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Macro Planning in Education (EdPM 2062) 3 Chrs
Chapter One; Conceptual Frame work for Educational Planning

1.1. Educational Planning Defined

There is no one single definition that satisfies all scholars throughout the globe. This might be due to people differ in knowledge and experience. Besides, the time and the purpose in which the definitions given are different. However some of the common definitions the term include the following.

- Planning in education, as in anything else consist essentially of deciding, in advance, what you want, to do and how you are going to do in. (Williams1971)
- Educational Planning is a process of preparing and subsequently evaluating a set of decisions; or future action aimed at achieving specific set of goals.
- Educational Planning is defined it as “the process of preparing a set of decisions for future action pertaining to education. (Anderson and Bowman1967)
- Educational Planning, in its broadest generic sense, is the application of rational systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of its students and society. (Coombs 1980)
- Educational Planning is... the application to education itself of a rational , scientific approach to examining one’s alternatives, choosing wisely among them , then proceeding systematically to implement the choices thus made.(UNESCO 1968)

Seen from all the above definitions, the concept of educational planning involves a succession of interdependent actions. Specifically the actions include

- Clarification of educational objectives
- Diagnosis of present conditions and recent trends,
- Assessment of alternatives,

- Translation of plans into action, and Evaluation and adjustment.

Moreover, all its definitions so far is chiefly concerned with the future and draws its assumptions from the past. It is a continuous process concerned with where to go and how to get there by the best possible route. Educational planning therefore proceeds from “what was to what is and what should be in the overall interest of progress and development”. This is where forecasting comes in.

1.2. A Brief Historical Sketch: The New Educational Environment on Educational Planning Content

An educational manager is someone skilled in knowing how to analyze and improve the ability of an organization /school to survive and grow in a complex and changing world. This means that managers have a set of tools that enable them to grasp the complexity of the organization's environment.

Good educational planning activity should be done by assessing the school and the set of significant interacting institutions and forces in the organization's complex and rapidly changing environment that affect its ability to serve its customers. The school must continuously monitor and adapt to the environment if it is to survive and prosper. Disturbances in the school environment may spell profound threats or new opportunities for the educational planning activities. The successful educational planning will identify, appraise, and respond to the various opportunities of the school.

To achieve established educational objectives, education planning as a continuous, flexible, demand driven and realistic process must consider the rapidly changing environments. These environments are;

1. Internal Environment

The educational planning can be conceptualized on two levels. The first level involves the school's internal environment. Internally, an organization/school can be viewed as a resource conversion machine that takes inputs (students , teachers, labor, money, materials and equipment) from the external environment (i.e., the outside world), converts them into trained personnel ,useful products, services, and makes them available to customers as outputs.

2. External Environment

The second level of educational planning involves understanding the organization's external environment. It consists of all the outside institutions and forces that have an actual or potential interest or impact on the school ability to achieve its objectives: this includes competitive, economic, technological, political, legal, demographic, cultural, and ecosystem.

Environmental forces create challenges and opportunities for in educational planning activities. Therefore, managers must react and adapt to changes in their internal and external environment. For example, globalization is an example of an opportunity to educational planner. Improving technologies, such as transportation and communications, have enabled schools to expand into global or worldwide markets. On the other hand, when educational planners/managers are failed to understand and respond the negative effect of globalization, their plan as well as their schools become un competitive. Therefore, the contents' of educational plan must consider multiple cultures, existing political systems, rapidly changing markets and technology. These plans must be able to anticipate this changing environment and must be developed to embrace the school's dynamic future.

1.3. Basic Issue of Educational Planning/ The key planning questions:

Questions/issue that should be raised in the process of educational planning include:

1. What should be the priority objectives and functions of the educational system and of each of its sub-systems (including each level, each institution, each grade, each course, and each class)?
2. What are the best of the alternative possible ways of pursuing these various objectives and functions? (This involves a consideration of alternative educational technologies, their relative costs, time requirements, practical feasibility, educational effectiveness, etc.
3. How much of the nation's (or community's) resources should be devoted to education at the expense of other things? What appear to be the limits of feasibility, in terms not only of financial resources but real resources? What is the maximum of resources that education can effectively absorb in the given time period?
4. Who should pay? How should the burden of educational costs and sacrifices be distributed as between the direct recipients of education and society at large, and among different groups in

society? How well adapted is the present public fiscal structure, and other sources of educational revenue, to attaining a socially desirable distribution of the burden and at the same time a sufficient flow of necessary income to education ?

5. How should the total resources available to education (whatever the amount may be) be allocated among different levels, types and components of the system (e.g. primary vs. secondary higher education; technical vs. general education; teachers' salaries vs. building and equipment vs. textbooks, free meals, scholarships, etc.)?

Educators and economists, as well as sociologists, politicians and philosophers, are likely to approach and answer these questions in quite different ways, reflecting differences in their background, outlook and styles of thinking. Since this fact bears heavily on how different groups did approach educational planning in the last decade, one should pause to note how educational administrators and economists were inclined to think about these matters. The good educational administrator is a hybrid of idealist, pragmatist and politician. He/she appreciates other important social needs, but to him education is clearly Number One; it commands his prime attention and loyalty. He believes devoutly that every young person should get all the education he can use, but he knows this is not feasible immediately. So at budget time he asks for all he thinks he can effectively use, plus something extra, for he knows he will get less than he asks for. He then fights hard to get all he can and finally ends up with a compromise budget which he proceeds to spend as fully and effectively as possible. His record of spending right up to the budget ceiling is seldom matched in other sectors.

Most important educational planning issues in developing context

A. Wasteful imbalances within the educational system countries

Typically, campaigns for expanding primary, secondary and higher education were not coordinated. Moreover, even at any one level the necessary flows of components (teachers, buildings, equipment, textbooks, Etc.) Were not carefully projected, scheduled and programmed before the current government. The inevitable result was a series of self-defeating disparities among regions in the country.

B. Demand far in excess of capacity

The setting of bold targets, the making of large promises, and the very expansion of education fired an increase in popular expectations and educational demand that fed on itself and soon got

out of hand. The widening gap between educational demand and capacity was compounded by a youth population explosion which turned the original expansion targets into moving targets. While children clamoring to go to school are a joyous sight in any land, it can also be an unnerving sight for school authorities who must turn a large number of them away.

C. Costs rising faster than revenues

Though this enormous popular demand was an effective political pressure for boosting education budgets, the budgets could not possibly keep pace with the rising costs and student numbers. In some countries the economic feasibility of the targets had never been tested; they rested on blind faith that somehow the necessary means for achieving them would arrive. Where they had been tested their costs had typically been **under-estimated** and prospective income over-estimated. Thus, the targets proved economically unrealistic.

1.4. Models in Educational Planning

2.4.1 Rational model

Rational model assumes a complex government consisting of a conglomerate of semi-feudal, loosely allied organizations, each with a substantial life of its own. Here, planning decisions are based on the output of the several entities, functioning independently according to standard patterns of behavior but partially coordinated by government leaders. In rational model planning decision is unitary, rational, centrally controlled, and completely technical and value maximizing. Rational model in a balanced perspective places analytical rationality within the context of political and institutional aspects of educational planning

2.4.2. Demographic Projection Model

Demographic projection model Demographic development has become a source of planning. Estimating the population that future educational system is to serve. Useful to take decision on new school/college permission

2.4.3. School mapping/Micro planning Model

School mapping/Micro planning. Geographical location of school is considered. From national frame to regional and local conditions and constraints are considered in the process of educational planning process.

1.5.. Approaches to Educational Planning

Usually educators and economists tend to view three different ‘approaches’ to educational planning. These are social demand approach, the man- power approach and the cost-benefit approach.

1.5.1. The Social demand approach

This approach comes most naturally to the educator and is actually more a description of what he normally does than a theoretical formulation of how he should approach planning. ‘Social demand’ is an ambiguous and mischievous term (rarely used by educators) which can be defined in several quite different ways. It is most commonly used to mean the aggregate ‘popular’ demand for education, that is, the sum total of individual demands for education at a given place and time under prevailing cultural, political and economic circumstances. If there are fewer classrooms and places than there are serious candidates to occupy them, one can say that social demand exceeds supply. There is good evidence of a demand-supply gap when educational authorities and political leaders receive mounting complaints from very angry parents whose children cannot get into school. Two important points need to be added. One concerns the imposition by government of compulsory school attendance. When this happens the demand suddenly grows larger and is basically determined by demography; it is no longer a private, voluntary demand. The second point is that voluntary demand may be considerably influenced by what the costs of education are to the student and his parents, not only the cash costs (fees, etc.) but the ‘opportunity costs’ of income forgone, of work not done on the family farm while the student is attending school. Within limits, public authorities can influence the size of social demand, though as a practical matter it is far easier to stimulate an increase than to reverse the process. For example, if a government can afford to, it can arbitrarily boost social demand by requiring school attendance and, beyond the age of compulsion, by making education free (even, in the extreme, by compensating students or their parents for the income and work forgone). Short of these measures, governments can use propaganda to stimulate the private (voluntary) demand for education. But the culture itself, the climate of attitudes and convictions about what education can do for people, is undoubtedly the most influential factor of all in determining the social demand for education, provided people can pay for it. Measuring social demand is almost always extremely difficult and often impossible. The exception, of course, is where compulsory

education exists together with good demographic data on the relevant age group (the case in most industrialized countries but not in most developing nations). To obtain even a good approximate measure of voluntary demand would virtually require a house-to-house canvass in most cases.

