

UNHCR



Effective Planning

Guidelines for UNHCR Teams

OMS Working Draft



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Foreword	Table of Contents	How to Use These Guidelines
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FOREWORD (Effective Planning for UNHCR Teams)

These guidelines are a management tool and resource for UNHCR field managers and our operational counterparts who have the responsibility of leading and coordinating planning processes in UNHCR field operations. The purpose of the guidelines is to assist the UNHCR field staff members and UNHCR

partner staff members manage the planning process at all levels of an operation in the most effective and efficient way possible. The assumption underlying this emphasis on the planning process is that better planning processes lead to better quality results delivered on time in a cost effective manner.

For whom have these guidelines been written?

These guidelines are for field managers who are leaders of teams and thereby share responsibility for implementation of aspects of an operation. They may be working at the regional level, country programme level or at the site level. They may have responsibility for protection activities or assistance activities or both. Typically, they have responsibility for managing the planning process at their level taking into account work planning and capacity at levels below them and policy decisions taken above them.

Team members and technical specialists will also find the guidelines useful. For members of planning teams, the guidelines provide a common frame of reference. For technical specialists, the guidelines provide a basis for ensuring effective integration of the input of technical specialists into overall strategy as well as operations and project plans.

Acknowledgments

The concepts and methodology presented in these guidelines have been adapted from the UNHCR training programmes, in particular Programme Management Training, and “best practice” workshops which have focused on planning. Additional sources for the content include the following UNHCR publications: *Chapter 4 of the UNHCR Manual*, the *UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies*, *Working as a Manager in An Organization (OMS 1)*, *Social Services in Refugee Emergencies*, *A Framework for People-Oriented Planning in Refugee Situations Taking Account of Women, Men and Children*, and *Partnership: A Programme Management Handbook for UNHCR’s Partners*, *Contingency Planning: A Practical Guide for Field Staff..* The guidelines take into account important innovations and improvements in planning envisioned as part of the development of the new Operations Management system.

Types of Planning

Areas of specialization within UNHCR such as protection, finance, and personnel have unique aspects for which specific expertise is required. These guidelines focus on those aspects of planning which are common to all areas with the expectation that the concepts and methodology presented can be adapted to all aspects of UNHCR’s work.

These guidelines have been written by Alan Vernon (emailid: vernon@unhcr.ch) and Andrew Mayne (emailid: mayne@unhcr.ch); however, many individuals have contributed to their development.

The plan of the OMS Team is to update these guidelines periodically as part of an ongoing effort within the OMS development process to craft a UNHCR “Best Practice” planning methodology. Comments and suggestions are most welcome.

Table of Contents Effective Planning for UNHCR Teams

How to Use These Guidelines

Chapter One: Planning Fundamentals

- 1.1 What is Planning?
- 1.2 Why Plan?
- 1.3 Planning Terminology
- 1.4 Keeping the Focus on the Beneficiaries

- 1.5 The Importance of Policy
- 1.6 The Importance of Objectives
- 1.7 The Importance of a Situational Approach
- 1.8 The Importance of an Integrated Approach
- 1.9 The Importance of a Participatory Approach
- 1.10 The Importance of Technical Expertise
- 1.11 The Importance of Standards
- 1.12 The Importance of Information
- 1.13 Planning Pitfalls
- 1.14 UNHCR Planning “Best Practice”

Chapter Two: Planning Models and Processes

- 2.1 Planning: A Conceptual Model
- 2.2 The Planning Scenario
- 2.3 Planning for Results and Impact
- 2.4 Planning as a Continuous Process
- 2.5 Managing the Planning Process

Chapter Three: Strategy and Strategic Planning

- 3.1 Basic Assumptions about Strategy
- 3.2 Strategy and Strategic Planning in the UNHCR Context
- 3.3 Strategy: Fundamentals
- 3.4 A Strategic Approach to Operations Planning
- 3.5 Aspects of Strategy
- 3.6 Types of Strategy
- 3.7 Strategy Development in UNHCR Operations: A Basic Model

Chapter Four: Operations, Programme and Project Planning

- 4.1 Operations Planning in the UNHCR Context
- 4.2 Key OMS Innovation: The Logical Framework
- 4.3 Operations, Programme and Project Planning

- 4.4 Operations Design
- 4.5 Programme and Project Planning: A Process View
- 4.6 Designing for Impact
- 4.7 The Reality of Programme and Project Design
- 4.8 Establishing Hierarchies of Objectives

Chapter Five: Participatory Planning Techniques and Methodology

- 5.1 Assessment
- 5.2 Vision and Objectives
- 5.3 Implementation Options
- 5.4 Feasibility Testing
- 5.5 Implementation and Workplanning

Chapter Six: Budgeting

- 6.1 Budgeting in the UNHCR Context
- 6.2 Results-Based Performance Budgeting

How to use these guidelines

The assumption in these guidelines is that the reader has in mind a forthcoming team planning event or opportunity in a UNHCR operational context, and would like to know how best to structure and organize the planning process, and to motivate colleagues and partners to participate and contribute.

The guidelines are structured around a recommended planning process and design matrix

Chapters one to three explain the **role of planning in UNHCR operations**, and the approaches to the planning and strategy formation processes which have proven most expedient and appropriate in the context of multi-partner and multi-country refugee operations. These sections are intended to help groups understand the rationale for the process, and to help facilitators present and explain it in a consistent manner.

Chapter four sets out a **recommended planning process and a design matrix for UNHCR teams**. The process steps and matrix are consistent with the conceptual framework of the Operations Management System, and with current best practice in planning among UN system agencies, in the humanitarian and development fields as well as in the private sector. They have been adapted to the specific needs of UNHCR and its partners.

Chapters five and six provide tried and tested **participatory planning techniques and methodology** for use by the team at the different stages of the planning process, from assessment through to workplanning and budgeting.

To make best use of the guidelines it is suggested that teams **focus on the recommended planning process in Chapter four**. The rationale for the process and the context and purpose of each of the steps can be understood by reading the relevant parts of chapters one to three. Tools and guidance relating to each of the steps will be found in Chapters five and six.

The planning process helps the team to build a logical framework

At the heart of the guidelines is a logical framework, adapted for the UNHCR context as the **OMS Design Matrix**. The completed matrix represents the most concise way of capturing for all concerned in an operation the soundness of the logic underpinning the plan that has been agreed among all the team members, partners and organizational levels involved. Each part of the Matrix is linked to a step in the planning process.

