economists will tell you it is. Human beings adjust behavior based on the metrics they're held against. Anything you measure will impel a person to optimize his score on that metric. What you measure is what you'll get. Period.

This phenomenon plays out time and again in research studies. Give someone frequent flyer miles, and he'll fly in absurd ways to optimize his miles.

When I was at MIT, I was measured on my ability to handle my yearly teaching load, using a complex equation of teaching points. The rating, devised to track performance on a variety of dimensions, quickly became an end in itself. Even though I enjoyed teaching, I found myself spending less time with students because I could earn more points doing other things. I began to scrutinize opportunities according to how many points were at stake. In optimizing this measure, I was not striving to gain more wealth or happiness. Nor did I believe that earning the most points would result in more effective learning. It was merely the standard of measurement given to me, so I tried to do well against it (and I admit that I was rather good at it).

This phenomenon happens at an organizational level, too. States that use standardized education assessment tests produce kids who indeed perform well on these tests but falter when asked to demonstrate their knowledge of the same material in a different way. Does that make teachers bad at their jobs? No. They're simply behaving the way people do when they're judged on the basis of a metric."

From "You Are What You Measure" by Dan Ariely, http://hbr.org/2010/06/column-you-are-what-you-measure/ar/1

- Conduct your own Google research on the topic of "You Get What You Measure" (you can use different variations of the theme in your search queries.)

- Prepare a 2 page paper outlining your position on the issue. Your paper should clearly indicate whether you agree with the proposition, your arguments for agreeing or disagreeing, concrete examples supporting your position, and a short conclusion.

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In the past organisations that focussed on measuring and monitoring outputs and activities produced outputs and activities but found that they were not achieving their outcomes and producing meaningful impact. This was because they were not monitoring outcomes and impact. Since then "Outcome Monitoring" has become a popular expression.

UNIT 5 LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.3 - Reading

> To understand a little more about outcome monitoring, read pages 6 and 7 of the following handbook: Assessing Change, developing and using outcomes monitoring tools at http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/Resources/CharitiesEvaluationServices/Documents/assessingchange-740-748.pdf.

M&E planning tools for strategic plans and programme/project documents come in different forms and formats. Below is a generic template outlining a useful planning format along with a sample M&E plan. Study these carefully.

Table 5.5: Generic M&E Planning Matrix

Results	Indicators, Baselines and Targets	Data Collection Methods and Monitoring Events	Schedule and Frequency	Responsibilities	Means of Verification	Resources Needed
Taken from the Logframe (Impact, Outcomes, Outputs)	From Logframe	How will we obtain the data/information needed? Example: through surveys, progress reports, focus group discussions, etc.	When will we collect the data and how often? Quarterly? Yearly? Etc.	Who is responsible for organizing the data collection and verifying data quality and source?	Where will we obtain the data (this will already be in the MoV section of your Logframe)	Resources required to carry out M&E activities

Table 5.6: Sample M&E Plan

Table 15. Illustrative example of planning matrix for monitoring: Enhanced capacity of electoral management authority

