A Rights Based Approach to Strategic Planning

A Guide for Southern African Civil Society Organisations

Series: Tools for Child Rights Programming in Southern Africa

May 2008

Save the Children
Sweden

Save the Children fights for children's rights. We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

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Foreword

Save the Children Sweden strives to base its work on a child rights programming approach. This approach enables us to integrate the UNCRC principles of non-discrimination, participation, survival and development and best interests of the child directly into our work and to adopt a framework that addresses root causes as well as immediate symptoms of rights violations.

Save the Children Alliance has produced a handbook *Child Rights Programming: How to Apply Rights-Based Approaches in Programming [http://www.crin.org/hrbap/index.asp?action=theme.docitem&item=4761].* In addition to supporting training and orientation on the concept, Save the Children supports organisations to fully understand and integrate the framework into ongoing work. A number of such workshops have been supported throughout Southern Africa.

To support these efforts, a series of companion guides is being produced. The first guide, *A Southern Africa Facilitators' Guide to Child Rights Programming Training* to support those facilitating orientation and training sessions, has been published. This guide, *Rights-Based Approach to Strategic Planning: A Guide for Southern African Civil Society Organisations,* is the second in the series. The final guide, *Rights-Based Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation: A Guide for Southern African Civil Society Organisations,* will be published in 2009.

The series would not have been produced without the vision, expertise and perseverance of the author, Penny Ward, of Mutengo Consulting. We are forever indebted to Penny for her work in designing and facilitating the initial workshops and in writing the series of guides. In addition, we would like to thank:
- Blanca Nomura and Sue Godt, Regional Programme Officers with Save the Children Sweden's Southern Africa regional office, for their contributions to the process design.
- Dumisani Mnisi, Nathi Vilakati and all the staff at Save the Children Swaziland for helping to test some of the sessions included in this guide.

This guide is a working document for those who are organising and facilitating planning processes based on child rights programming frameworks. We encourage you to mark up the guide so we have left wide margins for your comments, thoughts and notes. We have also included a *Facilitator's Feedback Form* on the last page for you to send your comments on how the guide could be strengthened. We plan to produce a revised publication down the line building on our collective feedback. In the meantime, we wish everyone good luck in using the guide.

Eva Clarhäll
Regional Representative - Southern Africa Save the Children Sweden

Abbreviations

ACRWC   African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AI   Appreciative Inquiry
CR   child rights
CRC   Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRP   child rights programming
CSO   civil society organisation
FY   fiscal year
GIM   Global Impact Monitoring
NGO   non government organisation
M&E   monitoring and evaluation
UNCRC   United National Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. Introduction

1.1 Development frameworks

The methodology for this guide draws significantly on two approaches. The first is child rights programming (CRP), which is based on the human rights of the child, as enshrined in various international Covenants and Conventions. The second is Appreciative Inquiry (AI), an alternative methodology for organisational development and capacity building, initially developed in the mid 1980s.

a. Child rights programming

Since the early 1990s rights approaches to development have gained wide spread acceptance among civil society organisations (CSOs) and donor agencies. However, the idea of combining development and human rights is not new. For over eighty years various international development agencies such as the United Nations and Save the Children have been advocating for development and human rights, especially children's rights. Thus, 'a rights approach to development is the most significant shift in development thinking and practice since the move from charity to sustainable development'[1].

'Child rights programming is a way of programming (i.e. of planning, designing, delivering and evaluating programmes) which is based on the achievement of the specific human rights of children as set out in international law – such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). Key child rights principles also provide the essential standards in the *practice* of development. As an approach it is comprehensive and inclusive, influencing all programme work no matter what the methods used or the specific context of work'[2].

b. Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a qualitative approach which involves discussion and active participation and focuses on looking for what works within an organisation. 'The essence of AI is a focus on the best practices of an organisation, the things it does well, rather than on the things that are "problematic". By identifying and supporting

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1   Save the Children Denmark (June 2002) *A toolkit on child rights programming.* Denmark. p 13.
2   Save the Children UK (2000) *An introduction to Child Rights Programming – concept and application.* SCUK, London. p 9.

the best things and doing more of what works, the organisation is moved in a positive direction. AI is typically contrasted with the problem solving approach in the following way'[3]:

Problem Solving approach	Appreciative Inquiry approach
Felt need – identification of a problem.	Appreciating and valuing – the best of "what is".
Analysis of causes.	Envisioning – "what might be".
Analysis of possible solutions.	Dialoguing – "what should be".
Action planning (treatment).	Innovating – "what will be".
Basic assumption: An organisation is a problem to be solved.	Basic assumption: An organisation is a mystery to be embraced.

It is felt that an appreciative approach is a good complement to a child rights approach to development. Both approaches emphasise exploring the conditions and relationships necessary for people to work together in productive and energetic ways. Thus, this guide outlines a flexible process that will enable people to have open conversations about their organisations and their future.

1.2 Strategic thinking

Strategic thinking and action are critical skills for organisations to develop, as all organisations operate in a fluid environment. Change is all around us constantly and we need to be aware of:
• Pace and depth of change;
• Discontinuous change;
• Unpredictability.
Thus, the only constant is change[4].

Having a strategic perspective enables organisations to deal with change. Alan Fowler talks about organisations developing "insightful agility"[5], which helps them to be open and flexible to change, as well as being able to shape their environment at the same time. It is this insight that helps organisations to develop a "strategic perspective".

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3 Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (1999) *Strategic Planning.* CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. X. Washington DC. p ii.

4 Harding, D (1996) unpublished notes.

5 Fowler, A (2000) *The virtuous spiral: a guide to sustainability for NGOs in international development.* Earthscan, London. p xii.

1.2.1 What is a strategic perspective?

Usually, there is never a single way forward or option, instead organisations need to be able to make conscious choices: to be influential or not; to take risks or play it safe; to shape or be shaped by change. Thus, a strategic perspective is a way of being[6]:
- It involves constantly scanning, reflecting, responding to changes and the context in which we work;
- A strategic perspective is also about positioning the organisation in relation to key stakeholders: who does the organisation want to influence; what are the organisation's strengths; where can it add value; how can it network more effectively;
- This involves balancing different stakeholder interests with that of the organisation;
- It is also a process to guide organisations: what must an organisation do to cope in that specific environment, rather than accepting change passively;
- Thus, strategic thinking is important, as opposed to only conducting isolated strategic planning events once every three years.

1.2.2 What is a strategic thinking process?

A strategic thinking process is a way for an organisation to strive for sustainability and success. It is a reflective and continuous process – it is not only done once a year – but rather regularly at different levels and by different staff and stakeholders within the organisation. It is also a way of looking at the organisation in relation to an ever changing environment; constantly scanning the environment; internal checking for consistency with aims and objectives[7].

There are three important factors that need to be part of a strategic thinking process[8]:
- scanning the broad environment;
- reflecting on vision and action;
- assessing capacity / the ability to meet demands of the context in which we operate.

Thus, a strategic thinking process also seeks opportunity for change, development, and adaptation.

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6   Thaw, D (1997) *Ideas for a Change Part 1: Strategic Planning.* Olive Organisational Development & Training.

7   Thaw, D (1997) *Ideas for a Change Part 1: Strategic Planning.* Olive Organisational Development & Training.

8   Ibid.

1.3 Strategic planning

If a strategic thinking process is about exploring opportunities for change, development and adaptation, the process of determining the details of how to implement this new awareness is strategic planning. There are three fundamental aspects of strategic planning:

- It is a means to an end. The end is 'high quality, high impact programmes that make a real difference in people's lives';
- Strategic planning is also a tool for change. It is most effective when it is seen as a way to promote deep, positive change, to creatively move beyond routine, the status quo or merely doing 'business as usual';
- And planning is about strategic flexibility. The process builds on itself, responding to the changing environment[9].

Thus, 'strategic planning determines where an organisation is going over the next year or more, how it's going to get there and how it will know if it is there or not'. The focus of a strategic plan is usually the entire organisation, as opposed to a project or business plan, in which the focus tends to be on a particular service, output or programme[10].

Quite often, an organisation's managers already know much of what will go into a strategic plan. However, the development of a strategic plan greatly helps to clarify an organisation's plans, to ensure that key leaders at different levels within the organisation are all in agreement. In addition to this clarity, other benefits of strategic planning include[11]:

- 'Clearly defining the purpose of the organisation and establishing realistic goals and objectives consistent with that mission, in a defined time frame and within the organisation's capacity to implement;
- Providing a clear focus for the organisation, leading to greater efficiency and effectiveness;
- Communicating the organisation's goals and objectives to partners, stakeholders and project participants;
- Developing a sense of ownership of the plan among staff, volunteers, partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries;
- Ensuring the most effective use of the organisation's resources by focusing on key priorities;
- Providing a base from which progress can be measured and establishing a mechanism for informed change when needed;

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9   CARE USA (July 1994) Long Range Strategic Planning Handbook. p 1.

10   McNamara, C (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

11   McNamara, C (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

- Bringing together everyone's best and most reasoned efforts in building consensus about where an organisation is going;
- Bridging the gap between staff and board members;
- Building strong teams among board and staff members – people working towards a mutually understood vision'.

1.4 Aims of the guide

This guide provides a step by step outline to the process of strategic thinking and planning. By following or adapting the steps in this guide, it is possible to come to know the organisation better than before, to value what the organisation does successfully and to be in a better position to plan for what should be done in the future.

Whether you are planning for a project, a campaign, a department, a region or an organisation – the questions that need to be focused on are the same. Therefore, this guide aims to help answer the following five strategic questions[12]:

- **Why does your organisation exist?** i.e. the organisation's vision, mission or main purpose and guiding values;
- **Where is your organisation now?** i.e. what is the current situation, resources, relationships and dynamics within the context;
- **What does your organisation do well**? i.e. exploring best practices that made high points of success possible;
- **What does your organisation wish to do?** i.e. finding strategic directions for the future that express what the organisation would be doing if it were performing at its best;
- **How will your organisation get there?** i.e. outlining an action plan that describes specific strategies for achieving the shared vision.

1.5 Audience

Taking into account the current scarcity of resources and rapidly changing environment, strategic thinking and planning are essential skills which enable civil society organisations to define and develop their organisational vision and mission statements, identify programmatic priorities and areas of focus, make better use of resources and market themselves to potential donors. Thus, this guide has been developed for leaders and managers of CSOs working in Southern Africa. Although some of the text highlights child rights programming, the guide can be used by anyone with an interest in strategic planning in the non profit sector.

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12 Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (1999) *Strategic Planning* CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. X. Washington DC. p iv.

More specifically, this guide is intended as a resource for staff of civil society organisations or facilitators, who are skilled trainers with experience in workshop facilitation and various other training techniques, as well as knowledgeable about child rights programming and child rights issues. It is strongly recommended that organisations identify suitable, experienced external resource persons to facilitate their strategic thinking process. In such a case, this guide could be used to orientate and brief the facilitator as to the type of process that may be required.

To become a good facilitator requires time, experience and learning by doing. The most effective facilitators tend to have a range of key characteristics, including:

- 'A warm personality and an ability to show approval and acceptance of participants;
- Social skills, with an ability to bring the group together and control it without damaging it;
- A manner of training which generates and uses the ideas and skills of the participants;
- Organising ability, so that resources are booked and logistical arrangements handled smoothly;
- Skill in noticing and resolving participants' problems;
- Enthusiasm for the subject and capacity to put it across in an interesting way;
- Flexibility in responding to participants' changing needs;
- Knowledge of the subject matter and practical experience with … rights approaches'[13].

1.6 Structure of the guide

The guide is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter deals with introductory issues, the second with preparations for a strategic thinking process. Chapters three to seven deal with steps and sessions in the strategic thinking and planning process and chapter eight concludes the document.

With regard to individual workshop sessions, each exercise is described in detail and includes the following:

- A list of suggested materials required to conduct the session;
- The purpose of the session;
- Key ideas, which outline the theoretical assumptions and concepts related to each session. Facilitators can use the key ideas to prepare each session, to inform the methodology used and other inputs given to the participants;

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13   Pretty, J et al (1995) *Participatory learning and action – a trainer's guide*. IIED, London. p 3.

- The methodology, which details the steps that need to be undertaken to carry out the exercise. Handouts and "real life" examples of the results of exercises are also provided.

In order to provide support to new facilitators, this guide includes detailed steps regarding each session as well as an overall layout of a proposed strategic thinking process. Thus, those who are new to facilitation may choose to use sessions as they appear. More experienced facilitators are encouraged to apply their own techniques and to use examples and tools from their own organisations or past experience to inform their inputs. A review of each session will help to determine how to adapt it to suit the working context, the needs of the facilitator and the participants themselves.

2. Preparation for strategic thinking

In preparing to conduct a strategic thinking process, an organisation should consider several issues, such as when to undertake the process, who should be involved, who should design/ facilitate the process and what the process should include.

2.1 When should a strategic thinking and planning process be done?

Ideally, a strategic thinking process should be done after the organisation has participated in a child rights programming workshop. (See 'A Southern African Facilitators' Guide to Child Rights Programming Training'[14] for more details). An orientation to CRP would enable the organisation to ensure its development interventions integrate the four key principles of the CRC and work towards the overall goal of improving the position of children so that they can enjoy their lives and live in societies that acknowledge and respect children's rights.

In embarking on a strategic thinking process, the course of action and its components will depend on the nature and needs of the organisation and its immediate external environment. For example, planning should be carried out more frequently in a rapidly changing environment or emergency context. In this situation, planning might be carried out once or even twice a year and done in a very comprehensive and detailed way, with a great deal of attention given to environmental scans, trend analysis, strategy development, activity planning, budgeting and estimating time lines[15].

In the case of more established organisations, which work in relatively stable environments, strategic planning might be carried out every three to five years, with certain aspects, such as action planning, updated annually[16].

The following guidelines for scheduling strategic thinking and planning activities are suggested[17]:
- Strategic planning should be done when a new organisation is in a start up phase. In this case the strategic thinking and plan will be

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14 Save the Children Sweden (Feb 2008) *A Southern African Facilitators' Guide to Child Rights Programming Training.* Pretoria.

15 McNamara, C (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

part of an overall process including the development of plans for resource mobilisation, financial and management/ operations;

- Strategic planning should be done in preparation for a new programme, such as the establishment of a new project or major campaign;
- A full strategic planning process should be conducted at least once every three years, or more frequently if the organisation is experiencing significant change or if it operates in an emergency context;
- Annual planning, in line with the current strategic plan, should be conducted at least once a year in order to identify the organisational goals to be achieved and the resources needed for the coming financial year;
- During the implementation of the overall strategic thinking process, progress should be reviewed at least on a quarterly basis by the board and staff. However, the frequency of these reviews should be determined by the degree and rate of change in and around the organisation.

2.2 Who should be involved in strategic thinking and planning?

One of the important tasks in preparing for a strategic thinking process is putting together a group of participants who will be responsible for producing the organisation's strategic plan. It might be helpful to include people who are from inside as well as outside the organisation. This is because everyone connected to the organisation has different experiences with it and therefore, can contribute unique insights.

The following are general guidelines for persons to include in the strategic thinking process[18]:

- Participants should include individuals from all departments, divisions, units and levels within the organisation;
- In particular, participants should include the board chairperson, vice chair and other members of the board. Developing strategies, plans and policies are key functions of an organisation's governance structure. Thus, members of the board need to be centrally involved in selecting a facilitator, as well as designing and participating in the entire strategic thinking and planning process;
- Participants should also include several stakeholders connected to the organisation's work. These stakeholders may include clients, beneficiaries, children, government officials, NGO partners and religious groups, who have a deep interest the work of the organisation;

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18 Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (1999) *Strategic Planning.* CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. X. Washington DC. p 3.