The Design Matrix conveys in a nutshell how the key components of the strategy are expected to contribute to the impact which the operation is designed to achieve. It articulates the rationale on which the design choices are based. It specifies the agreed criteria and means by which progress and the success of the strategy will be measured. Lastly it incorporates the assumptions and risks on which the viability of the strategy depends.

The team builds a plan in a logical sequence of analyses and design choices

The **planning process** is in fact a sequence of agreed problem analyses and design choices. Each step in the recommended planning process enables the team to generate a necessary logical component of the operation. Each planning step can be understood as generating as an output a key piece of the structure of the Design Matrix. The plan is built up step by step. Each step builds on the analyses or choices made in the preceding steps. Used in combination, both the process and the matrix help teams to track the rationale, coherence and completeness of the plan they are producing. The result is a sound plan in which the team has confidence, and for which they feel ownership and responsibility.

	Planning step	Key Tools	Output to Design Matrix and Plan
Assessment	Establishing Common Ground	Presentation and discussion	Team agreement on need for sound analysis and design
	Situation Assessment and Problem Analysis	Range of assessment and analysis tools	Agreed rationale for UNHCR and partner involvement - problems, causes and effects
Design	Vision Development	Hierarchy of objectives	Agreed goals, objectives, standards and indicators
	Implementation Strategy Development	Work breakdown, scheduling	Agreement on outputs, activities, responsibilities, workplans, budgets
Development of the Plan	Risk Analysis	Force-field analysis tools	Agreement on logic and feasibility of strategy given assumptions and risks
	Finalized Strategic Framework	Design Matrix, OMS planning formats	Detailed agreement on formulation of plan, prioritization of components, and on

Chapter One: Planning Fundamentals

1.1 What is Planning?

What is planning? Everyone, and every organization, plans in one form or another, yet the concept resists an easy definition. Typical dictionary definitions of what a “plan” is suggest that a plan is the method or procedure by which something will be done; thus planning is the process for developing plans. Textbooks and references on planning attempt to capture other aspects of planning. For example, planning involves:

- ◆ making choices about what to do and how to do it;
- ◆ dealing with ambiguity;
- ◆ identifying emerging patterns;
- ◆ attempting to influence the future;
- ◆ solving problems through assessment and design;
- ◆ making strategic decisions towards a desired outcome;
- ◆ analyzing past actions/ mistakes in order to improve future performance;
- ◆ applying a mandate for change.

These guidelines approach planning from the point of view that there are certain common elements of planning which, if accepted by planning teams, will facilitate the planning process and help to ensure that planning is effective. The approach taken by these guidelines assumes that *planning is a continuous process involving deliberate and/or emergent decision-making*. Moreover, the approach assumes that *planning involves efforts to influence the future in a manner which transforms the current situation into the desired situation*. These guidelines assume as well that *highly participatory planning processes are the most effective*.

These guidelines assume the following working definition of planning in the UNHCR context:

Planning within UNHCR is the decision-making process by which UNHCR’s mandate and policy is applied as an instrument for positive change directed towards solutions in specific situations.

This definition attempts to capture three important points about the planning. The first is that all stages of the planning process from initial assessment to final documentation of plans involves decision-making. The second that planning is a continuous process. The third is that mandate and policy are fundamental to effective planning, but that mandate and policy must always be interpreted within the specific situation. These points will be elaborated upon throughout the guidelines.

1.2 Why Plan?

Why plan? The answer is not necessarily self-evident. UNHCR, like most organizations, values quick action and results. Plans may provide the basis for effective action, but they are never an end in themselves. The answer that these guidelines put forward is that effective management of the planning process and more effective planning processes will lead to better results delivered on time in a cost effective manner with the end result being the achievement of the organisation’s overall objectives in the most effective way.

Effective planning processes are also powerful team building activities. When managed in a participatory way, a well-managed planning process can create a sense of direction among staff members, foster a longer term view, and create a sense of ownership and cohesiveness.

The Limits of Planning

Before embarking on any planning process, particularly highly participatory processes, UNHCR teams and their operational partners need to take into account the limits of even the best planning processes and determine whether the benefits will outweigh the costs. Some of the limits of highly participatory planning approaches include the following:

- ◆ Good planning requires investing time in the process, and key players may not be willing to make the time investment required.
- ◆ Intuition or "creative muddling" may be preferable, particularly in highly dynamic or unstable environments.
- ◆ In emergency situations, life-threatening issues should be tended to and a degree of stability achieved before embarking on a more elaborate planning process.
- ◆ Team dynamics may be such that a poor plan may result from the process.

Given UNHCR's Operation Cycle, planning is required of all UNHCR teams in order to ensure that an accurate assessment of UNHCR's resource requirements is presented to donor countries. Planning is an inevitable part of UNHCR's work. The challenge is to manage the planning process and to plan in the most effective and efficient way possible.

1.3 Planning Terminology

The following terms associated with planning are often a source of confusion as they are used by individuals and organizations in different ways. The following paragraphs briefly discuss each term and put forward a working definition to encourage shared understanding within UNHCR and between UNHCR and its partners.

Strategy

The concept of strategy is normally used in two ways. In the first strategy includes what is to be achieved, i.e., the vision/ goal/ objective and the means for achieving the vision/ goal/ objective, i.e., the activities or tactics. In the second, strategy refers to the method or approach which is to be implemented in order to achieve the vision/ goal/ objective. In each the concept of strategy deals with the "big picture", the global level at which the planning team is focusing.

These guidelines adopt the following definition based on the first usage:

Strategy is a clear vision of what you want to achieve (goals and objectives) and why, as well as the overall means and time frame (the "how", the tactics) to achieve it.

Vision

The concept of vision may be applied to the personal, team or organizational level. Vision normally represents the top of the planning hierarchy at which a planning team is working. As a working definition these guidelines suggest that:

Vision is a mental image of how things should be; i.e., the realization of the desired situation.

Goals, Objectives, and Outputs

A distinction is often made between goals and objectives with goals referring to higher level and longer term desired results and objectives referring to specific results with definite time frames. Some organizations attempt to distinguish between the various levels of planning by using terms such as goal, objective, outcome, and output. The UNHCR Programme Management System as described in Chapter

4 of the UNHCR manual refers to a hierarchy of objectives and does not distinguish between goals and objectives. The Operations Management System (OMS) development process has determined that it is in the interest of the organization to introduce a greater degree of rigour and precision in the setting of objectives in UNHCR programmes. The OMS process has identified the following levels of objectives which are typically reflected in UNHCR programmes:

Goal	<i>the desired result of UNHCR programmes in terms of overall solutions; goals are established at the organizational and programme levels.</i>
Objective	<i>a statement of desired result, or specific accomplishment often established at the sectoral level</i>
Output	<i>defined deliverables which enable objectives and impacts to be achieved;</i>

These guidelines adopt the approach taken in the OMS development process.

