CHRISTIAN RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

TRAINING PROGRAMME ON STRATEGIC PLANNING

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TAM CONSULT
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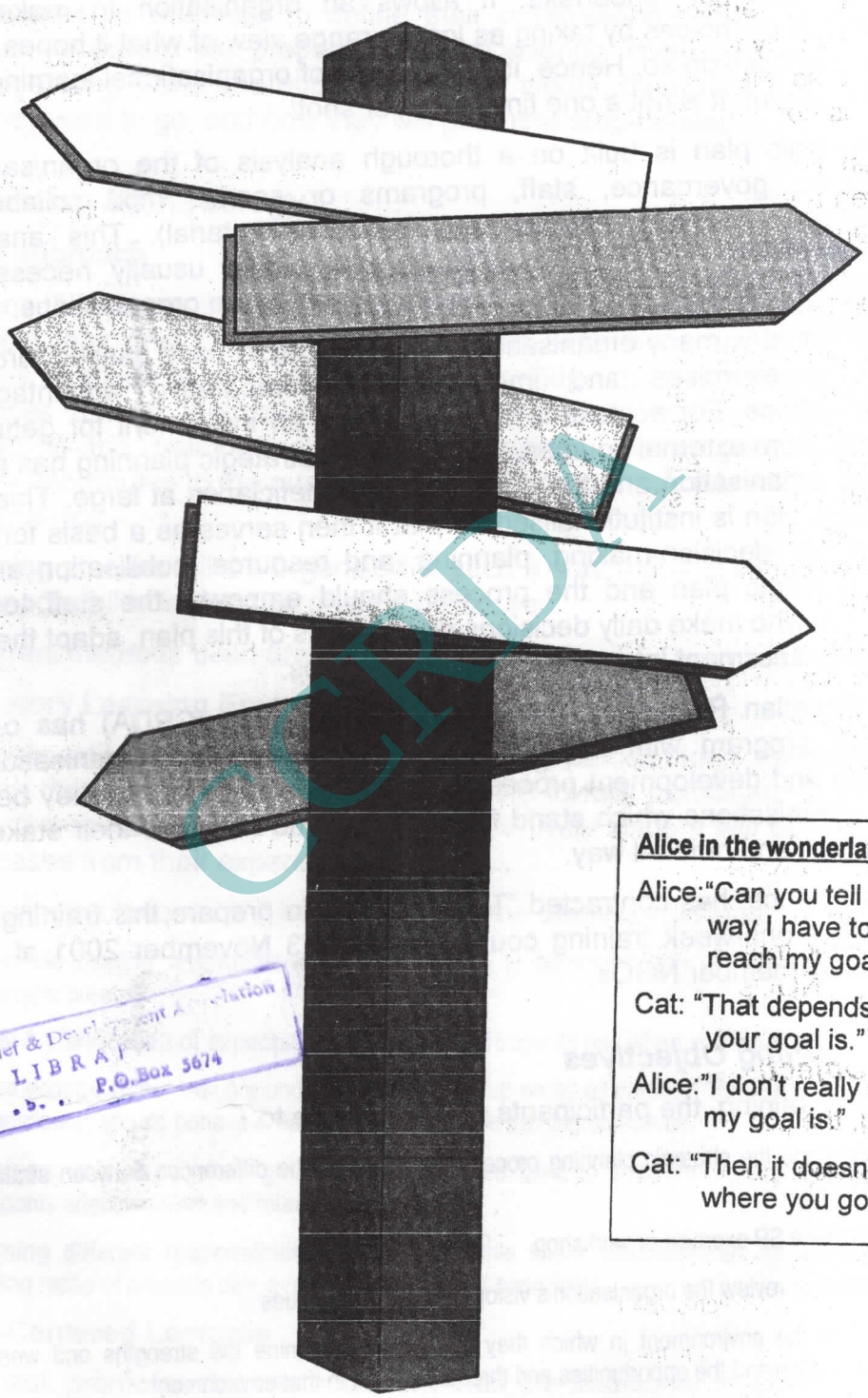
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Where do you want to go?



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Alice in the wonderland:

Alice:"Can you tell me which way I have to go to reach my goal?"

Cat: "That depends on what your goal is."

Alice:"I don't really care what my goal is."

Cat: "Then it doesn't matter where you go!"

If you do not know where you are going...any road will take you there!

1 Introduction and objectives of the training course

1.1 Introduction

Strategic planning is one of the most challenging and exciting exercise an organisation can undertake. It allows an organisation to make fundamental decisions or choices by taking as longer-range view of what it hopes to accomplish and how it will do so. Hence, it is a process of organisational learning, change and development. It is not a one time event or shot!

A strategic plan is built on a thorough analysis of the organisation's existing structure, governance, staff, programs or service mix, collaborations, and resources (financial, human, technical and material). This analysis is vital because, in order to achieve future goals, it is usually necessary to make significant changes in many of if not all aspects of the organisations.

In the country, many organisations including CRDA have passed through strategic planning exercises and improved the comparative advantages of their organisations. For some it is only becoming an instrument for getting/ attracting support from external sources. Nevertheless, strategic planning has many benefits for the organisation and the staff and the beneficiaries at large. This is true if the strategic plan is institutionalised so that it then serves as a basis for performance standards, decision-making, planning, and resource mobilisation and allocation. The strategic plan and the process should empower the staff to be *strategic thinkers;* who make daily decisions on the basis of this plan, adapt the plans based on the assessment internal and external realties.

The Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) has organised this training program with the objective of facilitating the organisational learning, change and development process of member NGOs, so that they become strong civic organisations which stand for and meet the needs of their stakeholders in a conscious and rational way.

CRDA, hence, has contracted "TAM Consult" to prepare this training manual and provide a one-week training course from 19-23 November 2001 at Nazareth for staff of its member NGOs.

1.2 Training Objectives

After the training, the participants should be able to:

- understand the strategic planning process and some of the differences between strategic and regular planning
- organise a SP exercise or workshop
- develop or review the organisation's vision, mission and values
- analyse the environment in which they work, and determine the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation and the opportunities and threats inherent in that environment
- identify strategic issues or fundamental choices facing the organisation
- develop goals, tactics, strategic objectives and major activities that carry the organisation in the desired direction

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- determine the financial, material, human, technical, community and other resources needed to achieve the plan and outline the means by which these resources will be mobilised
- establish procedures for using, reviewing, revising, and evaluating the SP

The training workshop program for achieving these objectives is presented in Annex 9 of this manual.

Going through this process, the participants of the strategic planning training program must be prepared to define their organisation's ideal future and core strategies necessary for preparing and monitoring consistent and meaningful annual operating plans and budgets. In other words, they must be able to clarify *where* they want to go, and *how* they will get there step-by-step.

1.3 Training Methodology

General approach

TAM consult believes in the participants' inherent and accumulated knowledge either from their past training or practical field experience and observations. All efforts will be made to bring participants' knowledge out, encourage exchange of experiences among themselves, so that participants could be interested and motivated in the training contents and process. Since good and coherent teamwork contributes to the quality of learning strong emphasis will be given to the group dynamics.

The training process will be organised in such a way that it initiates self-reflection & self-responsibility for leading change processes.

The different methods used are:

Participatory Learning Environment (PLE)

All attempts will be made to make the training participatory. Participants learn more than they get from the trainer if they able to fully participate in the learning process. If they participate, the training will be lively since it will be enriched with real life cases from their experiences.

The following techniques will be used during the training sessions:

- **Semi-circle seating arrangement:** so that barriers to communication are minimized and informal atmosphere created.
- **Survey & clarification of expectations:** which the participants had when coming to the workshop.
- **Setting ground rules:** that are understood & agreed up on by all parties. These rules also define how the participants should behave & operate to achieve the training objectives.
- **Energisers**, role-plays, jokes, group exercises will be used to strengthen group dynamics, to keep participants attentive, alert and relaxed all the time.
- **Assigning different responsibilities**. The participants share responsibilities for different tasks like providing recap of previous day, evaluation results and energisers.

Learner-Centered Lectures

TAM consult promotes this method more than the traditional teaching method. In this method of passing knowledge, skill or a message, the focus is on development of participants' abilities & skills to diagnose and solve their own problems. The lecture or inputs from the facilitators will be kept to the minimum, enough to initiate the process of reflection & observation on participants'

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experience & knowledge. Reading materials will be provided to support the lectures and group exercises.

Asking questions

One of the essential elements of effective communication and interaction among all persons participating in the workshop is an equal opportunity to contribute to the discussion. By asking questions, the experiences and knowledge of participants will be mobilised to improve communication among themselves and with the trainers.

The trainer poses problem(s) and asks questions instead of providing solution so that the participants or groups could discover the solutions to the problem(s) by themselves.

Group Exercises for Interactive Learning

The workshop ensures that all participants play an active part (exercise, work in small groups, discussion) and learn from each other. To facilitate this interactive learning, participants will interact or exchange ideas in small groups and plenary sessions interchangeably:

- working group sessions: for tasks that need thorough analysis & discussion,
- plenary sessions: for giving inputs by trainer-facilitators, presenting working groups' results, and making discussions and decisions.

Visualisation Method

All presentations by trainer-facilitators, contributions by participants, presentations by working groups and other discussions during the course of the training will be visualised using card techniques, overhead projectors and/or flip charts.

Documentation of results

The results of the training session will be documented for future reference and use in other training sessions.

Evaluation

Two evaluation instruments will be used to get information for course adjustments & adaptations to the needs of the participants. These are:

a) **Daily evaluation**: this will be done by using

- " **Moodmeter**" on which participants indicate their feeling about that day on a scale of 1 to 5 and
- "**Opinion cards**" on which participants indicate one positive & one negative aspect about the workshop.

Each morning, participants in rotation will do the interpretation, analysis and presentation of results of the evaluation of the previous day.

b) **Final evaluation**: Participants will be asked to fill a standard evaluation sheet. The content of the evaluation sheet will be developed in consultation with the client.

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2 Planning and Strategic Planning

"A hammer is a very good tool to hammer together bookshelves, but just swinging hammer doesn't mean the bookshelves will get built, nor does failure to build bookshelves reflect poorly on the hammer."

Michael Allison

"Plans are nothing, but planning is everything."

Unknown

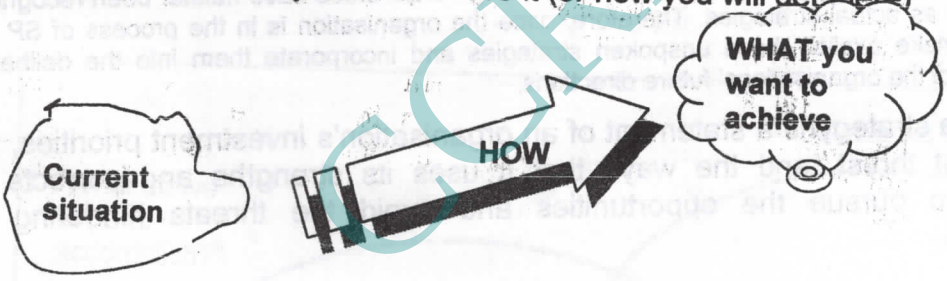
"You don't need a strategy to fight the battle, but to win the war."

Unknown

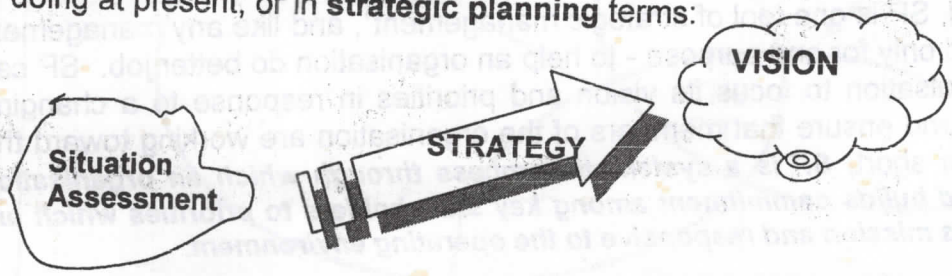
2.1 What is planning?

Planning is a function and process to set a future course of action: to decide and agree in advance on:

WHAT you want to achieve (or where you want to go)
HOW you will achieve it (or how you will get there)



But it is difficult to know what we want to achieve unless we know what we are doing at present, or in **strategic planning** terms:



There are **two** other important questions:

WHY do you want to achieve it? (to help the poor, the marginalized, strengthen the organisation, to improve collaboration among NGOs, etc.)

FOR WHOM are you directly working? (local communities, member agencies, congregations, the government, etc.).

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Too often, we focus on the question **HOW**. In fact most conventional planning systems only cover the **HOW**. It is essential, however, that we keep asking ourselves the question "**WHAT do we want to achieve**?" and from time to time, we must remind ourselves about the questions **WHY** and **FOR WHOM**.

In general, planning is a tool for resource allocation and a procedural method for decision-making about the development of the economy, area, Church, community, NGO, etc. This is because:

- as a tool for resource allocation, it can be seen as the means for **organising, utilising and managing resources for development**, enhancing growth in opportunities for qualitative change in the lives of people.
- as a procedural method, it can be seen as the **process** by which decisions about the future are made and implemented by translating them into **programs and projects** with the expressed objectives of improving the well being of the people.

In brief, planning is an attempt to reduce mistakes, wasted resources, disharmony and uncertainty in future actions.

2.2 What is a Strategy?

Strategies are broad, overall priorities or directions adopted by an organisation. Strategies are choices about how best to accomplish an organisation's mission. A strategy defines the organisation's overall programme and priorities, and therefore suggests where the organisation should be investing its resources now and over the next few years.

Note: All organisations make strategic choices, although often these have neither been recognised nor articulated as actual strategies. Therefore, once the organisation is in the process of SP it is important to make explicit these unspoken strategies and incorporate them into the deliberate consideration of the organisations' future directions.

In general, a strategy is a statement of an organisation's investment priorities, the management thrust, and the ways that it uses its strengths and corrects its limitations to pursue the opportunities and avoid the threats hindering its performance.

2.3 What is Strategic Planning?

Simply stated, SP is one tool of strategic management[1], and like any management tool, it is used only for one purpose - to help an organisation do better job. SP can help an organisation to focus its vision and priorities in response to a changing environment and ensure that members of the organisation are working toward the same goal. In short, ***SP is a systematic process through which an organisation agrees on and builds commitment among key stakeholders to priorities which are essential to its mission and responsive to the operating environment.***

1 Strategic management aims to achieve congruence among four factors: strategy formulation consistent with programme objectives and environment, organisational structure that matches strategy and facilitates implementation, internal functional management consistent with strategy and structure; and continued orchestration of reinforcement as the environment changes.