- The size of the group will depend on the size of the organisation and the extent of its network of external stakeholders. It is less important to fix the number of participants than it is to include all those people who are committed to the organisation. However, the depth of learning/analysis declines in groups with more than 20 – 25 people and this might be a consideration to take into account when identifying potential participants;
- The most effective strategic thinking groups are informal, relaxed and unstructured. It is best to think of the participants as a discussion group and to structure workshop sessions and meetings accordingly.

2.3 When is an outside facilitator/ consultant useful?

Strategic thinking can be facilitated by internal or external resource persons. However, it is strongly recommended that organisations use an external facilitator, especially in the following situations[19]:

- If this is the first time an organisation is conducting a strategic thinking process;
- If previous strategic thinking and planning processes were not successful;
- If there appears to be a wide range of ideas and/ concerns among participants about the strategic plan and organisational issues to be addressed in the plan;
- If there is no one in the organisation whom members feel have sufficient facilitation skills;
- If no one in the organisation feels committed to facilitating strategic thinking for the organisation;
- If participants believe that an inside facilitator may either inhibit participation for others or that they will not have the opportunity to fully participate in the process themselves;
- If participants want an objective voice, i.e. someone who is not likely to have strong predispositions about the organisation's strategic issues and ideas.

2.3.1 Guidelines for using external facilitators

The following is a checklist for identifying appropriate external facilitators[20]:

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19 McNamara, C (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

20 City of Aleppo and Deutsche Gellschaft fur Technische Zusdammenarbeit (GTZ). (April 1999) *Preparatory Training Workshop for the Aleppo Action Area Two.* Aleppo.

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- Know what you want from the facilitator and make sure your organisation is prepared for the process;
- Try to reach internal agreement (among staff and board) about the terms of reference for the consultancy;
- Know what the facilitator/consultant would contribute – to what extent would they offer new skills or a new way of doing things?
- Decide where the facilitator/consultant should be from e.g. private sector, the state or civil society;
- Decide what specific skills are required. A good facilitator is a good listener, is positive, brings out the best in others, is curious about people, is neutral and unbiased and is flexible. Do they need to speak a local language? Is this an advantage, but not a necessity?
- Decide what experience is necessary – should the facilitator have previous local or international experience? If they are expected to contribute details, then local experience is necessary. If they are expected to bring new, innovative ideas, unencumbered by the accepted ways of doing things, then local experience may not be a necessity;
- Should the consultant work with a local counterpart?
- Should the consultant train local staff from the organisation?
- What type of consultant is required? Technical consultants are often less good at imaginative, general solutions, but can respond better to given situations. Non-technical consultants can provide more imaginative, general solutions, but may not be good in specific situations.

(Also see 1.5 above).

Box 1: Tips for contracting a facilitator[21]:

- 'Give interested people the information needed to understand your requirements by using a "request for proposal" or through direct conversations;
- Get a written proposal from every interested party;
- Get a bid on the fee and reimbursable expenses;
- Look at more than one proposal and examine them all carefully;
- Interview the best prospects and check their references – consider the extent of their expertise, listening skills, ability to adapt to the nature of your organisation, ability to coach to ensure the organisation can address the problem in the future etc;
- Don't pick someone based on price only;
- Draw up a contract, including a list of deliverables, completion date, payment schedule, checkpoints at which to evaluate activities, a "bail out" clause, name of contact person in your organisation who will be responsible for approving work, agreement on reimbursable expenses and who will do the actual consulting'.

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21 McNamara, C. (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/misc/cnsltng.html.

2.3.2 A rights based approach to facilitation

The qualities needed by an effective facilitator are often underestimated by CSOs. In particular, organisations need to avoid consultants who offer pre-packaged and predetermined, 'expert' solutions to unique organisational issues, such as strategic planning. When working from a rights based approach, the facilitator should demonstrate the following principles in their work:
• Being inclusive and participatory e.g. the facilitator should ensure participants feel involved and acknowledged. This keeps people motivated and actively involved in the strategic planning process;
• Respecting diversity e.g. the facilitator should encourage individuality as people learn at different rates and have different learning styles which need to be catered for if the group is to be productive. This also involves balancing the need to value diversity with the need to build shared strategies and alliances;
• Building the capacity of marginalised groups e.g. the facilitator should help marginalised people or groups to express their voices and to affect change;
• Working holistically e.g. the facilitator should help organisations to combine service provision interventions with strategies to engage and influence government as well as building support for children's rights. This includes making linkages between local, national and regional interventions;

James[22] notes that 'consulting firms and individual facilitators often lack direct operational experience'. Thus, a good facilitator should have a fair amount of organisational and life experience to draw on as well as the following skills:
• An understanding of the context in which the organisation operates;
• A good working knowledge of the typical strategic thinking process – including its major phases and activities. The facilitator should be able to outline suggested steps in the proposed process, such as[23]:
  • Preparation for the strategic thinking process – this includes gathering and sorting new and pertinent information; defining the purpose of the workshop; deciding who needs to participate; who can help with new ideas/ information and what background information needs to be prepared beforehand;
  • Reviewing the organisation's vision, mission and values – this includes either developing a new vision, mission and set of values or reviewing the relevance of existing statements;

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22 James, R (1998) *Demystifying organisational development.* Policy Series #7. INTRAC, Oxford. p 40 – 41.
23 Thaw, D (1997) *Ideas for a Change Part 1: Strategic Planning.* Olive Organisational Development & Training. p 12 – 13.

- Scanning and identifying key issues, strengths and concerns within the organisation as well as its environment;
- Analysing data/ information to develop a deeper understanding of root causes, trends, effects, relationships and tensions;
- Synthesising information to determine what it means for the organisation and its future;
- Prioritising issues to determine which to take up now and which to watch or monitor;
- Agreeing on priorities and deciding which challenges to deal with and which are the most critical for success and sustainability;
- Setting strategic directions or objectives and expressing priorities as workable objectives.

Once strategic directions have been agreed, only then will an organisation start to develop work plans and schedules. This need not necessarily happen during the workshop. This task can be delegated to small, appropriate teams with the organisations, who generate the strategies and annual work plans to achieve the strategic directions. It is this stage that could be called 'strategic planning', while the preceding and subsequent stages are usually referred to as 'strategic thinking'.

In addition to these qualities external consultants or facilitators should bear in mind the following goals[24]:

- To establish a collaborative relationship with the client organisation. A facilitator should work with clients as if they were his/ her peers. This is in direct contrast to the consultant who works as an "expert" and directs the organisation regarding exactly what to do and when. Working in a collaborative manner with others helps to ensure that recommendations are appropriate, people commit to resolutions and that they adopt the changes needed to make the organisation effective.
- To work in a manner that enables the organisation to resolve issues independently later on. The approach to addressing issues within organisations should always involve people learning about what is being done and why, so that they can repeat these approaches to other issues long after the facilitator has left.
- To ensure attention is paid to developing the organisation/project as well as to relationships. The quality of the relationship between a facilitator and a client organisation is a reliable predictor of the quality of the outcome of the overall project. People often judge a project, not so much by outcomes of the process, but by the quality of the working relationship between the organisation and the consultant or facilitator.

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24 Block, P (2000) *Flawless consulting – a guide to getting your expertise used.* Jossey-Bass Pfeiffer, San Francisco. p 19 – 20.

2.4 What should the strategic thinking process involve?

The procedure for strategic thinking is very organisation specific and usually depends on whether the organisation has done strategic planning before, the number of strategic issues and goals the organisation faces, whether the culture of the organisation prefers short or long meetings and how much time the organisation is willing to commit to the planning process. However, the following tips may be useful to consider when determining the process that an organisation will use to complete its strategic plan[25]:

• While strategic thinking is an ongoing process, strategic planning should be completed within 2 – 3 months at the most, or momentum will be lost and the planning effort may fall apart;
• Ensure planning/ preparatory meetings are less than two weeks apart. It's easy to lose momentum between widely spaced meetings;
• Ensure that all organisational leaders participating in planning meetings clearly indicate that they strongly support and value the strategic planning process and that they are visibly involved in the planning process;
• Focus on having well managed, short meetings rather than fewer, longer sessions;
• Create realistic expectations about the planning process.

2.4.1 A typical strategic thinking and planning process

The following table describes an example of a typical strategic thinking and planning process:

Activity	Timing
Board retreat – including introductions by the board chair or director re: • the need for/commitment to a strategic planning process; • overview of the proposed planning process; • agreement regarding who will be involved in the process/ sub committees needed to guide the planning process; • agreement of key issues to be included in the strategic plan e.g. reviewing vision & mission, identifying current issues, goals, strategies and action plan; • terms of reference for the facilitator; • agreement on a time line for the process e.g. steps and outputs.	½ – 1 day
Selection, recruitment and briefing of facilitator.	1 – 4 days

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25 McNamara, C. (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation*. Authenticity Consulting. Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

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Activity	Timing

Preparation of background information on the current rights context
Form various sub committees to undertake the following preparatory activities:
• Ensure children's effective, meaningful and ethical participation in the strategic thinking process e.g. through consultation, presentations by children/ organisations working with children or direct participation of children in the process. See in particular Minimum Standards for Consulting Children and the accompanying operations guide.[26]
• Collect and summarise background information and documentation – including:
  • rights violations, omissions and root causes;
  • range and types of duty bearers, their capacity and political will;
  • accountability, obligations and obstacles to meeting these obligations;
  • current legislative, policy & practice environment;
  • data disaggregated by gender, age, geography;
  • trends over time;
  • views of a range of stakeholders, including children's perspectives as well as perspectives and ideas from other target groups, partners or beneficiaries;
  • history & description of current programmes implemented by the organisation & its partners.
• Dissemination of information to all participants prior to strategic thinking workshop;
• Prepare logistics for the strategic thinking workshop.
	5 – 10 days

Strategic Thinking workshop – should be aimed at producing the following: • presentation of perspectives from partners, beneficiaries and other target groups, especially children; • updated organisational vision, mission, values; • environmental and organisational scan; • identification of strategic issues, goals and strategies; • formulation of 3 – 5 strategic directions to guide the development of the organisation over the next 3 – 5 years; • evaluation of workshop process.	3 – 5 days
Finalisation of **strategic process report** and dissemination to all participants.	5 days
Strategic *Planning* process • formation of small, appropriate teams to generate strategies and annual work plans to achieve the strategic directions – including how the plan will be implemented and monitored on a regular basis over time. • finalisation of strategic planning report	3 – 5 days

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26 www.plan-international.org/pdfs/ministandards.pdf.

Activity	Timing
Regular board meeting to approve the strategic planning report and annual work plans.	1 day
Dissemination process to all staff, partners, other stakeholders and beneficiaries.	As required
Ongoing implementation and review of strategic plan. • drawing up annual plans and budgets etc; • reviewing progress; • making the necessary changes and adaptations.	As required

Notes

3. What Is? An environmental and organisational inquiry

The following chapters of this guide provide a step by step outline of a possible strategic thinking workshop process. However, facilitators are encouraged to use or adapt the sessions outlined as required by the organisational context.

3.1 Starting the workshop process

Duration: 1 hour

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- two flip chart stands
- markers, crayons and paint
- name tags
- write up the following on a separate flip chart beforehand:
  - a note of welcome, title and dates of workshop
  - questions for introduction of participants
  - workshop objectives
- copies of handouts for each participant:
  - Workshop objectives

3.1.1 Welcome and introductions

a. Purpose
To make the participants feel welcome and comfortable, and to create time and space for everyone to get to know each other.

b. Key ideas
It is important that an atmosphere of trust and cohesion is built, since this will be a participative workshop with various group and individual exercises.

c. Methodology
- Open the workshop in the accustomed manner, such as the chairperson of the board/ director making opening remarks and welcoming participants;
- Welcome all the participants and thank them for attending this workshop. As the facilitator, introduce yourself and ask other facilitators on the team (if present) to introduce themselves to the participants;

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- Ask the participants to introduce themselves to the group or to answer a predetermined question by way of introduction (see box below for examples). This can be a very creative session, requiring participants to use crayons, paint or drama in their presentations;
- Ask each person to report back – or to introduce their partner to the group.
- Comments generated regarding what participants bring to the workshop and what they need out of it can also be used to develop a list of key values or working principles for the group. Such lists can be used to demonstrate how to build a rights culture and practice in our work both in the field and within our organisations;
- Participant introductions can also be used to generate and clarify people's concerns and expectations regarding the workshop. (See Box 3 below).

Box 3: Ideas for introductory exercises:

- Ask participants to form pairs with someone they know the least and to find out more about each other (e.g. name, organisation, position, relationship to this organisation) – and then to introduce their partner to the rest of the group;

Or

- Ask participants to reflect on one or two of the following questions:
  - What does strategic planning mean to you?
  - What do you hope to gain or accomplish during this process?
  - What are your hopes and what are your fears?
  - What two qualities do you bring to this workshop?
  - What two things do you need from others in order to make this process successful

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3.1.2 Workshop objectives

Duration 30 minutes

a. Purpose
To share objectives with participants and to clarify what will be covered during the workshop.

b. Key ideas
It is important to deal with any misplaced hopes and fears at the beginning of the workshop and to clarify what will be covered and what will not. Hopes and fears that are not clarified can hamper people's active participation in the workshop process.

c. Methodology
- Introduce the workshop objectives to participants (see Box 4 below for an example);

- Clarify what will be covered and what will not be covered during the workshop. Compare the objectives to participant's expectations mentioned in the previous session;
- Allow time for comments and questions from participants.

Box 4: Example of SC Swaziland's workshop objectives

- Clearly define the purpose of Save the Children in Swaziland;
- Establish realistic goals (strategic directions) consistent with the organisation's mission and vision – to be achieved within a defined timeframe (April 2006 – March 2010) and within the organisation's capacity;
- Develop a sense of ownership of the plan;
- Ensure the most effective use of the organisation's resources by focusing on the key priorities;
- Provide a base from which progress can be measured and informed changes made;
- Bring together everyone's skills and insights in order to build consensus about where the organisation is going.

3.2 Introduction to strategic thinking

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials required:
- copies of handouts for each participant:
- Introduction to strategic thinking (Handout 1)

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a. Purpose
To introduce the concept of strategic planning and to prepare participants for the task of thinking strategically.

b. Key ideas
'Many managers spend most of their time "fighting fires" ' in an organisation. Their time is spent reacting to problems. For these leaders it can be difficult to stand back and take a hard look at what they want to accomplish and how they want to accomplish it. They are often too busy doing what they think is making progress. However, one of the major differences between new leaders and experienced leaders is the latter's ability to see the broad perspective, to take the long term view on what they want to do. One of the best ways to foster this skill is through strategic thinking and planning[27].

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27 McNamara, C. (2003) **Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation**. Authenticity Consulting. Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/ str-plan.html.

Read **handout # 1 'Introduction to strategic thinking'** and summarise the main points about strategic thinking and planning for participants. Cover the following points in your presentation:
- What is strategic thinking?
- What is a 'strategic perspective'?
- What is strategic planning?

c. Methodology
- Using the information in the key ideas above, give an input on strategic thinking and planning;
- Circulate **handout # 1 'Introduction to strategic thinking'**;
- At various points during the input, where appropriate, ask participants some of the following questions and have brief discussions in plenary:
  - What does 'strategic planning' mean to you?
  - What is the difference between 'strategic thinking' and 'strategic planning'?
  - What are the benefits of strategic thinking?
  - Why does strategic thinking not get done/ or why is it done poorly sometimes?
  - What are you hoping will be different regarding your new strategic plan?

