

Summary Proceedings of  
Workshop on  
**Strategic Planning & Reporting**  
17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2005 at Jhansi



*Conducted for*  
**DA – PACS Partner**

*Conducted by*



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# Proceedings of the Workshop on Strategic Planning & Reporting

## Context

An effective organization needs to develop self-renewing properties- a capability to continuously examine itself and take both reactive and proactive action in relation to the environment (both internal and external). This is reflected in the decision of several progressive organizations to re-examine and review their vision, procedures, objectives and targets, from time to time, even when the organisations are successful and have no apparent problem necessitating such an examination. Organizations can develop internal mechanism in this regard.

Undertaking strategic planning can help achieve this. Strategic planning is interdisciplinary and incorporates concepts from military strategy, history, business practices, and organizational theory. It came to prominence as a distinct discipline in the 1950s and 1960s because of its popularity among many corporations' headquartered in the United States. Yet, the essential concepts are applicable to any organizational setting. Strategic planning can be used to determine the organizational mission, vision, values, goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities as well as timelines. Strategic planning is the process by which the guiding members of an organization envision its future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future.

Simply put, strategic planning determines where an organization is going over the next year or more and how it's going to get there. Typically, the process is organization-wide, or focused on a major function such as a division, department or other major function. Entrepreneurs and managers are often so preoccupied with immediate issues that they lose sight of their ultimate objectives. That's why a

review or preparation of a strategic plan is a virtual necessity. This may not be a recipe for success, but without it a project is much more likely to fail.

Keeping the above in mind the program on Strategic Planning and Reporting was conducted by IDMAT resource team.

## **Objectives**

The broad objectives of the program:

- To Understand strategic management process and challenges in Project management focused: Social sector
- To address the areas of concern – mission, vision, goals, objectives and timelines in context of PACS-CSO partners strategic approach for the common goal and mission.
- To understand the essential components of strategic planning?
- To assist the delegate in to undertake actions to be taken in order to tackle the problems that are foreseen in achieving the desired goals?
- To generate strategic thinking and innovativeness to manage the uncalled.
- To help evolve participatory planning- inputs from all levels and divisions of the organization.
- To inculcate effective reporting skills

Help the organization/development practitioners to improve their skills to become cost effective change agents and to bring sustainability in their development initiative through effective and realistic strategic planning.

## **Content**

- Overview of Strategic planning- Definition of strategic planning
- Process of strategic planning
- Concept of strategic management
- Clarity of vision and mission of the organization

- Issues & concerns in the planning process in developmental sector
- Creative and lateral thinking process for solutions
- Participation and involvement of personnel from different levels
- Action plan and implementation of the agreed strategy
- Reporting skills

## Methodology

The training was conducted through a participative approach in formal as well as informal settings focusing on the use of case studies, role-plays, interactive sessions, simulation exercises and different instruments.

The workshop had thematic sequence and flowed with the group's learning goal. There cannot be rigid design structure, however the deliverables assumed significance.

The learning was based on experiencing, experimenting, mutual help (through feedback) and openness (sharing feelings, concerns and relevant experiences).

<b>Brief Process Observation &amp; Resource Team</b>
<p>The workshop on "Strategic Planning &amp; Reporting" was conducted at Jhansi from 17th Nov. to 19 Nov. 2005. The significant interest of more than 17 delegates from different parts of the country encouraged more active debate from the house utilizing relevant examples, illustrations and cases. Intensity of the programme was very high. Keeping in view the learning priorities of group, summary proceedings are stated below as an attempt of revisiting the workshop.</p> <p><b>IDMAT Resource Team :</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mr. Atul Shekhar</li> <li>2. Mr. Mahendra P. Singh</li> <li>3. Ms. Somali</li> </ol>

## **Day 1: 17<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

### **Unfreezing Process**

The day began with a welcome note by the IDMAT resource team. Further a brief introduction of the resource organization, IDMAT, was made. Workshop started with the unfreezing exercise. Participants were asked to walk around and form groups and share their experiences and feel the energy within. Groups were given opportunity to express themselves and open up for learnings. The objective of the unfreezing was not only to provide an opportunity to understand each other but also to prepare them for effective learning in the coming days.