Activity

These guidelines adopt the following definition of an activity:

An activity is a specific action or series of actions which provide the means for achieving an objective.

Activities can be broken down into tasks and sub-tasks as part of the workplanning process.

Input

These guidelines adopt the following definition of an input:

An input is a human, financial or material requirement for carrying out an activity.

Needs and Resources

This pair of terms comes from a directly operational perspective in planning. Needs in this context refers to requirements for human existence such as food, water and shelter. They are thereby comparable to resources which are the available means for meeting the needs. The terms “needs and resources” are most appropriately used by immediate action planners who are looking at a situation in terms of what is needed and what are the available and required resources to meet the unmet needs of a group of people. These guidelines adopt the following definitions:

Needs are basic requirements for human existence.

Resources are the human, financial and material means required to meet needs.

Problems and Solutions

This pair of terms comes from an analytical perspective in planning. A problem represents a condition which is likely to persist and is considered unsatisfactory from the point of view of the beneficiaries and organizations involved in assisting the beneficiaries. Problems are similar to needs as expressed in the

solution above with the exception that problems can be equated with unmet needs. Standards are the basis for determining whether a condition is considered a problem or not. Solutions represent a satisfactory change in the conditions that were previously considered unsatisfactory. Standards also provide the basis for determining whether a solution has been achieved. These guidelines adopt the following definitions:

A problem is a condition which is likely to persist and is considered unsatisfactory from the point of view of the beneficiaries and the organizations involved in assisting the beneficiaries.

A solution represents a satisfactory, long-term change in conditions that were previously considered unsatisfactory.

Standards

Standards are the means which enable planners to look at a situation, activity, results or performance and make judgments about quality. Planners typically attempt to determine the minimally acceptable standards to apply to the delivery and results of assistance activities. Standards also play a crucial role in enabling planners to make judgments in the assessment stage in terms of what problems the assistance programme should address. These guidelines adopt the following definition:

A standard is statement of a level which provides a basis for measuring or judging quality, particularly in terms of acceptable levels of service in protection and assistance programmes.

Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

The term assessment is related to the terms monitoring and evaluation. The distinction between the three terms - assessment, monitoring, and evaluation - usually has to do with the timing of the activities. Assessment is normally associated with preliminary activities, monitoring with ongoing activities, and evaluation with terminal activities usually after an activity is completed. These guidelines assume that all three activities involve information and data gathering and analysis. These guidelines adopt the following definitions:

Assessment consists of the activities involved to understand a given situation so as to provide a basis for designing an activity, project, operation or strategy.

Monitoring consists of assessment activities carried out in accordance with the guidelines or framework of a plan in order to correct activities found not to be in accordance with the plan or to modify the plan itself if determined to no longer be appropriate.

Evaluation is assessment taking place during or at the end of a project or operation in order to determine its impact, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency .

Planning Assumptions

Determining planning assumptions is an essential part of the planning process as they provide a basis for the setting of objectives. Typically, planners have little control over the conditions and events about which they make assumptions, but they recognize that effective planning demands that assumptions be articulated and considered as part of analyzing whether an activity, project, operation or strategy will be successful. These guidelines adopt the following definition:

A planning assumption is a prediction, condition or event which must exist if a project is likely to succeed, i.e., to meet its objectives.

Planning Scenario

The term "planning scenario" is useful for describing the body of assumptions which underlie a plan. Typically, in UNHCR programmes, planners make assumptions about beneficiary numbers, role and contribution of partners, government policy, beneficiary attitudes, etc. The planning scenario provides a bridge between the assessment and design of a project or operation. It "fixes" the body of fact, analysis and assumptions that allow the design process

to go forward. These guidelines adopt the following definition:

A planning scenario is the group of planning assumptions planners have used to provide a basis for developing a project, operation or strategy.

Planning Horizon and Time Frame

This pair of terms refer to the planning period an activity, project, operation or strategy will cover. They can be distinguished from each other in that the planning horizon usually refers to the end of the planning period at which point planners can say with confidence that desired results will have been achieved. In unstable, unpredictable situations the planning horizon will necessarily be short. In stable, predictable situations, the time frame can be longer. A time frame usually refers to the start and end of a plan. These guidelines adopt the following definitions:

Planning horizon refers to that point in the future at which planners can confidently predict that desired results will have been achieved.

Time frame refers to the starting and ending points of a plan.

Impact

In the context of planning, impact is a useful for referring to the overall result of a strategy, operation, project, or activity. It is related to the terms objective and goal in that it describes the desired result, and in some cases it is used synonymously with them. The concept of impact is particularly useful in the design stage of planning because it reminds us of the importance of value for money, i.e., getting the greatest possible impact, the best possible results, within the constraints of the resources that are available. These guidelines adopt the following definition:

Impact is the change, positive or negative, that is the result of an activity, project, operation or strategy.

1.4 Keeping the Focus on the Beneficiaries

Refugee and other populations are not homogeneous. Cultural and religious differences abound. As in any large group of people, there are numerous sub-groups within a given population or community. Therefore, to plan and successfully implement operations, teams need reliable information about the populations they are trying to protect and assist. The challenge for planners is to find the balance between the need for information and analysis, and the need for action and response. Planning teams never have all the information they need, nor will they have the time to do all the research and analysis required. This means that teams must make assumptions about the trends and developments within populations, as well as about the population itself. Any assumption made involve an element of risk—an essential part of any planning process is to examine that risk to find the balance between:

- ◆ ***Standardizing assistance to facilitate its delivery and to minimize costs; and***
- ◆ ***Diversifying assistance to meet the special needs of the various groups or categories of persons within the refugee population.***

Effective planning teams recognize the needs of specific individuals and sub-groups of beneficiaries, each with its own characteristics and needs. Of particular priority, as a matter of policy for UNHCR are women and children. Among the other sub-groups of special concern are unaccompanied minor children, the elderly, disabled individuals, victims of violence, persons suffering from chronic diseases, individuals with HIV/ AIDS, the mentally ill, and others. And of course, there are individuals who can be categorized in more than one group.

The challenge for planning teams is to keep the focus on the beneficiaries throughout the planning process. Gathering data on the demographics of a beneficiary population is just the beginning.

Planners need to understand the impact of the changes in circumstances that the refugees are facing. They need to know if traditional roles and responsibilities have changed, and if so, how. And, they need to know what dynamics of change may be at work within the refugee communities.