The UNESCO regional targets referred to earlier are a fairly good illustration of the social demand approach. The method employed was essentially very simple, though it was no easy matter to get the basic facts and estimates for applying it. The first step was to collect the best available estimates of how many children by age levels there were in each country of the region and how many of them were already enrolled in primary, secondary and higher education. This established the current participation rates. The next step was to take the best available projections of the future youth population at each age level, up to 1980. The third step was to choose some participation rate targets for 1980 and certain intervening years and apply them to the population projections, to determine absolute enrolment targets. This last was the trickiest step of all, because logically it required a composite judgment of many feasibility factors: how much education the people would really want, what it would cost, what the economy could afford, how much educated manpower each national economy would need and how many jobs it could actually provide, how much foreign aid could be obtained, etc. In actuality some relatively simple assumptions were made in the absence of any better ones. One important assumption was that the popular demand for education would continue to outrun the supply. Another was that the unit costs of education would remain fairly constant. It was taken for granted that the economy could use all who got an education and that in general the greatly expanded educational outlays would add importantly to economic growth. The main feasibility measurement that was attempted concerned the availability of funds. Here some rather optimistic assumptions were made about the behavior of unit costs, economic growth rates and foreign aid. The resulting targets were subject to criticism on many grounds. Nevertheless, they were about as good as circumstances permitted and they undoubtedly were quite effective at the time in stimulating higher educational budgets (and, indirectly, in stimulating social demand as well). Another example of the social demand approach is what happens in France with regard to university admission. The rule in France is that any student who passes the baccalaureate at the end of the lycee (secondary school) can automatically enter the university. The sky-rocketing of French university enrolments since the early 1950s has provided clear evidence of a sharply rising social demand for higher education. (It has also been a major source of headaches for French educational planners and

university administrators, who had no good way to predict very closely how fast the social demand would rise and how many students would turn up each autumn. Usually more turned up than were expected and then there was room for. This was certainly one important causal factor in the 'Events of May' that shook French universities to their foundations in 1968). Three main criticisms are made of the social demand approach, particularly by economists: (1) it ignores the larger national problem of resource allocation and implicitly assumes that no matter how many resources go to education this is their best use for national development as a whole; (2) it ignores the character and pattern of manpower needed by the economy and can readily result in producing too many of some types and not enough of others; and (3) it tends to over-stimulate popular demand, to underestimate costs, and to lead to a thin spreading of resources over too many students, hereby reducing quality and effectiveness to the point where education becomes a dubious investment.

1.5.2. Manpower forecasting

The 'manpower' approach as noted earlier, many economists preferred the 'manpower approach' to educational planning. The argument in its favor ran roughly as follows: Economic growth is the mainspring of a nation's over-all development and thus should be the prime consideration in allocating its scarce resources. Economic growth, however, requires not only physical resources and facilities but also human resources to organize and use them. Thus, the development of human resources through the educational system is an important pre-requisite for economic growth and a good investment of scarce resources, provided the pattern and quality of educational output is geared to the economy's manpower needs. The advocates readily conceded that education had other important purposes besides producing manpower, but they saw no necessary conflict. They disposed of the issue by inviting educational planners to weigh these 'other' objectives along with manpower considerations, but this was vague guidance and poor comfort. Accepting this line of reasoning, the government of Tanzania, for example, courageously decided in the early 1960s to stabilize its primary school participation rate at about 50 per cent in order to give temporary priority to higher levels of education directly tied to economic manpower needs. While the broad logic of the manpower approach was hard to argue with, its practical application revealed a number of flaws. First, it gave the educational planners only limited guidance. It had nothing to say about primary education (which was not considered

to be ‘work-connected’) though by implication it suggested curbing the expansion of primary education until the nation got richer. Most manpower studies confined their attention to ‘high level’ manpower needed by the ‘modern sector’ (that is, mostly urban employment). Thus planners were given no useful clues about the educational requirements of the people who would constitute the vast majority of the nation’s future labor force, namely, semi-skilled and unskilled workers in the cities and the vast majority of workers who lived in rural areas. Second, the employment classifications and manpower ratios (e.g. the desirable ratio of engineers to technicians, doctors to nurses) used in most manpower studies in developing countries, as well as the assumed educational qualifications corresponding to each category of job, were usually borrowed from industrialized economies and did not fit the realities of less developed ones. The actual work of a building trades worker or agricultural specialist or health officer in Africa or Asia, for example, was likely to be quite different, and to call for a different sort of preparation, from that of someone wearing the same label in England, France or the United States. Educational plans based on such faulty assumptions could result in the mis-preparation and over-preparation of many students for the jobs they were meant to fill. A third difficulty was the impossibility of making reliable forecasts of manpower requirements far enough ahead to be of real value to educational planning, because of the myriad economic, technological and other uncertainties involved. The more refined the categories (e.g. ‘electrical engineers’ rather than ‘engineers of all types’) and the longer- range the forecast (e.g. five to ten years U. one or two years) the fuzzier the estimates became and the less trustworthy. The manpower approach could usefully call attention to extreme gaps and imbalances in education’s output pattern that needed remedy, but this hardly required elaborate statistical studies. It could also give educators useful guidance on how, roughly, the educational qualifications of the labor force ought to evolve in the future-what the relative proportions should be of people with a primary education or less, secondary education, and various amounts of post-secondary training. This in fact was very useful for educational planners to know. But it was a far cry from detailed manpower requirements. Alert educational planners who understood the foregoing limitations soon learned to take impressive statistical tables of long-term estimates of manpower requirements, broken into fine categories, with a large fistful of salt. But, at the same time, they learned to extract useful guidance from manpower studies, even though this guidance fell far short of what the planners needed.

The inadequacies of this earlier manpower approach assumed gigantic proportions when eventually the employment market pendulum began swinging hard from manpower deficits to manpower surpluses, as described earlier. This prompted such original pioneers of the manpower approach as Professor Frederick Harbison to counsel their over-enthusiastic disciples (by now engaged in what Harbison called 'statistical pyrotechnics') to abandon this much too narrow view in favor of a wider-angled 'employment approach'. This meant that economic planning and economic development policy, no less than educational strategy, were in need of reconsideration. Until then (the late 1960s) the cardinal objective and criterion of success of economic planning had been to raise the GNP as fast as possible, but this was beginning to look as over-simplified as education's goal of boosting enrolment statistics. What good was a rising GNP if it was accompanied by growing masses of unemployed and under-employed and if its distribution among the citizens was extremely lopsided? So the manpower planners began pressing the view that creating new jobs and high employment should be given parity with raising the GNP as a prime objective of economic policy. Some also speculated that a moderate excess of educational output over estimated manpower requirements might actually stimulate the economy to faster growth. If good potential workers were available, perhaps the economy would use more of them, and perhaps some would take the initiative to create their own jobs if their education had struck a spark of motivation and entrepreneurship. In short, the old assumption was called into question, that the economy independently created the manpower needs while education passively responded to them. Perhaps the economy should also respond to education, and education could do some job-creating on its own. But, there was one great 'if' about all this. Education could only satisfy the economy's manpower needs and stimulate the creation of more jobs if it was the right kind of education, if it produced 'development-minded' people with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes to promote national development. A good deal of the education going on did not appear to fit these specifications.

1.5.3 The Rate-of-return' approach

Yet another group of economists, coming out of the neo-classical tradition of economists, took hard issue with the manpower approach on grounds additional to those already mentioned. They said, in effect, that this approach was about as guilty as the social demand approach of ignoring the over-all 'allocation problem' and the key test of benefits versus costs. The 'cost-benefit'

principle is what a rational individual roughly applies when deciding how best to spend his money when his desires exceed his means. He examines his alternatives, weighs the cost of each and the corresponding satisfaction or utility he feels it will bring him, and then chooses those particular options within his means that promise the highest ratio of benefits to costs. These economists argued that economic and educational planners should follow this same style of logic when dealing with the allocation of a nation's total resources among different major sectors, or with the allocation of the education system's total resources among its various sub-sectors. No one, least of all other economists, disagreed with this general point. Indeed, one can hardly be a good planner or decision-maker if he does not think intuitively in these cost-benefit terms. But the practical difficulties of actually measuring these costs and benefits were even more formidable than those encountered by the social demand and manpower techniques. To be sure, some economists and engineers had made progress on similar calculations applying to such things as steel mills, irrigation dams and fertilizer plants. But measuring the likely costs and benefits of major sub-divisions of an educational system was far more complicated. Undaunted, the advocates of what came to be called the 'rate-of-return' approach made a heroic effort and emerged with some precise-looking numbers in several studies in different countries. Other economists, however, lost no time in firing criticisms at these numbers with the vigor and delight that economists reserve for intra-tribal feuds. Educators largely stayed out of this particular battle. If they were even aware that it was being waged (which many were not), they either failed to understand what the shooting was about or regarded the matter as so academic as to be innocuous. Their instinct was right, at least at this early experimental stage of rate-of-return studies. The noise from the economists was out of all proportion to the immediate relevance of these studies to policy decisions. Still, there was always the risk that some innocent top decision-maker might get hold of the rate-of-return figures, take them to be scientifically revealed truth and make some horribly mistaken decisions. This at least was the fear of critics, but in fairness it should be said that the authors of these studies would probably themselves have been alarmed if they had thought that unsophisticated use would be made of their very tenuous statistical conclusions. It would take too long here to explain in detail the numerous weaknesses which have been charged to the rate-of-return approach. For one thing, the basic cost data are flimsy and critics take particular issue with including as a cost the estimated income forgone by students, especially in countries where heavy unemployment is endemic. These weaknesses on