Participants were asked to share what they experienced during the unfreezing exercise. Some of the reflections were:

1. Self Empowerment
2. Interactive Process
3. Blind Fold Round
  - a. Feeling of insecurity
  - b. Dependency
  - c. Lack of trust
  - d. Observation etc.

### **Learning Agenda & Learning Priorities**

Though there was a structure designed for the workshop, the faculty team decided to seek the learning agenda from the delegates so that their expectations can be met as far as possible. For this purpose, participants were divided into 4 groups and asked to set their learning agenda. Then the whole agenda was prioritized, which came up as under:

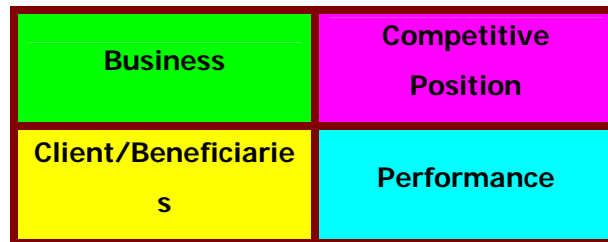
1. What is Strategic Planning?
2. Relevance of strategy in an organization.
3. Why strategic planning is essential?

4. Strategy thinking process and its management in totality.
5. What are the steps of Strategic Planning?
6. What is strategic change?
7. Rural development and Strategic Planning
8. What is the reporting process?
9. Methods of reporting.
10. Points to be covered in reporting.
11. Innovative ways of reporting.

**Strategic Management Process – Self & Organization**

The forenoon session dwelt upon the concept of **“Strategy starts with Understanding the Organization.”** The familiarity of the organization & organism was discussed and the relevance of strategy for organizational growth and development was emphasized upon.

Then it was discussed and shared what strategy is all about: a game plan – moves and approaches. Strategy for what: management’s Game Plan for BCCP i.e. Business, Competitive Position, Customer and Performance.



**Management’s Game Plan: BCCP**

It was stated that strategy is a blend of deliberate and purposeful actions which can be said intended strategy or as needed reactions to unanticipated development & fresh competitive pressures which is unintended strategy. Strategic planning is essential to cope with the changes in an organization. It was discussed that strategic planning is needed to embark on an initiative to produce breakthrough results. It

was also discussed that to re-engineer the organization and to prioritize the resource between varieties of initiative strategic planning is essential.

### **Strategic Thinking – Process & Management in Totality**

The afternoon session started with the discussion of strategy thinking process and its management in totality. Strategic planning is only useful if it supports strategic thinking and leads to strategic management - the basis for an effective organization. It was examined that strategic management is the application of strategic thinking to the job of leading an organization. The elements of strategic thinking which are formulation of the organization's future mission, development of a competitive strategy to achieve the mission and creation of an organizational structure which will deploy resources to successfully carry out its competitive strategy was also discussed in the workshop. It was shared that the skills needed as strategic planner are optimism, creativity and brainstorming.

The participants were asked to reflect back on if they think strategically. It was then shared that strategic thinking means making an assessment using three key requirements those are: a definite purpose in mind; understanding of environmental forces that affect/impede fulfillment of the purpose; and creativity in developing effective responses to those forces.

### **Developing Vision – First Task of Strategic Planning**

The first step of strategic planning i.e. to develop a realistic **Vision** for the organization was discussed. It was analysed that vision begins with thinking strategically. The participants were asked to write down the current vision of their organization and redefine the vision statement of their organization if they desire.

This was followed by goal setting process through simulation exercise keeping the long term vision in mind. The participants took part in the game quite actively. The exercise had three rounds of goal settings and each time they were free to modify their plan and goal.

Through this exercise it was experienced that there are two factors, one is fear of failure and the other is hope for success. These two factors influence the risk taking ability of individuals which could be low risk taking ability, moderate risk taking ability and high risk taking ability. Through this simulation exercise the participants examined their own risk taking ability and blockages in planning process.