UNHCR's People-Oriented Approach

Every society assigns certain roles and responsibilities to men and others to women. Almost everywhere, women are primarily responsible for caring for and raising children, and for household duties, such as food preparation, cleaning, family health care, etc. (although men may, in some places, share these roles).

In other areas of work, however, some societies are organized quite differently. For example, sometimes men are responsible for agricultural production while women carry out marketing and trading activities. In other societies, the reverse may be true. In some places, women are expected to perform only those tasks which can be done in the safety of their homes or nearby communities, and only men work and travel outside the home sphere. Knowing who does what is essential to targeting assistance projects appropriately.

Experience shows that when organizations undertake protection and assistance initiatives with a commitment to keep the focus on the beneficiaries and commit themselves to understanding the situation of the beneficiaries and its impact on their lives, the greater the likelihood that programmes achieve their desired impact. Experience also shows that a failure to do so not only reduces overall programme/project efficiency and effectiveness but that such failure often results in disadvantaging women and girls relative to men and boys, and, in some cases, can result in their marginalisation and increased vulnerability.

It is therefore imperative that differences in the roles, responsibilities and resources of men and women are recognized, and that plans take these differences into account. There are three questions that planners should answer before or in the process of designing any intervention:

- ◆ What are the important economic and social or political activities which people in this group do, and who (men, women, boys or girls) do which?
- ◆ What resources do people (men, women, boys and girls) depend on to do their activities and how has becoming a refugee changed access to, and use of, resources by males/females?
- ◆ What factors explain the distribution of roles, responsibilities and resources among this group of refugees, and how should the operation take these into account?

UNHCR's People-Oriented approach helps ensure that operations both keep the focus on beneficiaries and mainstream gender equality. To help planners develop a profile of the beneficiaries and use the information to design and implement effective protection and assistance programmes, UNHCR has published a handbook called *People-Oriented Planning at Work—Using POP to Improve UNHCR Programming* and *A Frame-work for People Oriented Planning in Refugee Situations taking account of Women, Men and Children*, available from UNHCR in Geneva.

1.5 The Importance of Policy

In discussing the importance of policy, it is necessary to first define the term. These guidelines assume the following working definition of policy:

Policy is a statement of commitment by an authority to a course of action or procedure or guideline based on “universal” criteria determined in response to alternatives.

Policy decisions in UNHCR operations typically are needed at the macro-level in terms of the fundamental issues and questions that must be resolved in order to move forward in a given situation to more micro-level issues that arise as a result of unanticipated developments as implementation takes place.

These guidelines propose that an early step in any effective planning process is the definition and/ or clarification of UNHCR's mandate and policy in a given situation.

At the highest level, UNHCR's policy is the organization's mandate as applied in a given refugee situation. It provides the basis for UNHCR's involvement in a situation and overall role and approach in working for solutions. For policy to be effective, however, it must integrate assessment "on the ground" with the overall perspective that UNHCR Headquarters provides.

When managed well, effective policy making provides the basis for an operation's mission and strategic intent. Moreover, it focuses the operation's assessment and design process. Without clear policy, assessment and design processes lack direction and specificity, leading to plans which are unfocused and very often lacking in a solutions orientation.

The Limits of Policy

By definition, even the most effective policy will not provide all the answers to managers in the field. Situation constantly evolve. Effective operations and project planning supports the policy making process by identifying issues and problems which require a policy decision and bring these issues and problems to decision-makers.

In summary, policy definition at the beginning of the operation provides the basis for effective situation assessment and operations design. Effective planning processes identify gaps that may exist in current policy and strategy so that these can be addressed by policy makers.

The following list attempts to capture characteristics of effective policy at the operational level.

Effective policy:

- ◆ ***represents an organizational commitment to act;***
- ◆ ***is congruent with organizational goals/ other policies;***
- ◆ ***is clear and provides guidance;***
- ◆ ***represents a reasonable consensus;***
- ◆ ***is longer term in nature;***
- ◆ ***contributes to a solutions-oriented approach.***

1.6 The Importance of Objectives

The most important step in any planning process is the setting of objectives. Well-defined objectives which are communicated to and accepted by all concerned not only facilitate the design process but also serve a powerful team-building function. A well-defined hierarchy of objectives from the goal level down to the specific outputs which are delivered provides a description of the results chain in terms of complementary results which will achieve the desired impact.

The team-building aspect of objective setting is particularly important. Teams and operational partners that set objectives together tend to work more effectively together because they share an overall sense of the direction of the operation or project and a commitment to seeing that objectives and overall results are achieved.

Time invested in the beginning of an operation in developing objectives at all levels of an operation and understanding the relationship between longer term, mid-term and short-term objectives will pay off in terms of increased efficiency in the implementation phase.

For the benefits of objective setting to be enjoyed, objectives and the supporting indicators and standards need to be well-defined. The acronym "**S-M-A-R-T**" serves as a reminder of the characteristics of well-written objectives and indicators:

S pecific	Is the objective clear about what and who will be changed?
M easurable	Do the objective and indicators provide a target which can be measured?
A chievable	Is the objective challenging but realistic?
R elevant	Is the objective addressing an important area/ group of beneficiaries of concern?
T ime-bound	Do the objective and indicators establish a time period for achieving results?

In operations in which objectives are well defined, the result is a hierarchy of mutually-supportive objectives at levels ranging from Headquarters and the operational centre in the field to the level of an individual's objectives as reflected in his or her CMS performance appraisal.

1.7 The Importance of a Situational Approach

Planning at the country level alone is not sufficient to capture an essential aspect of many of today's refugee operations - that all opportunities must be seized to coordinate actions in countries of asylum with the evolving situation in the country of origin.

If coordinated planning is not actively pursued - for example to determine the right timing and the right pace for repatriation movements - there is a real risk of misunderstandings and animosity developing between country teams.

Similarly, among countries in a region facing a common challenge, such as where new political and economic groupings or agreements on migration or asylum issues are emerging among countries, ways need to be found of accelerating learning curves by agreeing as to the analysis of the situation, the positions to be adopted and the priorities to be addressed.

UNHCR should therefore always endeavour to take a situational approach to refugee problems. A "situational approach" is comprehensive, focuses on all aspects of the refugee problem, existing or potential, and identifies and implements coordinated and complementary objectives aimed at achieving durable solutions within all countries concerned (e.g., countries of asylum and origin).