the cost side, however, are susceptible of correction as better data become available. The more serious weaknesses, which can be somewhat lessened with improved data but never eliminated, concern the calculation of future benefits. The usual method is to calculate the differential in a person's life-time earnings that will result from an added increment of education, discounted by an arbitrary percentage to allow for the non-educational causes of this extra income (e.g. superior intelligence, motivation, family background and connections). But these future incomes differentials, correlated with educational differentials, are computed on the basis of past and present differentials, the implicit assumption being that they will remain constant in the future. This is a very dubious assumption. These extra private earnings (after taxes) resulting from extra education are used as the measure of private benefits. The same private earnings (before taxes) are also used as a proxy measure of social benefits, which some critics consider to be a rather big leap. One of the underlying (and doubtful) assumptions behind this method of calculating social benefits is that differentials in wage and salary rates are a fairly accurate reflection of the relative economic productivity of different people. A good many other heroic assumptions are required to complete the arithmetic and to reach a rate-of-return figure. The authors make clear that their method measures only the direct economic benefits and takes no account of indirect economic benefits and non-economic ones. This is a fair-sized exclusion. The educational planner is left wondering what extra allowance he should make for these excluded benefits. Curiously enough, though primary education is not in itself considered a preparation for work, a few of these rate-of-return studies, done independently in different developing countries, have reached the same conclusion-that the economic yield on primary education in those countries is considerably higher than the yield on university education. This should not be taken as a natural law, however, or even necessarily as the gospel truth in these particular countries; it may simply reflect certain biases in the data and methodology. But it does illustrate the sort of provocative hypotheses that such studies thrust up which can lead to further useful inquiry. If all the other weaknesses could somehow be overcome, there would still remain the fact that the rate-of-return approach tells the planners and decision-makers only half what they need to know. It tells them in what direction to put more resources to get the best yield, but it does not tell them how far to go in this direction. The second question is perhaps their biggest problem. To sum up, it is fair to say that the rate-of-return approach at its present experimental stage of development tells us much more about the past than it does about the future. And while we can usefully learn from history, the last thing

a developing nation wants to do is to repeat it. Given the paucity of good data to work with and the need, in any event, to make a whole constellation of tenuous assumptions about the economic future, the precise-looking figures arrived at should be treated with extreme caution by practical planners and policy-makers. None the less, the rate-of-return approach, like the social demand and manpower approaches, has a decided relevance and utility for educational planning. At the very least it emphasizes the constant need to examine alternatives and to weigh their respective costs and benefits as best one can before leaping to a decision. As its methodologies and basic data improve it may provide more solid guidance.

But none of these approaches, it is now clear, provides an adequate basis by itself for educational planning. By now even the most partisan proponents of these different approaches concede that a new synthesis of all three is needed. Even such a synthesis, however, would leave important gaps to be filled. The towering weakness of all three is that they implicitly take the existing educational system for granted and leave it untouched except for its scale. They are essentially instruments for macro-planning, and as such can be very useful. But the conclusion we will come to later is that educational planning now needs to get down inside the system and change it to make it more relevant and efficient and productive. This is the main way to raise the future rate of return on educational investments.

CHAPTER TWO; Macro-Level Educational Planning

2.1 Mega, Macro and Micro planning compared

Mega Planning

Kaufman has developed a model for strategic thinking and planning he calls "Mega Planning." Kaufman argues that many organizational planning models incorrectly begin, and end, with internal or organizational performance and therefore fail to provide organizations a chance to plan how they deliver value outside of their organizations. Traditional planning ends with "Macro" level results, which are organizational results such as profits, graduation rates, ratings, etc. While these are important measures of organizational performance, they do not indicate the impact of an organization on external clients and society.

Mega Planning starts with the question of "What kind of world do you want for your

children and grand-children?" with responses distilled in terms of consequences. An Ideal Vision defines the measurable variables for Mega planning including survival, self-sufficiency, and quality of life. He calls Mega planning (a system approach) "Mother's Rule" because if you ask just about any mother what kind of world they want for their children, they don't talk to means (credentials of teachers, money spent on social programs) but the survival, health, and happiness of their children.

Mega planning has a primary focus on adding value for all stakeholders. It is realistic, practical, and ethical. Defining and then achieving sustained organizational success is possible. It relies on three basic elements:

1. A societal value-added "frame of mind" or paradigm: your perspective about your organization, people, and our world. It focuses on an agreed-upon focus on adding value to all stakeholders.
2. A shared determination and agreement on where to head and why: all people who can and might be impacted by the shared objectives must agree on purposes and results criteria, and
3. Pragmatic and basic tools.

Macro planning

Macro planning produces essential decisions and actions that shape and guide at an organization level. It requires broad-scale information gathering, an exploration of alternatives, and an emphasis on the future implications of present decisions. This type of plans usually answer such questions as "What is the purpose of this organization?" "What does this organization have to do in the future to remain competitive? Thus, macro planning involves adapting the organization to take advantage of opportunities in its constantly changing environment. In short macro planning;

- Relates the organization to the environment.
- It is creative, thinking the organization through the market.
- Requires information needed at this level of planning is for the development of policy, planning and strategy development.
- It is a long term plan at the organizational level.

Micro planning

- Planning at the lowest spatial unit can be termed as micro level planning. Micro level planning can mean planning carried out at the village level or even at the habitation level. While selecting a unit for micro planning one has to consider the availability of educational facilities like a school or a non-formal education center. In other words, while trying to develop micro level planning in education one may have to select a unit centering on an educational institution. This may be a school or its alternative which is already existing or planning to be opened.
- The basic aspects of micro-planning include: enrolment of all boys and girls (and special emphasis of those who remain deprived), regular attendance and retention of those who are enrolled, creating a sense of responsibility towards education of children in parents and the community etc.
- Micro planning focuses more on the operational details of achieving a specified plan target. Micro planning exercise can be undertaken by local people. In fact the object and subject of micro planning is local people. How to make schools community based? How do we ensure accountabilities of the school to the community it serves? What is the mechanism to channelize social forces towards education? These are important questions in micro planning exercise.
- Micro planning exercise involves less of technical skills and more of social skills. How to interact with the community for a common cause? How to bring them together on a common platform? How are we going to deal with the existing social hierarchy in a given locality? These are the issues which make a micro planning exercise successful or failure. How to organize micro planning exercises in villages cannot be based on a single model. Each locality may have some characteristics which may make micro planning exercise different across localities.
- The major objective of the micro planning exercise is not on issues pertaining to allocation of resources but on issues pertaining to better and efficient use of resources which are already allocated to a particular locality, area or school.

A summary of the five levels of results, in line with the three levels of planning, and a brief description

No	Name of the Organizational Element	Name of the Level of Planning and Focus	Brief Description	Type of Planning
1	Outcomes	Mega	Results and their consequences for external clients and society (shared vision)	Strategic
2	Outputs	Macro	The results an organization can or does deliver outside of itself	Tactical
3	Products	Micro	The building block results that are produced within the organization	Operational
4	Processes	Process	The ways, means, activities, procedures, methods used internally	
5	Inputs	Input	The human, physical, financial resources an organization can or does use	

Relating the three levels of planning

Level of planning	Basic question	Type of sponsor	Primary client and beneficiary	Level of results
Mega	Do you care about the success of learners after they leave your educational system?	leader	Society or community	Out-comes Impact-boarder results
Macro	Do you care about the quality of completers when leave your educational system?	Education bureau Head/educational official	Educational organization it self	Outputs immediate result /-graduates
Micro	Do you care about the specific skills, knowledge, and attitude of learners as they move from course to course and level to level?	School principal	Individual and/or small groups	Product/ building block, course completed, etc

2.2. Strategic Planning at the Macro Level

2.2.1. Basics of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning was developed in the military, adopted to the business world and ultimately expanded into various public sectors including education. Strategic planning can be defined as;

- Strategic planning is a process of operating in an extended time frame /3-5years/ which translate vision and values in to significant measurable and practical out comes.
- Strategic planning is a long range planning/3-5years/ aiming at becoming proactive not just reacting to crises and pressures.
- Strategic planning is a process of developing objectives for the organization and its sub parts as well as developing and evaluating alternative course of action to reach these objectives, doing this on the basis of a systematic evaluation of external treats and opportunities and internal and its of strength and weakness.
- Strategic planning is the process of developing and developing strategic fit between the organization goals and capabilities and changing educational opportunities.
- Strategic planning is the process of developing and analyzing the organization's mission, overall goals, general strategies, and allocating resources

As seen from the above definitions, strategic planning produces: fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. It requires broad-scale information gathering, an exploration of alternatives, and an emphasis on the future implications of present decisions. Top level managers engage chiefly in strategic planning or long range planning. They answer such questions as "What is the purpose of this organization?" "What does this organization have to do in the future to remain competitive?" Top level managers clarify the mission of the organization and set its goals. The output needed by top management for long range planning is summary reports about human resources requirement, finances, operations, and the external environment. Strategic plan involves adapting the organization to take advantage of opportunities in its constantly changing environment.

Strategic planning requires an organization to be flexible and to plan for maximum impact in a

fast changing environment by scanning the environment closely to identify events that are relevant to their area of work and adapt the work quickly to take account of these environmental changes and also lessons learnt from past experience. Strategic planning sets the stage for the rest of the planning in the organization. It involves setting of a clear organization mission, vision and objectives.

2.2.2. Importance of strategic planning

There is broad agreement among leaders and experts that planning is a critical component of good management and governance. Planning helps assure that an organization remains relevant and responsive to the needs of its community, and contributes to organizational stability and growth. It provides a basis for monitoring progress, and for assessing results and impact. It facilitates new program development. It enables an organization to look into the future in an orderly and systematic way. From a governance perspective, it enables the Board to set policies and goals to guide the organization, and provides a clear focus to the Executive Director and staff for program implementation and agency management.