3.3 Introduction to children's rights

Duration: 45 minutes

> Materials required:
> - copies of handouts for each participant:
>   - Introduction to human rights (Handout 2)
>   - Introduction to child rights programming (Handout 3)
>   - The 'Three Pillars' Model (Handout 4)

a. Purpose
To introduce or recap the concept of child rights programming. To ensure that all participants are familiar with the basic principles of child rights programming so that they can be applied throughout the strategic thinking and planning process.

b. Key ideas
Read **handouts # 2, 3 and 4 (Introduction to human rights; Introduction to child rights programming and The 'Three Pillars' Model)** and summarise the main points about child rights programming and the 'Three Pillars' Model. Briefly cover the following points in your presentation:
- The origins of rights based approaches to development;

- The history of the UNCRC;
- The four principles of the UNCRC;
- A general definition and explanation of CRP;
- The Eight Indicators of CRP;
- The content of the 'Three Pillars' Model.

c. Methodology
- Using the information in the key ideas above, give an input on human rights, CRP and the 'Three Pillars' Model;
- Circulate **handouts # 2 – 4**;
- At various points during the input, where appropriate, ask participants some of the following questions and have brief discussions in plenary:
  - How long have you been using CRP in your work?
  - What have been the challenges of using CRP in your organisation?
  - As a result of introducing CRP into your work – what have you had to learn to do differently?
  - In working for an organisation that seeks to apply CRP in its work – what personal challenges or questions have you been faced with?

3.4 Scanning the environment – looking at "What's on the table?"

Duration: 3 hours – but allow for extra time

> Materials required:
> - flip chart paper
> - prestick for sticking cards onto the wall/ flip chart paper
> - markers
> - lots of small cards (10cm x 10cm) in three different colours: at least 75 green cards, 75 blue cards & 75 pink cards (you can create the cards by cutting different colours of A4 paper/card into 6 pieces)
> - Copies of handouts for each participant:
>   - Three types of power dynamics (Handout 5)
>   - Instructions for small group exercise (Handout 6)

a. Purpose
To analyse child rights issues in the current context. To gain a deeper understanding of different forces and power relations at work in the environment.

b. Key ideas
> *"We look at power as an individual, collective and political force that can either undermine or empower citizens and their*

organisations. It is a force that alternatively can facilitate, hasten or halt the process of change promoted through our work."[28]

Including an analysis of power relations is crucial for any development organisation. 'But it is not an easy task, as it demands critical reflection and a certain level of political consciousness'. This analysis is of primary importance to the success of our work – 'because in our daily lives and work, we are already dealing directly with power dynamics'. We need to find the most appropriate ways of tapping this everyday knowledge and experience to systematically look at how power affects us and our struggles for children's rights. Reflecting on power can alter the way that organisations understand and approach their strategic thinking and planning process, as well as the tools they use, and thus it can be an enlightening exercise. Once there is an inclusion of an analysis of how power relations are linked to and affect our work, it is possible to broaden strategic thinking and action[29].

There are many methods and tools that can be used to put power at the centre of strategic thinking and planning. The "What is on the table?" exercise[30] provides one way to generate a power relation analysis of the context in which we work. This exercise encourages us to look at three different types of power dynamics: visible, hidden and invisible power dynamics.

Read **handout # 5 'Three types of power dynamics'** and summarise the main points about power and development work.

c. Methodology
Note: this exercise needs time to be done in sufficient depth, especially as the success of the rest of the workshop and the organisation's strategic plan rests on the quality of analysis done during this exercise. Thus, try not to rush participants during group work and allow extra time to deepen the analysis during the plenary session.
• Using the key ideas above give an input on the importance of understanding power dynamics in the context in which we work. Explain the three different types of power dynamics (visible, hidden and invisible). Ask participants to give examples of each type of power and clarify any questions people may have;
• Circulate **handout # 5 'Three types of power dynamics'**;
• Divide the participants into three groups and make sure the groups are evenly structured. Explain the exercise and ask each group to discuss the following questions:
    • **Group 1** – What's on the table? (visible power dynamics)

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28 VeneKlasen, L and Miller, V (2006) *A new weave of power, people and politics: the action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*. World Neighbours, Oklahoma City. p 49.

29 Ibid. p 49.

30 Ibid. p 47.

- What child rights issues are on the table?
- Who is at the table? And what are their respective roles & responsibilities?
- What are the forces at work – that keep these issues on the table?
- **Group 2** – What's under the table? (hidden power dynamics)
  - What child rights issues are under the table?
  - Who is under the table? And what are their respective roles and responsibilities?
  - What are the forces at work under the table – that influence the situation?
- **Group 3** – What's absent from the table? (invisible power dynamics)
  - What child rights issues are absent from the table?
  - Who is absent from the table? And what are their respective roles & responsibilities?
  - What forces are keeping these issues and people away from the table?

- Ask each group to start by listing all the child rights issues relevant to their group. Then to discuss each child rights issue one at a time – and to identify all the duty bearers/ rights holders or other stakeholders; their respective roles and responsibilities and the forces related to that issue, before going on to the next issue. Continue this process until all the child rights issues have been discussed;
- Use of cards: Groups should write all their child rights issues on the *green* cards provided; all duty bearers/ other stakeholders on the *pink* cards and all forces on the *blue* cards. (Use a separate card for each stakeholder/ rights issue/ force and repeat cards if necessary);
- Note that the same issue or stakeholder or duty bearer or force may be active in more than one group at the same time. This is because aspects of an issue can be simultaneously on or under or absent from the table – and that stakeholders may play different roles at the same time;
- Give the small groups approximately 1 hour to complete the exercise. As the facilitator, visit each group regularly to provide support, check on their progress and clarify any questions that participants may have. Be prepared to give groups more time to complete their analysis if required;
- Clear space on a wall and cover with about six sheets of flip chart paper on which to stick the cards when groups report back;
- Ask the groups to report back one at a time. After each presentation encourage all the participants to add any missing issues, stakeholders, duty bearers and forces. Add new cards in appropriate colours where necessary;
- To round off the exercise, summarise the discussion and emphasise the key points that have emerged.

Fig 1 & 2: Examples of the analysis done by SC Swaziland

Box 5: Important note for the facilitator:

The "What is on the table?" activity is a critical exercise – as it is one of the key foundations on which the strategic planning process will be based. The success of this exercise depends on the *depth of the analysis* – a superficial analysis will lead to a superficial strategic plan. One of the causes of superficial analysis is the reluctance of people to raise sensitive issues. Initially participants may be reluctant to raise certain issues, especially those relating to politically powerful groups or "taboo" subjects.

As the facilitator, it will be important for you to create an atmosphere of trust in the group and to encourage people to talk openly about issues. Remind people that keeping issues "off the table" and out of people's consciousness is an important way in which power dynamics are maintained and entrenched in a given context – and that this exercise is about challenging and breaking this silence. Issues can not be addressed unless we admit to them!

Thus, as a facilitator, you may need to develop your own check list of "invisible" and "hidden" issues and to check if the group is willing to talk about them – or if they have been let out of the analysis. For example, some of these issues may include: early marriages, teen pregnancies, child trafficking, circumcision, corporal punishment, gender issues (differences between girls and boys), age issues (differences between very young children vs the youth), traditional authorities attitudes and practices, geographical differences (urban vs rural), citizenship, youth sexual and reproductive health – as well as other issues that relate to your particular country/ context such as, the role and status of the royal family or practices and attitudes of key leaders/politicians.

3.5 Using other presenters to contribute to an environmental scan

It is critical to undertake basic consultations prior to embarking on a strategic thinking process. These interactions should include consultations with various groups who are associated with the organisation, such as partners, beneficiaries and other target groups, especially children. These consultations will provide an opportunity for these groups to inform, guide and provide options to the organisation during its strategic planning process.

It may be useful to include guest speakers, key partners or children to address the participants at specific points during the strategic thinking workshop. For example, an organisation may invite children or other civil society, donor or government representatives to talk about certain topics during the workshop, in order to give participants more background or contextual information. In the case of Save the Children Swaziland, the director of the Coordinating Assembly of NGOs (CANGO) in Swaziland was invited to the strategic planning workshop during Day One. CANGO is a national network of local NGOs in Swaziland and the director was asked to give a presentation on the history of civil society in Swaziland and challenges currently faced by NGOs working in the sector today. This presentation formed a useful lead into the "What's on the table?" exercise, as it provided participants with a well informed summary of critical development issues currently facing Swaziland.

3.6 Scanning the organisation

Duration: 2 hours

3.6.1 Story telling

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers
- write up instructions for group work and guidelines for conversations on flip chart beforehand

a. Purpose
To explore what works in the organisation and to explore those moments when the organisation was at its best.

b. Key ideas
Once we have looked externally at our context, the next step is to look internally at our organisation. The assumption of this exercise is that in every organisation something works well. In planning for the future it is important for decision makers to be able to understand and explain exactly what was happening when things were working and why the organisation was performing exceptionally. When people begin to see and appreciate what they were doing well, they are in a better position to do more of it[31].

A second assumption of this exercise is that strategic thinking is not about solving problems, but rather that it is about embracing solutions. We are not looking for what is broken or wrong with an organisation. Instead, our focus will be on the things that have been successful. The result of this process will be statements that describe where the organisation wants to be based on previous successes. These statements will reflect the real achievements that people want to repeat[32].

c. Methodology
- Using the information in the key ideas above, explain the purpose of the exercise and the two key assumptions;
- Ask each person to spend five minutes individually reflecting on a time when they felt they were making an impact in the organisation or a time when they felt most proud of being a part of the organisation;

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31 Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (1999) *Strategic Planning* CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. X. Washington DC.

32 Ibid.

- Then ask everyone to self select a partner. Working in pairs, each person will share their story with their partner. Give the following guidelines for these conversations:
  - Enjoy the conversation! – appreciate what you are hearing & share your story generously;
  - Keep to the subject – but do not be overly formal or structured;
  - Listen closely to your story teller;
  - Be fully involved in the conversation;
  - Encourage the story teller – ask questions that will help the story teller to relate the experience in more detail, look for enthusiasm and excitement;
  - Focus on describing feelings;
  - Keep to time (allow about 30 minutes for story telling in pairs);
- When the pairs return to plenary, ask for five to six volunteers to retell their stories to the rest of the group. As the facilitator, encourage the story tellers by asking questions that will help them to relate their experiences in more detail. In particular, ask the story teller to describe how he/she felt at different times.

Notes

3.6.2 Identifying best practices

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers

a. Purpose
To share what people have learnt from each other's stories. To uncover themes related to what works in the organisation and what makes the workplace a worthwhile place.

b. Key ideas
The next stage in the process is to learn from what was shared and to identify common themes or threads from the stories.

c. Methodology
- In plenary ask people to share the most powerful ideas or the most exciting information that they learned from their own and others' stories. Spend five minutes brainstorming to warm up the group;
- Then ask people to take five minutes to reflect individually on the following question:
  - What were the key elements or characteristics that had made these high points or achievements possible?
  - Ask people to make a few notes in their notebooks if necessary;
- After five minutes of individual reflection ask people to contribute their ideas. Record all the responses on a flip chart. This will

create a list of the organisation's best practices and will include anything that the organisation does well. Keep this flip chart in a prominent place during the remainder of the workshop;
• To round off the exercise, summarise the discussion and emphasise the key points that have emerged.

3.6.3 Organisational capabilities and challenges

Duration: 2 hours

Materials required:
• flip chart paper
• markers
• prepare the following flip charts beforehand:
  • draw the organisational capability model
  • the definitions of the three areas of capability i.e. conceptual, social and technical
  • instructions for small group work
• copies of handout for each participant:
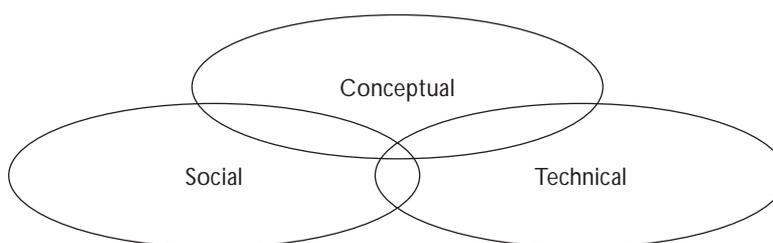 • Assessing organisational capability

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a. Purpose
To assess the organisation's capabilities and challenges in three areas: conceptual, social and technical.

b. Key ideas
Organisations are made up of people. It is what people bring to an organisation and how their capacities are translated into strategies and action, which result in the organisation's level of effectiveness.

The intersection of circles represents organisational capability for effectiveness

Conceptual

Social   Technical

There are many models that can be used to assess organisational effectiveness and capability. One model[33] involves assessing three broad areas: conceptual capability, social capability and technical capability.

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33 Thaw, D (2000) **Ideas for a Change.** *Part 6: Capacity Development.* Olive Organisational Development and Training, Durban. p 23.

The **conceptual** area relates to:
- Relevance of ideas, strategy and vision of the organisation;
- Extent to which the organisation's ideas, information and knowledge are used to vision, forecast and plan;
- Extent to which the organisation is strategically positioned (e.g. area of focus and key relationships);
- Ability to learn from and feed back experiences into ongoing work;
- Relevance of mission and vision;
- Appropriateness/impact of programme strategies;
- Extent to which child rights programming is demonstrated in programmes.

The **social** area relates to:
- Effectiveness/ extent to which relationships are built, maintained and managed;
- Height of organisational profile and extent of influence of its networks. How the organisation is perceived by partners, government, donors and other stakeholders;
- Extent to which key CR principles are demonstrated, e.g. non-discrimination of children, the participation of children, children's survival and development and their best interests;
- Level of organisational flexibility and adaptation to change;
- Extent to which staff potential is realised;
- People's knowledge and skills level within the organisation;
- Staff and volunteer capacity and effectiveness.

The **technical** area relates to:
- Effectiveness of support systems – for communication, administration and finance;
- Effectiveness of how activities/projects are designed, monitored and implemented;
- Extent to which information is recorded, shared, stored and accessed by staff;
- Access to/use of technology e.g. phones, computers, email, internet;
- Level/quality of assets owned e.g. vehicles, equipment, property, systems, publications and financial resources;
- Length, continuity, diversity and levels of funding sources.

c. Methodology
- Using the key ideas above give an input on the organisational capability model and explain the group exercise;
- Circulate **handout # 6: 'Organisational capability assessment'**;
- Ask participants to divide themselves into three equal groups. Each group will be required to review *one* of the areas of capability:
    - Group 1 will assess the organisation's conceptual capability;
    - Group 2 will assess the organisation's social capability;

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- Group 3 will assess the organisation's technical capability
  It is best for participants to self select their own groups, as this will ensure people are in a group where they feel they can contribute most meaningfully and will result in a deeper level of analysis;
- Give the groups 30 minutes to complete the exercise. Groups should refer to the checklist of issues under their particular area (see key ideas above) and answers should be written on a flip chart;
- As the facilitator, visit each group regularly to provide support and to clarify any questions the participants may have;
- Ask the groups to report back one at a time. After each presentation encourage the other participants to add any comments where necessary;
- This exercise should result in a more detailed understanding of internal challenges the organisation wishes to overcome. Round off the exercise by comparing the results of this exercise with the previous one (best practices), summarise the discussion and emphasise the key points that have emerged.

4. What should be? Vision and mission statements

Civil society organisations work for a change in society. They have a vision of how society could or should look in the future. A vision usually can not be achieved by one organisation alone, rather it guides the work and ethical conduct of the organisation and its staff. A mission more clearly describes an organisation's purpose. Because vision and mission statements look to the future, they usually remain valid for an organisation over the long term. However, a strategic thinking process is an ideal time to review or update these statements as this is when an organisation is reflecting holistically on its purpose, position and future[34].

4.1 Identifying or updating a vision statement

Duration: 1 ½ hours

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers, crayons, paint, glue, coloured paper and other creaive materials
- prepare the following flip chart beforehand:
  - Instructions for small group work

a. Purpose
To jointly develop a vision statement.

b. Key ideas
Developing or updating a vision statement needs to be a participatory process; it should not be constructed by the director alone. A vision is not achievable by one organisation on its own. Rather the organisation sees its role as contributing to broader social change through its work and collaboration with others[35].