The following suggestions will be helpful in ensuring effective multi-country planning focused on a specific situation:

- ◆ budget ahead for inter-regional visits and meetings;
- ◆ organize joint self-evaluation and planning events on "neutral" territory or in each country in rotation;
- ◆ create a horizontal information-sharing network among all staff;
- ◆ ensure that staff working in asylum countries and the country of origin have visited each others programmes and understand how their efforts must be complementary;
- ◆ devote plenty of time to understanding each country's specific situation;
- ◆ aim to produce a joint plan, or "Protection and Solution Strategy" (see Section 3.3 below) covering all the countries involved;

1.8 The Importance of an Integrated Approach

The identification of groups of concern and the assessment and resolution of those problems which make them specifically of UNHCR's concern are essentially protection issues. The size and range of the situation, the urgent need for relief and the need to create capacity to deal with the problems are the programme-related issues arising for the team at the same time. This section examines the importance of

such protection and programme considerations being weighed up jointly.

A problem, in this context, can be understood as an undesirable condition, a gap between the current situation and a desirable standard. Both the assessment of these gaps and the design of an appropriate response are guided by a given set of standards. A critical choice for planners is therefore to determine what standards to apply. Identifying appropriate standards involves both a consideration of principle - what is the agreed international standard we should strive for and a pragmatic consideration - what is the best that is realistically achievable in the timeframe we have, given the current context? Clearly this is one of the areas in which protection and programme staff need to work most closely together.

The same, though, applies to monitoring, coordination and evaluation. Both protection and programme need to see operations resulting in better protection and living conditions for the targeted beneficiaries - and both want to watch that resources are being used fairly and economically and not fueling new forms of abuse or injustice.

Complementary Roles of Protection and Programme Staff

Protection and programme staff, then, have to guide each other and coordinate their actions and decisions through each stage of the process from assessment through to evaluation, however large and complex the operation.

Where a division of labour is possible or necessary, the emphasis of the protection officer may be on the identification of persons of concern, careful definition of the nature of the protection gap involved as the basis for deciding on an appropriate response, and on those areas of intervention where UNHCR protection presence and specific legal expertise can have the greatest impact on the problem. The emphasis for programme staff on the other hand will be on promoting clarity and agreement as to objectives and means of achieving and measuring progress, and on creating conditions for effective partnership and continuing donor support so that the impact of UNHCR's own actions and resources can be multiplied and sustained.

Protection and Assistance

However in practice there is potential for a lack of coordination to emerge between protection and programme staff in an operations team. This often relates to widely differing perceptions about the role and value of "assistance".

In one interpretation, all UNHCR action is "assistance". While each of the problems and potential causes essentially derives from a protection concern, any kind of UNHCR intervention in any of these areas, from advocacy or human rights training to the provision of food and shelter, can be considered "assistance" in this broad sense, in that it supplements what is done by others potentially responsible, and it implies a cost to UNHCR.

In countries that are signatories to the 1951 Convention and other international instruments, that have enacted asylum legislation and established refugee status determination procedures and other aspects of asylum systems, UNHCR "assists" by ensuring legislation conforms to international standards, making UNHCR's views known to the public and to opinion leaders and decision makers, and shaping the institutions of the asylum system and the voice of civil society. In such cases protection and assistance are more clearly understood to be one and the same thing, pursuing the same results.

However it is in large operations - in countries where there is no alternative but for UNHCR itself to act as a substitute authority and directly provide humanitarian support to large numbers of people through its own intervention - that the tasks and interests of protection and programme staff have tended to diverge. Protection staff investigate and protest such occurrences as refoulement, abuse and violence while programme staff focus on the logistics of massive feeding, health and shelter programmes. "Assistance" assumes a more limited meaning as the delivery of material goods and services, takes on "a life of its own", too often with little involvement of protection staff, and in terms of UNHCR's energy and dedication of resources can appear to have priority.

This divergence is further exacerbated in situations where material assistance becomes even directly counter-productive to protection goals. This can occur for example where vested interests intervene to

prevent the assistance programme being adapted to real evolving needs, where preference for continued assistance allows indefinite postponement of solutions, or where UNHCR and its humanitarian partners are prevented by force from controlling the distribution to the intended beneficiaries.

However seen in another light, these very examples illustrate how essential it is that protection and programme work together continuously at all levels of the organization. In the examples given above, full involvement of protection staff in the assessment and design, monitoring and evaluation stages of the operation on a continuous basis would help to ensure that the programme was redesigned so as to counter vested interests and achieve a stronger bargaining position for UNHCR's primary protection concerns.

Joint efforts by protection and programme staff to analyze the population profile and gradually differentiate among groups of concern and other actors according to preferred or most likely durable solutions would help to shape the assistance programme into having progressively greater impact on the protection situation. Joint work on programme design could result in more successful prevention of refoulement, abuse and violence. With joint strategic planning, problems of overcrowding and insecurity could be overcome or reduced, and it could be better ensured that major efforts such as camp relocation, population registration and vulnerable group identification serve protection and durable solutions objectives in addition to assistance purposes.

Where assistance is situated in a protection and solutions context, it can enhance the scope and impact of protection efforts. Similarly, assistance with a protection and solutions orientation becomes a more refined and precise tool over time, whereas without this focus it can become a blunt and unwieldy instrument of uncertain impact.

Achieving Integration

The crucial factor in organizing a planning event is deciding on who should be there. The simplest answer is: the whole team - or at least all the key actors and work units. In UNHCR the key to the right mix is, usually, to build the event around a comprehensive dialogue between programme and protection. If they both see it as a synthesis of their views and concerns the plan will have real value for the team.

A planning approach which emphasizes the identification of problems and solutions can often provide a rare opportunity to protection staff to share with the team their analysis of the core problems that the operation is facing, the priority groups that need to be focused on and the relative risks of different assistance scenarios. Together, programme and protection staff can shape the programme, refine its targeting, enhance its leverage in protection strategies and sharpen its solutions-orientation.

In large operations there is a high risk of coordination breaking down between the protection and programme teams. This may be due to any of the following factors:

- ◆ Powerful vested interests prevent accurate targeting, fair distribution of assistance or responsiveness of assistance levels to the protection or solutions situation;
- ◆ Regular contact and dialogue with the beneficiaries has been lost;
- ◆ Task areas have become completely separate and opportunities are not taken for joint assessment, design, monitoring and evaluation.

Such tendencies can be addressed through ensuring that planning becomes a collaborative effort between protection and programme. The following areas are likely to be productive:

- ◆ Jointly brainstorm a list of priority groups of concern to UNHCR and the specific problems they face - making sure that the plan responds to these needs;
- ◆ Reach agreement on standards, objectives and indicators;
- ◆ Review the impact of each current assistance programme in terms of its value for protection and solutions;
- ◆ ***Identify areas for further joint assessment, and develop a joint coordination and***

monitoring plan.