Most organizations understand the need for annual program objectives and a program-focused work plan. Funders require them, and they provide a basis for setting priorities, organizing work, and assessing progress. A growing number of community-based organizations go beyond funder requirements to develop annual objectives and operating plans which also include a systematic plan for resource development, organizational development, and in some cases Board development. Most groups find it practical to define objectives for a 12-month period, and to design strategies and programs to meet them.

In fact, planning is no less important in a changing environment; it may well be more important. Most Hispanic community-based organizations exist to serve a specific community. To do that, they need to be very clear on community needs and then work to address them through similarly clear organizational missions, priorities, target groups, and objectives. If the external environment – funding, the economy in general, government enforcement of civil rights laws, etc. – is changing or hostile, then our organizations must be that much more effective in defining needs and marshaling internal and external resources to meet them. The community's needs will

change over time, but the most basic ones – such as access to high quality educational services, job training, employment opportunities, safe and affordable housing, sufficient financial resources to meet basic needs, human services directed at various age groups and special needs populations, and a secure environment – remain fairly constant. The challenge of meeting them can become greater with changes in the local or national environment, such as a poor economy or a hostile or unresponsive government, however; and it is here that strategic or long-range planning can be most helpful. Planning is designed to help an organization define its vision for the future and then determine systematically how it will get there, understanding obstacles and figuring out ways to overcome them.

There is an important caveat: Longer-range planning requires some level of organizational stability. It is very difficult to plan in a crisis, and unrealistic to look five years ahead unless an organization has some confidence that it will exist next year, and that most of its key staff and its Board leadership will continue to be affiliated with the organization. Board and staff also need the time to plan, which means that they must not be using every minute to carry out functions required for survival. Moreover, while planning provides increased organizational definition, a sound base for planning is consensus concerning a well-defined mission statement and/or organizational goals – these must often be developed as a foundation for longer-term planning. It is also difficult to plan if the organization is so young or its leadership so new that they do not have a good sense of the community and of the broader external environment. Most new organizations, or groups which have undergone major institutional difficulties or change, find that they do best by first attempting to reach consensus on an organizational mission statement and then doing shorter-range planning, usually for a single year. Learning from that experience, they can begin a longer-term planning process.

Planning that focuses on a period of three years or more requires an organized, serious effort which takes time and energy. There may need to be a formal community needs assessment as input to planning. This is extremely valuable, but also demanding. Moreover, planning is not a one-time effort; any plan needs to be reviewed, monitored, and updated. The benefits to an organization can be significant -- a clear focus, a sense of joint purpose and agreed-upon priorities, consensus on strategies, and a basis for measuring progress and impact.

To sum up of strategic planning has the following benefits

- Improve performance
- Stimulate forward thinking
- Enable the organization to be prepared for fast changing environment
- Help utilize the resource for the maximum
- Help solve major organizational problems
- Enable the organization to survive or reenergize
- Help build institutional capacity via team work
- Increase accountability to major stake holders
- Encourage delegation and commitment
- Develop indicators for measuring impact

2.2.3. Critical success factors in strategic planning

Critical success factors are those internal factors to the organization and providing a means of establishing the extent to which vision, mission, and values as well as customers 'wants and needs' are being met. Critical success factor is an outcome or a group of outcomes, the absences of which will put in danger achievement of the purpose and customer satisfaction. They are pre-requisites, not desirables for success. **In planning activities there are usually six critical factors that planners should consider. These are** factors for successful planning, not just for the things that an organization must get done to meet its mission. These are usually for mega planning, regardless of the organization. These six critical factors are discussed here under.

1. Critical success Factor One

Move out of your comfort zone - today's paradigms- and use new and wider boundaries for thinking, planning, doing, evaluating, and continuous improvement.

Here the focus should be;

- Breaking old habits- unfreezing
- Shifting mental gears – strategic thinking matters.
- 'Restructuring' outcome based education will not work unless we change the way we think.
- Shift from budget driven strategy –to – strategy driven budgets

- We must work smarter is not enough to work hard.
- Choosing to be successful not just comfortable. If we do only what is comfortable, we increase risk and wrong destination.
- Go beyond the known, the acceptable and the conventional.

If we are not masters of change, we will be the victims of it. If we only bother today's problems and solutions, we will not be open to creating a new education and new reality.

2. Critical success Factor Two

Differentiate between ends (what) and means (how).

- Ends /what/ are results, consequences, accomplishments, and payoff.
- Means /how's/are the ways to deliver ends. It includes resources such as time, money, people and facilities and methods like teaching, learning, supervising, planning, thinking and developing.

Planning that starts with means before identifying correct ends encourages developing and applying some very neat solutions that do not necessary go with any known problems.

3. Critical success Factor Three

Use all three levels of planning and results (Mega/Outcomes; Macro/Outputs; Micro/Products).

- It is best to assure that ends and means at the three levels of planning not only relate with each other but also integrate and nested with the other.

4. Critical success Factor Four

Prepare all objectives - including the Ideal Vision and mission - to include precise statements of both where you are headed as well as the criteria for measuring when you have arrived. Develop "Smarter" Objectives

This entails that planners should not be limited by current restraints or develop a vision for their organization alone.

5. Critical success Factor Five

Use an Ideal Vision (what kind of world, in measurable performance terms, we want for tomorrow's child) as the underlying basis for planning and continuous improvement.

- Frequently, objectives for the entire educational organizations only deal with intentions and thus are best called mission statements

6. Critical success Factor Six

Defining “need” as a gap in results (not as insufficient levels of resources, means or methods.

When we care about ends than means more about ‘what’ than ‘how’ when we define success in terms of accomplishments and contributions not on effort or expenditures, then we are using ‘need’/noun form / to signify the gaps between current and desired results .When doing a need assessment we define and prioritize the gaps between our current result and payoffs and the ones we desire. On the other hand to use ‘need’ as a verb like most other English words ending in ‘ing’ is to see it as a means , that is to prescribe solutions such as teaching or even strategic planning that might not meet the needs or close gaps in results.

2.3 Processes in Strategic Planning

There are many different models and action steps for strategic planning. One approach is summarized below. It assumes a cooperative effort between Board and staff, perhaps with a special strategic planning committee of Board members and staff taking responsibility for the effort. Some of the work can be done in committee, while Board and staff planning sessions or retreats are also likely to be required, both early and late in the planning process. Typical steps are described below, along with some suggested approaches for carrying out each step.

Frequently, Steps 1-3 occur before a strategic planning retreat, Steps 4-7 during the retreat, and Steps 8-10 after the retreat.

1. Agree on a strategic planning process.

This may be done at a Board meeting with key staff present, or may require a special meeting or retreat, including Board, key staff, and some external stakeholders. At the session:

- Provide an understanding of what strategic planning is and how it is done.
- Discuss its potential value to the organization, in terms of providing a

common vision and focus, with agreed-upon goals and strategies;

- Consider the costs of doing strategic planning, in terms of staff and Board time and other resources - and what might need to be given up in order to develop a plan; if the organization is in crisis or is financially or organizationally unstable, it may be difficult or unwise to enter into a strategic planning process until the immediate problems and needs have been successfully addressed.
- Consider whether the organization is "ready" for a long-range plan or whether it may best focus on a short-term plan, perhaps doing a one-year plan and then undertaking longer-term planning at the end of that year;
- If strategic planning seems appropriate, consider what procedures or steps can be used to establish and implement a strategic plan;
- Agree upon a process and establish responsibilities for the various steps in the process, including at least one day (or several half-days or evenings) devoted to a Board and (all or senior) staff planning retreat or a series of planning meetings.

Except for a very small organization, it will probably be desirable to set up a strategic planning committee or task force. Choose participants carefully, assuring their commitment to the process and their willingness to devote significant time to the planning effort. Usually the coordinating group will include a mix of Board leaders and members, as well as senior and middle managers. Some groups also include a representative of technical and/or support staff. Representatives of stakeholders - funders, sister organizations, and allies - and perhaps former leaders of the organization or other resource people might also be included. The organization may also want to include an outside facilitator or consultant who will assist with the process and with preparation of the strategic planning document - or this may be done by staff.

Be sure to allocate sufficient staff time to the strategic planning process. It may be necessary to reduce the regular workloads or responsibilities of staff and Board members who are expected to play a key role in developing the strategic plan.

2. Carry out an environmental scan.

This helps provide an understanding of how the organization relates to its external environment. The scan usually includes both internal and external environment. Each of them are discussed here under.

I. The internal component of the environmental scan includes an assessment of the organization's strengths and weaknesses. This may include a number of components or approaches.

- You may want to assess current organizational performance in terms of financial and human resources (inputs), operating methods or strategies (processes), and results or outcomes (outputs). If the organization does not have extensive objective measures of its outcomes, perceived performance can be partially determined through asking clients and stakeholders. Try to understand how key players or stakeholders in the broader community -- as well as constituents or clients -- view the organization. Sometimes, brief written forms are sent to, or interviews conducted with, key stakeholders; interviews are best conducted by a consultant, to assure frank and honest responses. Once you have this information, be sure to further analyze the reasons -- in terms of inputs and processes -- for perceived weaknesses in outcomes.
- It is often valuable to identify critical success factors for the organization. This step is not always included in strategic planning, but can be very useful. Try to understand what factors are necessary to the future and continued success of the organization. These may be factors like relationship with target community/constituency, resources, program strategies, governance structure, and staff skills and style. This may be done directly, or the organization might try a method suggested in the Aetna Management Process, which is to use "reverse logic," to identify the elements – the activities, attitudes, assumptions, etc. – that would cripple the organization and keep it from fulfilling its mission. Then use this to identify the critical determinants of success. Both Board and staff can provide useful input to this process.
- The organization might want to review or formalize organizational values and operating principles. Some organizations have written values and principles which guide their decision making and their ongoing activities. These can be very helpful in "defining" the organization.