Expected Results (Outcomes & Outputs)	Indicators (with Baselines & Indicative Targets) and Other Key Areas to Monitor	M&E Event with Data Collection Methods	Time or Schedule and Frequency	Responsibilities	Means of Verification: Data Source and Type	Resources	Risks
Outcome 1: Enhanced capacity of electoral management authority to administer free and fair elections 1.1. Advocacy campaign aimed at building consensus on need for electoral law and system reform implemented 1.2. Electoral management authority has adequate staff and systems to administer free and fair elections 1.3. Training programme on use of new electoral management technology designed and implemented for staff of electoral management authority	Public perception of capacity of electoral management authority to administer free and fair elections (disaggregated by gender, population group, etc.) Baseline: 40% of public had confidence in electoral manage-ment authority as of 2008 (50% men, 30% women, 20% indigenous populations) Target: 70% of overall population have confidence in electoral management authority by 2016 (75% men, 65% women, 60% indigenous populations)	1. Surveys 2. Annual Progress Reviews 3. Joint field visits to five regions 4. …	1. All surveys will be completed six months prior to the comple-tion of activi-ties 2. Progress reviews on achievement of all connected outputs will be held jointly in the fourth quarter 3. Two field visits will be held prior to the final survey and three more afterward 4. …	1. National Office of Statistics will commis-sion survey; external partners, UNDP, and the World Bank will provide technical resources as needed through their assistance for capacity development 2. Progress Reviews will be organized by Elections Authority 3. Field visits will be organized by Elections Authority; Elections Authority will ensure meetings with a representative cross section of stakeholders; at least two external partners will participate in a given joint field visit 4. …	1.1 Data and analysis of surveys will be available in (a) report for public And (b) on websites of National Office of Statistics and Elections Authority 2.1 Annual Progress Reports 2.2 Minutes of Annual Progress Reviews 3. Records of joint field visits will be available on website of Elections Authority 4. …	1. Resources estimated at USD 0.2 million for the survey will be provided by the European Union 2. Resources for M&E activities will be made available in World Bank assistance project 3. Cost of external partners' participation will be met by each respective partner. Other logistical costs will be funded from World Bank project 4. …	1. It is assumed that capacity develop-ment activi-ties within National Office of Statistics required for carrying out the survey will be completed one year in advance to actual survey; if there are delays, then a private company could be contracted to carry out the survey
Outcome 2: Increased participation by women and indigenous popula-tions in national and local electoral processes in five regions by 2016 2.1. Revised draft legislation on rights of women and indigenous populations to participate in elections prepared	Percentage of eligible women registered to vote in five regions Baseline: 30% of eligible women registered in the five regions as of 2008 Target: 60% registration of eligible women in the five regions by 2016						

(From UNDP's planning, monitoring and evaluation handbook: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf)

UNIT 5 LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.4 (Optional)

My Monitoring Tool

This is an optional activity. You can use the information in this section to create a draft M&E plan to accompany the Logframe you created in Unit 4. You can share and discuss the plan with your colleagues and get inputs from your tutor.

Evaluation is E in the M&E process and represents a systematic assessment of a project or programme.   Evaluations focus on expected and achieved results. Evaluations are generally more extensive and comprehensive than monitoring activities, and can sometimes cost quite a lot of money to undertake. Organisations use evaluations to assess the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of their programmes and their impact on the final outcome. See http://www.sportanddev.org/en/toolkit/monitoring___evaluation/what_is_monitoring___evaluation__m_e__/ It gives a snapshot description of the evaluation process.

Evaluation is also defined as **"the systematic collection or review and assessment of information in order to provide feedback on a programme/project"**. (http://www.socialresearchmethods.net.)

Important Note:

While some organisations only conduct evaluations at the end of the life of a project/programme, more and more organisations are beginning to conduct mid-term evaluations either of the full programme/project or components of it. This is because of the realisation that we lose a lot of the value of evaluations if we only do them at the end of the project. At this point the evaluation is useful only for reporting and as a lesson learned IF a new programme is being developed. But the existing programme does not benefit from insights and lessons learned from the evaluation. **A mid-term review or evaluation can provide valuable information to inform management decision re adjustments needed in the programme/ project.**

Evaluations tend to look at the project/programme as a complete activity and seek to identify its strengths and weaknesses, its effectiveness and adequacy of resources (human, capital etc.), management of the process and lessons learned among others.   The process is usually guided by the Vision, Mission and Goals of the organisation and the specific programme/project logframe of results that had been set at the beginning of the planning period.

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UNIT 5 LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.5 - Reading

- **READ** the article **Basic Guide to Program Evaluation (Including Outcomes Evaluation)** at http://www.managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation-guide.htm It gives added useful information on the topic.

In short then, Monitoring and Evaluation, individually and collectively, can assist you in ensuring the success of your programme/project. Monitoring is more of an ongoing activity – constant supervision – as the programme/project is in progress, and helps you to keep on track on a monthly basis. Evaluation often comes in the middle and at the end of a programme to provide deeper analysis to enable us to make fundamental adjustments to our programme and design new programmes and projects better.