The simulation experience was transferred into conceptual frame. It was discussed that vision is that statement where an organization want to go and the long term goal has to have four key properties possibility (achievable), desirability, actionability and articulation.



#### **4 key properties of vision**

It was shared further that visions are leader initiated, yet co-created. An exciting and inspirational vision can challenge and motivate workforce, arouse strong sense of organizational purpose, induce employee buy-in and galvanizes people to live the business.

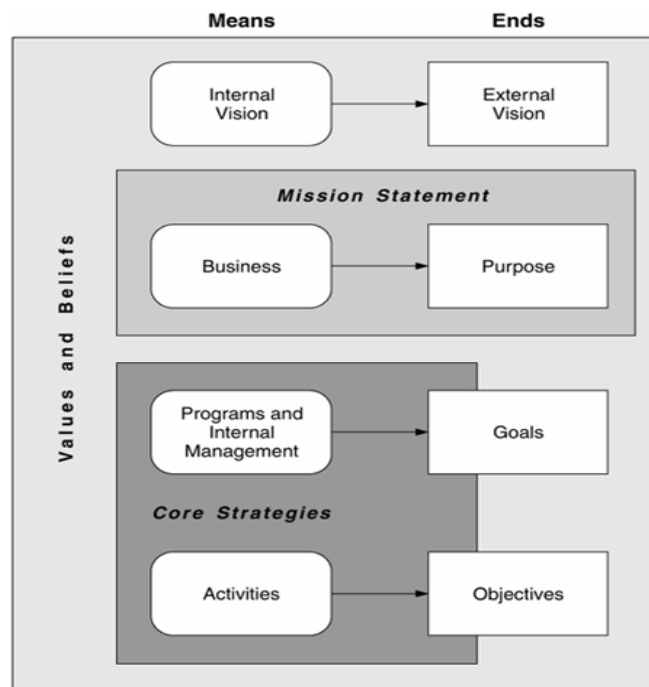
**Day 2: 18<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

#### **Strategic Planning – Means & Ends**

The forenoon session was started with the discussion on long range planning and strategic planning. Participants brainstormed on the difference between the two concepts. It was discussed that long range planning as a periodic process which

views future as predictable and also assumes current trends will continue. On the other hand strategic planning is a continuous process and it views future as unpredictable, it also expects new trend, changes and surprises.

The session assumed intensity with discussion on means and ends. It was experienced that in an organization strategic planning is not the end but the means to achieve the purpose which can be said as ends.

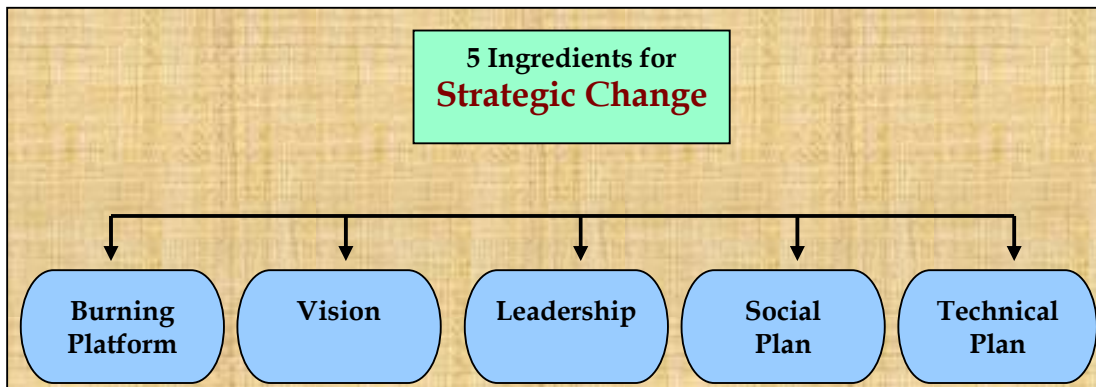


**The Language of Planning in the Nonprofit Sector --  
Focusing on Ends and Means**

Then the concept of internal vision, external vision, business, purpose, goals, objectives etc. was discussed. It was also discussed that current business activity is the mission of the organization which highlights the boundaries of current business/purpose. The participants examined the three components of mission statement : key target, contribution and distinction.