Identification of the SWOT

Strength - Positive internal factors that occur at present – not potential. Example, appropriate technology uncorrupted organization, committed leadership and staff, financial stability etc.

Weakness- It involves the lack of, missing, or weak points occurring at present. They are the control of the project not just potential. Example, inexperienced staff, inadequate finance, poor relationships among stake holders, poor net working skills, lack of incentives etc.

Opportunities - Positive favorable factors in the external environment which the organization should take advantage of/potential/. They are different from strength in the sense that opportunities are beyond the control of the organization but strengths are positive internal factors. Example; improved economy, enabling environment willing donors, favorable government policies, availability of training program, and better employment opportunities for the graduates etc.

Threats; Negative unfavorable external factors in the environment. They affect the organization if not overcome. They differ from weaknesses that they are normally beyond the control of the organization. Example, worsening economic conditions, fast growing population, natural disasters, changing political regime, little employment opportunities etc.

Internal environmental analysis focuses on structure, systems, process and people within the organization. It provides the answer to the question 'what are things about ourselves which are likely to help us or hinder us in our attempts to be what we want to be? Two techniques could be employed to analyze internal environmental of an organization. These are;

- Benchmarking and
- The 7-S frame work

1. Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a systematic attempt to compare our organization's performance with other organization, but with an emphasis on comparison with the best, in order to identify where we can and should improve our own performance. This is how it helps organization to identify issues to be addressed, areas to be tackled in our own planning process.

The key steps in setting up benchmarking process are;

- What are we going to benchmark?

- Who are we going to benchmark against?
- How will get the information?
- How will we analyze the information?
- How will we use the information?

The SWOT analysis is used as a baseline for future improvement, as well as gap analysis. Comparing the organization to external **benchmarks** (the best practices) is used to assess current capabilities. Benchmarking systematically compares performance measures such as efficiency, effectiveness, or outcomes of an organization against similar measures from other internal or external organizations. This analysis helps uncover best practices that can be adopted for improvement. Benchmarking with other organizations can help identify a gap. Gap analysis identifies the progress required to move the organization from its current capabilities to its desired future state. In this way, the organization can adapt to the best practices to improve organizational performance.

2. The 7-S frame work

The 7-S frame work is an example of a check list technique. The main assumption is that, for successful implementation of a strategy, there must be a match of seven elements it the frame work. The 7- S represents;

- Skill
- Structure
- Systems
- Shared vision
- Staff
- Style of leadership
- Strategy

The external component of the environmental scan should include a review of the target or service community and the broader environment in which the organization operates, to identify the opportunities and threats facing the organization. This might include the following:

- ✓ Consider forces and trends in the broader community, political, economic, social, and

sometimes technological (See Bryson, Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations). Look at changing demographics, political trends, community values, economic trends, the implications of new or changing laws and regulations affecting the organization, communications and other technological trends -- and consider their impact on your organization and the population it serves.

- ✓ Look carefully at the immediate target community or service area to determine its status and needs, and specifically those of current and potential clients and beneficiaries of the organization's services and advocacy.
- ✓ Consider opportunities and challenges related to resources and funders. Look at actual and potential collaborators and competitors, including organizations which may serve the same neighborhood and/or target population or may seek funds from the same funding sources, public or private.

This process may involve something as extensive as a community needs assessment with interviews, focus groups, and fax or e-mail surveys that is conducted by a consultant, or may be limited to a small number of informal discussions with clients and other community residents, heads of other Hispanic and non-Hispanic organizations, public officials, funder representatives, and other appropriate individuals.

In analyzing external environmental conditions, techniques like;

- Customer /client need analysis
- Competitors and allies analysis
- PEST/political, economic, social and technological/analysis must be conducted and opportunities and threats identified

A consultant can be hired to assist with the environmental scan, contacting stakeholders to provide an external view and staff to obtain an internal assessment. An organization that is open in its communications may be able to obtain this information without outside assistance, through a staff retreat or a series of meetings with staff in various components and at various levels within the organization. The committee responsible for the strategic plan should work with staff to plan the environmental scan, help to conduct external interviews with community leaders – especially

if no consultant will be used, and assure that the Board receives a full report on the results of the environmental scan process.

The result of the environmental scan should be an analysis of organizational strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. This may be oral or written, and requires careful review and discussion by the strategic planning committee. Often, your strategic planning retreat will begin with a presentation of results of the environmental scan. Sometimes, results are presented at a Board or Board-staff session prior to the retreat. In either case, the Board and staff should be familiar with the findings before strategic planning decisions are made.

3. Identify key issues, questions, and choices to be addressed as part of the strategic planning effort.

This may mean specifying "strategic issues" or questions that the organization should address, and setting priorities in terms of time or importance. If there is little disagreement about issues and priorities, it may be possible to move immediately to the organizational vision and then goals. If there is no agreement on general directions and organizational goals, it may be important to explore issue priorities and identify critical choices. This might be done in several ways. For example:

- Board and staff might be asked to identify strategic issues from the environmental scan, with individuals identifying a specified number of such issues and indicating why each is strategic, including the benefits of addressing it and the negative consequences of not addressing it. These issues might involve a wide range of program or other issues – e.g., the need for new programs to address a particular community need such as education or housing, expansion of the organization's target area from particular neighborhoods to the entire city or county, agreement on who constitutes the organization's constituency, or a decision as to whether the organization should consider merging with another group.
- The planning group or a consultant working with the group might work to identify strategic issues emerging from the environmental scan, and then prioritize them in terms of importance, timing, and feasibility. The result should be a set of strategic issues that will be addressed as part of the strategic planning process, preferably during the retreat, and a second set that will not be addressed or will receive limited attention at the retreat,

but will be considered by a Board committee or appropriate staff.

Whatever the method used, the issues discussion should generate some level of agreement about issues or choices to be considered and decisions to be made as part of the strategic planning process.

Once Steps 1-3 have been completed, you are ready to develop a strategic planning retreat agenda and schedule a one- to two-day retreat or a series of shorter meetings.

4. Define or review the organization's values, community vision, and mission.

Be sure there is consensus on why the organization exists, what goals or outcomes it seeks to achieve, What it stands for, and whom it serves. If it has specific mandates –things it must do or not do based on its articles of incorporation or bylaws, or long-term contracts or grants – then these should be clearly defined. Consider beginning your strategic planning by agreeing on the following:

- **Organizational core values or operating principles** – those beliefs or principles that guide the organization; these values are shared by Board and staff, strongly held, and not easily changed.
- **Community Vision** – your vision for the community; it might be viewed as your image of what the community you serve would be like if your values were shared and practiced by everyone. Note that this is your vision for the community, not your vision of what the organization will look like in three to five years or more (that comes later!).

Erich Fromm pointed out; "The best way to predict your future is to create it." A **vision** might be a picture, image, or description of the preferred future. Some of the common definitions of vision are;

- Vision is an organization hope for the reality to be.
- Vision is an organization's future direction and business course, a guiding concept for what the organization is trying to do and to become.
- Vision is expression of ideas, beliefs or dream based on shared values but that may not be attained in one's life time.

- Vision has to be future oriented and defines the kind of world we want for our children and grand children. It should identify the organizations' direction and reflect challenging ambitions.

A visionary has the ability to foresee something and sees the need for change first. He or she challenges the status quo and forces honest assessments of where the industry is headed and how the company can best get there. A visionary is ready with solutions before the problems arise. A vision has lots of purposes. The most important of which are the following.

- Shared vision is an initial force that brings people together
 - Inspires stakeholders and provides basis for partnership
 - Is a life blood of an organization
 - Provides energy, momentum and strength to individuals
 - Binds an organization in times of crises and motivates to work through internal conflict
- Vision should be relatively short and inspiring. An inspiring vision ;
- Focuses on better future,
 - Encourages hopes dreams and noble decisions,
 - Builds on organization's history and culture and
 - Identify direction and state positive outcomes.

Examples of vision

- To eradicate famine and poverty from Ethiopia
- To create a society void of exploitation
- There will be no murders, rapes, or crimes. It will be free of infectious disease and every child brought in to the world will be a wanted child. Poverty will not exist and every women and man will earn at least as much as it costs him/her to live unless/she is going to school and moving to school and moving toward preparing him/herself so that he/she is increasingly close to being self-sufficient.

Mission – the stated purpose for your organization's existence; it might be viewed as your organization's public statement of the contribution it promises to make to help accomplish the community vision. It is the purpose of the organization. It is why the organization exists. Thus, planning begins with clearly defining the mission of the organization. A **mission** is a broad definition of a business that differentiates it from all other organizations. It is the justification for the organization's existence.

- ❖ A **mission statement** is broad, yet clear and concise, summarizing what the organization does. It directs the organization, as well as all of its major functions and operations, to its best opportunities. Then, it leads to supporting tactical and operational plans, which, in turn leads to supporting objectives.
- ❖ A **mission statement** should be short - no more than a single sentence. It should be easily understood and every employee should be able to recite it from memory. An explicit mission guides employees to work independently and yet collectively toward the realization of the organization's potential.
- ❖ A **mission statement** may be accompanied by an overarching statement of philosophy or strategic purpose intended to convey a vision for the future and an awareness of challenges from a top-level perspective.
- ❖ **The mission statement** is the "touchstone" by which all offerings are judged. In addition to the organization's purpose other key elements of the mission statement should include whom it serves, how, and why. The most **effective** mission statements are easily recalled and provide direction and motivation for the organization.