You should also take note of the fact that the two processes go together in that monitoring feeds into the evaluation process, while evaluation will inform changes to the programme that will then need to be monitored. Graphically the process looks like this:
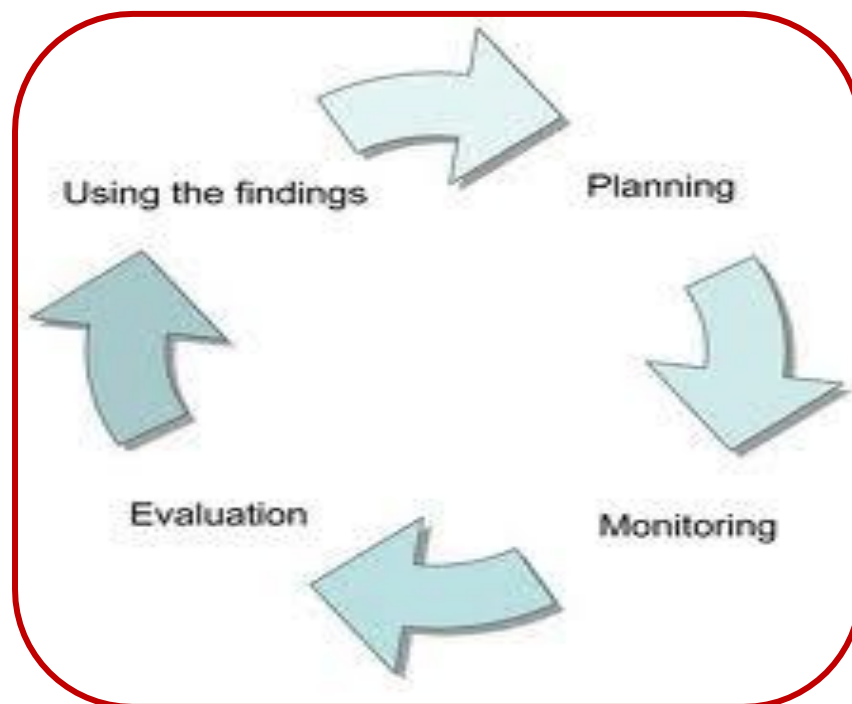
Figure 5.5: Components of the Programme/Project

The importance of monitoring and evaluation in strategic planning cannot be overemphasized. It is also useful to remember that you plan in advance for monitoring and evaluation.

UNIT 5 LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.6 - Reading

> This is a suitable time to read more about Monitoring and Evaluation at http://www.civicus.org/new/media/Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation.pdf. The paper provides a clear picture of both tools, their differences and complementarities, and how they are used.

UNIT 5 LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.7 - Scavenger Hunt

Now that you have completed the session you are required to search the internet for **two (2)** or more examples of cases where creative/innovative participatory monitoring techniques are used. After you have found the articles, you are to:

a. Give their URL

b. Give a short description of the articles

c. Give your reasons why you have chosen these articles.

d. Post this to the online discussion forum.

Session 5.3 Summary

In this session, you learnt about monitoring and evaluation as tools to be used during the execution of your strategic plan/programme/project. You were able to understand the similarities and differences between the two and the importance of both. Monitoring is done throughout the entire process of implementing your plan/programme and is required to ensure that all activities are going according to plan. It is used to constantly monitor progress and make required changes as needed. Evaluation, on the other hand, is more comprehensive and systematic and provides critical information at specific points in time – normally mid-way and at the end of a plan or programme/project. Evaluation also feeds from the information that has been gathered during the monitoring exercise.

In the session you also learned how to construct an M&E plan setting out what M&E activities will be conducted, when they will be conducted, who will be responsible for the activities, and how much the activities will cost.

This now brings us to the end of the Unit and of the Course.

Unit Wrap Up

In this Unit, you were able to:

- Review the processes of monitoring and evaluation

- Differentiate between the two.   Monitoring is ongoing throughout the life of the project/programme, while evaluation takes place at the end.

- You agreed that the information gathered from the monitoring process informs the evaluation exercise.

- Use your network of stakeholders to assist you to identify the resources required for the success of the plan.

- Identify the most suitable members of your network to sell your plan in order to attract and mobilize the resources that you need.

- Look at different methodologies used in presenting reports.

- Identify the methodology that best suits your situation.

Unit Assessment

In pre-arranged groups, prepare and present a panel discussion on the topic: **The relevance of monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of a strategic plan for youth development.**

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_w orking/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.PD F**

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_20 040827154900/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