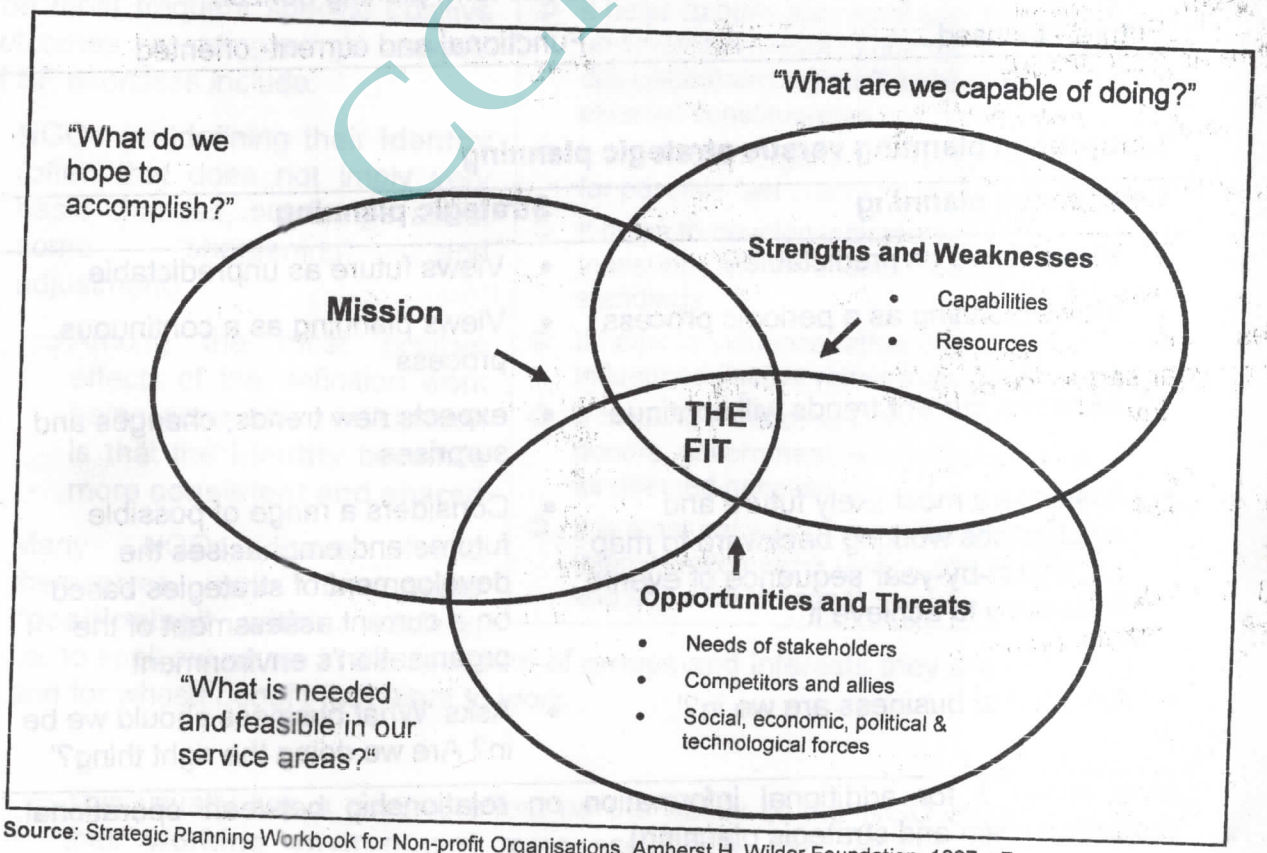
Several key concepts in this definition reinforce the meaning and success of SP:

- The process is strategic because it involves choosing how best to respond to the circumstances of a dynamic and sometimes hostile environment.
- It is systematic in that it calls for following a process that is both focused and productive.
- It involves choosing specific priorities or making decisions about ends and means, both in the long-term and short-term. This fundamental choices about the future of an organisation involves:
  - the mission or goals your organisation will pursue
  - the programs, services or products you will offer to accomplish the mission
  - how you will attract and utilise the resources you need: people, money, expertise, facilities, etc.
- The process is about building commitment of key stakeholders, i.e., the process allows a broad consensus to be built, resulting on enhanced accountability throughout the organisation.

SP is the process of determining **what** an organisation intends to be in the future and **how** it will get there. It is **charting a course** that you believe is wise, then adjusting that course as you gain more information and experience. Thus, it is **finding the best future** for an organisation and the best path to reach that destination.

*Therefore, SP can be seen as **finding a fit** among three sets of forces: mission, capabilities & environment.*

Finding the Fit



Source: Strategic Planning Workbook for Non-profit Organisations. Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1997, p7

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3 How is strategic planning different from other planning

Strategic planning and operational planning involves two different types of thinking:

- **strategic decisions** are fundamental, directional, and future oriented whereas
- **operational decisions/plans** primarily affect the day-to-day implementation of **strategic decisions**.

Strategic plans outline priorities to be achieved over the next several years (usually 3-5 years), operational plans outline actions, to be taken in next years, that will lead to those strategic priorities.

Strategic planing and **long-range planning** differ in their emphasis on the assumed environment. Long range planning is generally considered to assume the current knowledge about future conditions is sufficiently reliable to ensure the plan's reliability during its implementation. SP, however, assumes that an organisation must be responsive to an environment, which is dynamic and is hard to predict. The emphasis is on overall direction rather than predicting specific, year-by-year, and concrete objectives. The focus of strategic planing is on strategic management, that is, the application of strategic thinking to achieving the purpose. Thus, SP spends a lot of time on answering Why, For Whom and What.

Strategic decisions versus operational decisions

Strategic decisions	Operational decisions
Fundamental, directional	Implementation oriented
Long-term planning horizon	Short-term planing horizon
Future - focused	Functional and current- oriented

Long-range planning versus strategic planning

Long-range planning	Strategic planning
• Views future as predictable	• Views future as unpredictable
• Views planning as a periodic process	• Views planning as a continuous process
• Assumes current trends will continue	• expects new trends, changes and surprises
• Assumes a most likely future and emphasises working backward to map out a year-by-year sequence of events necessary to achieve it	• Considers a range of possible futures and emphasises the development of strategies based on a current assessment of the organisation's environment
• Asks 'What business are we in?'	• Asks 'What business should we be in? Are we doing the right thing?'

(see annex 3 for additional information on relationship between operational, project/program and strategic planning)

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Strategic planning emerged from other past planning experiences. It is interdisciplinary and incorporates concepts from military strategy, history, business practices and organisational theory. It is being used by NGOs, bi- and multi-lateral organisations, government organisations, business firms and individuals.

What is **similar** about strategic planning in non-profit (like NGOs, church organisations), business, and government (Min. of Agriculture, Health, etc.) is the *essence* of SP-in an organisational setting deciding what to accomplish, and how to go about it in response to a dynamic operating environment. What is **different** is that the *nature of internal and external forces* which affect the essential tasks.

4 Benefits: Why develop a strategic plan?

According to *Alan Fowler (1997)* the main achievement of a large number of development NGOs *that* have gone through strategic planning is **analytical** skills. As a result of thorough external and internal analysis, they were able to make long-term **choice** about:

⇒ **concrete goals** (often some progress in concretising existing goals is enough)

⇒ **resource allocation** (prioritisation) that are likely to maximise impact, without compromising identity, autonomy and viability.

Benefits of Strategic Planning

- ➲ It improves performance
- ➲ It stimulates forward thinking and clarify future direction
- ➲ It solves major organisational problems
- ➲ It helps to survive - even flourish - with less resources
- ➲ It helps to build teamwork and expertise; and increased level of commitment (and delegation) among staff, board, and external constituencies
- ➲ It enables an organisation to be prepared for possible fast changing environment
- ➲ It helps to develop indicators for measuring effectiveness/impact and set standards
- ➲ It helps to influence rather than being influenced ('active rather than proactive')
- ➲ It helps to meet others' (beneficiaries, donors, government, etc.,) requirements as deemed necessary
- ➲ It is a natural way of doing things (plan→implement→ take action, monitor and adjust to changes)

The most frequent specific positive outcomes regarding single aspects of SP exercises include:

- NGOs (re-)defining their **identity** (often that does not imply very basic changes, but brings about some "sharpening" and adjustment)

  ⇒ Among the most positive effects of the definition work being done with participation is that the **identity** becomes more **consistent and shared**

- Many NGOs have found themselves able for better **"positioning" within society**, i.e. to spell out where in the spectrum of groups and interests they are allocated and for whose benefit they want to work.

  ⇒ This usually has a positive effect on the ability of the NGO to determine their **working environment** more specifically (e.g. NGOs working on

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HIV/AIDS gained better understanding of essential factors, attitudes, behaviours leading to the spread of the disease and about ways to address them)

- Confronting their **own choices** (that already exist in organisations before they have intensively consulted with their constituencies) with the **priorities of the primary stakeholders,** and seeing how they matched and where there was a need for adjustment, is also mentioned frequently as a positive experience of NGOs with SP.

  ⇒ There might be a negative effect: the confrontation can be an entry point for external domination, e.g. by government. However, *primary stakeholders* (e.g. staff of the agency itself and the immediate constituency such as project participants) should not be considered as external.

- Reviewing and agreeing on the organisation's **policies** is a positive effect that may come about often without much fundamental revision. Often it just needs involving more people in discussing policies within the organisation and creating common understanding about them.

  ⇒ This may help to ensure that **vision, direction and actions** of an agency become more **consistent**.

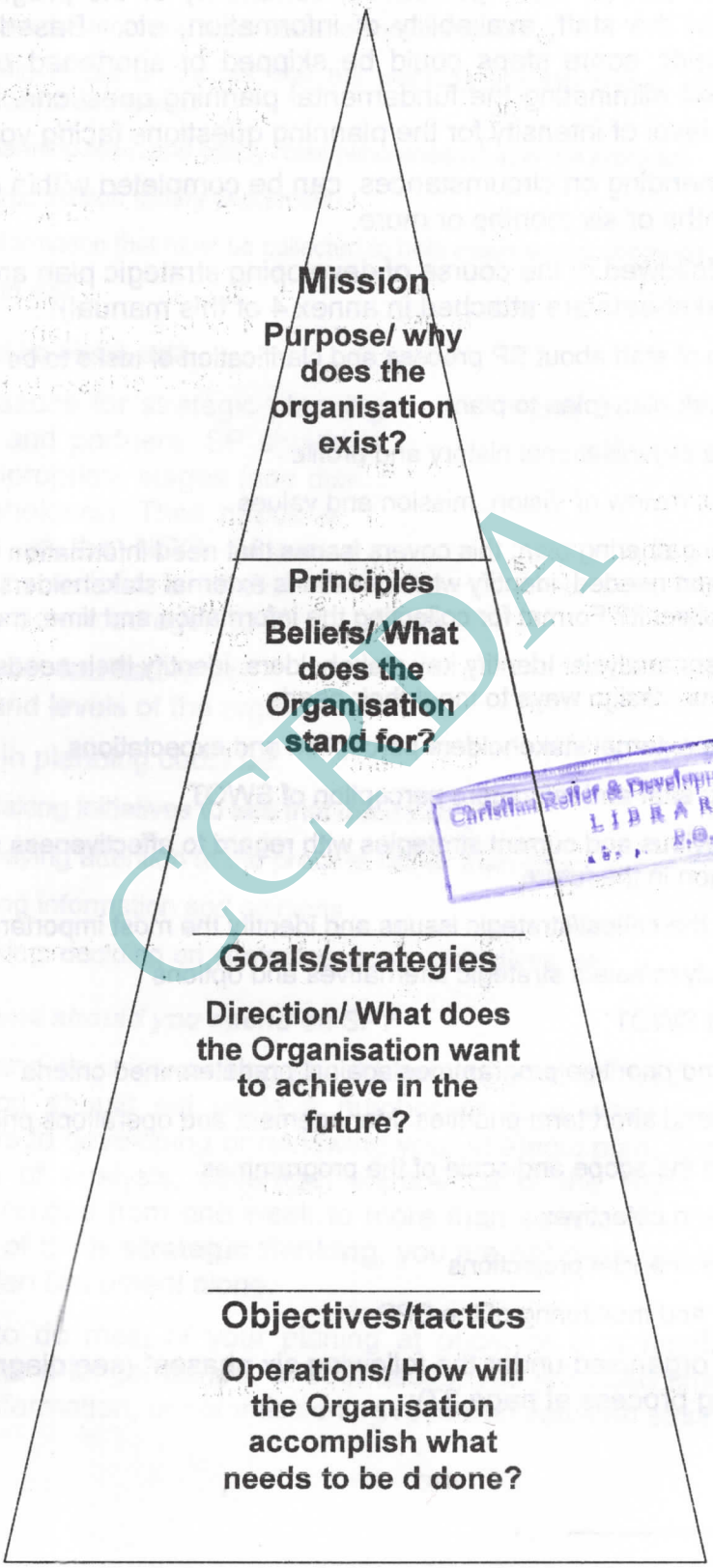
Limitations of Strategic Planning

- SP consumes time and money that might be spent more productively for other tasks.
- Intuition or 'muddling' may sometimes be preferable to formal planning. It is not a substitute for the judgement of leadership.
- When the "life-threatening" problems should be addressed first
- When implementation is unlikely
- It does not predict the future or make decisions which can't be changed
- SP is not always a smooth, predictable and linear process
- When poor plans are likely due to faulty assumptions, poor group dynamics, etc.

The cumulative benefit of some or all of these effects can be that a **concept of quality** is developed and shared in the organisation as a whole. This is an essential element of enhancing future **performance**.

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Planning with a pyramid



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5 Steps of Strategic Planning Process

The steps that strategic planning process follows can be shortened or extended depending on the size of the organisation, complexity of the programmes, budget, time, capability of the staff, availability of information, etc. Based on the specific planning framework, some steps could be skipped or shortened or else added, if necessary, without eliminating the fundamental planning questions. It is important to choose the right level of intensity for the planning questions facing your organisation.

The process, depending on circumstances, can be completed within one or two days, one to three months or six months or more.