A definition of a vision statement:
A vision is a broad statement or general description of what an organisation aspires to be – a picture of the future.

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34 Thaw, D (1997) **Ideas for a Change Part 2: Organisation Diagnosis**. Olive Organisation Development and Training, Durban.

35 Ibid.

Notes

c. Methodology[36]

Prior to the workshop the facilitator will need to ascertain from staff and organisational leaders whether or not the organisation has a vision statement and to what extent the organisation wishes to change or update this statement. The response to these questions should determine the design of this particular exercise.

- Using the key ideas above introduce the concept of a vision statement and the definition;

- Divide the participants into groups of four to five people. Referring back to the "What's on the table?" exercise, ask the groups to describe three or four children's rights issues that they are trying to address. Ask the groups to record these issues;

- Then ask the groups to imagine a society where these issues are completely solved and to draw a picture of what such a society would look like – using colours, shapes and images;

- Give the groups 30 minutes to complete the exercise;

- In plenary each group should report back one at a time, explaining their drawings in detail;

- After the report backs ask the participants what images, words or phrases struck them during the presentations. In particular ask people for value-related words or statements (e.g. *all* children, *equal* access, *full* potential, *inclusive*, *safe* neighbourhoods etc) As the facilitator, capture key words and phrases on a flip chart;

- Give participants time to study the words and statements. Then ask the whole group to jointly circle or highlight four or five key words or phrases that inspire them the most. List these words on a separate flip chart. Ask the whole group to use these words to jointly write one sentence that describes the organisation's vision for the future. Ensure that the sentence is written in the present tense and that it reflects the range of input;

- Discuss and refine the statement until the whole group is comfortable with the outcome and owns it as theirs;

- Write the final statement up on another flip chart and leave it in a prominent place for the duration of the workshop.

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36 Based on exercise adapted from Thaw, D (1997) *Ideas for a Change Part 2: Organisation Diagnosis*. Olive Organisation Development and Training, Durban. p 13.

4.2 Identifying or updating a mission statement

Duration: 1 ½ hours

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers, crayons, paint, glue, coloured paper and other creative materials
- prepare the following flip chart beforehand:
  - Instructions for small group work

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a. Purpose
To jointly develop a mission statement.

b. Key ideas
A mission is a more practical and precise description of an organisation's purpose or reason for existence. It usually describes[37]:
- Purpose – what the organisation seeks to accomplish;
- Target audience – the target group/beneficiaries of the organisation's work;
- Work – the main method or activity the organisation is involved in – what the organisation seeks to provide.

Some key questions that a mission should answer[38]:
- Why do we exist?
- Who do we serve?
- What services do we provide?
- How do we go about providing these services?

As with a vision statement, a mission statement should be developed jointly – not by the director alone. It should also be brief and to the point.

c. Methodology[39]
- Use the key ideas above to introduce the concept of a mission statement;
- In plenary ask participants to identify the organisation's most important stakeholders by a quick brainstorm. (A stakeholder is any individual or group who stands to gain or lose from the existence

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37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Based on exercise adapted from Thaw, D (1997) *Ideas for a Change Part 2: Organisation Diagnosis.* Olive Organisation Development and Training, Durban. p 15 – 16.

Notes

of your organisation). As the facilitator, record the names of the stakeholders on a flip chart;
- Then ask participants to identify which of the names represents the organisation's direct target group(s) (A target group is any group of individuals or organisations who will either use or directly benefit from your organisation's work, services or products.) Write these on a flip chart and get agreement;
- In groups of four to five, ask people to choose three of the most important names from the target group list and to analyse these under the following headings:
  - Name of target group;
  - What they stand to gain? (e.g. a service, product, certain long term benefits, strengthening of civil society etc);
  - What they stand to loose? (e.g. certain powers, clients, members, a share of the market);
  - What they could contribute to the organisation? (e.g. finances, resources, support, expertise, political credibility);
- Ask each group to report back in plenary and discuss the results;
- Return people to their small groups. Ask each group to choose one of their target groups and on a piece of flip chart paper, to prepare a slogan that describes the organisation's work with that target group;
- In plenary each group should present their slogan;
- Then ask the whole group to generate a mission statement based on the various slogans. The mission statement should describe:
  - Who we are;
  - What we do as an organisation;
  - With whom;
- Discuss and refine the statement until the whole group is comfortable with the outcome and owns it as theirs;
- Write the final statement on another flip chart and leave it in a prominent place for the duration of the workshop.

5. What can be? Strategic directions for the future

After assessing **what is,** by scanning the context and scanning the organisation; and assessing **what should be**, by reviewing the organisation's mission and vision statements, the next step is to consider **what can be**. This involves determining an organisation's strategic directions.

5.1 Identifying strategic directions

Duration: 3 ½ hours

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers
- two **different** types of small coloured stickers (e.g. red stars and blue stars)
- 30 small cards (e.g. 10cm x 21 cm) or A4 card/paper cut into thirds
- prepare the following flip charts beforehand:

Definitions of a strategic direction
- Hierarchy of achievements
- Fieldworker training project exercise
- Instructions for voting

a. Purpose
To explore what a strategic direction is. To identify relevant strategic directions for the organisation over the next three to five years.

b. Key ideas

Introduction to outputs, outcomes and impact
Typically strategic plans and planning processes focus on identifying achievements at different levels. The following hierarchy of achievements is common to many plans. This hierarchy[40] can be used to guide planning at many different levels within the organisation e.g. strategic planning, programme planning or project planning:

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40 Save the Children Sweden (March 2008) *Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System in the Overseas Regions, User Guidelines.* Draft 2. Stockholm p 72–73.

Level of measurement	Description
Impact (goal or strategic direction)	The lasting or significant changes in people's or children's lives
Outcome (effects or objective)	The intermediate effects of outputs on an organisation or its target population
Output (results)	The products or services delivered or direct results/outputs of activities
Activities	The tasks undertaken
Inputs	Financial, material and human resources required

Note that the names of the different levels may change from organisation to organisation – the actual terms that you use are not as important as agreeing exactly what we mean by each term and where it fits within the hierarchy. Thus, you may need to spend time agreeing the terms and their definitions so that everyone understands what is meant by each term and that everyone uses the same language.

An exercise for the group:
In order to differentiate more clearly between the different levels of the hierarchy, ask participants to work in small discussion groups and to identify at which the level in the hierarchy the following statements could be categorised:
i.   An imaginary development project: An income generating orientation and training programme for NGO fieldworkers:
ii.   Training sessions delivered;
iii.   Fieldworkers use new tools and procedures in their work;
iv.   Improved quality of training is provided by fieldworkers in their work with community members;
v.   Trained community members demonstrate an improved understanding of how to set up and run income generating activities;
vi.   Participating community members run profitable income generating projects;
vii.   Target households and communities have improved long term livelihood security.

What is a "strategic direction"?
- A strategic direction is strategy or action that is crucial for realising an organisation's vision;
- It fits somewhere between an organisation's vision/mission statement and an individual programme impact or goal statement;
- According to the table above, the strategic directions of a strategic plan would fit at the impact level of the organisation's whole programme;

Notes

- They should focus the organisation on a limited number of key priority areas during the planning period;
- Strategic directions usually take three to five years to complete (medium term timeframe);
- They have an organisation wide/ national or regional importance for the organisation and its programmes;
- They have a broad focus – they cover more than one organisational project or programme;
- They are few in number – because they are relatively broad and have a strategic importance for the organisation, it is not advisable to work on more than five or six strategic directions in any one strategic plan;
- A strategic direction should be written in the present tense – as if it has already been achieved;
- It should be an "active" statement – containing lots of verbs;
- Together, all the strategic directions should describe the steps that need to be taken to realise an organisation's vision.

Some examples of strategic directions include:

> *"Child rights themes and working principles institutionalised in the organisation – including key capacities, developing market leadership in development and forming a knowledge base to support the above."*

> *"The organisation is positioned as a leading social change agent with a strong reputation for innovative responses/ approaches to social injustice."*

> *"The funding base is diverse and increasing and more effective marketing efforts are in place to brand the organisation."*

c. Methodology

- Before this session starts make sure that you have all the flip charts stuck up and easily accessible/visible from the following exercises:
  - A copy of the 'Three Pillars' Model (see handout # 4);
  - "What is on/ under and off the table?" exercise;
  - List of organisational best practices;
  - List of organisational capabilities (conceptual, social and technical)
- Recap the workshop process so far (i.e. reviewing "what is" and "what should be") and outline the sequence and relevance of the next steps in the process (i.e. identifying "what can be") – refer to the flip charts where necessary;
- Use the key ideas above to introduce the concept of the hierarchy of achievements. To familiarise people with the different levels of the hierarchy conduct the exercise on identifying different levels

within the hierarchy (using the example of the fieldworker training project above);

- After giving people time in small groups to discuss the fieldworker training project - ask participants to share their conclusions. Usually, people agreed that (i) is an output of the project, (ii) – (v) are outcomes of the project and (v) – (vi) are examples of project impacts. Ask people to explain their reasoning. Note that there is generally no right or wrong answer for differentiating between an outcome and an impact – as this often depends on the nature of the project itself. However, emphasise the point that an impact usually refers to a longer term significant change, while an outcome is the intermediate effect of project interventions on the children/ people involved.
- Use the key ideas above to introduce the concept of a strategic direction. Note that the first step is to develop a set of selection criteria that will help to assess and explore strategic options for the organisation;
- Ask participants to spend a few moments individually reflecting on criteria that they would use to select:
  - areas of programmatic intervention and
  - areas of organisational intervention;
- After five minutes, ask participants to brainstorm their criteria in each area. Draw up two lists of criteria on flip chart. Below are some examples used by other organisations[41]:

Organisational selection criteria:	Contextual/programmatic selection criteria:
- Builds a sustainable organisation and internal capacity; - Improves our profile/brand; - Enables us to further our vision and mission; - Is deeply felt within the organisation; - Is widely felt within the organisation; - Deepens CRP practice; - Realises staff potential; - Builds lasting organisational alliances; - Is winnable; - Diversifies funding sources for the organisation.	- Demonstrates the Three Pillars: - Direct service provision; - Engaging and influencing government; - Building support for child rights; - Increases levels of children's participation – ensures children's are 'at the table' and their voices are heard; - Results in a real improvement in children's lives; - Promotes respect and awareness of children's rights; - Helps the domestication of the CRC; - Gives children a sense of their own power; - Builds accountable leadership;

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41 Adapted from: VeneKlasen, L and Miller, V (2006) *A new weave of power, people and politics: the action guide for advocacy and citizen participation.* World Neighbours, Oklahoma City. p 147–149.

Organisational selection criteria:	Contextual/programmatic selection criteria:
	• Is widely felt within the community/ target area;
	• Is deeply felt within the community/target area;
	• Provides an opportunity for many children to be involved;
	• Helps us to reach the most marginalised and deprived children;
	• Builds lasting organisations and alliances;
	• Provides the potential for raising funds;
	• Is winnable – we will be able to make an achievement in the next 4 years.

- Discuss and adapt the criteria on the checklists. Make sure that everyone in the group has the same understanding of each criterion. Agree final lists of organisational and programmatic selection criteria. Leave the lists in a prominent place, where they can easily be referred to by participants during the next step in the process;
- Then hand out up to five small stickers of one colour to each participant (e.g. red stars). Ask participants to use their stickers to "vote" for the **programmatic intervention(s)** that they think are most critical for the organisation to focus on over the next three to five years *and* which best meets the agreed programmatic selection criteria. Explain the following voting rules:
  - You must use all your five stickers;
  - You must place your sticker(s) nearest the issues you are voting for on the relevant flip chart;
  - You may put more than one sticker per issue – but you only get five stickers – so choose wisely!
  - You are not allowed to sell or trade your stickers with anyone else!
  - You are not allowed to lobby for others to put their stickers in a certain place!
- When everyone has completed voting for the programmatic interventions, hand out the second set of five stickers (these stickers should be a **different** colour or shape to previous stickers e.g. blue stars). Repeat the previous step – by asking people to vote for the **organisational intervention(s)** that they think are most critical for the organisation to focus on over the next three to five years *and* which best meets the agreed organisational selection criteria;
- Once the voting is completed re-write each issue that has been voted for on a separate card. Ask the group to confirm that each issue, that was voted for, has been written on a card;

- Clear a large area of floor space in the workshop room. Place the cards in any order on the floor and ask the participants to group the cards into five or six categories. People can agree on any rationale for the grouping – and they may decide on fewer categories, but there should not be more than seven categories. As the facilitator, retreat to the background at this stage and encourage the whole group to get on with the exercise on their own. Only intervene when absolutely necessary, to help people to focus or if a conflict needs resolution;
- Once the cards have been grouped into categories review each grouping and confirm that everyone is happy with the configuration of the groups;

Fig 3: Grouping cards

Identifying strategic directions. Credit: Mutengo Consulting

- Refer back to the hierarchy of achievements and remind people that strategic directions should capture the lasting or significant change in people/ children's lives that the organisation wishes to achieve. Also recap the characteristics of a strategic direction (see key ideas above);
- Then ask the whole group to agree on a sentence that will name each group of cards. Proceed with one group of cards at a time. The sentence should adequately capture the lasting or significant

change in people/ children's lives and should be based on the ideas on the cards in the group. Typically a strategic direction should consist of : "What if …" + who + lasting impact/change;

- To get people started, it may be helpful to ask them to start each sentence with the words "What if …" (Once the sentence has been written, the words "what if …" can then be deleted).
- As the facilitator, write up people's ideas on a flip chart and help the group to form strategic directions by probing or offering advice. But avoid suggesting actual answers to the group;
- These statements or sentences will be the organisation's strategic directions and should contain a mix of both programmatic and organisational interventions. Examples of SC Swaziland's strategic directions are listed below:

Save the Chidren Swaziland Strategic Directions (April 2006 – March 2010)

- Children are protected from all forms of violence and abuse, especially sexual abuse, exploitation, child labour and corporal punishment
- Children have access to private and public space where they can express themselves on issues that affect them
- Save the Children Swaziland is known as a leading organisation spearheading the creation of a rights culture in Swaziland
- We learn, track progress and impact of our programmes from effective M&E and administration mechanisms which help us to identify future priorities
- We scale up and scale out or programmes from a strong, diverse resource base

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Note – this exercise can be done in small working groups, each working simultaneously, with regular report backs and plenary discussion to refine the wording of each strategic direction.

- Once the exercise has been completed, write up all the strategic directions on a fresh flip chart and leave displayed in a prominent place for the remainder of the workshop;
- Build in time later on in the workshop for participants to come back to the wording of these statements in order to review and refine their strategic directions, preferably after an overnight break.

6. What will be? Strategic planning and implementation

Once the strategic directions have been identified (see Chapter 5), the next step in the process is the drafting of a strategic plan.

6.1 Setting objectives and dimensions of change

Duration: 3 hours *(depending on the number of strategic directions & number of participants)*

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers
- prepare the following flip charts beforehand:
  - Definitions of an objective and dimensions of change
  - Instructions for group work activities

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a. Purpose
To identify objectives for each strategic direction. To review current programme activities to assess what we must continue doing, stop doing and start doing.

b. Key ideas

Introduction to objectives
In order to elaborate how each strategic direction will be achieved, a number of objectives need to be identified. An objective describes what an organisation would like to **achieve** during the three to five year strategic planning period. It is not about what you are going to do. An objective needs to be more than an activity.