1.9 The Importance of a Participatory Approach

Participation in an operation can be defined as the process through which stakeholders (any group or individual who can affect or is affected by a programme) influence and share control over the decisions-making process and resources which affect them. The stakeholders in a typical UNHCR operation range from the beneficiaries receiving protection and assistance to the operational partners delivering the programme including of course, the governments concerned.

UNHCR's experience has shown that in every situation, the soundest and most innovative plans are those where the whole team knows what it says, and follows it without even having to read it. This is because they all had a chance to contribute their own thinking to the analysis of the situation, and to argue for their own priorities in the setting of objectives.

The objective of planning is to reach broad-based ownership in the operations team for agreed objectives and means of achieving them, for roles, responsibilities and coordination arrangements at the level of activities and tasks, and for the timeframes to be adhered to. These things can best be achieved if every participant is given an opportunity to speak their minds and express a point of view.

These are a wide range of approaches which encourage participation and contribute to greater ownership for the resulting plan. Ones that are particularly relevant to UNHCR operations are:

- ◆ Facilitation focused on ensuring full participation;
- ◆ Use of brainstorming mode, writing all ideas without value judgment;
- ◆ Use of small working groups to allow development of ideas;
- ◆ Use of focus groups to enable beneficiaries to highlight their concerns and share their knowledge;
- ◆ ***Sharing of drafting responsibilities among the team.***

1.10 The Importance of Technical Expertise

The importance of technical expertise in providing essential inputs into any planning process is obvious. An essential step in any UNHCR planning process - protection, assistance, administration, finance - is to ensure that the need for technical expertise is identified early and technical inputs are provided in a timely manner.

Unfortunately, the management of technical expertise is not always as effective as it should be. The following problems are typical of operations which are not managing technical expertise effectively:

- ◆ failure to integrate technical expertise into the planning process
- ◆ viewing technical experts as problem solvers after the problems have arisen
- ◆ lack of recognition of the need for technical expertise
- ◆ failure to take advantage of local expertise
- ◆ failure to coordinate the provision of technical expertise with Headquarters.

The consequences of not managing technical expertise effectively include inadequate operations and project designs which do not lead to appropriate results, failure to ensure value for money, and loss of valuable time in operation and project implementation.

The following reminders can help planning teams manage technical expertise effectively:

- ◆ View technical expertise and inputs as essential elements of all plans;
- ◆ coordinate closely with UNHCR Headquarters on how best to provide technical expertise;
- ◆ If technical experts will be involved on a short term basis, ensure they are well-briefed about all aspects an operation or project, particularly standards and funding constraints;
- ◆ Integrate technical experts into operations and project management teams as early as possible so that their inputs are dealt with in a timely manner and so that the technical experts understand the programming process and how their expertise can be used to the greatest advantage.

1.11 The Importance of Standards

Standards are of fundamental importance in all UNHCR operations at all stages of the programming process. Prior to the actual design of a programme, it is the application of standards in the assessment process which provides the means for determining what are the core problems that must be addressed and what is the gap between current and desired conditions. In the design phase, standards are the means for establishing what the appropriate level of quality to be achieved will be through the provision of assistance and thus are an integral part of the objective setting process. Standards play a crucial role in the monitoring process as it is the monitoring of progress against standards and indicators which determines whether progress is being achieved in terms of achieving the right quality at the right time and for the right cost. Similarly in the evaluation phase of an operation when impact is assessed, the impact of an operation is identified and judged to be positive or negative largely in relation to standards.

In spite of the importance of standards, they are often a neglected feature of operations. Not only are standards often absent from programme and project documentation, but the relevant standards for operations are not consistently discussed and agreed among partners prior to implementation and revisited as implementation proceeds.

The Sources of UNHCR's Standards

UNHCR's standards in the area of protection are derived from international refugee law which is comprised of the UNHCR Statute and the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol as well as EXCOM Conclusions, regional documentation which establish protection standards for refugees in a regional context (the e.g. OAU Convention), and international human rights law (e.g., the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Conventions on Civil and Political Rights, Convention Against Torture, etc.).

In the area of assistance, particularly emergency assistance, UNHCR's sectoral standards are described in the Emergency Handbook, a new edition of which was published in January 1999.

A promising development in terms of agreeing minimal standards for humanitarian assistance among the range of humanitarian actors working today is the Sphere Project. The Sphere Project has established minimum standards in disaster response, including humanitarian disasters, by involving NGOs, UN agencies, government agencies, and academic institutions in a joint enterprise to agree upon minimum standards and indicators for humanitarian assistance. UNHCR's standards have informed the process and UNHCR technical specialists have played an active role in defining the standards. The preliminary results of the Sphere Project have been recently published and are available at the Sphere Project web site (www.sphereproject.org)

Because each UNHCR operation possesses a degree of uniqueness, UNHCR's standards provide the starting point for determining what will be the standards in a particular operation, but they are not absolutes. The regional context, local conditions in particular for local populations which are affected by a UNHCR programme, host governmental standards, and the standards of agencies participating in the programme all must be taken into account as specific standards are agreed as part of the normal

planning and management process. The following list provides a summary of key standards for UNHCR operations:

Minimum Standards in UNHCR Refugee and Returnee Operations

The following "working" list provides a summary of core protection and assistance standards apply generally applicable to UNHCR programmes. As discussed above, these standards, while intended to be universal, must be considered in each context. These are minimum standards which may serve as a basis for problem identification and analysis, prioritizing of overall activities and establishing key indicators at a country (or caseload) level. Whereas the achievement of the protection standards may not be wholly within the control of every office, the assistance standards focus on basic life-sustaining activities, such as the provision of food, water, health services and shelter, which must be maintained in all ongoing refugee assistance programmes.

Protection

The primary function of the Office is to assure the international protection of refugees. The following are minimum standards:

- ◆ asylum is ensured;
- ◆ the principle of non-refoulement is respected;
- ◆ there is a functioning refugee status determination procedure;
- ◆ immediate protection needs of refugees in general, and of specific refugee individuals/groups, are met;
- ◆ UNHCR access to refugee sites and settlements is guaranteed;
- ◆ security needs of women and children are met;
- ◆ armed elements are separated from the refugee population;
- ◆ organized physical violence from any source (police, military, antagonistic racial, religious, national or social group or violent mobs) is eliminated;
- ◆ freedom of movement and the right to work are guaranteed/respected;
- ◆ relevant amnesties and legal guarantees exist;
- ◆ there is no discriminatory legislation;
- ◆ there exists a functioning procedure for the clarification and resolution of citizenship questions.