The steps to be followed in the course of developing strategic plan are presented below (some worksheets are attached in annex 4 of this manual):

1. Orientation of staff about SP process and clarification of tasks to be carried out
2. Prepare work plan (plan to plan)
3. Summarise organisational history and profile
4. Formulation/review of Vision, mission and values
5. Information gathering plan: this covers issues that need information gathered for, type of information needed, identify what questions external stakeholders can answer, Who will collect it? Format for collecting the information and time, method used, etc.
6. Stakeholders analysis: Identify key stakeholders, identify their needs and expectations, design ways to meet their needs
7. Summarise external stakeholders perception and expectations
8. Take stock: staff and managers perception of SWOT
9. Assess previous and current strategies with regard to effectiveness and option for consideration in the future
10. Determine the critical/strategic issues and identify the most important strategic issues
11. Design/analyse/select strategic alternatives and options
12. Interplay of SWOT
13. Evaluate and prioritise programmes against predetermined criteria
14. Long term and short term priorities: Management and operations priorities
15. Summarise the scope and scale of the programmes
16. Set goals and objectives
17. Long range financial projections
18. Evaluation and monitoring of the SPP

These steps are organised under the following six phases[2] (see diagram showing the strategic planning process at page 27):

2 Some literatures organise them into five phases or steps. In many literatures steps and phases are interchangeably used.

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5.1 Phase 1: Getting ready (Plan for planning)

An origination that determines it is indeed ready to begin strategic planning must then do five things to pave the way for an organised process:

- Orient staff, board, clients and other stakeholders about SP
- Identify specific issues or choices that the planning process should address (reason for planning, concerns and fears)
- Identify the planning team and clarify roles (who does what in the process)
- Summarise organisation history and profile
- Identify the information that must be collected to help make sound decisions
- Write a "plan to plan"

5.1.1 Who should be involved?

A fundamental reasons for strategic planning is to improve the quality of our work with beneficiaries and partners. SP should be an inclusive effort that engages key stakeholders at appropriate stages (see diagram on the next page to see how broad is the list of stakeholders). Their needs and perspectives are central to a strategic planning exercise of the NGO. Moreover, involving people from outside your organisation can be helpful in challenging your assumptions and widening your analysis. You are also encouraged to involve external advisors and facilitators.

Whether you use SP facilitators or not, you need to have a group of people from different sections and levels of the organisation who steer the SP process.

Stakeholders' role in planning could be:

- Leadership: taking initiatives to see that decisions get made and things get done
- Facilitation: paying attention to the process rather than content
- Input: providing information and opinions
- Decision-making: deciding on strategies, goals, objectives, etc.

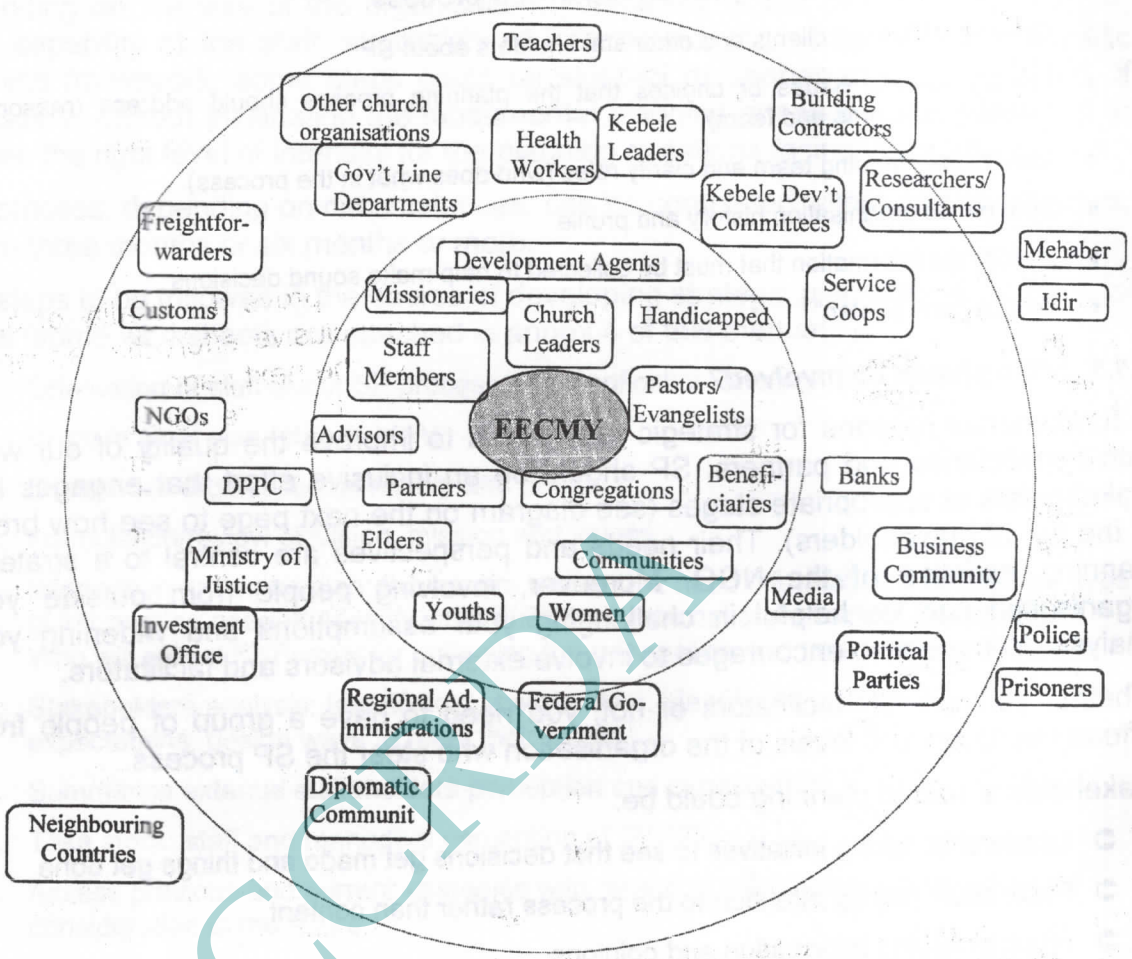
5.1.2 How much time should you spend on SP?

Strategic thinking and decision-making should become part of the NGO's everyday work. However, you should set aside a number of days when you consciously dedicate your efforts to developing or reviewing your strategic plan. The time needed depends on depth of analysis, coverage, experience of the NGO, availability of information, etc. It ranges from one week to more than six months. Since the most important outcome of SP is **strategic thinking**, you are not expected to hurry to end up *with Strategic Plan Document* alone.

You may choose to do most of your planing at once, or in a number of shorter sessions spread over a longer period. In both cases, you will need time for thinking, writing, collecting information, or commissioning research between sessions.

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Figure 1: Whose influences and interests should we take into account?
Example from EECMY SP exercise on stakeholders analysis

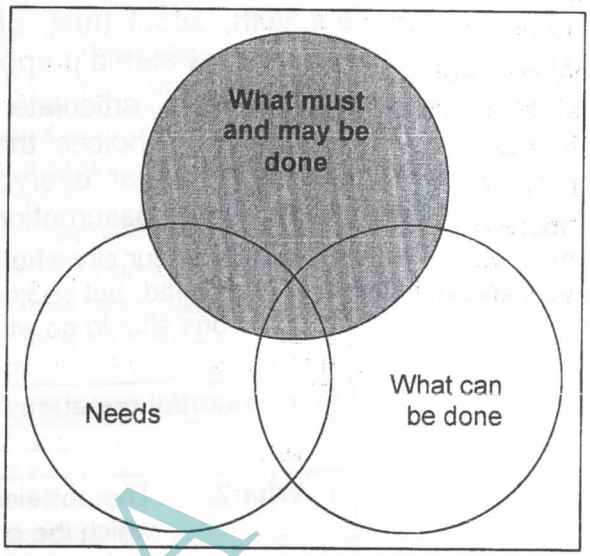


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5.2 Phase 2: Articulate Mission and Vision[3]

5.2.1 Why mission statement?

The mission statement communicates an organisation's essence to its stakeholder and the public and clarifies the "what, how and why" of an organisation's work: one guiding set of ideas that is articulated, understood, and supported by the organisation's board, staff, donors and collaborators. Mission statement should provide an answer to the following questions that might be raised by anyone coming into contact with your organisation:



⇒ Who are you, as an organisation?

⇒ Why do you exist? What do you do?

⇒ Whom do you serve?

5.2.2 Elements of mission statement

A mission statement should include:

1. **Purpose**: One statement that describes the **end result** (of its efforts) an organisation seeks to accomplish (and for whom)

In order to define or clarify an organisation's purpose -the ultimate result an organisation is working to achieve -individuals may need to step back from day-to-day activities and try to identify the focus problem that the organisation tries to solve. Therefore, the 'purpose' component of the mission statement explains the solution the organisation seeks to accomplish with respect to the focus problem.

A purpose statement usually includes two basic elements:

- a situation that indicates a change in status (such as to increase, to decrease, to eliminate, to prevent, etc.)
- an identification of the problem to be addressed or condition to be changed (such as access to healthcare, public policy on environment, cultural assets in the community, eliminate the condition of homelessness, etc.).

2. **Business**: A description of the **primary means** (programme, action, services, etc.) used to accomplish the purpose. The business defines what methods the organisation will use to pursue the purpose.

Business statement often include the verb "to provide", "to support" or link a purpose statement with the words "by" or "through".

An organisation dedicated to the purpose of eliminating homelessness might choose one or more of the following three methods: by constructing housing for homeless

[3] Refer to Annex 2 for schematic presentation of the interrelationship between vision, mission and values.

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individuals, by educating the public and advocating for public policy changes, or by providing counselling and job training to homeless individuals.

3. Values: A list of values and beliefs or guiding principles shared by members of an organisation and practised in their work.

Spoken values usually focus on service, quality, people, and work norms. Values and beliefs are about faith, about trust, about giving people guidance with regard to means to achieve a clearly stated purpose.

While values and beliefs articulate fundamental principles, assumptions are statements that guide the choices that the organisation makes. For example, a fundamental belief might be that "everyone deserves shelter from the elements and a roof over their heads." Three assumptions relate to this belief may be:

"there are too many people in our city who do not have roofs over their heads; not everyone may want a roof over their head, but choice is important; and there are sufficient resources available in this city so no one should go without shelter from the elements."

Five essential questions in formulating mission statement

1. **What**?	The mission statement must define the need which the organisation is intended to satisfy.
2. **Who**?	The mission statement must provide a definition of the organisation offering the service, including defining how it is different from other organisations and what its identity is.
3. **Whom**?	The mission statement must identify the organisation's clients, the primary intended beneficiaries of its programs. Clients could include families, children, etc.
4. **How**?	The mission statement must define the means, processes, methods or procedures through which the organisation's services will be provided.
5. **Why**?	Finally the mission statement must define the ultimate goal of the organisation, why the organisation exists?

5.2.3 Vision of success

A **vision** is a guiding image of success. While a mission statement answers the question about why the organisation exists, what business it is in, and what values guide it, a vision statement answers, "**what will success look like**?" It is the pursuit of this shared image of success that inspires and motivates people to work together.

If you do not have a dream or vision of success, any plan may seem appropriate and feasible.

The **external vision** focuses on **how the world** would be improved, changed, or different if the organisation achieved its purpose. The focus of an effective vision

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statement should first of all be on the client to be served or the constituency whose lives are to be impacted by the organisation. For example, "All people in our state will have access to quality health care, regardless of ability to pay."

The **internal vision** describes **what the organisation** will look like when it is operating effectively and efficiently to support the achievement of the external vision-the organisation's service of product mix, it's image or reputation, funding, partnership, use of technology, board, staff, and facilities. For example, "We will achieve a diversified funding base which will adequately support all of our programmes."

Visioning can help the organisation be better able to answer the questions:

- What services and products should we be offering now and in the future that would best enable us to achieve our external vision of the future?
- Should we make changes in the services or products we are currently offering or how we go about doing our business as to be better able to achieve our preferred future?

With mission and vision statements in hand, an organisation knows what it is doing, why it is doing it, and what it hopes to achieve. The next phase then will be to discuss how to get the job done.

Vision of WFP-Ethiopia

The vision of WFP-Ethiopia is to see, **a Country in which every man, women and child has access at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life.**

Mission statement

WFP-Ethiopia supports Government of Ethiopia poverty reduction strategies focusing on the most vulnerable food insecure groups. With partners, WFP-Ethiopia positions its food assistance to promote community driven initiatives (CDIs) that:

- mitigate disasters
- build human capacity and
- create lasting assets

for more sustainable livelihoods, supplementing with relief operations whenever there are emergency needs.

Guiding principles and core values

WFP-Ethiopia's operations, approaches and program areas across levels and in choosing partners are guided by the following principles:

- Reaching the most food insecure people through timely and appropriate interventions
- Participatory development
- Meaningful partnership
- Advocacy for vulnerable groups and favorable policies and practices
- Gender mainstreaming
- HIV/AIDS mainstreaming
- Result/impact-orientation

Moreover, the following core values govern its operations, including by its implementing partners:

- **Accountability**: *transparency, avoiding wastage of resources, integrity, moral and financial responsiveness*
- **Impartiality**: *neutrality, serving the food insecure people free of bias, treating all with equality and dignity*
- **Effectiveness**: *efficacy, result-oriented*
- **Dedication**: *Conviction, high motivation, working towards a common mission and goals*
- **Pro-active**: visionary, pragmatic, willing to take prudent risks
- **Flexibility**: sensitive, open and responsive

Some examples of vision, mission and values are given in the following boxes:

Vision

All girls and boys have access to education.

There are livelihood opportunities for all, and women have alternatives to prostitution.

There is a decreased incidence of people acquiring HIV/AIDS.

Mission

Seek better future for children in slum areas.

Strive to ensure that rights of disadvantaged children, young women, disabled people and others are protected.

Assist disadvantaged groups to access services, which will help them, have dignified life.