A good test for an objective is to ask if it is SMART:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time bound

Note, although objectives should be measurable, do not assume that what can't be measured is not important. This is dangerous and unadvisable.
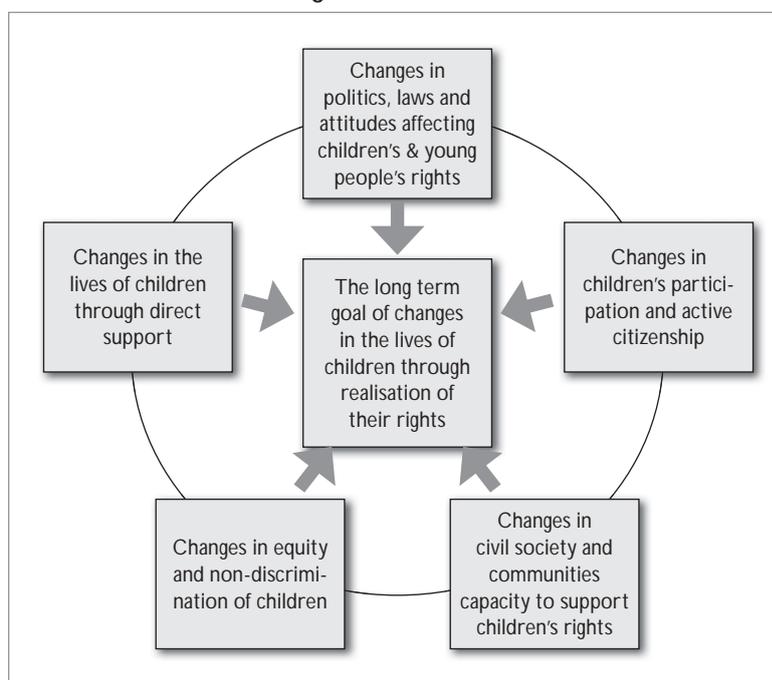
Dimensions of Change

Dimensions of change were first introduced by international NGOs in response to the need to assess the impact of their interventions on rights issues. Save the Children UK was the first SC Alliance member to adopt dimensions of change within their programming[42].

Dimensions of change are based on the four general principles of the UN CRC (i.e. survival and development, participation, non discrimination and best interests of the child) and the three CRP principles of equity, accountability and participation. Dimensions of change are useful in determining the types of change that child rights organisations would like to achieve in their work. The following diagram[43] details of the five key dimensions of change:

The 5 Dimensions of Change

The five dimensions of change are[44]:

i. **Changes in the lives of children a through direct support as a result of direct interventions by the organisations**. Change in this area could include which rights are being better fulfilled, and which rights are no longer being violated. Changes could relate both to the number of children affected, and the ways in

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42 Save the Children Sweden (March 2008) *Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System in the Overseas Regions, User Guidelines*. Draft 2. Stockholm. p16.

43 Adapted from Ibid.

44 Ibid. p15.

which their lives have changed – which also could be considered as the ultimate impact on children.

ii. **Changes in policies and laws affecting children's rights**. This could include changes in policy (e.g. new legislation or changes in existing legislation), changes in the way that policies are implemented, and changes in attitudes and beliefs concerning the respect for, fulfilment of and protection of children's rights.

iii. **Changes in children's participation and active citizenship**. This is often divided into two areas. The first would concern children's ability to influence the design and implementation of an organisation's own programmes. The second would include children's ability to influence issues beyond the programme level (e.g. increased recognition of children in public debates).

iv. **Changes in equity and non-discrimination of children**. A central feature of a child rights approach is that rights apply to all children, and it is the responsibility of an organisation working for child rights to see that its own work reflects that. Any benefits or services should apply across different categories of children, including marginalised children, both within programmes and within wider laws and policies.

v. **Changes in the capacity of civil society and communities to support children's rights**. Change here would include whether other organisations are more active in demanding child rights and whether community groups and individuals are more aware of violations of children's rights, and are able to identify duty bearers in order to hold them accountable. The improved capacity of organisations to support child rights would be included under this dimension.

If organisations incorporate the five dimensions of change into their work, it will help them to contribute to the realisation of children's rights. One of the ways of ensuring that the dimensions are incorporated into an organisation's programme interventions is to reflect them in the objectives of each strategic direction. This can be done by using the five dimensions of change to formulate objectives, either by formulating a specific objective for each dimension or by combining a few of the relevant dimensions of change under one objective.

Forming objectives
Objectives need to:

- Address all five Dimensions of Change;
- Have a three-year time frame;
- Be written in the present tense/active voice;
- Be about a change or achievement *not* an activity you are trying to do.

A test for good objectives:
- Have each of the five Dimensions of Change been addressed? – or motivate why not;
- Is the objective realistic and achievable within 4 years?
- Can it be verified or assessed in some way?
- Is it about a change or achievement or is it really an activity?
- Does the phrasing of the objective include the words "to build", "to strengthen", "to support", "to contribute". Avoid these words, as they usually indicate activities – as opposed to achievements;
- Do all the objectives add up to achieve the strategic direction? Or is something missing?
- Have any cross cutting issues been adequately addressed? e.g. media as change agent, adult attitudes, HIV and AIDS, child poverty, migration, working in partnership, emergency issues etc.

Typically objectives should be composed of:
> "What if …" + who + achievement or change
> *(Note: "what if…" should be deleted once the sentence has been formed – it is just there to help get people started)*

Bad objectives are:
- Unrealistic;
- Focused mainly on activities;
- Set too high (too ambitious for the timeframe) or too low (too easy to achieved and therefore not motivating);
- Not understandable by outsiders.

c. Methodology
- Use the key ideas to introduce the concepts of objectives and dimensions of change;
- Divide participants into groups and allocate one strategic direction to each group (if there are not enough people you may need to conduct successive rounds of group work to ensure all strategic directions are covered);
- Ask each group to use the 'test for good objectives' to develop appropriate objectives for each strategic direction. Answers should be recorded on flip chart;
- Groups should report back in plenary, Use the 'test for good objectives' to confirm if the objectives are appropriate and phrased effectively. The most common mistake when drafting objectives is to phrase them as activities and not as achievements. Challenge the group to ensure the objectives are written at the right level.
- Once the objectives and strategic directions have been verified by the group, it may be necessary to ask people to reflect on their current programme activities. If required – ask people to return to their previous small groups. For each strategic direction and associated objectives, discuss the following questions:

- With regard to your current programme & organisational activities – what do you need to continue doing?
  - With regard to your current programme & organisational activities – what do you need to stop doing?
  - With regard to your current programme & organisational activities – what do you need to start doing that is new?
- These activities will form the basis of future action plans;
- Record answers on a flip chart and present in plenary. Encourage the group to add comments in plenary where necessary.

6.2 Setting indicators

Duration: 3 hours *(depending on the number of strategic directions & number of participants)*

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers
- prepare the following flip charts beforehand:
  - Definitions and different types of indicators
  - Instructions for group work activities

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a. Purpose
To identify indicators for each objective and a process for monitoring progress.

b. Key ideas

What is an indicator?
In order to track our progress over time we need to measure what has changed or stayed the same. An indicator is an objective way of measuring (indicating) that progress has been achieved. It is a means to measure achievement/ change connected to an intervention. SCS's definition of an indicator is[45]:

> *"A piece of information that provides evidence that something has happened."*

Levels of indicators
There are several different types of indicators:

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[45] Save the Children Sweden (March 2008) *Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System in the Overseas Regions, User Guidelines.* Draft 2. Stockholm. p79.

Level		Description	Examples
Achieving	Impact indicators (goal indicators)	• Extent of significant change • Extent to which project goals have been reached • What people are doing differently • How children's lives have changed	• % reduction in child beatings • % of CSOs who use fund raising training to get new funding for their organisations by end of project
Achieving	Outcome indicators (effect indicators)	• Intermediate effects of activities • What was learnt • How well activities were done • How children/adults feel about the service/project	• # laws passed prohibiting corporal punishment • extent to which there have been changes in legislation prohibiting corporal punishment • % of lecturers using new tools and procedures
Doing	Output indicators (activity or results indicators)	• What was done • What was produced or delivered • How many children/adults involved	• # workshops held • # people trained between Jan–Dec 2008

Note that if an indicator uses "number of children"/ "number of people" it will only tell us about how many individuals were involved. But if an indicator uses "% of children" – it will tell us more about the change that has occurred. It will tell us that out of x children, y children's lives have changed in some way. Therefore using a percentage tells us more than just what happened, it also tells us about the proportion of people affected. Thus, the use of "percentage of …" is better in outcome and impact indicators than only using "number of…"

Types of indicators
Generally indicators can be grouped into two categories[46]:

Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators
• Expressed as a number • Provide information on scope and width • Analysed through statistical methods	• Expressed as words • Provide in depth info • Analysed by scoring, grouping and summarising
Examples:	

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46   Ibid. p 80.

Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators
• Units - # staff trained • Prices – amount of money spend on treatment • Proportions - % of children accessing treatment • Rate of change – change in % of children in average income households over life of project • Ratio – teacher pupil ratio • Scoring/ranking – score out of 5 given by children to rate quality of education they receive	• Satisfaction – how children describe their satisfaction with service received • Standards – extent to which training is recognised by an authority • Practices/behaviour – ways in which practices have changed since intervention began • Institutional change – the effect of new measures introduced to improve NGO's accountability to children

Other types of indicators:

Within the categories mentioned above, there are various other types of indicators[47]:

- *Proxy indicators*

  Used when you can't find a reliable indicator to measure an outcome/impact.
  - e.g. number of condoms distributed – proxy indicator for reduction in rate of HIV transmission.
  - e.g. what media writes about corporal punishment – proxy for change in attitude towards corporal punishment.
- *Basket indicators*

  Used when you can't predict change resulting from intervention.
  - e.g. changes in children's lives following legislation reforms.

Note: these two types of indicators don't measure change – they only illustrate the different types of changes that may have occurred.

- *Open ended indicators:*

  Used when dealing with invisible problems/objectives that can't be completely defined at the beginning of project, such as during organisation capacity building processes. They are usually open ended questions that emerge during the process of project implementation:
  - e.g. what is the most significant change that has happened in your organisation internally during the last year?
  - e.g. what is the most significant change that has happened in the communities in which you work and which is related to changes in your own work/methods?

A test for good indicators[48]:

- Can you collect the information in the indicator?
- Where will the information come from?

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47   Ibid. p 81–82.

48   Ibid. p 83.

- Is the information likely to be accurate and credible?
- How much will it cost to collect this information?
- Do you need a baseline?
- Who will collect the info and do they need training in order to do so?
- How far can you attribute the indicator to your own project?
- Is the indicator SMART?
  Specific
  Measurable
  Achievable
  Relevant
  Time bound
- Are there indicators at different levels of the hierarchy (e.g. output/ outcome/ impact)?
- Are there indicators that will be collected throughout the lifetime of the project/plan, as opposed to only at end of project?

Indicators should consist of:
- A numeric value/ extent + a condition being assessed + time

c. Methodology
- Use the key ideas to introduce the concepts of indicators;
- Divide participants into groups and allocate one strategic direction to each group (if there are not enough people you may need to conduct successive rounds of group work to ensure all strategic directions are covered);
- Ask each group to use the 'test for good indicators' to develop appropriate indicators for each objective. Answers should be recorded on flip chart;
- Groups should report back in plenary. Use the 'test for good indicators' to confirm if the indicators are appropriate and phrased effectively.
- The most common mistake when drafting indicators is to only measure activities or outputs. Challenge the group to ensure the indicators also measure outcomes and impact. Also make sure that indicators will be measured at different times during the strategic planning period, and not only at the end of the timeframe.
- It is also recommended that the organisation prepares a monitoring and evaluation plan to track progress over time. The table below can be used to develop a plan for coordinating the collection of information on the indicators on a regular basis.

A sample monitoring and evaluation plan:
The monitoring and evaluation plan should set out in detail how you intend to monitor and evaluate the strategic plan during its lifespan.

Strategic direction # : ....

Objectives	Indicators	How you will collect the data	Who will collect the data	When the data will be collected
	• For **each objective**, list the indicators you will use to verify if the objective has been reached; • Indicators should include both impact & outcome indicators; • Ensure that information on the various indicators is collected at different times during the lifespan of the plan & not only at the beginning & end of its lifespan.	• For **each indicator** describe how you will collect the information to verify it e.g. interviews, surveys, observations or review of government statistics etc; • Also indicate if you will need to conduct a baseline survey.	• For **each indicator** decide who will be responsible for collecting the information. This could be a named person, department or organisation.	• For **each indicator** decide how often & when you will collect the information.
1.	a.)			
	b.)			
	c.) etc…			
2.	a.)			
	b.)			
	c.)			
3.	Etc…			

Notes

6.3 Implementing the strategic plan

Duration: 2 hours

Materials required:
- flip chart paper
- markers
- copies of "Some useful tips for keeping your strategic plan off the shelf" for each participant
- prepare the following flip chart beforehand:
  - Instructions for group work
- copies of handout for each participant:
  - Useful tips for keeping your new strategic plan 'off the shelf'

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a. Purpose

To plan for how the strategic plan will be "kept off the shelf" and how ongoing implementation and review will be handled by the organisation.

b. Key ideas

As mentioned above – developing a strategic plan is only half the story. The real challenge for an organisation is to be able to implement the plan and keep thinking and working strategically throughout the time period. Thus, it is important to consider ways in which the plan will be introduced to others who are not present at the workshop, how the plan will be implemented over time, how problems will be addressed when they arise and how the progress of the plan will be reviewed from time to time. As well as who will be responsible for all these activities.

There are at least three areas that need to be considered:
- How the board will be involved in and support implementation of the plan;
- How all staff members will be involved in and support implementation of the plan;
- How the progress of the plan will be monitored and how changes will be made to the plan.

See **handout # 7: 'Useful tips for keeping your new strategic plan "off the shelf"'** for more information.

c. Methodology
- Using the key ideas above introduce the issues related to implementing the plan;
- Ask participants to divide themselves into three groups to discuss the following questions:

  Group 1 – How will you monitor/review the implementation of the strategic plan?

- What activities will be needed and how frequently?
- Who will be involved at each step?
- How will problems of implementation be addressed, how will changes/ adjustments to the plan be made?

Group 2 - How will you communicate the results of this workshop to the rest of the Board of Trustees?

- Who will be responsible for this and by when?
- Regarding oversight of implementation of the plan – what will the roles and responsibilities be: of the chair, the executive and general board members?

Group 3 – How will you communicate the results of the strategic plan to staff?

- What activities will be needed?
- Who will be responsible?
- By when will this be done?
- What are the next steps for preparing for implementation and doing implementation of the plan?

• Ask the groups to record their answers on flip chart and to report back in plenary. Encourage participants to add comments where necessary;

• Round off the exercise by circulating **handout # 7: 'Useful tips for keeping your new strategic plan "off the shelf"'** and highlight some of the main points which you think are relevant.

6.4 Following up after the workshop – producing an annual work plan

Once strategic directions, objectives and indicators have been set, only then do we start to develop work plans and schedules. This need not necessarily happen in the workshop. This task can be delegated to small, appropriate teams within the organisations, who generate the strategies and annual work plans to achieve the strategic directions. It is this stage that could be called 'strategic planning', while the preceding and subsequent stages involve 'strategic thinking'[49].

It is strongly recommended that people work *together in small teams* when completing their annual work plans, rather than nominating one person to draft the plan in isolation. This ensures that those who will be implementing the plan know what it contains, have helped to shape it and are thus more inclined to remain committed to meeting their obligations.

A typical annual work plan may follow the following format:

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49 Thaw, D (1997) *Ideas for a Change Part 1: Strategic Planning.* Olive Organisational Development & Training.

