

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is key to the success of any nongovernmental organization, as it defines your position as an organization. Strategic planning involves clearly describing your vision, identifying what you contribute to the work that makes you the best organization to run your projects, as well as laying out your goals and how you plan to achieve them. To help, we have produced a series of handouts and accompanying templates that will lead you in the strategic planning process. You can use each of these handouts alone if you have specific needs, or all together to create a strategic plan.

In the last chapter, we introduced Meaningful Participation and Meeting Facilitation, the significance of which starts to emerge in this chapter—because Strategic Planning requires the input of all staff members. In the strategic planning process, it is important that everyone participates meaningfully. Strategic plans concern everyone and only when consensus has been made can a strategic plan be finalized.

Beginning with the handout **How to Understand Strategic Plans** and **How to Create a Strategic Plan**, this chapter serves as a step-by-step guide through the entire process. It will show you how to make use of the **Template| Strategic Plan Model** in your planning. Further, the **Template| Strategic Plan Peer Feedback Form** can help you gather feedback from peer organizations, staff and other stakeholders. **Example| Good and Bad Strategic Plans** aims to show how to create a strategic plan, as well as some mistakes to avoid. The first step of creating

a strategic plan is to communicate with stakeholders to find out the position of your organization. **How to Collect Stakeholders' Information** can help you with this activity. **Toolkit | Stakeholders' Information Collection Questions Outline** provides readers with ideas and strategies to collect the information that is needed. Outputs and outcomes can be very confusing, so we used **How to Differentiate Outputs and Outcomes** to compare these two concepts. While conducting a strategic planning session, you might also want to use the handout, **How to Draft a Vision Statement**. The process of writing a vision statement is an important way to unify and focus everyone in the group on a shared goal. **How to Map the Field** is a group exercise that will help you identify the added value your organization provides, relative to other groups working in the same field. We have also provided **Example | Mapping the Field**, so you can see an example of what your map should look like.