Values

The empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised groups

Mutual support for improving livelihoods

Equality in access to services, for instance between girls and boys

Respect for people

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5.3 Phase 3: Assessing the environment (Situation analysis or taking stock)

This step requires gathering up-to-date information about the organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses, and its external opportunities and threats- assessment that would refine and possibly reshape the list of critical questions that the organisation faces and that its strategic plan must address. This includes the following tasks:

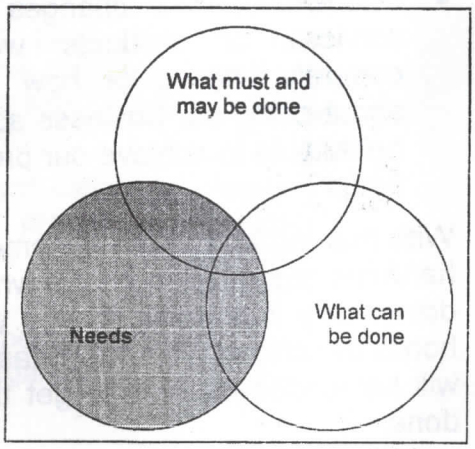
- Articulate previous and current strategies
- Gather input from internal stakeholders
- Gather information from external stakeholders
- Gather information about programmes effectiveness

The outcomes of this step are an understanding of critical issues which demand a response from the organisation-the most important issues the organisation needs to deal with-and a database of concrete information that will support planners in choosing priorities and strategies.

The planning team, after review of the results of SWOT analysis, must identify/agree on the final list of six to eight critical issues selected as most important. For additional information on SWOT analysis see annex 1.

5.3.1 Analysing the external environment

This step covers the "needs" section of your analysis. This exercise helps to identify:



- the groups of people affected by the focal problem (i.e., current and potential target groups)
- main causes of their poverty, marginialisation and powerlessness (i.e., vulnerability to risks and capacities for copping)
- the political, economic, social, technological and environmental trends (policies or practices) which make people vulnerable to poverty and hunger or which can strengthen their capacity to challenge and improve their situation, and
- opportunities for collaboration and alliances/partnership with other organisations working in similar areas.

You are not expected to achieve a perfect and complete analysis.

So the objective of this part of analysis is to help an organisation decide later on:

- who will be its intended beneficiaries?
- where the organisation will work?
- What issues the organisation can, and will, address?
- How the issues will be addressed?

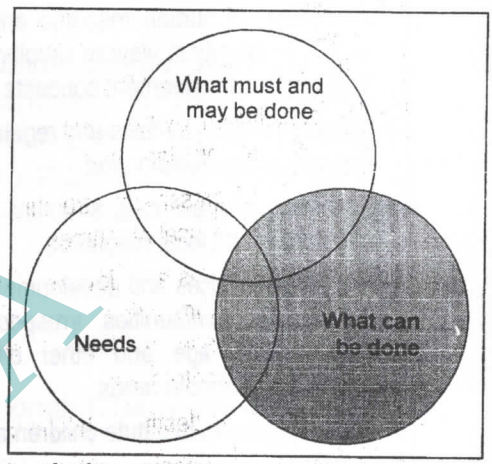
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SWOT analysis can be used to summarise the external environment scanning in terms of opportunities it offers and threats that your organisation should guard itself from. Nevertheless, the process points out important challenges for your NGO in the coming years.

You should use the opportunities available in the external environment for provision of quality services, partnership building, program effectiveness and impact. The threats should be considered as challenges against which your organisation should design purposeful action against it (refer to the additional reading material in Annex 7, how to identify poor people and causes of their poverty and identify trends).

5.3.2 *Analysis of internal environment*

The purpose of the internal analysis is to determine what your NGO can actually do.



The exercise helps to:

- identify your human and financial resources and capacity,
- analyse the lessons of past and present programs with regard to programs effectiveness and
- identify your NGO's distinctive competence in the country.

The result of the internal analysis will help the organisation decide whether it has particular strength in relation to others and where it has weakness. This helps the organisation make decisions about where to focus its work and what actions need to be taken to improve the quality of different aspects of the organisation.

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Example: SWOT analysis of EECMY Social Services and Development works

The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats at the EECMY's Church Units and Central Office level are the results discussion and consensus on different formal and informal discussion sessions. Ideas and perceptions of knowledgeable persons in the Church and donors are also integrated as relevant.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Long term experiences in social services and development works, as a result good and long-term relationship at the community, national and international levels • Wholistic Ministry concept put into practice • Availability of human resource and readiness to develop capacity in view of keeping herself in line with current development concepts • The constitution, by-laws and regulations, some in line with state proclamation • Existence of grassroots structure to access the community and local resources • Her social services and development works target the needy communities irrespective of race, religion, sex, age and other differences and reaching the remote areas. • Good concern to destitute children and youth • Work in hard and challenging situations	• Dependency on (foreign) external financial assistance • Plans are not based on baseline survey in most cases, poor planning, monitoring and evaluation. Plans are influenced by the interest of partners (government and donors) • Weak leadership/management at different levels (structure is too consultative) • Inadequate accounting and reporting system (inadequate transparency and accountability) • Works are more emergency than development oriented (too much dictated by external inputs, lack of focus and clear direction) • Mis-match in allocation of resources: over staffed and over funded • Inadequate utilisation of resources • Inadequate advocacy role for the voiceless, etc • Resistance to changes
Opportunities	**Threats**
• High needs/demands from the community for social services and development works • Indigenous knowledge, wisdom, coping mechanisms, etc. • Favourable government policies on decentralisation, food security, rural-centred development strategy, participatory development, etc. • availability of resource at grassroots level • acceptance of the Church's work by the community • High recognition and trust from donors and commitment to continue providing technical and financial support • Growing population of believers	• Decline of external funds for program implementation (shirking of available financial resources in absolute terms and in relation to increasing program coverage). High competition for the same cake (resources) • Recurrent drought, natural disasters and the resulting economic crises and poverty • Development challenges like Poverty, HIV/AIDS pandemic, deterioration of livelihoods, high population pressure • Frequent changes in partners' policies and different interests both at Church and international levels ("Generation gap") • Conflict-oriented division of church units

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5.4 Phase 4: Identify the Strategic issues

5.4.1 What are strategic issues?

A strategic issue is a **fundamental policy choice** affecting an organisation's mandates, mission, values, products or service level and mix, cost financing, and organisation or management. The way these choices are framed can have a profound effect on decisions that determine:

- What the organisation is
- What the organisation does
- Why the organisation does it

A whole range of issues will have emerged when you summarised each part of the previous analysis/phases. Some of the issues are fundamental for the effectiveness and impact of your organisation while some are not. In this phase you need to carry on the process of identifying issues, particularly drawing together the three parts of your analysis, and deciding what strategic issues you need to address. For additional reading note refer to Annex 7.

This step will involve:

- looking at the issues that have already emerged
- adding other issues that occur as you look at the relationship between different parts of your analysis
- grouping issues that relate
- checking which are strategic and
- beginning to prioritise issues.

Strategic issues are always framed as questions. Moreover, virtually every strategic issue involves conflict:

- What will be done?
- Why will it be done?
- How will it be done?
- Where will it be done?
- Who will do it?
- Who will be ADVANTAGED or DISADVANTAGED by it?

In identifying strategic issues, we should describe the issue, discuss the factors (mandate, mission, and internal/external environmental factors) that make the issue strategic and discuss the consequences of ***failure*** to address the issue (see side box for checklists).

Checklists for identification and analysis of strategic issues

1. What **issues** need further consultation with partners?
2. Why it is an important issue? What are the empirical **evidences** or **factors** (mandates, mission and internal/external environmental features) that make the issue strategic?
3. What are the **implications** (positive or negative) of failure to address the issue?
4. To which **partner**(s) and/or **policy** of the Government the issues refer? How do the partners see the issue?
5. What alternative **options** do exist to address each strategic issue? Can we do something about it? Is there a way to combine or eliminate the issue(s)?
6. What are the **advantages** and **disadvantages** of each alternative option?

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5.4.2 Benefit of identifying strategic issues

- Attention is focused on what is ***truly*** important: As you start identifying issues, you will go back to all or some of your earlier analysis. You may find tat you need to check information in order to assess the relative importance of different issues.
- Attention is focused on ***issues***, not answers: the choices you will make determine your program's overall direction and aims.
- Identification of issues usually creates the kind of useful tension necessary to prompt ***organisational change***: you will see how your current program fits in with the issues that have emerged and where new program initiatives, and different approaches and methods are required.
- Strategic issue identification provides ***useful clues*** about how to resolve this issue: the more clearly a question is defined the more you gain an insight into the range of possible ways of addressing the issue- i.e., you will be beginning to think of alternative strategies for tackling the issue.

Moreover:

- Focus on issues, not answers
- Always frame strategic issues as questions
- Recognise that strategic issues can be about addressing problems but also about capitalising on opportunities

Here are some examples of strategic issues:

- What business should we be in?
- How do we ensure an adequate financial base to fulfil our mission?
- How do we influence public policy at national and regional levels to ensure an enabling climate for service delivery?
- Poverty has increased in urban areas, both in degree and in terms of the number of people affected. Should we begin to work in the urban areas?
- Should we extend our work beyond support for agricultural development?
- Should we work through local NGOs with experience in institutional development or directly with community groups?
- How can we work with a neighbouring country office on issue of displaced people and refugee groups?
- How do we strengthen our capacity to respond to emergencies?
- How can we attract and retain more qualified staff?
- What should be our role in meeting the increasing health needs of the community?

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5.5 Phase 5: Identifying strategic aims/goals and strategies

The purpose of this step is to:

- Identify no more than five strategic aims for your program that will focus and give direction to your work;
- Make initial identification of appropriate strategies for working towards the achievement of your aims;
- Decide your development plan for internal capacity building,
- Identify budget requirements to carry out your program and internal capacity building strategies.

This step figures out what to do with the affirmed mission statement and the identified critical issues: the broad approaches to be taken (strategies) and general and specific results to be sought (the long-term and short-term goals and objectives).

5.5.1 Identify strategic aims/goals

In the previous step, you identified strategic issues in the form of questions. You now need to turn these questions into positive statement about what you want your program to achieve. Identifying your strategic aims is the most challenging step in the planning process because:

- You need to prioritise
- You need to look for themes and synthesise
- You have to decide where your organisation can have the most impact
- You will probably need to acknowledge that some parts of your existing programs are no longer priorities and will need to be phased out. You will need to discuss this with partners working with you in these areas.
- You will have to say "no" to some things, acknowledging that there are some issues that you cannot tackle because they are not priority; other agencies have the strengths or the capacities to tackle them; or the issue does not fit well with your organisation's mission.

You will have probably identified quite a large number of issues that you would like to address. You will need to prioritise and synthesise these issues, until you have formulated no more than five strategic aims for your program. Review your strategic issues to see if any can be combined or if certain themes emerge. Once you are satisfied with the formulation of the strategic aims, it is important to look at he consequences for your existing programs, because you may need to decide strategies for phasing out and reducing areas of work as well as for new developments. For examples on strategic aims and strategies refer to annex 8.

The **strategic aims** that you formulate should relate to the coming **five-year period**. They state **what you want to achieve** during this time. **How you intend reaching your aims,** and the steps you need to take year by year, will be worked out as you formulate your **strategies**.

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5.5.2 Formulate your strategies (or strategic objectives)

Strategies are paths you want to follow to work towards the achievement of your aims. This often involves choosing among options to select the one that is most cost effective, feasible given the organisation's SWOT analysis, and likely to advance the goals of the organisation, making it simultaneously more competitive and sustainable.

In a well-written SP, strategic objectives should be interlocking and complementary. A good SP also integrates financial planning and sustainability issues in the development of strategic objectives. In short, some consideration of costing or the financial implications of your proposed strategies will make your plan more complete and useful. This also means that good strategic plans outline approaches to mobilise, increase and target resources where they are most needed.

5.5.3 Writing the strategic plan

This phase essentially involves putting the results in the previous steps together into one coherent document and submission for review by all key decision-makers (usually the board and management staff). The reviewers should make sure that the plan answers key questions about priorities and directions and in sufficient detail to serve as a guide for the organisation's members. The product of this phase is your strategic plan!

Documenting your strategic planing work serves several purposes:

- It will ensure that your analysis and proposals are available and accessible for local use
- It will be an agreed document from which you develop your action plan and against which you monitor your progress
- It will be important in helping decisions to be made about the allocation of resources to programs
- It assists continuity and institutional memory, new team members will know not only what the plan is, but also its justification.

Moreover, the written plan is a management tool, so it should be succinct and should clearly identify the focus and direction that you want your program to take in the coming five years. The plan should document the process and the results. It should include:

1. An executive summary of no more than two pages
2. Your vision and mission statements
3. A summary of main points from the analysis of external and internal environments and any particular aspects of your mandate to which you want to draw attention
4. Main strategic issues that emerged from the analysis and the strategic aims and provisional strategies that you have agreed
5. A five year budget projection
6. A brief description of process of he strategic planning undertaken, i.e., who has involved, number of groups sessions and topics, total staff time and other resources involved, main learning points.

Aim to keep your strategic plan to no more than 20 pages.

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5.6 Phase 6: Implementing, Monitoring and evaluating the strategic plan

5.6.1 Action and financial plan for implementation of the SP

This refers to operationalisation of the strategic plan through annual action and budget plans. The action plans should clarify the guidelines for implementation (what, when, by whom, with whom, etc) and the precision of results to be monitored.

The action plans are bundle of activities that will take place, in sequential order, to achieve strategic objectives and the resources, especially monetary, that will be required to undertake them. Well-articulated strategic plan should show not only specific activities but also:

- Timeframe for completion
- Persons responsible
- Resources needed
- Expected outcomes or results
- Indicators for monitoring and evaluating and documenting results.

These detailed plans can also be used to support organisation's financial planning, budgeting, and resource mobilisation or fund-raising.

5.6.2 Monitoring and reviewing and evaluating the strategic plan

The strategic planning process is never really finished. There are cycles, and periods of more or less intense activity, but the process being responsive to a changing environment is ongoing. Thus, the SP process must be continuously monitored and evaluated to check the ongoing validity of the decisions made during the SP process or/and adapt the strategic plan to prevailing environment. Any good SP should include annual reviews, an in-depth analysis and revision at mid-term and a thorough final evaluation.

A strategic plan should be used to measure performance and determine organisational needs. A shared, nurtured vision is a powerful vehicle for managing organisational growth, development and effectiveness.

Strategic planning should be an on-going aspect of management, and you should develop information system which help you keep the external and internal environments under review, and monitoring system to help you measure the effectiveness and impact of your programs.

You should be ready to revise and update your aims and strategies in the light of changed circumstances or new learning. At least, once during the strategic plan period, you should undertake major review of your plan, to check that your aims and strategies are still appropriate and that progress is being made towards reaching your aims.