Vision:

Mission:

FY period/ duration:

Strategic Directions	Objectives	Indicators	Activities (tasks that need to be undertaken to achieve objectives and measure indicators)	Person/ group responsible for each activity	Timing (by when/ deadline for each activity)	Budget calculations (costs per activity)
Strategic Direction #1	Objective #1	Related indicators	List of activities …			
	Objective #2		List of activities …			
	Objective #3 etc.		List of activities …			
Strategic Direction #2	Objective #1		etc.			
	Objective #2					
	Objective #3 etc.					
Strategic Direction #3	Objective #1					
	Objective #2					
	Objective #3 etc.					
Strategic Direction #4	Objective #1					
	Objective #2					
	Objective #3 etc.					
Strategic Direction #5	Objective #1					
	Objective #2					
	Objective #3 etc.					

Together, an organisation's vision, identity, mission, strategic directions, annual work plans and budget form its strategic plan. With a strategic plan, the organisation is in a good position to move forward effectively. In addition to providing a clear path to follow, strategic thinking and planning enables people to get to know their organisation better, diagnose its strengths and challenges and to value the collective skills of the staff.

'However, it is common to either not implement the strategic plan consistently or to put it on a shelf and not implement it at all'[50]. It is critical that all participants in the process take responsibility for the plan that they have jointly developed. Carrying out the plan, monitoring its progress, and adjusting it to the organisation's changing reality are also part of the strategic thinking process. Progress should be checked at least quarterly to verify where you are. 'If adjustments are necessary, make them. The ability to be flexible and to gauge when new developments or issues require you to change your action plans are skills all staff need to cultivate. Strategic thinking is an ongoing cycle of analysing, communicating, planning, monitoring and analysing again'[51].

> *"In the end, the most significant benefit of the strategic thinking process is that it puts you and your colleagues in touch with what you want your organisation to be in the end and with the people who make your organisation what it is."[52]*

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50 McNamara, C (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

51 The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (1999) *Strategic Planning.* CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. X. Washington DC. p24.

52   Ibid. p 24.

7. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan

As stated above, developing an effective strategic plan is one part of a longer, strategic thinking process. For a number of reasons, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of a plan is as important as developing the plan itself. Monitoring and evaluation helps to:[53]

- Keep an organisation 'on track', and to follow the direction set during strategic planning;
- Ensure strategic directions or objectives are achieved;
- Fine tune strategies in the light of lessons learnt during implementation and to help the organisation to take corrective action;
- Improve organisational performance. Monitoring helps to support organisational learning, decision making and to produce more effective action plans;
- Provide a vital link between the strategic plan and the day-to-day activities of the organisation;
- Understand the effects and impact of the organisation's work, and thus the effectiveness of the strategic plan.

In designing and establishing a monitoring and evaluation system for an organisation's strategic plan, the following elements should be considered:

a. Checking the status of implementation of the strategic plan

As Theis[54] notes, 'the ultimate aim of development… is to bring about improvements in people's lives. Measuring changes in people's lives is therefore a key aspect of rights based monitoring and evaluation.' Strategic plans are developed to help guide organisations in their work. Thus, tracking the effects of the implementation of a strategic plan is an important part of the process.

Some key questions that could be used to develop an M&E system could include[55]:

- To what extent are the strategic directions or objectives being achieved by the organisation? If they are being achieved, record,

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53   Birnbaum, B. *'Monitoring implementation of your strategic plan'* www.birnbaumassociates.com and Theis J (April 2003) *'Rights based monitoring and evaluation – a discussion paper'.* Unpublished.

54   Theis J (April 2003) *'Rights based monitoring and evaluation – a discussion paper'.* Unpublished. p 94.

55   McNamara, C (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

celebrate and communicate the progress. If they are not, focus on the following questions.

- To what extent will strategic directions be achieved within estimated time frames?
- If they will not be achieved, should the time frames be revised? If changes need to be made, ensure there is understanding of why activities are behind schedule as well as what else needs to be changed to ensure new time frames can be met in future, as opposed to merely postponing activities.
- Does the organisation have the necessary resources to achieve its strategic directions, including staff, time, funding, equipment, facilities, systems, skills and relationships?
- Should organisational priorities be changed to put more emphasis on achieving strategic directions?
- What has been learnt from monitoring and evaluation activities, which can be used to improve future programmes?

The exercise in 6.2 above can help organisation draft a monitoring and evaluation plan, but thought also needs to go into how this plan will be put into practice by the organisation concerned. The following sections provide some guidelines for how this can be achieved.

b. Identifying appropriate indicators
While identifying specific indicators, with targets and time frames, can be helpful in measuring the achievement of concrete outcomes of strategic plans, this approach is only useful when changes are tangible or easy to quantify. (See 6.2 above for some examples).

However, child rights represent a broad minimum standard that generally cannot be measured by a single indicator. Rights are also interdependent and interconnected and require a broader perspective in assessing the extent to which they have been realised. Thus, in trying to address this dilemma in assessing rights, Save the Children UK has developed a Global Impact Monitoring system that does not rely entirely on indicators. Rather, it uses five 'dimensions of change' against which development activities can be assessed. These dimensions could also be applied to monitoring the implementation and impact of an organisation's strategic plan. (See 6.1 above for more info on dimensions of change).

The five dimensions include[56]:

- 'Changes in the lives of children and young people – which rights are better fulfilled? Which rights are no longer being violated?
- Changes in policies and practice affecting children and young people's rights – to what extent duty bearers are more accountable for the fulfilment, protection and respect of children's rights? Do

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56 Starling, S. Foresti, M and Banos Smith, H. (2004) *Global Impact Monitoring – Save the Children UK's experience of impact assessment.* Save the Children UK, London. p 8.

policies that are developed and implemented and do the attitudes of duty bearers take into account the best interests and rights of the child?

- Changes in children's participation and active citizenship – do children claim their rights or are they supported to do so? Do spaces and opportunities exist that allow participation and the exercise of citizenship by children's groups or others working for the fulfilment of child rights?
- Changes in equity and non discrimination of children – in policies, programmes, services and communities, are the most marginalised children reached?
- Changes in the capacity of civil society and communities to support children's rights – do networks, coalitions and movements add value to the work of their participants? Do they mobilise greater forces for change in children's lives?'

These five dimensions are both simple and flexible, enabling them to be adapted to suit a variety of different organisational contexts and strategic plans. They also provide an effective way of encouraging organisational learning and assessing the implementation of strategic directions. Thus, they should be drawn on to form the basis of an M&E system for assessing rights based strategic plans.

c. Designing monitoring and evaluation processes

Generally monitoring is the systematic and continuous assessment of the progress of work over time, which checks that things are going according to plan, while evaluation is the periodic assessment of the relevance, performance, efficiency and the impact of work with respect to stated objectives[57].

However, the frequency of monitoring and evaluation activities will depend on the context in which an organisation operates. Organisations working in unpredictable, emergency situations or who are experiencing rapid internal change may need to monitor the implementation of the strategic plan on a monthly basis, while organisations working in more stable situations may only require quarterly or annual reviews.

Different levels of leadership within the organisation should also determine the method, frequency and participants of M&E activities. While senior staff should reflect on their strategic plan at least on a monthly basis, the Board of Trustees should review the status of implementation quarterly or annually. Other processes can valuably involve children, community members, partners, as well as project staff. For example, the Global Impact Monitoring system relies on a series of annual review meetings where groups of partners, children,

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57 Adapted from Gosling, L and Edwards, M (1995) *Toolkits: a practical guide to assessment, monitoring, review and evaluation.* Development Manual 5. Save the Children, London.

adult community members, government officials, donors and NGOs review the performance of Save the Children's programmes. Thus, process design needs to carefully match participants' needs and interests in order to maximise their contribution regarding influencing the implementation and progress of the strategic plan.

d. Feeding back results

Monitoring and evaluation activities should also be well documented to enable them to be shared and discussed more transparently, as well as providing a useful way of tracking changes over time. Some possible areas these reports cover may include:

- Trends and achievements regarding the progress of implementation of the strategic plan;
- Recommendations for the follow up action and priorities;
- Specific actions that need to be taken by the organisation's leadership and key stakeholders.

e. Dealing with changes

McNamara[58] notes that 'the plan is only a guideline, not a strict roadmap which must be followed. It's OK to deviate from the plan'. Reality never matches our plans, thus, most organisations change their strategic plan during the course of its implementation. Alterations usually result from environmental changes, emerging community needs or shifts in the availability of resources needed to carry out the original plan.

However, the most important aspect of making such changes is understanding why a change has occurred and knowing why a deviation from the original strategic plan is necessary. Thus, before making changes to the plan, organisations need to reflect on the following questions[59]:

- What is causing the need for change?
- Why should a change be made?
- What change is needed? In terms of revisions to strategic directions, responsibilities and time frames?

During these reviews, organisations should also watch for opportunities to fine tune their planning and review processes. This can improve the implementation of strategies in future. For example, organisations could set aside extra time during the fourth quarterly (annual) review exercise to assess their planning process. This involves reflecting on what went well and what could have been done differently regarding these sessions. This will ensure that the planning process is more responsive to the organisation's needs, as well

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58   McNamara, C (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation.* Authenticity Consulting, Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

59   Ibid.

as increasing transparency, the participation of a wider range of stakeholders and the quality of learning and feedback during the process. Ultimately, the test of the effectiveness of any monitoring and evaluation system is the extent to which it is able to build the capacity of those involved in the process.

Notes

8. Conclusion

It is hoped that by this stage, your rights based strategic thinking process should have successfully answered the following five key questions[60] that need to be addressed through the process:

- **Why does your organisation exist?** i.e. the organisation's vision, mission or main purpose and guiding values;
- **Where is your organisation now?** i.e. what is the current situation, resources, relationships and dynamics within the context;
- **What does your organisation do well**? i.e. exploring best practices that made high points of success possible;
- **What does your organisation wish to do?** i.e. finding propositions for the future that express what the organisation would be doing if it were performing at its best;
- **How will your organisation get there?** i.e. outlining an action plan that describes specific strategies for achieving the shared vision.

We hope that you have found some of these ideas useful and that they will help you and your organisation strive for success and sustainability.

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60   The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (1999) **Strategic Planning**. CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. X. Washington DC. p iv.

Appendices

Handout 1: Introduction to
Strategic Thinking

a. Strategic thinking

Strategic thinking and action are critical skills for organisations to develop, as they all operate in a fluid environment. Change is all around us constantly and we need to be aware of:
- Pace and depth of change;
- Discontinuous change;
- Unpredictability.

Thus, the only constant is change[61].

Having a strategic perspective enables organisations to deal with change. Alan Fowler talks about organisations developing "insightful agility"[62], which helps them to be open and flexible to change, as well as being able to shape their environment at the same time. It is this insight that helps organisations to develop a "strategic perspective".

b. What is a strategic perspective?

Usually, there is never a single way forward or option, instead organisations need to be able to make conscious choices: to be influential or not; to take risks or place it safe; to shape or be shaped by change. Thus, a strategic perspective is a way of being[63]:
- It involves constantly scanning, reflecting, responding to changes and the context in which we work;
- A strategic perspective is also about positioning the organisation in relation to key stakeholders: who does the organisation want to influence; what are organisation's strengths; where can it add value; how can it network more effectively;
- This involves balancing different stakeholder interests with that of the organisation;
- It is also a process to guide organisations: what must organisation do to cope in that specific environment; organisations should not accept change passively; vision implementation is vital in this regard;
- Thus, strategic thinking and acting is important, as opposed to only conducting isolated strategic planning events once every three years.

c. What is strategic planning?

If a strategic thinking process is about exploring opportunities for change, development and adaptation, the process of determining the details of how to implement this new awareness is strategic planning.

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61 Harding, D (1996) unpublished notes.

62 Fowler, A (2000) *The virtuous spiral: a guide to sustainability for NGOs in international development.* Earthscan, London. p xii.

63 Thaw, D (1997) *Ideas for a Change Part 1: Strategic Planning.* Olive Organisational Development & Training.

The word 'strategic' comes from the Greek word '*strategia*', which means *skilful management with tact and diplomacy*. In the context of civil society, we can think in terms of taking stock, the deployment of resources or advantageously positioning the organisation, as well as visioning, setting goals and objectives in the fight against poverty or injustice.

Strategic planning tends to be an abstract and conceptual process and it involves addressing several different aspects simultaneously. Thus, a good strategic plan will include[64]:

- **A plan**: a way or path for realising our goals and objectives;
- **A pattern**: an understanding of patterns of actions over time, patterns that have emerged over time when we reconcile reality with our aims;
- **A position**: a stance that we take about our context or an issue, e.g. "let no right go unrealised";
- **A ploy**: a 'ruse' or procedure for dealing with power dynamics in the context in which we work;
- **A perspective**: a world view that shapes and guides our programming decisions and actions.

Thus, a strategic plan needs to include[65]:

- **The art of our particular intervention** – how we will prepare ourselves and the things we need to do before we engage an issue, situation or group, as well as the things we need to do to *avoid* conflict or the things we need to do to make conflict *unnecessary* – how we can use our influence with tact and diplomacy;
- **A general plan of action** – an approach to a challenge and our tactics, e.g. how we can use scarce resources effectively, how we will link our resources (means) to results (ends);
- **A clear goal or end objective** – strategies need to be related to a goal or end objective, such as a mission or vision;
- **A set of decisions** – such as, who we are, what we offer, to whom and on what terms. This helps us to pick the right course of action as well as to carry it out properly and effectively.

But, in order to get the most out of strategic planning, we also need to bear the following in mind[66]:

- 'The real benefit of strategic planning is the process itself – rather than the plan or report;
- There is no "perfect" plan. There is doing your best at strategic thinking and implementation and learning from what we are doing to enhance what we will do in the future'.

d. Some useful quotations to bear in mind …

"We have got to live with chaos and uncertainty, to try to be comfortable with it and not to look for certainty where we won't find it."

Charles Handy: "The Age of Paradox".

"Excellent organisations don't believe in excellence – only in constant improvement and constant change. They cherish impermanence."

Tom Peters: "Thriving on Chaos".

"The stormier the sea, the greater the need to stay on course. Visions demand goals and goals require innovative strategies."

Anon.

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64 Nickols, F (2000) *'Strategy is a lot of things'.* Distance Consulting.

65 Ibid.

66 McNamara, C. (2003) *Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation*. Authenticity Consulting. Minneapolis. www.managementhelp.org/plan.doc/str-plan/str-plan.html.

Handout 2: Introduction to Human Rights

a. The International Human Rights Framework

For the perspective of a rights based approach, we take the human rights established as universal legal guarantees by the United Nations (UN) as our global reference point. The current system of human rights came into being in the aftermath of the Second World War motivated by the genocide, and suffering that had taken place in the first half of the 20th century. From the beginning the UN stated that human rights, justice, peace and development were strongly interlinked and has since agreed on a series of human rights treaties aimed at protecting individuals and groups against actions and omissions (i.e. failures to act) that affect their freedoms and human dignity[67].

Origins and development of the International Bill of Rights:

- 1945 – United Nations formed to ensure that another World War never occurs and to end genocide. Its main aim is 'promoting and encouraging respect for human rights …'
- Human rights seen as an important condition for peace and stability. Human rights, justice, peace and development are seen as strongly linked;
- 1948 – Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) developed. It is the first UN document and was designed to exert moral and political pressure on States. (However, generally declarations are not legally enforceable.) Although the UDHR was not developed by a group representative of the world's people – it is acknowledged as identifying the fundamental rights of all human beings;
- Thus there is a need for a single treaty – based on the UDHR – that states can sign and which is legally enforceable;
- In the meantime – the Cold War breaks out and there is a division between soviet and capitalist states. The soviet states focus on economic and social rights e.g. the right to work, to health and to education. The capitalist states focus on civil and political rights e.g. freedom of speech and religion.
- 1966 two treaties are ratified (treaties and covenants are generally legally enforceable):
  - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) – which is signed by all member states except China and
  - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) – which is signed by all member states except the USA
- Together the UDHR + ICCPR + ICESCR constitute the International Bill of Rights – the core of human rights law;
- Other treaties have been developed regarding particular vulnerable populations e.g. the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1981. Below are listed some of the key treaties.

b. Main human rights declarations and treaties:

1948   Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
1965   Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

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67   Save the Children (2004) Child Rights Programming Handbook.