Health

Refugees are exposed to many factors which increase the risk of disease. Typically, these factors include overcrowding, inadequate water, poor sanitation and inadequate food supply, each of which have to be addressed in their own right. Priorities under the health sector are therefore to minimize the effect of these hazards, ensure an appropriate level of health care and reduce the number of new cases of disease. The following are minimum standards:

- ◆ gross mortality rate below two per 10,000 per day;
- ◆ under five mortality rate below two per 10,000 per day;
- ◆ less than 15 per cent of children under five years of age are less than 80 per cent of the standard reference for weight-for-height;
- ◆ malnutrition, measles, diarrhea, malaria, respiratory diseases and any other diseases which are endemic/epidemic in the region are under control (i.e. all persons with suspected infection are correctly diagnosed, monitored, enrolled in feeding programmes)

if indicated and treated medically as needed);

- ◆ all vaccination/immunization needs are met, especially measles for all children 6 months to 14 years;
- ◆ all nutrition needs, especially Vitamin A prophylaxis for children 0 to 14 years, are met;
- ◆ there are sufficient oral rehydration clinics for diarrhea/diseases;
- ◆ protocols for disease investigation, control and case management are being respected;
- ◆ health teams routinely investigate reports of communicable diseases;
- ◆ all refugees have access to primary health care services at the community, clinic and district hospital level;
- ◆ the health care system follows WHO standard treatment protocols;
- ◆ facilities, personnel, drugs, equipment and supplies are equally available to all refugees;
- ◆ the health care system is coordinated with local host country authorities and operated jointly whenever possible;
- ◆ sufficient numbers of qualified health care workers cover all areas of care (for every refugee population of 10-20,000 persons, a minimum of 1-2 Doctors/Medical Assistants, 1 Public Health Nurse, 3-4 Clinic Nurses/Midwives, 1 Pharmacy Attendant, 1 Laboratory Technician and 10 Dressers/Assistants);
- ◆ consumable supplies and pharmaceuticals are systematically ordered, stored, used and monitored;
- ◆ the health information system is an integral part of the health infrastructure;
- ◆ the community outreach programme functions effectively in terms of the identification and referral of the sick and the health promotion system;
- ◆ efficient CHWs (male and female) have been recruited (minimum 10 per 10,000 refugees), trained, work according to guidelines and are supervised routinely;
- ◆ sufficient Traditional Birth Attendants are identified (minimum 4 per 10,000 refugees), trained according to guidelines, formally introduced into the referral system and supervised routinely;
- ◆ ***all refugee women have access to reproductive health care.***

Nutrition

Priority activities in this area aim to reduce mortality, morbidity and suffering associated with severe malnutrition, reduce risks associated with moderate malnutrition and ensure a correct Vitamin A, B1, B2, B3, C, D and iodine status. Minimum standards are the following:

- ◆ there is a steady supply of adequate food to sustain life; a minimum of 2,100 kcal per person per day must be provided. A typical weekly ration would be composed of 350-400 grams of staple cereal, 20-40 grams of energy rich food (oil/fat) and 50 grams of protein rich food (legumes);
- ◆ there are adequate means to ensure the transportation and distribution of all food items;
- ◆ where individuals or groups are physically and socially separated from the rest of the population (e.g. unaccompanied children, inpatients, prisoners, elderly), they have access to enough appropriate food;
- ◆ all food provided is of sufficient quality to be eaten without transmission of food-borne

disease or other short-term hazards;

- ◆ any foods provided are appropriate to the population;
- ◆ all food provided can be stored, prepared and consumed in a safe and appropriate manner, at household or community level;
- ◆ infants less than 6 months have protected access to optimal nutrition;
- ◆ children 6 to 36 months have access to enough appropriate food;
- ◆ unaccompanied infants and young children are adequately cared for;
- ◆ caregivers can care for their children;
- ◆ information on outcomes of nutritional stress (mortality, morbidity, malnutrition) and underlying causes (food security, public health, social/care environment) is gathered, compiled and analyzed in a timely manner.

Water and Sanitation

Priority activities in the sectors relate to the quantity and quality of the water supply, excreta disposal, vector control, solid waste disposal and drainage. Minimum standards are the following:

- ◆ all refugees have equitable access to a sufficient quantity of water (15 to 20 litres per person per day) for drinking, bathing, food preparation and washing (minimum one tapstand per 200 persons sited at not more than 100 metres from user accommodation);
- ◆ drinking water at the point of collection is of sufficient quality to be drunk without transmitting water-borne diseases and without causing short-term health hazards;
- ◆ bathing water is free of schistosomiasis;
- ◆ there are adequate facilities and supplies for collecting, storing and using water so that a sufficient quantity is collected, stored and used for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene, and to ensure that drinking water remains of sufficient quality until it is consumed;
- ◆ information campaigns encourage refugees to use sufficient water effectively for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene, store (and possibly treat) and use water so that it is consumed in a potable state, and avoid consuming low quality water where there is a better alternative;
- ◆ all refugees have access to a sufficient numbers of toilets sufficiently close to their dwellings to allow them sufficiently rapid and safe access at all times (day and night). At a minimum, there should be one latrine seat per 20 persons or, ideally, one per family sited not further than 50 metres from user accommodation and not nearer than 6 meters;
- ◆ toilets (including defecation fields) are designed and constructed in such a way that they are hygienic and pleasant to use, provide a degree of privacy in line with the norms of the users, are accessible and easy to use by children, old persons, pregnant women and handicapped persons, are lighted at night if necessary, are provided with anal cleansing materials as needed, are provided with handwashing after use, are located, designed, constructed and operated so that they do not contaminate drinking water sources, living and access areas and stores, and are designed and maintained in such a way as to minimize fly and mosquito breeding;
- ◆ information campaigns encourage refugees to identify and use the toilets intended for them, rather than defecate in less suitable places, use the toilets in the most hygienic way, both for their own health and for the health of others, including control of flies and

mosquitoes, wash their hands after defecation, and ensure children's feces are disposed of safely;

- ◆ protection from disease bearing vectors and nuisance vectors with a health impact is ensured;
- ◆ information campaigns encourage refugees to avoid attack from disease vectors, particularly malarial mosquitoes, and provide knowledge and ability to carry out practices such as refuse disposal, latrine maintenance and bedding hygiene to reduce rat, fly and mosquito vector breeding;
- ◆ the refugees' living environment is acceptably free of solid waste contamination, including medical waste;
- ◆ the means to dispose of domestic waste (storage, collection and disposal) are convenient and effective. At a minimum, there should be one 100 litre refuse bin per 50 persons, one wheelbarrow per 500 persons, one tip truck (1-2 MT capacity) per 5,000 persons and one communal refuse pit (2m x 5m x 2m) per 500 persons;
- ◆ information campaigns encourage refugees to dispose of domestic refuse using the system provided;
- ◆ the refugees' living environment is acceptably free of standing water, including storm water, flood water, domestic wastewater and waste water from medical facilities;
- ◆ the means (installations, tools, etc.) to dispose of domestic wastewater and water point wastewater are convenient and effective, and protect refugees' shelters and other family or communal facilities from flooding;
- ◆ information campaigns encourage refugees to dispose of domestic wastewater and water point wastewater using installations and tools provided, protect shelters, etc. from flooding with simple measures and avoid contact with water bodies where this poses a schistosomiasis risk.