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6 Conclusion

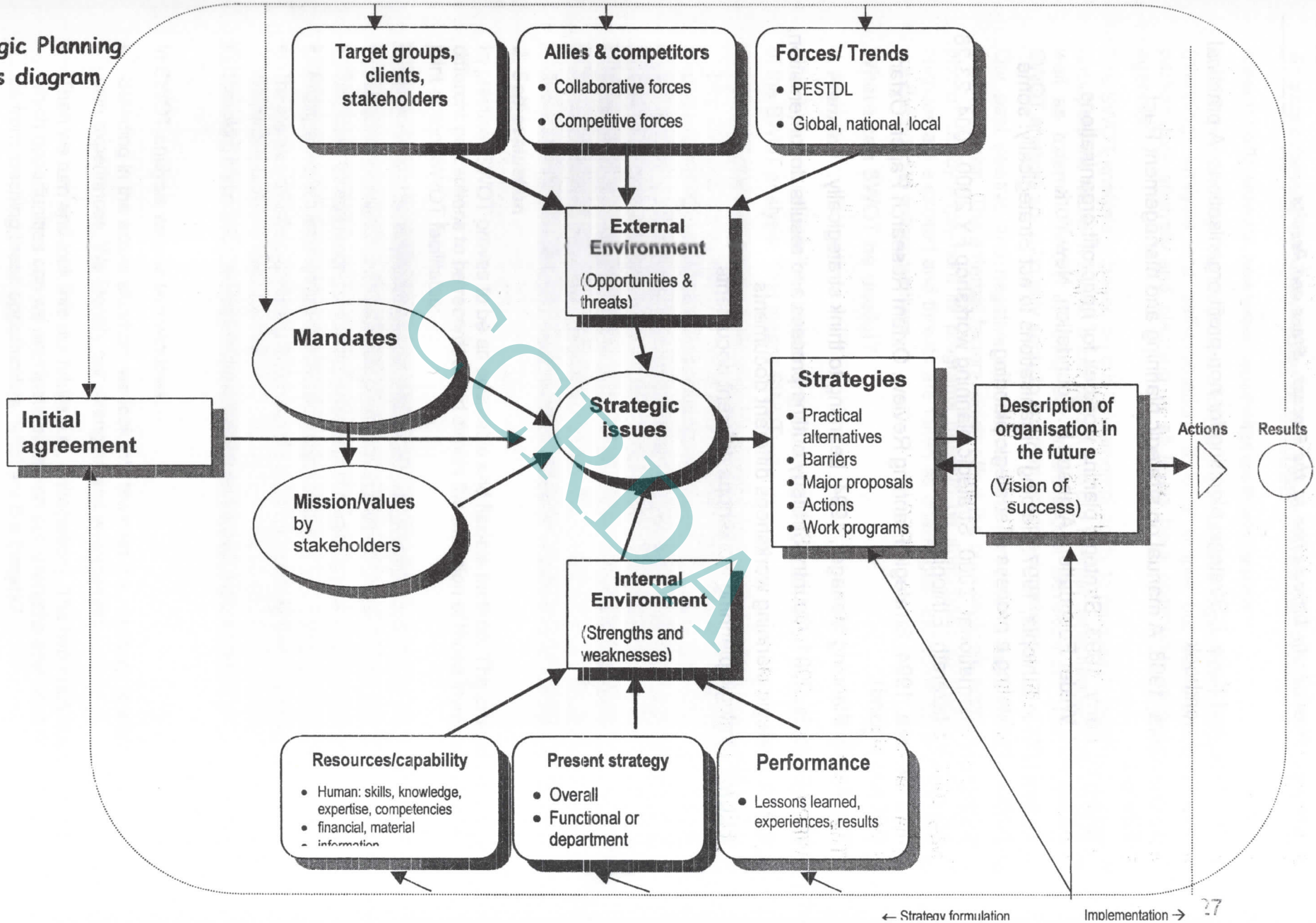
Strategic thinking is more worth than the strategic plan developed in the course of the process. The planners, based on their knowledge of current situation, can anticipate about the future situation. Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that the future would remain as anticipated by the planners.

External situation like change in the economy, new technological inventions, policy change, security situation, better service by new organisation, change of interest by donors, etc., can affect the implementation of the strategic plan. There is no way, of course, for leaders and staff of an organisation, to foresee these changes. Rather, they must be responded to as they arise. The rationale is to be effective in perusing the organisation's mission, not to try to correctly predict the future. The SP process is a means to that rationale.

The responsibility of the leadership of every organisation is to ensure that a strategic plan is in place and that appropriate adjustments are made in the implementation of that plan as circumstance change. The strategic plan is a reference document to assist the leadership with these responsibilities. This calls for leaders with such capability.

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Strategic Planning Process diagram



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CRDA strategic planning workshops different documents

EECMY strategic planning workshops different documents

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Annex 1: *SWOT* (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) *Analysis*

SWOT is a working tool for project piloting, organisational capacity assessment, strategic (planning) analysis and self-evaluation. It is a simple but comprehensive tool for participatory analysis and planning at all levels from community to national and UN agencies.

The SWOT analysis is based on our fundamental ability to repeatedly recall the past and anticipate the future. It is also a tool to look into our internal capacities and capabilities as well as external factors affecting our organisational development and sustainability. SWOT analysis could equally apply to program or project contexts.

Our past positive and negative experiences and perceptions need to be shared and lessons drawn. The external factors which affect the organisation's abilities to effectively and efficiently implement its programs need to be anticipated so that opportunities or chances are exploited and threats are taken as challenges and some purposeful actions are designed to overcome them.

Where can SWOT be useful?

1. Planning

SWOT procedure is helpful for planning. Planning steps can follow based on the outcome of the SWOT analysis. That means SWOT:

- identifies and analyses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an organisation, program/project or a community's need for action. To do so, the planning team examines the mangement, programming and financing capabilities of the organisation.
- facilitates the approach to planning since it enables those involved to express their experiences, disappointements, potentials, hopes and fears in view of future changes.
- reveals the diverse visions entertained by the various actors and makes them comprehensible to all.
- facilitates the quest for common interests and values.
- links the review of the past with looking into the future in order to initiate possible joint action.

2. Self-evaluation

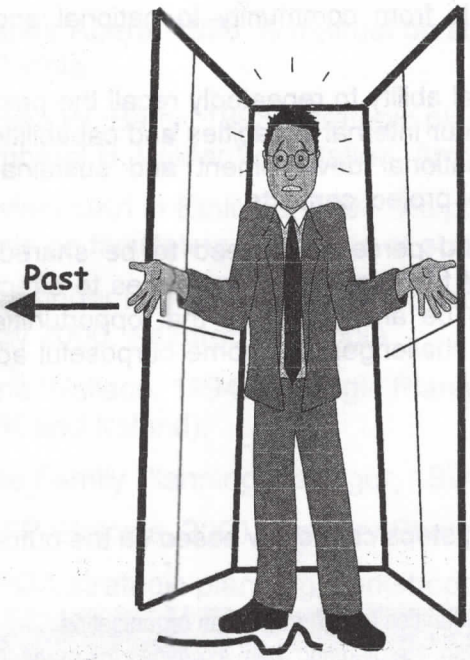
In practice, SWOT proves to be an adaptable and flexible method. The procedure allows different perceptions to be recorded and directs the attention of those involved towards joint action. SWOT facilitates:

- The portrayal of the varying experiences made by different groups of actors.
- Participatory evaluation and assessment of experiences and perceptions.
- Respect for the experience, opinions and estimations of marginal groups.
- Finding a common language and step-by-step problem solving.
- The approach of self-evaluation and elaboration of a built-in evaluation system which reinforces independent piloting of those involved.
- The linking of evaluation (review) with the adjustment of objectives and planning.

In SWOT analysis we use two windows:

- Standing in the actual situation, we look into the past (i.e., review), to learn from our own experiences. We identify our strengths and weaknesses.
- Then we turn and look into our future (i.e., anticipation). The two main questions are which opportunities can we anticipate based on our strengths and what could hinder us from reaching these opportunities, what are the threats?

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Actual (Present) situation

According to the assessment, experiences will be written in one of the four parts of the window, for example:

- **Strength**: successes, aims achieved, strengths, pleasure, fun, know-how, motivation, technical skills, networking, etc.
- **Weakness**: Failures, difficulties, bottlenecks, limitations, poor information base about opportunities, etc.
- **Opportunities**: potentials, trends, unused abilities, attitudes, approaches, etc.
- **Threats**: Obstacles, resistance, unfavourable framework conditions, changing procedures/approaches, etc.

SWOT Analysis Framework

Strengths **(Positive experience)** What did we do well? ***(to capitalize)***	**Opportunities/chances** **(Possible potentials)** What changes are taking place in our environment that might allow us to better achieve our mission? ***(to take advantage of)***	*Positive Factors*
Weaknesses **(Negative experience)** What/where could we have improved? ***(to eliminate)***	**Threats/constraints** **(Possible difficulties)** What changes are taking place in our environment from which we need to guard against or prepare for the challenge in doing our work? ***(to overcome)***	*Negative Factors*
Past (Review of internal forces)	*Future (Anticipation of external forces)*	*Time*

How to apply it?

1. Visualisation

It proves advantageous to have SWOT procedure supported by means of visual aids; pin-boards and cards, large sheets of papers, and even just a sand floor and symbols, can be useful in this process. In most cases, it is sufficient if the well-known rules of visualisation are explained before or while applying the tool.

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2. Introduction steps

The following steps can be used to introduce and apply SWOT analysis:

- Explain to users how the SWOT window is constructed
- Always begin with the look into the past and start with strength/success. It gives encouragement and draws attention to development potential.
- Let the group decide on how far to look back and how far forward in the time the analysis should go.
- Each actor should express his/her own experience and perceptions.
- Ensure that all experiences find space in SWOT and are taken seriously.
- Have the individual actors comment on their contributions and clarify comprehension questions.
- Record common aspects first (consensus) and discuss contradictory opinion (dissent) at a later stage
- Facilitate implementation of SWOT by proceeding according to planning steps: problem causes, discussion of alternatives, agreement of aims, planing of activities and means

Part 1: List of Strengths and weaknesses[4]

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strategic implication for SP	**Strategic implication for SP**

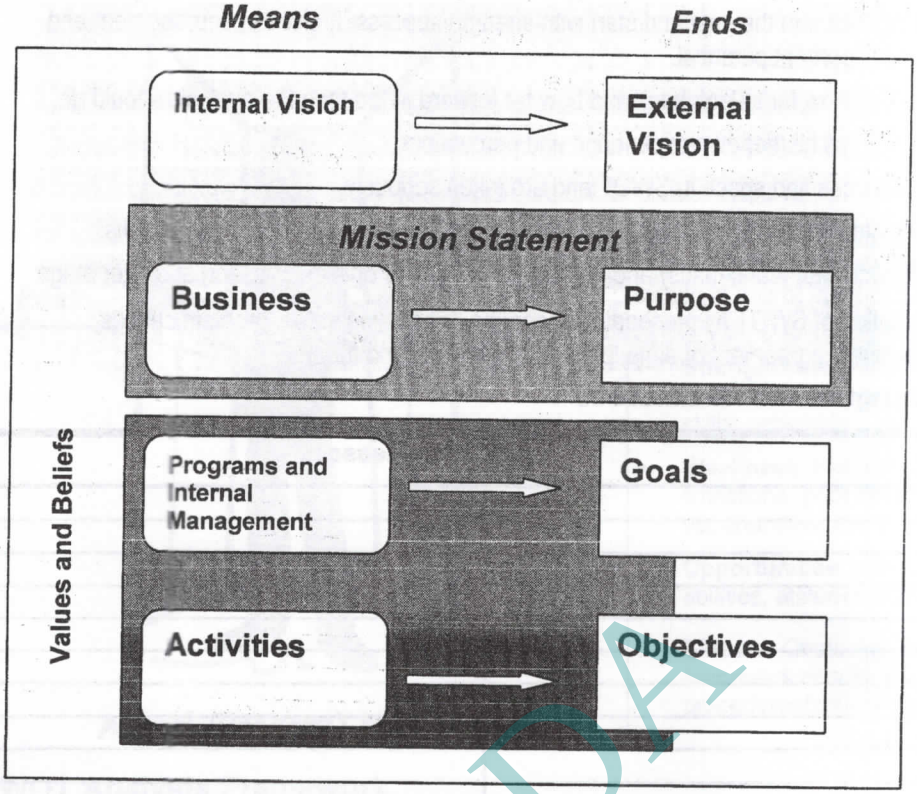
Pat II: Opportunities and threats

Opportunities	Threats

[4] The following areas can be used to facilitate your assessment: Organisational structure, Planning, Co-ordination, Staffing, Training, Management information system, Networking/ partnership, Administration, logistics, Program capabilities, Financing capabilities, Monitoring and evaluation, etc.

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Annex 2: Different terminology of planning in the non-profit sector-Focusing on Ends and means



Source: Allison M. and Kaye J., Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations, p16

Means	*Ends*
Internal vision A description of the organisation operating at its most effective and efficient level	**External vision** A statement that describes how the world would be improved, changed, or different, if an organisation is successful in achieving its purpose.
Business The priority method(s) used by the organisation to achieve its purpose.	**Purpose** The ultimate result an organisation is trying to achieve (Answers the question "Why does the organisation exist?".
Programmes and Internal Management A description of services and products that an organisation offers, and the internal operations that that support the delivery of services or products.	**Goals** Outcome statement that define what an organisation is trying to accomplish both programmatically and organisationally.
Activities The specific actions required to produce services and products	**Objectives** Precise, measurable, time-phrased results that support the achievement of a goal

Core strategies

Broad, overall priorities or directions adopted by an organisation

Mission Statement

A succinct statement that articulates the organisation's purpose, business, values, and beliefs

Values and beliefs

The basic, guiding principles that provides guidance and inspiration to the board and staff.

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Annex 3: Main Elements of Strategic Planning in relation to other Planning Levels

1. **Strategic Analysis:** What is the situation?
   - The **environment** in which we operate
     - ⇒ Main elements: political, economic, social, technological, ethical
     - ⇒ History: how did it develop?
     - ⇒ Present: what are the main characteristics?
     - ⇒ Future: how will it change?
   - The **influence of the environment** on us and the challenges it holds for us:
     - ⇒ Opportunities/chances
     - ⇒ Threats/constraints
   - Our **resources** and potential to act in the environment and influence it:
     - ⇒ Our strengths
     - ⇒ Our weaknesses
   - **Expectations** of our internal and external **stakeholders**:
     - ⇒ Our weaknesses
     - ⇒ Constraints arising from expectations

Capacity, knowledge, experience, finance, organisational structure, etc.