1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)[68]
1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or
        Punishment (CAT)
1986 Declaration on the Right to Development
1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC)
2000 Millennium Declaration
2003 Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their
        Families
2006 Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons.

There are also regional human rights treaties[69], national laws and constitutions – all of which may be important in applying a rights based approach. However our global reference point remains the international human rights framework.

1983 African Charter on Human and People's Rights
1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

c. Rights based approaches and child rights programming

Child rights programming (CRP) is a child-focused version of a much broader range of approaches to doing relief and development work that are 'rights based'. All these approaches endeavour to apply the human rights principles and standards discussed in the previous chapter. So before looking in more detail at what we mean by CRP, it is helpful to understand a little more about the wider 'family' of rights based approaches of which child rights programming is a part.

d. What are rights based approaches to relief and development?

Approaches to development work have changed considerably over the past decades, as well as differing in emphasis depending on the dominant political ideology. Early international development assistance was often based on the assumption that improving economies and personal wealth alone would improve the lives of individuals. More recently a trend to more "people centred", empowering, and participatory approaches has emerged. Although the end goal has always included improvement in people's survival and quality of life, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable people in the poorest countries of the world, the understanding of how this is best achieved has varied a great deal.

The recent shift to a form of relief and development work that is guided by an imperative to achieve people's rights reflects the recognition that something more is needed than a trickle of external assistance from the rich "developed" world to the poorer "developing" world. Through their agreement to treaties and covenants over the past two decades governments have adopted the realisation of human rights as the goal of development. The realisation of the rights of all has be-

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68 The UDHR, ICCPR (and its 2 Optional Protocols), and the ICESCR are often referred to collectively as the International Bill of Human Rights.

69 For example, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; and the American Convention on Human Rights.

come a global challenge rather than one for individual governments alone, a challenge most recently articulated through the UN Millennium Declaration[70].

Key to this new way of looking at development is the way that rights based approaches hold powerful people and institutions accountable for their responsibilities to those with less power. Rights based programmes support rights holders, especially the poor, powerless and discriminated-against - to claim their rights. They have the potential to increase impact and strengthen sustainability by addressing the underlying causes of violations of rights, and bringing about policy and practice changes to make a sustained difference to the lives of individuals, both now, and in the future.

Rights based approaches have now become an important way in which agencies and organisations "do" development.

An increasing number of UN agencies, donors, NGOs and others are debating how best to focus their aid and development policies on maximising their impact on the fulfilment of human rights. In 2003, for example, the key UN agencies (including UNDP) involved in relief and development work agreed a common understanding of rights based approaches[71].

e. Why adopt rights based approaches?

Many development organisations have adopted rights based approaches to programming for two main reasons. Firstly, they agree with the set of values and beliefs about human beings and development expressed in human rights i.e. they believe that it is a *morally* right approach. Secondly, they believe that rights based approaches bring a number of *practical* benefits compared to other approaches to relief and development work. These benefits include:

- **International agreement and legitimacy**: the goal and standards are universally agreed and set out in an international legal framework which is shared by governments, donors and civil society. This gives organisations legitimacy and authority.
- **A clear, shared long term goal** (regarding the of human rights): this goal can be shared by everyone working in relief and development, along with the standards to measure progress towards it.
- **Accountability:** the responsibilities of governments, donors, the private sector, communities and individuals are identified and various ways in which they can be held accountable have already been developed and tested.
- **Empowerment:** the active participation of disadvantaged and discriminated-against groups is seen as essential to achieving social justice, non-discrimination and pro-poor development.
- **Equity:** there is a strong focus on justice, equality and freedom and a willingness to tackle the power issues that lie at the root of poverty and exploitation. There is a commitment to reach the most excluded.
- **Greater impact and effectiveness:** because of its emphasis on accountability, empowerment and activism the rights based approach is seen as being more effective in the fight against injustice, poverty and exploitation.
- **An integrated approach**: rights based approaches incorporate what is widely regarded as "good development practice" into one overall holistic approach.

Adopting a rights based approach to relief and development is about having real impact on development ambitions, and on the way in which organisations and their staff work. But a lot of what is actually done using rights based approaches is not radically different from what is done using other approaches. Given that rights based approaches build on good development practice it would be

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70 See www.un.org/milleniumdeclaration/ares552e.htm for the Declaration and www.developmentgoals.org for details of the Millennium Development Goals.

71 The UN Common Understanding (2003) outlines the UN agencies commitment to rights based approaches, see www.undp.org.

strange if it were so different. However, some areas of focus are new and some things must be done differently.

Rights based approaches are a package and it is their systematic and complete application that makes them so effective.

One way of understanding some of these differences, particularly those that relate to the relationship between development actors such as NGOs and the people for whom they claim to work - is to compare some key elements of rights based approaches with those of other approaches with which relief and development practitioners are familiar.

(Source: Save the Children (2004) Child Rights Programming Handbook.)

Handout 3: Introduction to Child Rights Programming

a. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) – the human rights of children

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is the most 'complete' human rights treaty – in that it contains all the civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights of children, and also covers some areas usually associated with international humanitarian law. The UN CRC re-emphasises that children are holders of rights, and their rights cover all aspects of their lives. It applies to all human beings under the age of 18.

As of January 2006 the UN CRC has been ratified by 192 out of 194 countries[72], and it is legally binding for these countries.

b. History of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child

The roots of the UN CRC can be traced back to 1924 when the League of Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, written by Eglantyne Jebb, the founder of Save the Children. In 1948 the UDHR recognised the "special nature of childhood and motherhood", and in 1959 the UN adopted a Declaration on the Rights of the Child. Other human rights treaties of course refer to children[73] and all of their provisions apply to children. However, it was felt that children needed a separate convention and a clearer definition of children's legal status under international law. After a 10 year drafting process the UN CRC was adopted by the United Nations on 20th November 1989.

c. The UN CRC – substantive rights and general principles

The UN CRC consists of 54 articles, some of which deal with the process of ratification and monitoring of the UN CRC. The remaining articles concern specific rights.

The UN CRC covers a very wide range of rights. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, set up to monitor the application of the UN CRC by states, has identified four of these rights as general principles that are to be considered in the implementation of every article of the UN CRC, and in all situations concerning children. These general principles are:

Non-discrimination (article 2)

> "The state parties to the present Convention shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status."

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72 Only the USA and Somalia have not ratified it, though both have signed it. The UN CRC is the most widely accepted of all human rights treaties.

73 For example, article 24 of the ICCPR (birth registration etc.), and article 13 of the ICESCR (which refers to education)

The principle is that all rights apply to all children without exception. The state itself has an obligation to put into place the means to ensure children are protected from any form of discrimination and to take positive action to promote their rights.

Best interests of the child (article 3)

> *"In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."*

The "best interests" principle covers all decision making affecting boys and girls, including the mobilization and allocation of resources. Children's "best interests" will not normally be the only consideration when decisions are made which affect children but must be among the first aspects to be considered and should be given considerable weight - "a primary consideration", relative to the interests of adults. It is important for those taking decisions to take into consideration the views of the child when determining what the best interests of the child might be.

Right to life, survival and development (article 6)

> *"1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.*
> *2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child."*

This article establishes the principle that children have the right to life, and in addition affirms that every child has the rights to those inputs and provisions that will enable them to develop to their full potential and play their part in a peaceful, tolerant society.

The right to be heard (article 12)

> *"States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."*

Girls and boys have the right to be heard in all decisions affecting them, and article 12 places an obligation on governments to ensure that girls and boys' views are sought and considered. This article is part of a wider body of "participation rights" that children have, which is often defined as article 12 together with articles: 13 (freedom of expression); 14 (freedom of thought, conscience, religion); 15 (freedom of association); 16 (right to privacy etc.); 17 (access to appropriate information). In the UN CRC children are recognised as social actors both in relation to their own development and that of society.

d. What is child rights programming?

As already noted, CRP is a child focused version of the rights based approaches described above[74]. CRP applies rights based approaches specifically to work to realise the rights of boys and girls under the age of 18. The reason for having a specific approach like this is that children - as well as being human beings - have their own special needs and vulnerabilities. In other words, children are

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74   See also G. Lansdown's Discussion Paper "What's the difference? Implications of a child-focus in rights based programming" (Save the Children UK 2005).

like adults in some respects but also different from them in other ways. This is why there is a special international convention on the human rights of children and why development organisations working with girls and boys need a rights based approach that is adapted to the special situation of children.

The key components of CRP all draw upon the general principles of the UN CRC, as well as other fundamental human rights principles, as discussed in Section 1.

One useful way of thinking about CRP is to consider the definition of its three component words:

- *Child* – every boy and girl under the age of eighteen years of age, a period of childhood accorded special consideration in human rights terms (UDHR Art 26b), characterised as a period of evolving capabilities and of vulnerabilities relative to those of adults.
- *Rights* – defined as international human rights applicable to children, set out primarily in the UN CRC but also to be found in all other human rights conventions.
- *Programming* – management of a set of activities, including analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring, towards a defined goal or objective, involving good development practice.

The combination of these three definitions provides an overall working definition of CRP:

> *"Child rights programming means using the principles of child rights to plan, implement and monitor programmes with the overall goal of improving the position of children so that all boys and girls can fully enjoy their rights and can live in societies that acknowledge and respect children's rights."*

Child Rights Programming brings together a range of ideas, concepts and experiences related to child rights, child development, emergency response and development work within one unifying framework. It is primarily based on the principles and standards of children's human rights but also draws heavily on good practice in many areas of work with children as well as lessons learnt in relief and development.

(Source: Save the Children (2004) Child Rights Programming Handbook.)

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e. Eight key indicators of Child Rights Programming

At this point, it might be useful to outline some of the key indicators of CRP taking the general human rights principles and concepts as well as the UN CRC principles and concepts as a starting point:

- Extent to which services offered are 'child friendly.' *(Right to be heard)*
- Extent to which children are included regarding services or project offered (i.e. who is excluded & why?). *(Right to non discrimination)*
- Extent to which 'child survival & development' issues are being addressed. *(Right to life, survival and development)*
- Extent to which 'best interests of the child' is being applied. *(Best interests of the child)*
- Extent to which duty bearers are supported to fulfil their responsibility & are held accountable.
- Extent to which children & guardians are able to make use of, or claim their rights.
- Extent to which problems are prevented by addressing root causes of issues.
- Extent to which this intervention is a child rights project.

Handout 4: The 'Three Pillars' Model

It is important to remember that all child rights programmes should contain a mix of three types of activities which aim to[75]:
- Address gaps and violations of rights e.g. through the distribution of food aid, reunification of separated children or sexual exploitation;
- Strengthen legislation or government structures and mechanisms e.g. policy change, legislation development and institution building;
- Strengthen communities and civil society's capacity to support children's rights e.g. children's rights coalitions, mobilisation of youth clubs etc.

This way of thinking about CRP is known as the 'Three Pillars' Model. While the mix of activities may vary across projects and contexts, all child rights programmes would be expected to include some activities in all three pillars, evolving through the programme cycle over time. The three areas of child rights interventions & strategies include:

CR situation analysis		
1. Direct service provision	**2. Engaging & influencing government**	**3. Building support for child rights**
Actions to directly address violations of child rights (e.g. service delivery & practical actions) • provision of services; • training & skills devt; • protection against violations; • ensuring children are involved in decision making; • addressing discrimination	Actions to promote child rights focused decisions in legislative, political and admin structures (e.g. building structures and mechanisms) • primarily engaging and influencing government; • legal reform; • raising awareness of policy makers; • advocacy campaigns to influence policy/ laws • development of government structures – to inform legislation from a child rights perspective; • ensuring policies and laws are put into practice	Actions to build a constituency for support for child rights within government, civil society, professions, media and private sector (e.g. constituency building – people and awareness) • awareness of other stakeholders; • capacity building of various duty bearers; • working in partnerships • participating in networks
Strong linkages needed between all three pillars to ensure strategies are mutually reinforcing – can't only focus on one 'pillar' in isolation of others		

Examples of common approaches that could be used in all 'pillars': Research; communication and public education; advocacy; training and capacity building; monitoring and evaluation.

Note: NGOs should not 'take over' the role of the state in realising child rights – rather they need to find a niche, pressure government for change and strengthen duty bearers to fulfil their responsibilities.

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75   Save the Children (July 2005) *Child Rights programming – how to apply rights based approaches to programming.* Lima, Peru. p 42.

Handout 5: Three Types of Power Dynamics

a. Visible power dynamics

These include **observable decision making processes**, such as, formal rules, structures, authorities and institutions, such as elections, political parties, laws, legislature, budgets, corporate policies, municipal by laws etc. These dynamics also include the individual capacity and political will of duty bearers[76].

But the environment and society never treats all people equally - there are always other dynamics at work …

b. Hidden power dynamics

These dynamics determine what is on the political agenda and they include society's or government's **informal/unwritten rules and practices**. These dynamics are less obvious forces and thus, are difficult to engage. They help to maintain current power relations by controlling who decides, how decisions are made as well as what gets onto the agenda. Hidden dynamics are tactics that powerful groups use to influence others, such as attempting to discredit, exclude or delegitimise certain issues, people or groups. They can also include the lack of political will of duty bearers to address an issue. These dynamics prevent issues from being focused on, prevent certain voices from being heard and determine what issues are regarded as "newsworthy" by the media. For example, by encouraging domestic violence to be seen as a "private issue" it is delegitimised and the necessity for state action precluded – resulting in the issue remaining unaddressed[77].

c. Invisible power dynamics

These power dynamics **shape meaning in society**. They render competing interests and problems invisible and ensure significant issues are kept "off the table" and out of people's consciousness. These dynamics determine what information is concealed or inaccessible and they influence **how people think**, what beliefs dominate and how different groups of people see themselves – this is due to culture and ideology working to perpetuate exclusion, inequality and definitions of what is regarded as "normal" or acceptable in a given context. These practices also prevent people questioning or changing relationships and addressing injustice. Examples of invisible power dynamics include socialisation practices, stereotypes, gender roles, images in text books, the media and adverts[78].

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76   VeneKlasen, L and Miller, V (2006) *A new weave of power, people and politics: the action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*. World Neighbours, Oklahoma City. p 47.

77   Ibid. p 47.

78   Ibid. p 48.

Handout 6: Assessing Organisational Capability

Organisations are made up of people. It is what people bring to an organisation and how their capacities are translated into strategies and action that result in the organisation's level of effectiveness.

There are many models that can be used to assess organisational effectiveness and capability. One model[79] involves assessing three broad areas: conceptual capability, social capability and technical capability.