Since an organization exists to accomplish something in the larger environment, its specific mission or purpose provides employees with a shared sense of opportunity, direction, significance, and achievement. An explicit mission guides employees to work independently and yet collectively toward the realization of the organization's potential. Thus, a good mission statement gets the emotional bonding and commitment needed. It allows the individual employee to say; "I know how I should do my job differently."

A mission statement provides answers to six essential questions.

1. **What-** What is being satisfied. The mission statement defines the need which the organization

is intended to satisfy.

2. **Who** - the mission must provide a definition the organization offering the service, including defining how it is different from other organizations. Who are we?

3. **Whom** – who is being satisfied? the mission statement must identify the organization's clients, target beneficiaries of its program and geographic domain.

4. **How**. The mission statement should indicate how customer needs are satisfied- the technology used and functions performed. It must define the means, processes, methods, or procedures for service provision.

5. **Why**- the mission statement must define the ultimate goal of the organization. Why the organizations exist?

6. **Where**- indicates the geographical domain?

Mission may include four elements. These are, purpose, strategy, value and behavioral standard.

- Purpose - Why the organization exist?
- Strategy - Distinctive competence and means for winning
- Value– what the organization believes. It is a philosophy or moral principles behind the organization culture. Value stated separately.
- Behavioral standard- Explains the how the organization meets its purpose

Agreeing on values, vision, and mission is usually best accomplished as a part of a planning retreat or at a special meeting; the process will usually take several hours, and should include Board and at least senior staff. Often, you will draft the values and mission statement and describe the vision as part of your strategic planning session, and then the Strategic Planning committee or task force will review and refine the specific language, and bring the refined language to the Board for approval.

4. Develop a shared vision for the organization.

In some strategic planning efforts, a vision for the organization is developed after a vision for the community has been discussed -- with the assumption that a shared organizational vision may be dependent upon a shared vision of what society should become. Whenever this is done, it is important to agree on where the organization wants to be in three to five years (It is often helpful to focus on where you want to be at the end of the period covered by the strategic plan).

For many Board and staff members, it makes sense to first develop a vision of where the organization wants to be in a specified number of years, and then define strategies that will help it get there. The vision might describe the organization broadly, in terms of its mix of programs, reputation or status inside and outside its primary target community, key accomplishments, and relationships with stakeholders; specific descriptions might be included in relation to service/target area, program scope and depth, funding, governance, staffing, relationships with other entities, visibility, etc. This form of "visioning" can be done in many ways; for example:

- Small groups can physically draw their vision of the future, then describe it to the full group, and identify common elements, and use them to establish a joint vision. This approach is often used when the Board has limited literacy or where the whole Board is not entirely comfortable in the same language – e.g., multi-ethnic Boards, or Boards that include some members with limited English fluency and some with only English fluency.
- Small groups can role play what they would want to be able to say about the organization's major accomplishments and reputation to a newspaper reporter five years from now, then share the major components of their vision with the full group, again as a basis for developing a shared vision.
- Small groups can play the role of various supportive stakeholders – funders, clients, allies/collaborating organizations, the Board, the staff – and each develop a series of statements describing the organization as they would like to see it in a specified number of years. Then these visions can be shared and meshed.
- Individuals can complete a formal worksheet indicating where they see the organization in either broad or specific terms. For example:
 - ✓ **Broad categories.** Describe the organization in five years, in terms of the following categories such as program, resources, status, relationships, institutional development, and governance; or
 - ✓ **Specific characteristics.** Describe the organization in five years, in terms of the following: target area, target populations, budget, percentage of funding from public and private sources, staff size and composition, staff/component structure, program areas, offices/locations, Board size and composition, relationship with the private sector, relationship with major local public agencies.

Individuals would then share the information in small groups, reach some form of shared

responses, then present them to the full group. The full group must then reach consensus on a shared vision.

If the organization is small, the full group can take turns describing the organization in terms of specified categories or topics (e.g., missions, program scope, resources, and relationships), then consensus can be reached on major statements and categories.

The development of a shared vision is usually best done with both Board and staff involvement. For a small organization, a joint Board-staff process may be practical. For a large organization, a two-stage process might be useful, with staff first working together on a vision, then having the Board and key staff participate in a similar process, in which they review and incorporate the staff vision with their own.

6. Develop a series of goals or organizational status statements which describe the organization in a specified number of years – assuming it is successful in addressing its mission. It is usually a short step from the vision to goals – sometimes the statements describing the vision are essentially goal statements. It is extremely valuable to transform the vision into a series of key goals for the organization, preferably in the form of status statements describing the organization. For example, goals might cover a variety of categories, stated as follows:

- **Program:** "El Centro will operate an alternative high school with public school funding that will have a student body of 250"; "El Centro will provide comprehensive services to youth from pre-school through college age";
- **Resources:** "El Centro will have a budget of \$3 million and a staff of 40";
- **Status:** "El Centro will be the largest and most respected nonprofit housing development corporation in Lake County";
- **Relationships:** "El Centro will be represented on major coalitions in its program areas and on the Boards of at least three major mainstream organizations";
- **Institutional Development:** "El Centro will own its own headquarters building, which will also have space for rent to other community-based organizations"; "El Centro will have a fully computerized financial management and management information system, with all staff connected through a network".
- **Governance:** "The El Centro Board will take an active role in resource development, taking responsibility for one major special event each year"; "The El

Centro Board will establish three active working committees – Programs, Finance, and Resource Development – which will meet bimonthly and consistently have quorums.

7. Agree upon key strategies to reach the goals and address key issues identified through the environmental scan.

The major emphasis should be on broad strategies, including current and new program, advocacy, collaborative, or other approaches. These strategies should be related to specific goals or address several goals. The process requires looking at where the organization is now and where its vision and goals indicate it wants to be, and identifying strategies to get there. The Board needs to provide a broad view to guide this effort, while the planning group or staff can do much of the detailed analysis. Approaches might include the following:

- Once the key issues to be addressed and the goals have been specified, the planning group, staff, or a consultant might look back at the SWOT results of the environmental scan, and identify changes in current strategies which may be required to reach the goals and address the issues. This might mean identifying potential new strategies or suggesting changes in emphasis or priority. These would be presented to the Board and key staff for discussion and decisions.
- The planning group might review the planning process to date, and develop and present to the Board and key staff a series of alternative approaches or scenarios – for example, should the organization focus on community organizing or national-level advocacy; should there be increased decentralization or more centralization; should field offices receive more or less attention and resources, compared to the headquarters office. Based on the decisions made using these scenarios, strategies will be determined.

Whatever the specific approach used specific criteria for evaluating and choosing among strategies should be agreed upon. They might include such criteria as the following:

- ✓ **Value** – Will the strategy contribute to meeting agreed-upon goals?
- ✓ **Appropriateness** – Is the strategy consistent with the organization's mission, values, and operating principles?
- ✓ **Feasibility** – Is the strategy practical, given personnel and financial resources and capacity?

- ✓ **Acceptability** – Is the strategy acceptable to the Board, key staff, and other stakeholders?
- ✓ **Cost-benefit** – Is the strategy likely to lead to sufficient benefits to justify the costs in time and other resources?
- ✓ **Timing** – Can and should the organization implement this strategy at this time, given external factors and competing demands?

Based on these or other agreed-upon criteria, strategies can be evaluated and selected, or prioritized.

In agreeing upon strategies, the planning group should always consider the need to clearly define responsibilities for their implementation. For example, if a strategic plan goal is to make primary health care available to your target group, regardless of ability to pay, then a key strategy might be to establish a coalition of local organizations to work towards establishment of a community health center, or to work with a local hospital or existing health center to open a satellite center in the community. Or you might need to advocate for changes in current laws or policies. There must be someone or some unit within the organization that can take responsibility for implementing this strategy.

You are likely to complete Steps 4-7 during a strategic planning retreat. Someone B a consultant, the Strategic Planning committee or task force, or a staff member B will need to take the newsprint and notes from the retreat, the results of the environmental scan, and other relevant materials and begin draft a written strategic plan. Once this draft has been prepared, the next step can begin.

8. Develop an action plan that addresses goals and specifies objectives and work plans on an annual basis.

Once the longer-term elements of a strategic plan have been developed, it is time to ensure a specific work plan to begin implementation. Strategic planning recognizes that strategies must reflect current conditions within the organization and its environment. Thus it is rare to attempt to develop detailed annual objectives except for the first or perhaps the first and second year covered by the strategic plan. However, annual action plans are needed. Annual program objectives should be time-based and measurable. The annual plan may be a part of the strategic plan or may be an annual addendum to it.

Objectives and work plans for the Board and for the institution as a whole are as important a program-related ones. Most projects have specified annual objectives and work plans because of

funder requirements, while only a strategic plan is likely to require a Board to think about its desired composition, skills, and involvement, or about organizational structure and administrative systems.

Developing objectives and annual work plans requires both Board and staff input, with staff often taking major responsibility for program-related goals and objectives once the Board has defined organizational goals, and the Board developing goals and objectives related to governance. The Board must approve the action plan, while staff (with consultant help, if desired) can do much of the development of the written plan. This is an area of staff expertise, since implementation of programs and other strategies based on policies set by the Board is a staff function.

9. Finalize a written strategic plan that summarizes the results and decisions of the strategic planning process.

There is no set format, but be sure to include the outputs of each major step. The box at the end of this document provides one possibility.

10. Build in procedures for monitoring, and for modifying strategies based on changes in the external environment or the organization.