2. **Strategic Choice:** What can we do in and about the situation?
   - Strategic **Options**:
     - ⇒ What is suitable?
     - ⇒ What is feasible?
     - ⇒ What is applicable?

Assessing appropriateness

Choosing strategic options

3. **Strategic Planning:** How to apply Strategic Analysis and Choice?
   - Be clear about your **values**
   - Formulate **Vision-Mission-Aims**, based on your values while considering the results of Strategic Analysis and Choice
   - (Re-) Structure the **organisation** (or plan for it)
   - Plan **activities** (programs, projects, resources, etc.)
4. **Program/Project Planning:** Break down the Strategic Plan into manageable steps
   - Determine **Overall Goal**: the broad future situation (improvement) to which your project wants to make a limited contribution. This amounts to breaking down Vision-Mission-Aims and make them manageable for the level of single projects or programs
   - Work out the **Purpose**: how (through generating which changes) your project will contribute to moving closer to the Overall Goal
   - Compile the **Outputs** necessary to achieve the Purpose and the **Activities** to get Outputs
5. **Operational Planning**: Details of Activities with resources, budgets, timing, etc.

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Annex 4: Strategic planning worksheets

Worksheet

Planning process outcomes and issues

- What does your organisation wish to achieve from a planing process?
- What issues or choices do you think need to be addressed?
- Are there any non-negotiable or constraints that need to be articulated up front?

What would success look like at the completion of the planning process? What does your organisation wish to achieve from a planning process?

What are the issues facing your organisation? What questions to be answered during the planning process?

Issue	**Why it is an issue? What are the consequences of not responding**	**Check whether the issue is strategic or operational**	
		Strategic	**Operational**

Are there any questions which are non-negotiable (not up for discussion)?

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Worksheet

Mission Statement ↳ Draft the Mission statement of the Organisation

What is the **focus problem (s)** that our organisation exists to solve? What need or opportunity does our organisation exists to solve? (In considering the focus problem or need, you might want to consider the following questions: who is affected by the problem? How are they affected?) Describe how the world would be improved, changed, or different if our organisation was successful in solving the problem or responding to the need.

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What is the **purpose** of our organisation (answer the question why we exist, does not describe what we do)? Make sure to indicate outcomes and results (e.g., to eliminate homelessness), not methods of achieving those results which is your business (e.g., by constructing houses).

What is our **business**? Describe the business(s) we are in-our primary services or activities.

What are the fundamental values and beliefs that should guide us in our day-to-day interactions with each other and our constituencies? What are the major assumptions upon which our organisation provides its services?

We believe:

We assume:

Our Mission Statement

(Combine the information above to create a compelling mission statement about who the organisation is, what the organisation does, and why the organisation does it.)

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Worksheet

Vision Statement ↳ What is the organisation's realistic but challenging guiding vision of success?

External Vision: Describe how the world would be improved, changed, or different if our organisation was successful in achieving its purpose.

Internal Vision: Envisioning our organisation's future.

What is the **programmatic vision** for our organisation for three to five years from today? (What would be our ideal programme mix/service? List in order of priority- top priority services at the top of the list.)	Describe your **administrative vision** for our organisation for the next three to five years in terms of : staffing and benefits, Board of Directors, our image in the community, our funding, our infrastructure and use of technology, facilities, information systems, and planning and evaluation, quality control ad others.

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Worksheet

Previous and current Strategies ↳ **Identify and assess the organisation's previous and current strategies**

Previous and current strategies	Was or is the strategy effective? Why or why not?	Should it be considered as a strategy for the future? Why or why not?

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Worksheet

External Stakeholders Perceptions and Expectation ↳ **Summarise findings regarding stakeholders' perception and expectation of the organisation**

Stakeholder/ Constituency	• **What does this stakeholder say about our organisation's strengths and weaknesses?** • **What trends do they perceive as either opportunities or threats?**	• What does this stakeholder need or expect from our organisation? (What is the criteria they use to judge our performance?) • How well our organisation performs against those criteria? (Exe., good, fair or poor) • What these stakeholders want us to do more of or lee of? • What additional or increased programmes of services do they think we should offering if resources are available?

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Worksheet

Staff Assessment of Programmes and Organisation

Evaluate your programmes and organisation in terms of client needs, results and competitive position, and potential for increased efficiency.

Programme/Service Name:_____

Description of Programme service:

Prepared by: _____

Analysis of Competitive Position

Name of organisation	**Ability to provide service** *Excellent, Good Fair Poor*	**Quality of service** *Excellent Good Fair Poor*	**Why did you rate ability to provide service the way you did? Why did you give the rating on quality of service?**
Our Programme			
Competitor:			
Competitor:			
Competitor:			
Competitor:			

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What are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of this programme?

Strengths	Weaknesses

How could we improve the cost-effectiveness of this programme?	How could we improve the quality of this programme?	How could we improve our ability to provide this service?

If the budget of this programme were suddenly *halved* or suddenly *doubled* , what would you recommend we do?

Suddenly *halved*	Suddenly *doubled*

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How should we measure results/impact/outcomes of this programme in improving the quality of our clients' lives? What are the indicators of success (benchmarks upon which we should measure our success)? How do we know we are making a difference?

Client Needs Assessment

List client group(s) currently being served by our organisation	How well this group being served by us (Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor)	Why did you rate our services to this client the way you did? How could we ensure that this client group receives the best possible services available delivered either by our organisation or from another organisation?

Assessment of Entire Organisation

How could we improve the cost effectiveness of our organisation?	What do our clients consider value? How could we improve the quality of services we provide as an organisation to our client s?

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What would you recommend we do if the budget for this organisation were:

Suddenly *halved*

Suddenly *doubled*

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Summary: Suggested Overall Programme Priorities

Short-Term Priorities	Long-Term Priorities

Summary: Suggested Overall Management/operations Priorities

Short-Term Priorities	Long-Term Priorities

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Worksheet

Programme Evaluation ↳ **Assess your programme in relation to inputs, implementation, outcomes, and impact.**

Name of Programme: _____

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

Assessment of inputs: What resources are required to operate the programme?

Assessment of implementation (evaluation of the process): How many units of services are we delivering?

Assessment of outcomes (evaluation of the programme): Are the goals being met?

Assessment of impact: What unexpected or unintended impacts are occurring as a result of our programme?

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Worksheet

Programmes Prioritising Matrix

Review the list of criteria in choosing programme priorities, list all programmes (services) you wish to assess in relation to listed criteria. Please give a (✓) beside all criteria that apply to the programme.

Criteria ↓ Programme→									
Congruence with mission									
Measurable results									
Fills a need nor being met in the community									
Organisation capable of providing quality services relative to other providers									
Demonstrated need in the future									
Increases organisation's visibility									
Fund is available									
Benefits outweigh or at least equals costs									
Reduces dependency									
Sustainable									

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Worksheet

Core Future Strategies ↳ **Identify and assess your core future strategies.**

Strategic issue/question	Proposed strategy	Assumption, facts, and values which support this proposed strategy?	What possible obstacle do we face in implementing this strategy?	What triggers might encourage us to re evaluate this strategy?

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Annex 5: Lessons from Strategic Planning Process of CRDA

Starting without some preconceptions - At CRDA we started the SP process with out having any preconception on what the outcome might be. Some agencies start SP with some preconception, but if the agency has clear vision of its future it does not need a Strategic Planning. Probably it does not have to spend its time.

Orientation on the concept of SP - The SP should be viewed as a **means of self-learning**. Therefore, all parties to be involved need to be open, and willing to entertain different opinions, and there is a corresponding need for a **readiness to entertain changes.**

The **steps** were the following

1. Internal assessment
2. External assessment
3. Mandate mapping
4. Issues identification and analysis
5. Setting the organisational mission, aims and objectives

Our advice with regard to each of the above steps is the following:

I. **Internal assessment** - this first need to be done by selected staff. Sufficient time need to be allocated for the review of major documents. Staff findings should be used to guide a group event discussion and identify Strengths and Weaknesses. Some agencies finalise the internal assessment in a single day workshop. We do not advise this for big and established agencies.

II. **External Assessment** - We did a simple PESTE analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological and Environment analysis). The staff were not clearly advised to see how those aspects affect/influence CRDA. Therefore, we advise others to study the external environment with the context of *how it affects the specific agency.*

III. **The mandate exercise** (who is interested or affected or deciding on/about CRDA) has not been that much helping. It can be incorporated with the external analysis

IV. **Our approach of issues** - those emerging from the SWOT analysis, as matters that need to be resolved soon or else that can have a profound effect on the agency, is helping very much. At this stage alternatives to contain the issues need to be well analysed by assigned staff so as to assist a gathering of stakeholders can decide and can opt for one.

V. **Setting mission and strategic aims** - this need to be first worked-out by assigned staff for agreement by the Management (Leadership). Eventually this has to be presented and endorsed by the larger group of partners

Timing and time requirement

Impact on regular work – Strategic planning review is a lengthy and demanding process. It requires quite some time to generate and reflect ideas. Unless well planned it affects the whole organisational performance in the process year. Staff from senior to low level will be involved. Annual plans will be affected. We advise others to take in to account this aspect in their plans.

Timing - Group events should be organised in months where relatively most to be involved are less squeezed by their routine assignments

Sequencing - Our SP has been accomplished through three series of workshops separated by sufficient preparation time. We know some agencies do it in a-one-go

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process. We advise others to follow our sequencing as this allows sufficient time to prepare and present a fairly worked result for workshops of partners.

Expect and account for group events of various forms (formal and informal). The informal one's are amongst staff in the preparation phases. In formal group events good participation number of people to attend group events should be limited to less than 30.

Co-ordination - It is better if a Core Committee of people from the technical departments is established for central co-ordination of the process. A core contact person from existing staff needs to be assigned on full-time basis.

Use of external resource person - CRDA has used an external resource person for facilitation. His mandate included leading the process through facilitation/moderation of group events, guiding and editing staff work and challenging results. In the beginning there was some conflict with the facilitator as he attempted to decide results. This emanated from the gap in establishing roles and responsibilities. Therefore, CRDA advice other agencies that wish to use external facilitators to make sure that their roles are clearly spelt-out as only facilitation. In addition the resource person should have good knowledge of the agency and its operational environment. It is not advisable to use individuals who have little knowledge and experience of NGOs.

Need to be open - Some agencies start SP process to endorse some already perceived strategy. Under such conditions they oppose any other idea which is not compatible to their intention. Therefore for a better effect it is better if an opening workshop is given in advance for those to be involved.

Finance requirement - There is a need to properly plan for the following cost items; hall rent, facilitator/moderator fee, stationery (flip chart paper, cards, markers, glue etc.), refreshment for participants (tea/coffee and lunch if done in Addis, or include boarding cost if done outside of Addis), duplication and distribution costs

Participants and participation

- **Composition** - As much as possible include opinions of governmental partners, targets, donor and other partners. Nonetheless, the initial work should be done by staff
- **Consistency** - As much as possible same people need to be encouraged to participate through out the whole process. Newcomers often tend to question previous stages, and too much time is taken on this.
- **Reporting** - participatory facilitation techniques enable past and direct reporting. Under such condition one can not misinterpret wishes of those involved

Expected outputs - Some agency use SP to come-out with detail project ideas, and even financial needs. The nature of SP exercise often does not allow and give sufficient time to plan projects. Rather, the practice of CRDA whereby the SP only provides the policy guide/framework document is advisable. Project idea and costing should come once after the guide document is developed. This can be fairly well done as an action planning exercise.

- **Do not expect detailed project ideas - SP provides policy guide or framework**
- **Be prepared for a subsequent Action Planning exercise - not covered by SP**
- **You may need a bridging period - SP results do not immediately translate into action**

"SP is not a one-time show, it is a dynamic process"

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Annex 6: Additional reading note on analysis of external environment

(Source: Strategic planing guidelines, Oxfam, 1995)

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1. Identify poor people and the causes of their poverty

Poverty, distress and suffering are not only about the absence of material goods and basic services. They also relate to the experience of marginalisation, exclusion, and powerlessness caused by social, economic, political, technological and environmental constraints which limit people's ability to control and make positive changes to their lives. People's lack of access to **basic rights** and the possibility of a **sustainable livelihood** are key factors.

Identify the different groups of people in your country/region most affected by poverty, distress and suffering. Identify those most likely to be affected by disasters and emergencies.

Look at the causes of poverty and ask the following questions:

* What are the major social, economic, political, technological and environmental factors causing poverty, distress and suffering in your region/country?

* Who are the groups of people most affected?

* What obstacles stand in the way of these groups obtaining their basic rights?

* How are their possibilities for achieving a sustainable livelihood constrained?

Ensure your analysis has a **gender** perspective. This is an essential part of fulfilling the Gender Policy section of your mandate. The particular ways that the relations between women and men are structured in your region/country will result in differences in the ways in which they experience poverty, distress and suffering. Women and men from the same social group will have differing social, economic, and political roles, which will affect not only the relations between them, but also their capacity to participate in wider society. Their access, or lack of it, to their basic rights and the possibility of a sustainable livelihood will differ as a result. For example, women may not enjoy the same rights to land and inheritance as men under local law.

You should also bear in mind other **social differences**, such as socio-economic status, age, ethnicity, race, caste, and disability. Consider how these factors interrelate and create different patterns of poverty, distress, and suffering, not only between social groups but within them.

Wherever possible break down your data by gender, age, socio-economic status and the other important forms of social difference in your region/country.

Consider if there are ways in which **public policy and practice** are hindering the fulfilment of basic rights or the achievement of sustainable livelihoods. Look at all levels, including those most susceptible to the influence of non-governmental and community-based organisaitons, such as local government. Are there possibilities for combining the funding of development and relief programmes with advocacy at local, national, regional and international levels? (See Oxfam UK/I's Guide to Advocacy Planning, November 1994).

Ensure your analysis is **dynamic**. Patterns of poverty, marginalisation and powerlessness change. For example, the implementation of structural adjustment policies throughout Asia, Latin America and Africa have made many more people poor in numerical terms and created significant new groups of poor people eg. female maintained households and growing numbers of older people who can no longer rely on their families to support

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them. Analyses carried out four or five years ago will almost certainly have to be updated. Question past and accepted analyses, and seek out new findings.