## Strategic Change: Issues & Concerns

Further it was examined why we need to plan for strategic change. It was discussed thoroughly that change fails due to no sense of urgency, no guiding coalition, absent or poor vision and poor implementation etc. The five things required for successful change which are burning platform, vision, leadership, social plan and technical plan was discussed in length.



The afternoon session was started with the discussion on leadership. Participants were asked to think of good leaders and share the rationale.

Leadership traits was analyzed i.e. vision, skill, intelligent, inward & outward focus and passion. Mr. Atul Shekhar shared that according to the new management research, leadership has been categorized into 5 categories from L1 to L5; those are L1 competent person; L2 Team Player; L3 Effective Manager; L4 Effective Leader; and L5 Humility and Will. Level of Leadership and its role in strategic planning process was discussed.

Further to this personal leadership styles were discussed through a simulation tool. It was shared that leadership can be categorized in different forms like supportive, rescuing, bohemian, creative, aggressive, assertive etc. It was discussed that how these styles can effect the strategic planning of a person. The leadership pattern of each participants was ascertained and it was experienced that how they will plan strategically in view of their leadership style.

After the leadership another important ingredient was for a strategic change was shared - social plan. It was stated that in order to get your plan accomplished you need to enroll. Several strategies were discussed to influence others in order to attain the strategic plan. Some of the social plan ways were experienced like involving the key people in the decision, controlling the information, increasing the dependency on others etc.

The key targets of social plan for implementing strategic planning were covered:

- The superiors,
- Peers and
- Subordinates.

Then the last ingredient of strategic change i.e. technical plan was discussed. It was emphasized that in order to get the strategic plan processed towards action all these five ingredients were important to consider.

**Setting objectives: second task strategic management** was discussed thoroughly. The purpose of setting up of objectives was shared.

The participants were exposed to three rules for starting objectives: which are:

- quantifiable or measurable terms,
- deadline for achievement,
- and be challenging but achievable.

Objectives = Targeted results + outcomes

Further to this the participants were given experiential based case and asked to develop the strategy for the same.

The case study was of crisis management. Participants were divided into three groups further the each group was divided into the following roles:

- Community, NGOs & Donors. The group were asked to present their strategic plan on three based components: Strategy , Assumption and Action.

Each group did the presentation and discussed their strategy, actions and assumptions to save the village from flood(as per the case). The presentation generated quite a brainstorming discussion and debate as each group were different ways and look outs based on their assumptions.

Through this simulation task the role and linkages of strategy, assumption and action was experienced. It was also seen that the objective of each group differed due to their assumptions and hence different strategy and altogether another outcomes were evolved. The necessity of objective setting and the role of key stakeholders were also shared during this session. The group examined how purpose of setting clear objectives was important in strategic planning process as the clear purpose creates mission into performance targets, create yardsticks to track performance, and establish goals requiring stretch.

Further, this case study also highlighted- **crafting of strategy which is the third task of strategic planning**. The participants examined how appropriate crafting strategy can help in achieving outcomes effectively and efficiently.

### **Day 3: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

The day started with the discussion of the previous session with a recap and further: **Implementation of Strategy: Fourth Task of Strategic Palnning was discussed**. In strategic planning process how to implement strategy in an organization was shared. It was shared that implementing strategy involves creating fits between way things are done & what it takes for effective strategy execution; executing strategy proficiently & efficiently; producing excellent results in timely manner etc. It was stated that strategy implementation is an internal, operations-driven activity involving organizing, budgeting, motivating, and culture-building, supervising and leading to make the strategy works as intended. Strategy implementation is the fourth task of strategic planning.

Further to this **Project formulation** was discussed and importance of strategic planning in a project formulation was shared. To experience this the participants were divided into three groups and provided a situation/case and each group was asked to make the project report presentation. All the group quite actively made their project report ,based on the situation/case provided to them. Several learnings were drawn from the exercise. By this task it was clear what is planning tools and techniques.