Be sure progress towards goals and objectives and use of strategies is monitored regularly, with strategies revised and annual objectives developed yearly, based on the progress made, obstacles encountered, and the changing environment. Have procedures for taking advantage of unexpected changes such as more sympathetic elected or appointed officials, improvements in the economy, changes in local funder priorities, or changes in the target population. Define annual objectives at the start of each year. Look back to see what progress has been made in critical success factors. Use the plan as a compass, but not an inflexible blueprint for action. The Board plays a critical role in reviewing progress and assuring that strategies are changed as appropriate; staff should carry out the documentation required to generate ongoing data for this review, as well as carrying out periodic monitoring and making reports to the Board. If the organization has a planning and evaluation unit, it should play an ongoing role in monitoring progress towards goals and objectives, and analyzing reasons for shortfalls in accomplishments.

To sum up the steps listed above are just one approach to developing and implementing a strategic plan. Strategic planning is a process which lends itself to a joint Board-staff effort.

Often, there is a joint Board-staff retreat early in the process, a Board-staff committee to oversee the entire planning process, a staff planning session with a strong focus on the action plan, and a Board session to review and approve the plan. The retreats are in addition to committee meetings and ongoing staff work. The key planning sessions often work best when facilitated by an outsider knowledgeable about the organization or about community-based organizations generally. A facilitator should be someone skilled in group processes and experienced in strategic planning who is non-directive, committed to assuring full discussion of issues but also task-oriented and able to move the process forward. Sometimes a former Board member or Executive director can fulfill this role. Some foundations provide management assistance grants that can support consultant and other support for the entire process and make possible an in-depth environmental scan. If your organization is relatively new, your first strategic plan is likely to be for a three-year period. After that, you may want to develop a new strategic plan every five years. Be sure to document not only the plan but also the process, so you can improve upon it with each cycle.

2.4. Project planning

2.4.1. Basic concepts of educational projects

The term project originated from the Latin verb ‘projectum’ meaning to throw forward. This denotes the idea that proposals which may introduce new ideas improvements and changes are put forward. Organizations perform works which generally involve either operations or projects, although the two may overlap. Operations and projects share many characteristics; for example, they are:

- Performed by people
- Constrained by limited resources
- Planned, executed and controlled

Projects are often implemented as a means of achieving an organization’s strategic plan. Projects and operations differ primarily in that operations are on going and repetitive while projects are temporary and unique. The Unique nature of a project implies to the product or service different in some distinguishing way from all other products or services.

For many organizations, projects are means to respond to those requests that cannot be addressed within the organization’s normal operational units.

It is difficult to have a single and comprehensive definition of a project mainly because projects are different in their nature, objectives and people forwarding definitions have different knowledge, skill, view etc. Accordingly, some of the definitions include the following.

- ✓ Project is a specific activity with specific starting and ending points intended to accomplish a specific objective.
- ✓ A project is a plan that has a beginning and an end. It has specific goals, conditions and responsibilities. You can have a project in a community or in a household.
- ✓ A project is an investment activity up on which resources are expended to create capital asset that will produce benefits over an extended period of time which logically lends to planning, financing, implementing as a unit.
- ✓ A project is seen primarily as a planning process which uses one or more scarce resources during a specific time for the purpose of producing some economic returns or output at a later date.
- ✓ A project is a capital investment to develop facilities to provide goods and service.
- ✓ A project is a problem scheduled for solution". Problem refers to the gap between where you are and where you want to be, with an obstacle that prevents easy movement to close the gap.
- ✓ Projects are a group of activities that have to be performed with limited resources to yield specific objectives, in a specific time, and in a specific locality. Thus, a project is a temporary endeavor employed to create a unique product, service or results.
- ✓ According to the Project Management Institute (PMI) (2004) a project is any work that happens only once, has a clear beginning and end, and is intended to create a unique product or knowledge. It may involve only one person, or thousands. It may last several days, or many years. It may be undertaken by a single organization, or by an alliance of several stakeholders. A project may be as simple as organizing a one-day event or as complex as constructing a dam on a river.
- ✓ A project can also be taken as to mean a set of investment activities aimed at achieving specific development objectives within a pre-determined time frame and resources.
- ✓ A project is a means by which a local, regional or national development plans or ideas are realized.

Projects are undertaken at all levels of the organization. They may involve a single person or

many thousands. Their duration ranges from a few weeks to more than five years. Projects may involve a single unit of one organization or may cross organizational boundaries, as in joint ventures and partnering.

Projects are critical to the realization of the performing organization's business strategy because projects are a means by which strategy is implemented. Examples of projects include:

- Developing a new product or service
- Effecting a change in structure, staffing, or style of an organization
- Designing a new transportation vehicle
- Developing or acquiring a new or modified information system
- Constructing a building or facility
- Building a water system for a community
- Running a campaign for political office
- Implementing new business procedure or process
- Building new schools or additional classrooms

In general project is simply task or series of tasks that has a definable beginning and end, and requires the expenditure of one or more resources that must be completed in order to achieve the objective for which it is instituted. It can be seen as an act of capital investment using (scarce) resources to develop facilities for the provision of goods and services. In other words, a project is that it is an activity on which money will spend in expectation of returns, and which logically seems to lend itself to planning, financing, and implementation as a unit. It is specific activity with a specific starting point, and a specific ending point intended to accomplish a specific objective.

2.4.2. Characteristics of Projects

Though projects can be defined in various ways and differ in many respects, they have the following common features:

- Projects in expectation of future benefits
- Projects are activities that are capable of being planned, financed, and implemented as a unit
- Projects have defined sets of objectives and specific start and end time frames

- Projects have their own geographical or locational boundaries in which they are to be implemented
- Projects have a partially or wholly independent management or administrations
- Projects have pre-determined objectives, time frame, inputs, mode of operations, outputs and impacts
- Projects can range from very large national level activities with millions of Birr investment to very small community level projects with a few thousand Birr investment. The huge national level projects are often known as macro projects while the smaller ones are termed as micro and mini projects.

Whatever level of projects we are considering, the definition and main features are more or less similar although the amount of resources and level of complexity could be different. Moreover, projects may have intended and unintended social, economic, and environmental impacts that far outlast the projects themselves.

2.4.3. The project cycle

The life of a project is usually divided into several successive stages. The sequence is often known as the project cycle. This step in modern project management commonly follows five successive steps. These are;

- Project identification,
- Project preparation/formulation,
- Project appraisal,
- Project implementation and
- Project evaluation

Each stage is usually the logical successor of the previous one. The project cycle explained above in terms of five phases, distinctions among these phases, especially between identification and preparation, are often unclear in practice and their relative importance varies greatly, depending on the character, scale and history of the project. The five phases of the project cycle should be viewed as interactive steps, not as a linear set of sequential steps.

1. Identification of Projects

Project identification is the first phase of a project cycle. It is a recurrent process for documenting, ranking and approving candidate projects within an organization. It is the process

of checking if candidate projects should be undertaken by the organization. To have successful project identification, it should contain clear and good management arrangements.

Project identification is, the process of generating several project ideas and selecting one or more ideas for possible project preparation and investment.

2. Preparation/ formulation of Projects

Project formulation begins with the drafting of a proposal for sponsorship (a short concept proposal of 4–5pages) that lays out preliminary ideas, objectives, results, strategies, outputs and activities. This proposal is used as the basis for consultations with implementing partners and governments and other sponsors.

3. Project Appraisal

After the completion of project preparation the stage of project appraisal sets in. Appraisal involves a comprehensive and systematic assessment of all aspects of the proposed project. Project appraisal is the process of reviewing the project proposal (document) to decide on whether it should be funded for implementation. It is the responsibility of investment or financial decision maker's .After appraisal the relevant authorities decided whether the project should be implemented or abandoned.

The proposed project should provide adequate answers to the following questions.

- ✓ Does the project fit in to the development process of the country and goes in line with national development policies?
- ✓ Does the project represent high priority use of the country's local resource?
- ✓ Does the project contribute to the maximum realization of the objectives?

Detailed appraisal includes assessment of;

- ✓ What urgent need the project meets
- ✓ The cost effectiveness of the project
- ✓ The size and timing of the project and
- ✓ Is their another available alternatives if the project is not implemented?
- ✓ Is the problem identified and analyzed and the proposed solution can be justified?
- ✓ Could the project is capable of addressing the problem adequately?
- ✓ Is the project cost effective
- ✓ Is the project acceptable and relevant

✓ Is the project sustainability?

The project is seen against a number of criteria, which measure its acceptability. The most frequently used criteria for appraisal are economic appraisal, technical appraisal, , institutional appraisal, commercial appraisal, financial appraisal, social appraisal and environmental appraisal. Economic appraisal assesses projects in terms of cost-benefit analysis and cost-efficiency. Whereas technical appraisal help evaluate projects from appropriateness of technology, availability of equipment and facilities and appropriateness and adequacy of project site perspective. Institutional appraisal the other hand enables to assess appropriateness of project organization, reliability and adequacy of project coordination and availability of qualified human resources. The criteria commercial appraisal help assess the availability of market for the project product or service.. Financial appraisal also helps to assess the availability of realistic budget requirements, fund and adequacy and continuity of flow of fund. Further, social appraisal aims to evaluate level of acceptability and support by the community and undesired impact on individuals or groups that may be created by the project. Finally, environmental appraisal targeted to investigate the negative impact on the environment and measures to mitigate negative environmental impacts.

4. Implementation of Projects

Projects that go through the appropriate steps in phases 1 and 2 will take less time between approval and implementation, and significantly reduce the risks involved in implementing a project. Budgeted resources are more likely to be used to implement activities and achieve the intended results and objectives. Project managers monitor expenditure, activities, output completion and workflows against their implementation plans, output delivery and the progress made towards achieving the results and objectives according to their anticipated milestones or benchmarks. Project sustainability beyond the project duration and reliability of the project strategy and methodology should be borne in mind throughout the implementation period.