2. Identify trends

Another part of your analysis relates to the social, economic, political, technological and environmental trends which influence, both positively and negatively, who is affected by poverty, distress and suffering and people's capacity to achieve their basic rights and more sustainable livelihoods.

Consider macro-trends at the level of international and national policy, the effects of these at a micro-level and local trends. Consider the activities of other development agencies, such as the World Bank, the UN organisations, and international and national NGOs in responding to these trends.

Strengthening poor men and women's own capacity to make positive changes to their lives is a core principle of Oxfam's relief and development work. It is important to look at trends in how poor men and women are responding to changes and how they see them. For example, are new forms of social organisation developing at community, national or regional levels? Are old ones disintegrating and, if they are, what are the effects? Are the types of economic activity that poor men, women and children engage in changing? How? Is the kind of support they are asking from Oxfam changing?

One approach to help you carry out this part of the analysis is to look at how the different trends affect:

* the **vulnerabilities** of different groups of people, i.e. the long-term factors which weaken the abilities of people to maintain and improve their current situation and make them more susceptible to the negative effects of macro- and micro-trends,

* the **capacities** of different groups of people, i.e. the strengths, skills and individual and collective resources they can call on to help them take advantage of any positive trends and minimize the effects of the negative ones,

People's vulnerabilities and capacities will vary according to their gender, age, ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, caste and other factors.

Projecting future trends will help you identify new groups of people you may need to consider. This will apply to all aspects of your programme, including the possibility of people being affected by future emergencies.

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Box 2. HINTS FOR EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

Oxfam does not need to carry out new research if other bodies can provide the information we require. Using a variety of sources of information will help build up a rounded view of the situation, and quality and accuracy can be checked by comparing different sources.

Since women's perspectives may not always be represented by male-dominated organisations, special efforts may be required to obtain these. Check that data is sufficiently broken-down by gender, and does not hide important information, such as women's work outside of formal employment, or variations in health statistics between boys and girls.

Useful sources of information:

* Your own Team.
* Oxfam UK/I's Policy Department, provides research, information and analysis on issues of major concern to Oxfam. (See Resources, Section B for useful bibliography and Section C for contacts in Oxfam Head Office).
* National and local government departments, universities, research institutions and individual specialists.
* World Bank, International Development Bank, UN Agencies and the International Fund for Agriculture and Development's Poverty Assessments.
* Project counterparts and other local NGOs.
* Local Oxfam UK/I research reports.
* Neighbouring Oxfam UK/I country offices and other members of Oxfam International.
* Personal conversations with beneficiaries, project workers, and other local informants.
* Lessons learnt from project and programme monitoring and evaluations.

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3. Consider the response of Oxfam UK/I and other agencies

It is important to look at the ways in which different agencies are engaging with your region/country. Look at the responses in terms of relief, development, capacity-building and advocacy. You should consider your own programme and find out about the objectives and activities of other members of Oxfam International in your region/country. You should also look at the activities of government departments, national NGOs, and multilateral and other foreign agencies. This will help you to identify areas of unmet need, establish opportunities for collaboration, avoid duplication and seek out possibilities for joint work, including advocacy. This could be particularly effective with the members of Oxfam International since there now exists a commitment at directorate level to cooperation with the aim of increasing our joint impact.

Summarise the opportunities and threats stemming from the main positive and negative trends you have identified into a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Matrix (see the Resources section for details). This will feed into your discussion of Strategic Issues.

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EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: ACTION

Move on once you have achieved and ticked off the following:

- [] Identified the main groups of people lacking access to basic rights and sustainable livelihoods in your country/region.
- [] Identified the main factors behind their lack of access to basic rights and sustainable livelihoods.
- [] Identified the main positive trends in response to this situation.
- [] Identified those groups most likely to be affected by disasters and emergencies or susceptible to becoming poor.
- [] Described the activities of those involved in helping to resolve the problems identified.
- [] Compiled a written summary of your analysis.

Annex 7: Additional reading note on strategic issues

(Source: Strategic planing guidelines, Oxfam, 1995)

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Issues that relate directly to poverty, distress and suffering

First of all, write down issues that relate directly to poverty, distress and suffering.

You are likely to have a number of issues relating to different groups of people or certain districts where poverty, distress or suffering is most acute or where the situation is deteriorating e.g:

A) Poverty has increased in urban areas, both in degree and in terms of the numbers of people affected. Should Oxfam UK/I begin to work in the urban areas?

B) War in one of the poorest parts of the country has increased environmental degradation and led to a range of economic and infrastructure problems. Should Oxfam UK/I extend its work beyond support for agricultural production?

C) Fear of civil war and ongoing communal violence have led to small populations of displaced people within one country and refugees arriving in two neighbouring countries. Can Oxfam UK/I respond to the needs of displaced people and refugee groups in all three countries?

These three issues are elaborated in more detail in the Worked Examples shown at the end of step 6 (Boxes 4, 5, and 6). Issues A and B are at a country level, whereas issue C needs discussion by a regional group. Examples like these are inevitably presented in a simpler form than you will encounter in your own planning. However, it is hoped that they will be useful to illustrate how the different steps in your planning come together to help you formulate strategic aims and strategies.

You will identify a number of other issues linked to each of your major issues. These will emerge from the review that you have done of your mandate and scope of your work and from your external and internal analyses. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats you have identified in your SWOT analysis will suggest certain choices to you.

* You may have identified that Oxfam UK/I has areas of strength and that you are likely to achieve good impact from working in these areas.

* You may have identified that other agencies are responding to particular areas of need and it may not be necessary for Oxfam UK/I to give priority to these issues.

* An area of significant unmet need may have been identified and you may have to consider "by whom" and "how" this need can best be addressed.

Some of these issues will emerge from just one part of your analysis. With others, you are looking at the areas of overlap between the three circles of "must/may", "needs" and "can". This will help you to see where Oxfam UK/I is likely to have most impact. It will also highlight areas of tension or difficulty - for instance where you feel you need to improve Oxfam UK/I's capacity to respond to particular needs or aspects of your mandate. Some of the questions you write down will probably be about which strategies to follow or how to develop a strategy working with other parts of Oxfam. For instance:

* Should we work through local NGOs with experience in institutional development or directly with community groups?

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* At what levels will advocacy work be most effective in relation to labour conditions in the informal sector?

* How can we collaborate with the Policy Department on advocacy?

* How can we work with a neighbouring country office on the issue of displaced people and refugee groups?

This is to be expected. In Step 6 you will need to synthesise and prioritise all the issues you have identified, so that you have a clear set of **strategic aims** and an initial analysis of appropriate **strategies** to work towards each aim.

Examples of some linked issues for the main issues A, B and C are listed in the Worked Examples in Boxes 4, 5, and 6.

Issues relating to internal capacity-building

The issues that arise relating to capacity-building required in your team should also be written down e.g:

* How do we increase Oxfam's capacity to adopt a one-programme approach, especially developing our competence in relation to integrating advocacy issues?

* How do we strenghten our capacity to respond to emergencies?

Some capacity-building issues will relate to specific programme issues and will need to be tackled through the strategies you adopt to work on a particular programme aim. Others w ...s your whole programme. Part of your work in step 6 will be to devise an inte... building development plan, indicating the strategies required to help your team deliver an effective programme.

Frame and document your strategic issues

As you start writing down the issues that are emerging, check that they are strategic in nature (see Box 3) and look to see where issues could be brought together into common themes.

The list of strategic issues that you have identified will need prioritising and synthesising further in step 6, as you explore the choices you have to make and how issues can be addressed and resolved. You will be working towards identifying a small number of strategic issues and from these formulating the **strategic aims** which will focus your programme.

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Box 3. IS YOUR ISSUE STRATEGIC?

For each issue you have identified, try doing the following check;

1. Can you explain why it is a fundamental issue? Yes/No
What is it about your mandate, values, internal strengths and weaknesses or external opportunities and threats that makes this a strategic issue?

2. Can Oxfam do anything about it? Yes/No
If there is nothing that you can do about it, then it probably is not a strategic issue. It may be important and possibly urgent but you cannot build a strategic aim and strategy around it. It may be something another part of Oxfam can address. In this case, it may still be a strategic issue and you could discuss it with your manager.

3. Will the impact be broad? Yes/No
Some questions that face a country office often seem to be strategic because they present a large range of possibilities but in fact are not very important because they are so small in scale and impact.

For example, the question "Should we work with farmers in x province?" may not qualify as a strategic issue if work in x province is only a tiny part of the programme. This question might be part of the much bigger issue of "In which provinces should we work with farmers towards the achievement of sustainable livelihoods and basic rights?"

4. Are the financial implications important? Yes/No
If the issue is strategic, there will usually be important resource implications.

5. Will the issue still be around in the next two years? Yes/No
Strategic issues cannot usually be quickly resolved - they require longer term responses.

6. Will there be important consequences if you do not address this issue? Yes/No
If it does not seem to matter much whether or not you address the issue, it is not strategic.

If you have answered "Yes" to most of the questions then you probably have a strategic issue.

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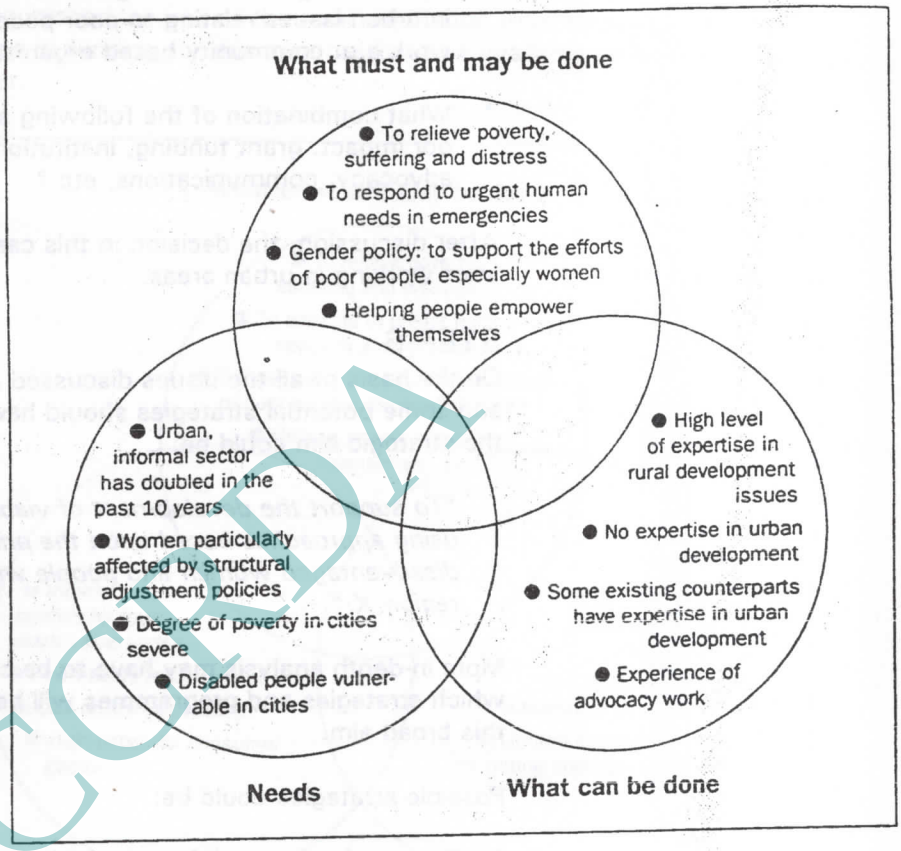
Annex 8: Examples on strategic aims, strategies and resource requirements

(Source: Strategic planing guidelines, Oxfam, 1995

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Box 4. STRATEGIC ISSUE A - A WORKED EXAMPLE FOR A COUNTRY OFFICE

Poverty has increased in urban areas, both in degree and in terms of the numbers of people affected.



A summary of points from the analysis

STEP 5

From the analyses, the following strategic issue emerges:

"Should Oxfam UK/I begin to work in urban areas ?"

There are a number of linked issues that emerge from the analyses, or now need further investigation, in order to decide whether Oxfam UK/I should work in urban areas and the form that work might take.

* Who should we work with? For example, should we work with disabled people, street vendors, street children, female maintained households?

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* Should we focus on particular areas of need? If so, which ones e.g. local economic development, labour conditions in the informal sector, health, etc.?

* Should we concentrate our work in specific towns or work nationwide? If specific towns, which ones?

* Are there agencies and organisations with a distinctive competence in urban issues relating to poor people? With whom should Oxfam work e.g. community based organisations, NGOs, the state, etc.?

* What combination of the following strategies is likely to maximise our impact: grant funding, institutional development support, advocacy, communications, etc.?

After discussion, the decision in this case was yes, Oxfam UK/I will start working in urban areas.

STEP 6

On the basis of all the issues discussed and resolved, the strategic aim and some potential strategies should have become clear. For example, the strategic aim could be:

"To support the development of viable economic alternatives, using approaches based upon the principles of empowerment, with disadvantaged women and people with disabilities in urban areas in region X."

More in-depth analysis may have to be carried out in order to confirm which strategies and programmes will be most appropriate to achieve this broad aim.