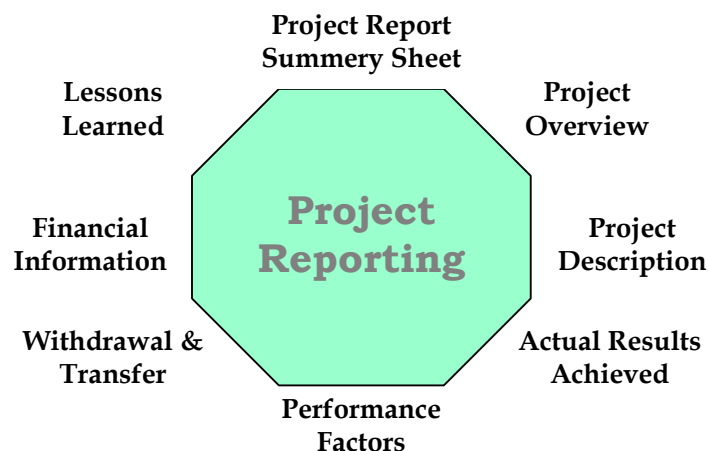
The project planning tools were summarized:

- What the project is trying to achieve,
- How it aims to do this,
- What is needed to ensure success.
- Ways of measuring progress.

It was discussed that planning tools are necessary in implementation of the project because one need to know the purpose of the project (**why**); what you want to achieve (**what**); deadlines (**when**); the process part including the measurement tools, potential problems etc. (**how**); and defining of responsibilities to the stakeholders of the project (**by whom**).

### **Project Reporting**

Further discussion was made on project reporting. Discussion was made on 8 factors of project reporting i.e. project report summery sheet, project overview, project description, actual results achieved, performance factors, withdrawal & transfer, financial information and lessons learned.



A sample project report summary sheet was given to the participants to understand how to do the project report summary and reflect back the error made in making the project report in the earlier session.

Each of the component of the project reporting was discussed (see the diagram above). Project overview details was shared. It was stated that in project overview one needs to mention the background and project rationale, update on the situation. It was examined that in project description we need to write down the amendments to approved project proposal, purpose and expected results by LFA or RBM and activities completed. The Work Breakdown Sheet was examined further. By a sample performance table and a sample summary assessment of project performance it was discussed how to show the actual results achieved. It was also discussed the performance factors and withdrawal & transfers. It was shared that the actual versus planned income and expenditures and narrative explanation of variance should be written in financial information in project reporting. A sample financial statement was also shown to the participants to make them understand better. It was discussed lastly in the reporting format that it should have lessons learned from the project. The participants gained know how on effective reporting and report writing skills from this session and enjoyed the contents of the reporting.

After the content based inputs, participants were taken through simulation exercise. The exercise was performed by dividing the participants into 2 groups. Each group were suppose to cross the maze through non visible path.

The exercise provided participants to experience the overall view of strategic planning process.

The game clearly highlighted the following and aroused debate in the house

- What was the strategy in the groups,
- What was the strategy plan,
- Was strategy communicated across the group,
- How they implemented the task etc.

The game very well summarized the whole learning of strategic planning process and helped the participants live through the process.

Further it was elaborated strategy pyramid concept and importance of groups, individual in an organization. It was stated that strategy is a multi-level game in an organization. In order to have effective outcome there should be shared values and convergence of strategies at the all level: Operating strategy, the functional strategy, the business strategy and in the highest level of pyramid board/corporate strategy.

**Evaluating Strategy: Fifth Task of Strategic Planning:** Evaluation of strategy which is the fifth task of strategic management was discussed. It was stated that none of the tasks of strategic management are a one-time exercise because times & conditions change, events unfold, better ways to do things become evident and new managers with different ideas take over. It was also discussed that development managers must constantly evaluate performance, monitor situation & decide how well things are going and make necessary adjustments. The corrective adjustments like altering organization's long term direction, redefining the business/purpose, raising or lowering performance objectives, modifying the strategy, improving strategy execution was also discussed.