At the implementation stage, the following activities will be carried out.

- ➡ Establishing organizational and administrative structures and systems for the project
- ➡ Preparing job descriptions, procedures and work manuals and activity plans
- ➡ Recruiting or if necessary training the project staff
- ➡ Placing the purchase orders as desired

- ➡ Acquiring the necessary inputs
- ➡ Moving the necessary inputs to the project site
- ➡ Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- ➡ Implementing the work

During project implementation, the implementing agencies and project managers should update and refine their risk assessment and formulate a risk management plan. When contingencies arise, risk management strategies should be implemented.

Project implementation may also involve people from various directions and organizations. It is essential to define their roles clearly for the purpose of good coordination, effective communication, minimizing duplication, promoting responsibility/accountability, increasing commitment and enhancing participation.

2.6. Project evaluation

Project evaluation is the systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics, and outcomes of projects to make judgments about the project, improve effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming (adapted from Patton, 1987). Evaluation is not merely the accumulation and summary of data and information about a project. Instead it provides well-documented and considered evidence to support the decision-making process.

The aim of evaluation is;

- ◆ To determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, developmental, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.
- ◆ Provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.
- ◆ To determine the project's merit (does it work?) and its worth (do we need it?).
- ◆ Helps decision-makers determine if a project should be continued and, if so, suggests ways to improve it
- ◆ Documents project (and program) accomplishments.

2.4.4. Project Proposal

The success of the projects directly related to its success in solving the problem it was designing to solve. Project proposal is an important event done through the projection of a project document the result of project formulation and the basis for implementation.

Project proposal must be prepared in generally agreed format. There are various ways of presenting project proposals. Different donors prescribe their own particular formats for project presentation. Whatever the case may be, the major elements involved in a project presentation have similarities. Below is the general format for the presentation of project proposal.

1. Title page

- Should be brief and concise
- Indicate the kind of action processed in the project

2. Executive summary/not more than a page or two/

- Project title
- Project location
- Sector
- Executing organization
- Contact person and address
- Project description
- Target group/number of beneficiary
- Project cost
- Project duration
- Collaborative agency

3. Background and justification

Before starting to develop the ‘technical’ aspects of a project it is useful to describe to the context in which it is going to be operating and to provide valid justification for a project. This will help particularly when the project is being considered for funding. Here, the focus is;

- Description of the context and setting of the project

- Description of major problems /symptoms causes/- why the project is needed now?
- Actions taken to tackle the problem
- Is there any assistance from others?
- Is the proposal the result of special study?
- Whether the project is directed to a new activity or an improvement on existing ones?
- What strength can be built on and what are the weaknesses the project will have to overcome

4. Target groups/Beneficiaries

- Who are the immediate beneficiaries? Or the ultimate beneficiaries of the project?
- The needs of beneficiaries must be compatible with the project objective
- The geographical coverage of the project /national or local/ will be indicated.

5. Project objectives

5.1 Development objective

- Describe a desired end/ a solution to development problem
- Macro/ higher level long term objective

5.2. Immediate objective

- Short term, concrete measurable and micro objective
- What will be the situation at the end of the project compared with pre project Situation

5. Outputs

Outputs are the result of project activities intended to achieve the immediate objectives. They are tangible and visible

6. Activities and time table/calendar/

- Activities are the action taken to produce the outputs.
- Activities taken place over time and are coordinated and to be complete by the date required in the description of the output.
- A planning calendar indicating the beginning of each of the project activities, their sequencing duration has to be included.

7. Inputs

- Inputs are financial, material and human resource necessary for carrying out the

activities

- Inputs involve local and external contributions to the project
- The amount of government ,community or donor contribution should be indicated
- The form of input has to be mentioned
- A detailed financial analysis indicating the breakdown of costs by item must be presented

9. Organization and management

- The project internal organization as well as its relations to partner organization and donors have to be expressed in hierarchical and operational terms /accountability/
- Describe the implementation strategy .state how and who will coordinate implementation activities.
- Are there legal texts which are of any importance to the project laws , regulations standards, in the field of fiancé, labor customs, Insurance, taxes etc.
- What about the communication/ reporting/ system? The project will produce information reports ,data minutes and indicate who will produce them, what they will contain when they will be produced, for what use and to whom they will be sent

10. Evaluation

- Monitoring/continuous or ongoing/ and final /ex-post/ evaluation of a project is necessary to correct deviations while the project is operational and to assess its impact after implementation on termination of the project
- It must be clearly stated at what interval ,how and by whom the evaluation is to be carried out to whom the report should go
- The results achieved by the project /during the execution and termination/ are analyzed. If indicators of success have established, it may be measured in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability etc.

11. Sustainability

If the project has to be continue after completion, identification of local resource or the nature of support required for self reliance or if there is going to be second phase it must be clearly stated

CHAPTER THREE; Information for Educational Planning

3.1 An introduction to Educational Indicators

Education indicators are statistics that reflect important aspects of the education system, but not all statistics about education are indicators. Statistics qualify as indicators only if they serve as yardsticks. That is, they must tell a great deal about the entire system by reporting the condition of a few particularly significant features of it. For example, the number of students enrolled in schools is an important fact, but it does little to tell us how well the education system is functioning. However, data on the proportion of secondary students who have successfully

completed advanced study in mathematics can provide considerable insight into the health of the system, and can be appropriately considered an indicator.

- In short, an indicator is an individual or composite statistic that relates to a basic construct in education and is useful in a policy context.

3.2. Classification of Indictors

In the extensive literature on social indicators and poverty measurement the importance of an analytical distinction between types of indicators is stressed. Indicators tend to be classified depending on whether they reflect the means, the process, or the end in achieving the objective of a particular set of development policies, programs or projects. Good monitoring and evaluation should make use of an appropriate balance between different types of indicators that can establish the link between means and ends. Prevailing classifications of indicators are roughly similar, though some important differences exist. Here, it is proposed to distinguish four types of indicators¹: (i) input indicators; (ii) access indicators; (iii) output indicators; and (iv) outcome indicators.

Input indicators measure the means or the resources employed to facilitate the satisfaction of needs and, hence, reaching development objectives. Examples in education would include the number of teachers, school buildings, and teaching materials supplies and the cost and level of expenditures (public and private) on education. Since absolute numbers may not be very indicative for policy decisions, input indicators are often specified as some match of supply and demand variables, such as pupil/teacher ratios and average cost per pupil. It will rank the latter type of indicators nevertheless as input indicators, since they give an indication of the amount of services (inputs) in relation to some identified need or demand.

Access indicators identify demand factors of potential users and would comprise variables that determine

the use and accessibility of the supplied services. Examples of this type of indicators in education are the geographical distance to school facilities, family and cultural background of students, foregone earnings of individuals and households, and direct private costs of education (fees, utensils, uniforms, etc.). Some of these demand factors are essential in textbook analyses of the economics of education, but rarely are given due importance in educational information systems, let alone in the practical application of monitoring and evaluating educational programs.

Output and outcome indicators measure the impact of a particular set of policies or a project on living standards of the population. Improvement in these types of indicators should determine the success of policies and projects as they try to measure the development impact. Output and outcomes should relate to objectives, but there may be different levels of objectives, hence the distinction between output and outcome is made.

3.3. Purpose of indicators

- Indicators are used to monitor the economy, the criminal justice system, or other social systems.
- Indicators tell a great deal about the entire system by reporting the condition of a few particularly significant features of it
- Indicators provide useful information about such a complex phenomenon as schooling.
- Indicators generate more and more accurate information about conditions
- Indicators are used to monitor complex conditions that we would probably judge imprecisely or miss altogether in day-to-day observations.
- Indicators help reflect the characteristics of students and communities served by schools, the financial and human resources (especially teachers) available to the schools, and other educational inputs.
- Indicators help reflect the adequacy of the curriculum and instruction received by students, the nature of the school as an organization in pursuit of educational excellence and equity, and other educational processes.
- The overriding purpose of indicators is to characterize the nature of a system through its components--how they are related and how they change over time. This information can then be used to judge progress toward some goal or standard, against some past benchmark, or by comparison with data from some other institution or country.

Therefore, governments recognize the value of statistical indicators that provide current information, analyze trends, and forecast impending changes. Consequently, it is not surprising that policymakers and researchers are seeking better statistical indicators of education.

3.4. Characteristics of good Indicators

- Indicators must be related to one another so that their relationships, and changes in these relationships, can be ascertained to suggest possible explanations for observed changes in outcomes
- In addition to monitoring outcomes, Indicators must represent, at least roughly, the important components of an educational system.

3.5. Indicator system?

Another central concept in the discussion of indicators is that of the indicator system. Whether indicators are single or composite statistics, a single indicator can rarely provide useful information about such a complex phenomenon as schooling. Indicator systems are usually designed to generate more and more accurate information about conditions. However, an indicator system is more than just a collection of indicator statistics. Ideally, a system of indicators measures distinct components of the system and also provides information about how the individual components work together to produce the overall effect. In other words, the whole of the information provided by a system of indicators is greater than the sum of its parts.

A good education indicator system is expected to provide accurate and precise information to illuminate the condition of education and contribute to its improvement. The information generated will be neither possible to grasp through casual observation nor generally available from other efforts to collect, report, and analyze data about schooling. Indicators are thus expected to assist policymakers as they formulate schooling goals and translate those goals into actions.

Whenever social indicators have been heralded as a stimulus for reform, their promise has quickly given way to realism. Promises of policy applications have been overly optimistic. Indicator systems were, for example, unable to provide detailed and accurate enough information for evaluating government programs. These events led to more realistic assessments of what indicators can and cannot do.