Possible strategies could be:

* Support for research in order to have a better analysis and for advocacy purposes;

* Organisational and institutional support to the women's organisations and associations of people with disabilities, working in the area of economic development;

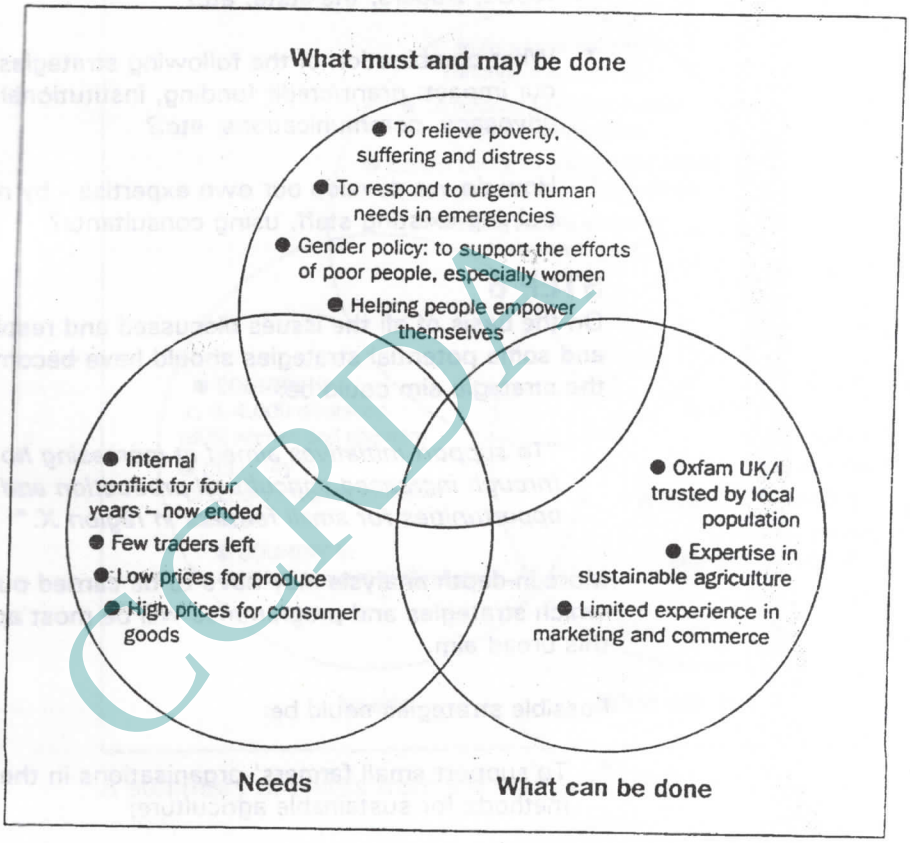
* Support for economic activities undertaken by women's organisations and associations of people with disabilities, in the form of credit schemes, training in small business management, technical advice and training etc;

* Development of a training programme for programme staff on urban issues.

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Box 5. STRATEGIC ISSUE B - A WORKED EXAMPLE FOR A COUNTRY OFFICE

War in one of the poorest parts of the country has increased environmental degradation and led to a range of economic and infrastructure problems. There have been road closures, reduced trade and diminished income of the rural population from farming. Some increase in funding for this area has become available since the end of the war.



A summary of points from the analysis

STEP 5

From the analyses, the following strategic issue emerges:

" Should we continue to focus on agricultural production or should we expand our support to marketing/commerce?"

After discussion the country team decided to expand their support to marketing/commerce. Work on sustainable agriculture will be continued.

A number of linked issues emerged, related mainly to expanding the team's work into marketing/commerce:

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* Should we reallocate resources from our present work in sustainable agriculture or fund the new work from the small increase available?

* Who should we work with? For example should we work with small farmers, traders, consumers? Should we focus on female headed households in these groups?

* Should we focus on particular areas of work, such as marketing systems, infrastructure, credit?

* Who should our counterparts be - community based organisations, NGOs, traders, the state, etc?

* What combination of the following strategies is likely to maximise our impact: grant/credit funding, institutional development support, advocacy, communications, etc.?

* How do we develop our own expertise - by recruiting new staff, training existing staff, using consultants?

STEP 6

On the basis of all the issues discussed and resolved, the strategic aim and some potential strategies should have become clear. For example, the strategic aim could be:

"To support initiatives aimed at increasing households' income through increased agricultural production and marketing opportunities for small farmers in region X."

More in-depth analysis may have to be carried out in order to confirm which strategies and programmes will be most appropriate to achieve this broad aim.

Possible strategies could be:

* To support small farmers' organisations in the development of methods for sustainable agriculture;

* To support the development of marketing systems;

* To lobby national and international governments for rehabilitation of infrastructure (roads, telecommunications etc.);

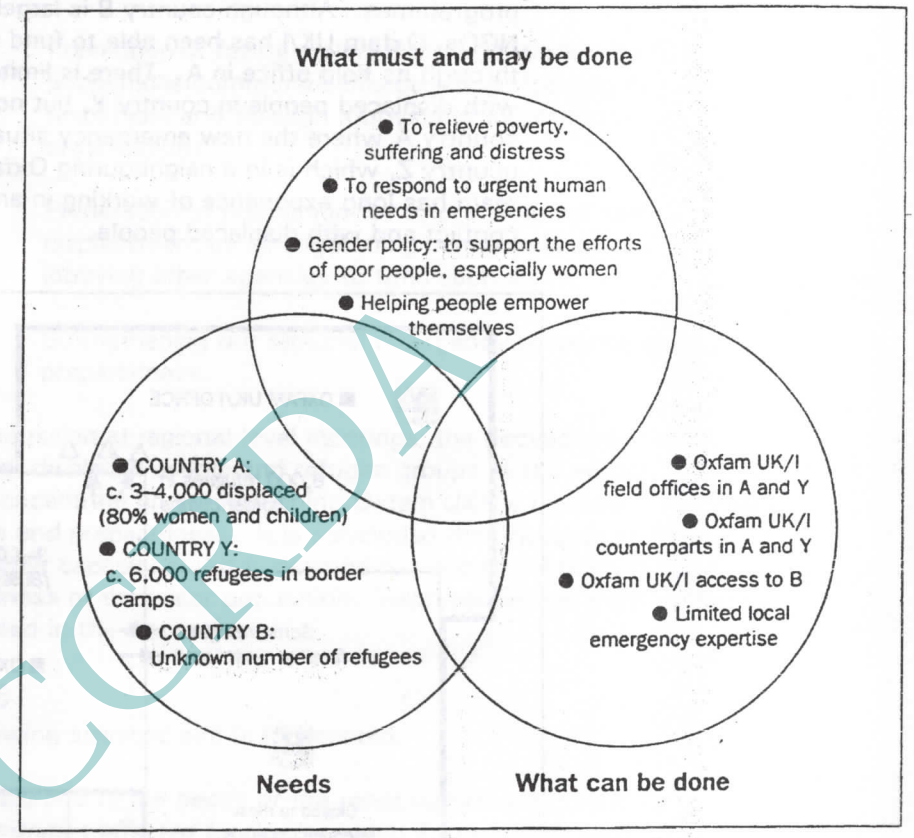
* To strengthen and support consumer cooperatives and their activities;

* To employ additional staff with marketing/commerce expertise.

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Box 6. STRATEGIC ISSUE C - A WORKED EXAMPLE OF A REGIONAL ISSUE

Fear of civil war and ongoing communal violence have led to small populations of displaced people within one country in the region and refugees arriving in two neighbouring countries.



A summary of points from the analysis

The external analysis in a REGION may indicate :

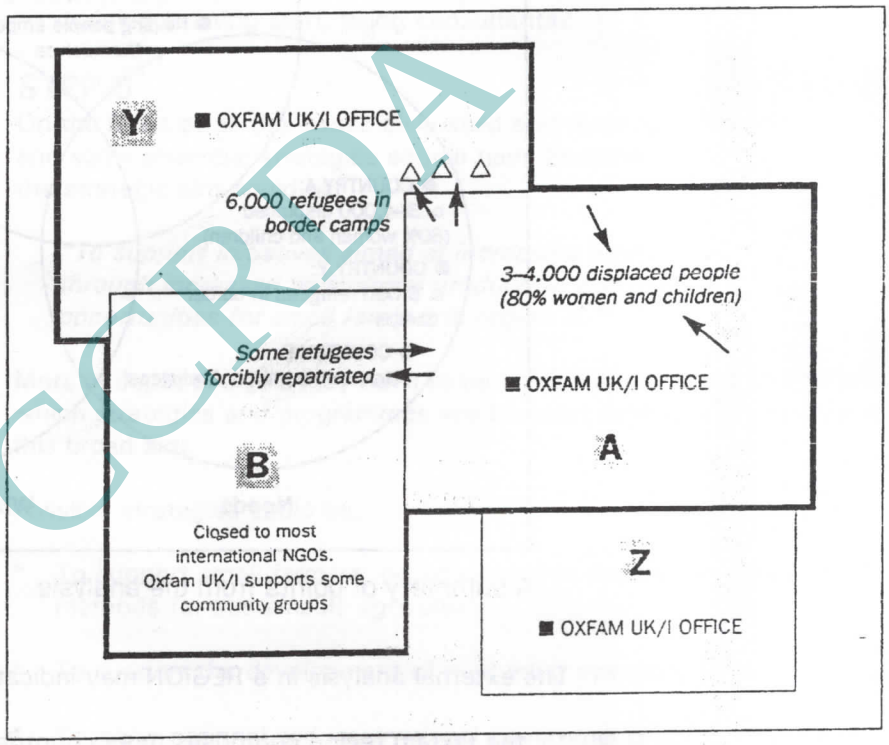
* the Oxfam region comprises three countries - A, B and Y
* **in country A** there is ongoing communal violence. Civil war is predicted as a secessionist movement grows stronger with external support. The strong military government of A is hostile to international NGOs. Oxfam UK/I's international staff had to be evacuated during a period of regional tension. There are small populations of internally displaced people, mainly women and children, fleeing the conflict.
* **country B** has strong links with country A and has forcibly repatriated refugees from country A. Country B is closed to most international NGOs.

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* country Y has been accused by country A of harbouring rebels. There are small refugee camps on the border; these are run by cadres of the secessionist movement. The majority of the estimated 6,000 refugees in these camps are men.

The internal analysis may indicate:

Oxfam UK/I has field offices in countries A and Y. Oxfam is currently providing some material aid to people internally displaced, in country A, through Oxfam counterparts and their ongoing development programmes. Although country B is largely closed to international NGOs, Oxfam UK/I has been able to fund some community groups through its field office in A. There is limited experience of working with displaced people in country Y, but no previous experience in country A where the new emergency situation is developing. In country Z, which is in a neighbouring Oxfam UK/I region, the Oxfam team has long experience of working in an environment of local conflict and with displaced people.



Map of the Region, also showing the position of country Z

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STEP 5

From the analyses, the following strategic issues emerge:

* Should we do more than assist the displaced persons in country A?
* Can Oxfam UK/I respond to the needs of displaced people and refugee groups in all three countries? If not, which ones?
* Should we work in any of the following, or a combination thereof:
  - Prevention of future violence through work with local populations/communities/leaders (e.g. training in conflict resolution) and through lobbying of international organisations;
  - Preparation of population for future violence and displacement by strengthening community organisation and lobbying other agencies to fund such work;
  - Strengthening our regional emergency response and preparedness.

After discussion at regional-level meetings, the decision is made to work with displaced people and refugee groups in the whole region and to concentrate on strengthening Oxfam UK/I's regional emergency response and preparedness. It is concluded that violence prevention is beyond their capacity and it is deemed too late to work on disaster preparedness of the wider population. Representatives from country Z participated in the discussions.

STEP 6

The following strategic aim is formulated:

"To respond to the needs of the most vulnerable groups in communities affected by displacement in the whole region and, in particular, to develop regional capacity and preparedness for response".

In order to determine their strategies, the group discussed the linked issues that had emerged, relating to the "how":

ISSUES CONCERNING THE "HOW" OF RESPONSE

* should Oxfam UK/I assist displaced people and refugees only, or the whole affected populations?
* should Oxfam UK/I focus on country B because of the access which it has through community groups (a comparative advantage vis-a-vis other INGOs)?

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* should Oxfam UK/I respond only where it is possible to have direct access to refugees, and they can participate in programme design and implementation?

* are there counterpart organisations with which Oxfam UK/I can work, or should Oxfam UK/I plan to take an operational role?

* should Oxfam UK/I consider the humanitarian branch of the secessionist movement as a potential counterpart?

* should Oxfam UK/I consider working with the governments?

* how can Oxfam UK/I ensure that the specific needs of refugee women and children are met?

ISSUES CONCERNING THE "HOW" of ADVOCACY

* should Oxfam UK/I address protection issues or focus on advocacy with the UN e.g. related to forcible repatriation, violence and sexual harassment of refugees?

* should Oxfam UK/I lobby UNHCR for the relocation of the camps in country Y away from the border between Y and A?

* should Oxfam UK/I call for armed UN intervention to prevent full scale civil war and halt the flow of refugees?

* should Oxfam UK/I lobby other international NGO's?

ISSUES CONCERNING THE "HOW" OF STRENGTHENING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

* How does Oxfam UK/I gather reliable, disaggregated and up-to-date information on the evolving political/war situation, the plight of refugees/internally displaced people and the position/reaction of the international community?

* How does Oxfam UK/I build up the capabilities of staff in the region to respond to emergencies? (training, secondment, exchange visits)?

* How does Oxfam UK/I build up the logistical and storage capacity for quick response?

* How does Oxfam UK/I include counterparts in capacity-building?

* Which organisations/governments should Oxfam UK/I lobby for preparedness, and how?

More in-depth analysis would need to be carried out in order to confirm which strategies and programmes will be most appropriate, to achieve the broad aim.

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In areas of conflict, or which are disaster-prone, strategic ams and strategies need to be kept under review as situations change. In this example, if civil war did break out in country A, there would need to be a review of the strategic aim and strategies appropriate to respond to the increased level of need in the region.

Possible strategies could be:

INFORMATION GATHERING

research by Oxfam UK/I country office A

* into the impact of conflict on poor women, men and children displaced in country A;

* through community groups in country B concerning the situation of refugees remaining there.

research by Oxfam UK/I country office Y

* into the situation of refugees in country Y including identification of the most vulnerable and current relief responses (in the camps).

general research by the Oxfam UK/I offices

* assessment of the groups/networks becoming involved in the growing crisis;

* information gathering from neighbouring regions about political trends;

* discussion with Oxfam UK/I Head Office on perspectives of the international community.

CAPACITY BUILDING IN-REGION

* undertake exchange visits with Oxfam UK/I staff who have experience of Oxfam UK/I's response in conflict, to enable cross-programme learning from Oxfam UK/I's experience;

* explore opportunities for training in emergency preparedness and response. These may include staff visits and exchange placements of staff between countries A, Y and Z as well as drawing on the expertise of the Emergencies Department. All regional staff should become familiar with the emergency procedures, including the formulation of security guidelines;

* include development counterparts in emergency training workshops; develop gender analysis in emergencies and review women staff/counterparts and support needs to work in emergency situations;

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* review Oxfam UK/I's development programmes, the potential impact of an emergency, and possible responses to enable a relief response to be developed alongside the ongoing programme;

* explore possibility of positioning staff in country B to monitor situation in the event of the borders being closed;

* strengthen Oxfam UK/I's position with government of country A by support to government relief programme if appropriate;

* capacity-building programme on disaster preparedness in the region. This could include storage facilities, pre-positioning of stocks and equipment and logistical issues.

ADVOCACY

* identify advocacy issues and possible responses;

* develop advocacy programme appropriate to region/countries together with the Policy Department.

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