### **Summing Up, Feedback & Reflections of the Workshop**

Participants were asked to give feedback about the whole program. The general feedback was that the workshop was effective and fulfilling. The process and methodology used, especially that of simulation games and exercises were well appreciated. Most of the participants enjoyed the way the observations/learning from various games/exercises were processed. The summing up session conducted with the active interaction with the participants. The participants were asked to write down key learning points from the whole programme.

Some of the collective **key learnings** which the participants articulated were:

1. Learnt why strategy is important in organization?
2. Learnt what is strategic management in totality?
3. Usefulness of Strategic Planning
4. Strategy planning process & its utilization.
5. Leadership is an integral part of strategic planning
6. Proper reporting Process.
7. Came to know what is the method of reporting.

Further the participants were asked to identify among them two best and active participants. A appreciation along with a small gift was awarded to the best participants. This was followed by certification ceremony. Participants were handed over certificates for attending the workshop. The participants gave thanks to Ms. Juhi, Mr. Santosh and DA for giving the opportunity to attend the program and thanked the IDMAT Resource team for conducting the workshop and giving them proper learning on the subject . The participants wanted the manual to be translated in hindi but due to time constraint DA & IDMAT couldn't do that. At the end Mr. Atul Shekhar, Mr. Mahendra Singh and Ms. Somali thanked DA and the participants for all their co-operation and support during the program.

Some of the **feedbacks received** from the participants were as follows:

*"This programme was very usefull for our professional and personal field "*

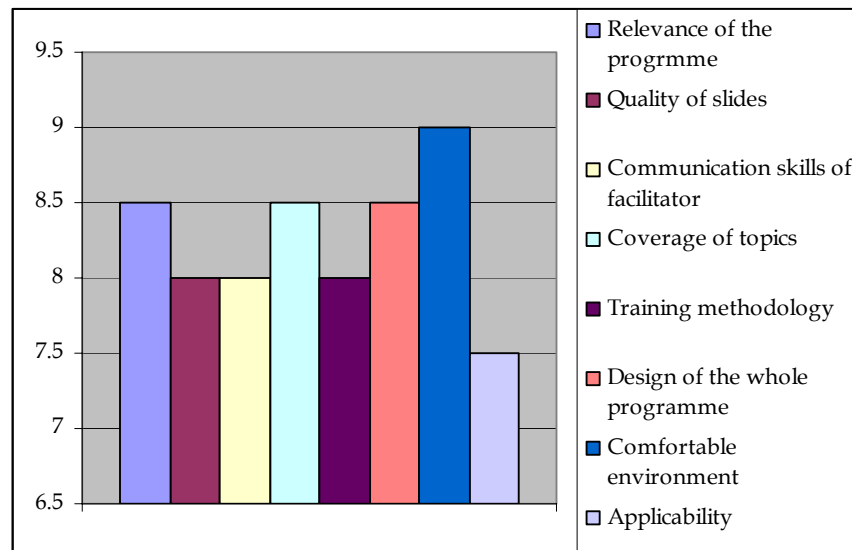
*"The clarity on strategic planning was less before coming and it was refined by RPs and cleared our doubts."*

*"The IDMAT Resource team is very good. The facilitators helped us understand strategic planning better through various case studies and games."*

*"I have attended many workshops of this kind, but the learnings and experience form this workshop are the best."*

*"I learnt a lot from the workshop. The knowledge gained from this workshop will be very useful in the professional area. However if the workshop can be extended by a day that will be great for us."*

The overall rating of the program was **8.5** on the scale of 10. The range above of depicts the standard of “Very Good” with the description that the program meets the expectations of the participants to a large extent.



Technical quality has been found quite satisfactory.

### **General Observation about the Participants**

All the participants were quite active. The size of the total group – 17, made the program quite interactive. The participants were mostly the head and CEO of their organizations which provided enough resource within the group to share and experiment with one another's learning.

### **Recommendations**

- The program should have been extended to four days, this was also expressed by several participants.
- Initial Training Need assessment is proposed in at least few organizations so that further modification can be done in Strategic planning programs as this assumes quite an importance in bringing up the capabilities of the partner NGOs.