The intersection of circles represents organisational capability for effectiveness
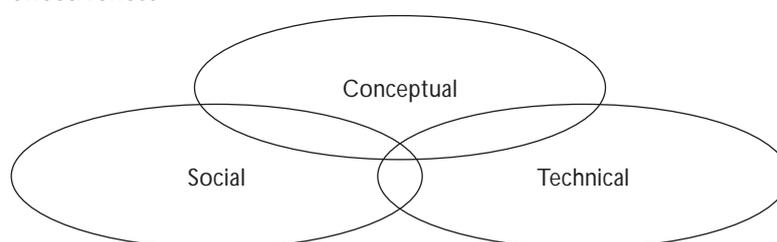
a. The conceptual area relates to:

- Relevance of ideas, strategy and vision of the organisation;
- Extent to which the organisation's ideas, information and knowledge are used to vision, forecast and plan;
- Extent to which the organisation is strategically positioned (e.g. area of focus and key relationships);
- Ability to learn from and feed back experiences into ongoing work;
- Relevance of mission and vision;
- Appropriateness/impact of programme strategies;
- Extent to which child rights programming is demonstrated in programmes.

b. The social area relates to:

- Effectiveness/ extent to which relationships are built, maintained and managed;
- Height of organisational profile and extent of influence of its networks. How the organisation is perceived by partners, government, donors and other stakeholders;
- Extent to which key CR principles are demonstrated, e.g. non-discrimination of children, the participation of children, children's survival and development and their best interests;
- Level of organisation and flexibility and adaptation to change;
- Extent to which staff potential is realised;
- People's knowledge and skills level within the organisation;
- Staff and volunteer capacity and effectiveness.

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79   Thaw, D (2000) *Ideas for a Change. Part 6: Capacity Development.* Olive Organisational Development and Training, Durban. p 23.

c. The technical area relates to:

- Effectiveness of support systems – for communication, administration and finance;
- Effectiveness of how activities/projects are designed, monitored and implemented;
- Extent to which information is recorded, shared, stored and accessed by staff;
- Access to/use of technology e.g. phones, computers, email, internet;
- Level/quality of assets owned e.g. vehicles, equipment, property, systems, publications and financial resources;
- Length, continuity, diversity and levels of funding sources.

Group work:

Participants to form three small groups.

Group 1:

- Using the checklist of questions above, assess the organisation's conceptual capability;
- Write your responses on a flip chart;
- Select a presenter to report back to the group.

Group 2:

- Using the checklist of questions above, assess the organisation's social capability;
- Write your responses on a flip chart;
- Select a presenter to report back to the group.

Group 3:

- Using the checklist of questions above, assess the organisation's technical capability;
- Write your responses on a flip chart;
- Select a presenter to report back to the group.

Handout 7: Useful Tips For Keeping Your New Strategic Plan "Off The Shelf"

Daily demands can easily distract good intentions and keep the newly completed strategic plan "on the shelf" and gathering dust! The following tips can help your organisation to obtain the tangible benefits that it deserves from its planning efforts:

- 'Make your strategic planning process inclusive. Ownership is a critical ingredient when implementing a strategic plan. Without ownership, individuals who are most affected by the plan may actively or passively resist their part in implementing it. The most effective way of developing ownership is to ensure broad participation in the planning process', (such as broad members, management, admin, field staff as well as partners and community members) (Burns);
- Determine a process for feeding back results to others not present during the strategic planning event. For example, plan "echo workshops" that help additional staff, partners, beneficiaries contribute to the planning and implementation process, especially the drafting of more detailed annual plans and review processes;
- A process for considering adjustments or changes should be agreed on **before** the implementation of the plan. This process should identify how changes can be made and who is responsible for making them;
- 'Provide your strategic plan to all new employees and trustees. Some organisations make it part of the employee manual as well as the trustees orientation pack' (Kandel);
- 'Use the executive summary to submit to donors, media and community leaders' (Kandel);
- 'There should be marks on everyone's copy as adjustments are made based on changing circumstances. The document should definitely not be merely gathering dust on the shelf' (Kandel). **(The point of a strategic plan is not to be right … but to be ready!);**
- 'Develop more detailed annual plans based on the strategic plan – and check on progress of the annual plan at least quarterly. Many organisations put their annual plans on the wall and check off their progress'. These detailed implementation plans make the strategic planning process complete – without these annual plans there can be little accountability for using and achieving the strategic plan (Kandel);
- 'Key meetings of the Board should be arranged to discuss progress to-date during which possible major adjustments are considered. Boards should devote one special meeting annually to a discussion of progress. Generally this begins with an assessment of the current context and any resulting changes recommended in strategies' (Kandel);
- Ensure the support and commitment of Board members by (Burns):
  - Involving board members (especially the chairperson) in the strategic thinking process;
  - Engaging board members in a discussion of the pros and cons of the proposed strategic plan and unofficial discussions throughout the strategic thinking process;
  - Ensuring board members are involved in regular, scheduled reviews of the implemented plan;
- 'Staff meetings should have planning milestones as a regular part of the conversation. Have we achieved what we anticipated? Why or why not? Are we heading in the right direction given changes in the context or have we drifted off course?' (Kandel);
- Make a commitment to evaluation as a process of measuring success – this is a good time to make adjustments to the plan in the light of new findings. 'First decide what you really want to know from an evaluation'. Then identify who will be responsible for the process. Third, agree on a method. And finally develop a work plan that assigns responsibilities to specific individuals, as well as dates and tasks (Burns);

- 'Constant consideration of the strategic plan through all aspects of the organisation's life instils a way of strategic thinking' among staff and helping to ensure your organisations remains relevant and strategically positioned (Kandel).

Sources:

Gregory Kandel **"Keeping the Plan and Planning Alive"** www.arts.endow.gov/resources/lessons/kandel2.html. p 1–3.

Mike Burns **"Off the shelf: How to ensure that your strategic plan becomes a valuable tool"** www.arts.endow.gov/resources/lessons/burns.html. p 1–3.

Further Reading and Useful Resources

Appreciative Inquiry

Annis-Hammon, S (1996) **The thin book of appreciative inquiry**. CSS Publishing.

Http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/ A worldwide portal devoted to the fullest sharing of academic resources and practical tools on **Appreciative Inquiry.**

Cooperrider and Srivasta (1987) *"Appreciative inquiry into organisational life"* in **Research in Organisational Change and Development**. Pasmore and Woodman (eds) Vol 1, JAI Press.

Watkins, J and Mohr, B (2001) **Appreciative inquiry: change at the speed of imagination**. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Whitney, D and Trosten-Bloom, A (2002) **Power of appreciative inquiry: a practical guide to positive changes**. Berrett Koehler.

Rights Based Approaches

O'Brien, P and Jones, Andrew (2002) **Human rights and rights based programming – a facilitators' guidebook**. CARE USA, Nairobi, Kenya.

Save the Children Alliance (July 2005) **Child rights programming handbook**. CRP Coordinating Group.

Save the Children Denmark (June 2002) **A toolkit on child rights programming**. Denmark.

Save the Children Sweden (Feb 2008) **A Southern African Facilitators' Guide to Child Rights Progamming Training.** Pretoria.

Save the Children Sweden (March 2008) **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System in the Overseas Regions, User Guidelines.** Draft 2. Stockholm.

Theis J (April 2003) *'Rights based monitoring and evaluation – a discussion paper'.* Unpublished.

UNDP (June 2003) **Human rights based reviews of UNDP programmes – working guidelines**. UNDP New York.

Strategic Planning

Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) (1999) **Strategic Planning**. CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. X. Washington DC.

Drucker, P (1993) **Five most important questions you will ever ask about your non profit organisation: participants workbook**. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco.

Block, P (2000) **Flawless consulting – a guide to getting your expertise used**. Jossey-Bass Pfeiffer, San Francisco.

Fowler, A (2000) **The virtuous spiral: a guide to sustainability for NGOs in international development**. Earthscan, London.

McNamara, C (2003) **Field guide to nonprofit strategic planning and facilitation**. Authenticity Consulting. Minneapolis.

Thaw, D (1997) **Ideas for a Change Part 1: Strategic Planning**. Olive Organisational Development & Training, Durban.

Thaw, D (1997) **Ideas for a Change Part 2: Organisation Diagnosis**. Olive Organisation Development and Training, Durban.

Thaw, D (2000) **Ideas for a Change. Part 6: Capacity Development**. Olive Organisational Development and Training, Durban.

VeneKlasen, L and Miller, V (2006) **A new weave of power, people and politics: the action guide for advocacy and citizen participation**. World Neighbours, Oklahoma City.

Example: "What's on the table?" Exercise

The following tables describe the results of the "What's on the table?" – reproduced with kind permission from Save the Children Swaziland:

a. What's on the table? *(visible power dynamics)*

Visible child issues	Stakeholders	Forces/ power dynamics
• Sexual Offences Bill • Children Bill (issue paper only); • Violence against children; • Corporal punishment	• Line ministries – MoEd, MoJ, MoH&SW, parliamentary committees • Royal Swazi Police • Child Protection Committees • NGOs – UNICEF, Save the Children Swaziland, World Vision, SOS, Church Forum, Swaziland Theatre for children & young people, SWAGGA, Places of Safety, Swazi National Youth Council • Traditional leaders & structures	• Good civil society mobilisation on the issues; • Media attention helping to highlight & raise public awareness; • Exposure of levels of violence against children; • Public concern about levels of violence & an outcry; • Global trends & interest (recent research reports etc); • Visible signs of abuse on children hard to ignore; • Demand for systems/ mechanisms to protect children; • official debates in parliament & recommendations
• OVC policy and Plans of Action	• MoH&SW • NGOs – UNICEF, NERCHA, Child Protection Network	• Concern about increase in # of OVCs; • Demand for a policy; • Donor priority – issue is well funded; • International/ regional priority
• Government bursaries for OVCs	• National Parent teachers association • Head Teachers Association • Teachers	• Concern about increase in # of OVCs; • Demand for timely payment of school fees
• Review of Employment Act in relation to child labour	• MoEmp&Ent • NGOs – ILO, SC Swaziland • USAID • Media • Trade Unions	• Increase in child labour; • International pressure; • International research conducted in the region
• Budget analysis	• MoFin • NGOs – CANGO, SC Sweden, SC Swaziland	• Demand for transparency re allocations to budget line items affecting children; • Demand for fit with national development priorities
• Provision of psychological support	• MoEd • NGOs – UNICEF, NERCHA, SC Swaziland	• Concern about increasing number of OVCs; • Issue is well funded
• Education for all (primary education)	• MoEd, MoFin • NGOs – UNICEF, SC Swaziland	• Millennium Development Goals; • CRC requirement; • Demand for quality education; • International pressure; • New national constitution ensures basic education for all within 3 years

Visible child issues	Stakeholders	Forces/ power dynamics
• Implementation and enforcement of new national constitution; • Concerns about grey areas in constitution – rights given and rights taken away by King; • Need better understanding of new rights and how they will be realised	• MoJ & Constitutional Affairs • King in Council • Civil society	• Local pressure from civil society • International pressure to domesticate CRC & human rights

b. What's under the table? (hidden power dynamics)

Hidden child issues	Stakeholders	Forces/ power dynamics
• Sexual abuse & exploitation – not talking about it openly; • Child prostitution; • Child porn	• MoH&SW • Some teachers • Police • Some parents, guardians, care givers	• Sex is a taboo subject – not talked about openly; • Existing outdated legislation – girls under 16 not statutory "raped" and sodomy is "indecent assault & lesser charges; • Individual fear exposure for crimes; • Cultural norms & practices; • Fear of consequences for poorer households; • Hierarchy and unequal power relationships – powerful adults vs vulnerable children • Media images & deciding what is 'newsworthy' or not; • High unemployment; • Poverty limits options of poor hhs & resorting to risky behaviour; • Unequal distribution of resources – men get skilled jobs, women & children get unskilled jobs
• Denial of extent of child labour; • MoEmp&Ent demands empirical evidence & refuses to sign protocols	• MoEmp&Ent • Business people • Parents, guardians, care givers	• Cultural norms & practices; • Expectations of the household; • Girls expected to do hh work; • Demand for cheap labour; • Lack of public awareness; • Lack of mechanisms to monitor implementation of laws; • Attitudes of some officials (Minister refused to sign protocol and demands empirical evidence); • Impact of HIV/AIDS – increasing ~ of OVCs; • Poverty, food insecurity and need for money for food = risky behaviour; • High unemployment
• Disagreement with the concept of child rights	• MPs, parliament, senators • Teachers • Traditional leaders • Religious leaders • Parents, guardians, care givers	• Lack of political will; • Slow domestication of CRC; • Cultural attitudes to child rights; • Double standards; • Fear or change & loosing control; • Lack of understanding of what rights are

Hidden child issues	Stakeholders	Forces/ power dynamics
• Lack of child participation; • Limited opportunity for children's self expression; • No forums for children's voices; • Children not allowed to talk in presence of adults	• Govt ministries & municipalities • Teachers & schools • Religious leaders • Traditional leaders • Parents, guardians, care givers • Children	• Socialisation process; • Children not allowed to talk in presence of adults; • Priority of children's voices is very low; • Misunderstanding what 'participation' can mean; • Legacy of lack of participation in Swazi culture; • Fear of losing power & control over children; • Adults assume they alone know what children's best interests are; • Absence of enabling legislation; • Constraints of current policies and legislation – being a 'minor' until 21 yrs old
• Teen/ early pregnancies	• Teachers • Religious leaders • Traditional leaders • Parents, guardians, care givers	• Sex is a taboo subject; • Failure of sex education messages; • Condom use not encouraged by schools – focus on abstinence only; • Schools refuse to discuss sex education; • Socialisation – girls and boys raised differently • Gender roles – girls expected to be wife/ mother • Parental role models reinforce stereotypes
• Baby dumping; • Street children; • School drop outs	• Municipalities • SACRO • Parents, guardians, care givers	• Seen as too small scale to respond to in Swaziland
• Codification of Swazi law and customs	• Traditional structures and leaders • Some traditional leaders undecided	• Seeking to put Swazi law & custom above other laws; • Fear of what will happen to power base/ culture if human rights are adopted; • Fear of loosing power based

c. What's absent from the table? (invisible power dynamics)

Invisible child issues	Stakeholders	Forces/ power dynamics
• Need to consider privacy at adolescent stage; • Children in institutions have limited privacy; • Men supervise Reed Dance Ceremony (maidens)	• Parents, guardians, care givers • Teachers • Traditional leaders • Adolescent children	• Socialisation and societal expectations; • Local norms & values; • Community dynamics (men are allowed to watch maidens bathing); • 'It is our culture' – no questioning permitted; • How parents see they responsibly re children; • Parents think 'my child is always my child'; • Distrust or fear that child will 'go wrong'
• Limited child participation in decisions that affect them	• Parents, guardians, care givers • Teachers • Traditional leaders	• Socialisation; • Mind sets – children should be seen and not heard; • Adults assume they alone know what children's best interests are; • Ignorance of current approaches to child development issues; • Fear of change and loosing control of children

Invisible child issues	Stakeholders	Forces/ power dynamics
• Limited sense of responsibility; • Projects see children as passive beneficiaries not rights holders; • Need to address intellec-tual & moral development of children	• MoEd, MoH&SW • Parents, guardians, care givers • Teachers • Traditional leaders • Donor community/ programme designers • NGOs	• Projects give hand outs; • Dependency syndrome; • Parenting methods; • Absence of good role models; • Respect etc not included in school curriculum; • Insufficient training on child rights issues
• Child trafficking	• Parents, guardians, care givers; • Police; • Community members	• No data; • Cases not reported; • Denial there is a problem; • Poverty & HIV/AIDS; • Child runaways
• Early marriage	• Parents, guardians, care givers • Royal family	• Regarded as 'normal'; • Tends to mainly involve the monarchy; • People 'follow the leader'

Feedback Form
(Mays 2008)

This Strategic Thinking and Planning Guide is designed to be constantly updated and amended based on reflection and feedback. Save the Children Sweden would like to hear from you regarding how you have used this guide and how you think it can be improved. Please take some time to complete this form and return to:

> Sue Godt (Programme Officer – Southern Africa):
> Email: sueg@saf.savethechildren.se
> Fax: +27.12.342.0305

1. What was useful or effective about this guide for facilitators?

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2. What changes would you like to be made to this guide?

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3. What additional exercises or topics should be added to this guide?

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Any other comments:

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Thank you for your input!