Shelter, Domestic Needs and Household Support

All refugees need to be provided with appropriate shelter (minimally to provide protection from wind, rain, freezing temperatures and direct sunlight), as well as with customary domestic/household items (blankets, cloth/clothing, cooking sets (pots, plates, cups, utensils), buckets/jerry cans/other water containers, soap, plastic sheeting/tarpaulins, mats, lantern, cooking fuel and cooking stoves). The following are minimum standards:

- ◆ all refugees have a minimum of 3.5 square metres shelter space per person and 30 square metres site space per person;
- ◆ at least 15-20 per cent of every site is devoted to open spaces and public facilities, and another 20-25 per cent is devoted to roads and walkways, including adequate fire breaks (a 50 metre wide clear area between every 300 metres of built-up area);
- ◆ sites are not located near "hostile" borders, host country military areas, conflict zones or combatants' living areas;
- ◆ all sites are suitable for expansion;
- ◆ all refugees enjoy sufficient security, privacy, protection from the climate (dry, warm, cool) for psychological (security, privacy) and health (disease) reasons;
- ◆ sufficient storage facilities are available (e.g. for bagged food grains stacked 6 metres high, 1.2m² per MT is required);
- ◆ sufficient shelter materials are available to serve the refugees and to preserve the

environment;

- ◆ environmental impact and the local economy have been taken into consideration;
- ◆ all refugees are provided with sufficient blankets and clothing for protection from the climate (cold, hot and wet) and for cultural reasons;
- ◆ all women refugees are provided with specialized clothing for reasons of human dignity and hygiene;
- ◆ children, especially babies, are provided with specialized clothing for health and hygienic reasons;
- ◆ families are provided with utensils for household work;
- ◆ families are able to undertake small agricultural activities for the improvement of their diet, be more self-reliant, have a healthy occupation and to allow some training with a view on repatriation and reintegration into their home country or home area;
- ◆ fuel economic devices are be provided to avoid degradation of the environment;
- ◆ stoves and cooking areas are protected from the wind;
- ◆ fire brigades have been established;
- ◆ public awareness.

1.12 The Importance of Information

Planners confront uncertainty at all stages of the planning process. There may be uncertainty about the policy in a given situation as events may be evolving faster than the policy and decision-making processes can cope. There also may be uncertainty about the situation itself as is very often the case in emergency situations. Projections and forecasts about the future which planners inevitably must make are just that, protections, and necessarily involve risks. Thus a key issue for planners is to manage uncertainty in a way that allows the best possible decisions to be taken during the planning phase and once implementation has begun. The key means for managing uncertainty in the planning processes is to maximize the opportunities for the timely gathering and analysis of accurate data and information. The need for timely information begins from the earliest stages of an operation and remains a crucial component through to closure. The importance of timely and accurate information begins with baseline data about the condition of beneficiaries (and their communities) in the assessment phase through to data and information gathered against indicators as part of monitoring and as the key means for evaluating impact. In spite of the best efforts at gathering data and information, there will always be gaps.

Given its importance, information management is often a weak area of UNHCR operations. Baseline information is often not systematically captured as part of the assessment process, and if it is, it is too often done in a fashion which does not facilitate comparison over time and against information gathered from external data sources. During implementation the gathering of relevant data as part of the monitoring process is the key means for ensuring effective management of operations.

Data and Data Collection

A distinction is typically made between two types of data: qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative data is in numerical form while qualitative is not. Qualitative data can be much more than just words, however, or text as photographs, videos, sound recordings and so on can be considered qualitative data. Even the simplest of UNHCR operations generate an enormous amount of data and information; thus a key challenge is to identify what is the critical data that must be gathered and analyzed in an operation.

Data collection in UNHCR operations ranges from informal collection of impressions through a site visit to formal methodology of surveys and sampling following the tenets of social science research. The key to effective data collection is advance planning in terms of the means for gathering the data, the formats

for recording it, and the process for sharing and updating.

Effective Data and Information Management

There are a number of key principles which UNHCR planning teams can apply to improve information management as part of the planning process. They are:

- ◆ Recognize that information management is a planning issue that requires good planning;
- ◆ Develop an information management strategy as part of the planning process;
- ◆ Identify the key data elements which must be gathered and analyzed in order to keep abreast of developments in the operation;
- ◆ Determine who is responsible for gathering data and in what formats as well as how it will be shared;
- ◆ While a beneficiary and contextual profile is important in all UNHCR operations, it is absolutely essential in returnee and other programmes which share many of the characteristics of development programmes;
- ◆ Take advantage of data-base software applications to manage your data and to present it in graphically interesting ways.

1.13 Planning Pitfalls

This section on Planning Pitfalls deals with three concepts that create problems for planning teams if not understood. These are the concepts of **Levels**, the **Distinction between Results and the Means to Achieve them**, and **Time Frame**.

Levels

The concept of levels in planning is important because of the way in which UNHCR and its partners organize themselves. In most UNHCR operations, there are at least three management levels: the Headquarters level, the country capital level, and the site level at which protection and assistance is being delivered directly to UNHCR's beneficiaries. While UNHCR takes a field based approach to the development of operations and project plans, planning inevitably occurs at least at all three levels within the same operation.

To see how difficult this may be, the following potential levels of planning can be identified just within a typical UNHCR operation:

Levels of Planning:

- ◆ Organizational
- ◆ Regional
- ◆ Sub-Region
- ◆ Beneficiary Situation or theme(Countries of Asylum plus Countries of Origin)
- ◆ Country
- ◆ Project
- ◆ Site
- ◆ Work Unit
- ◆ Individual

At each of these levels, objectives are being set which should be supportive of each other so that their

achievement leads to the overall results desired at the operation or project level.

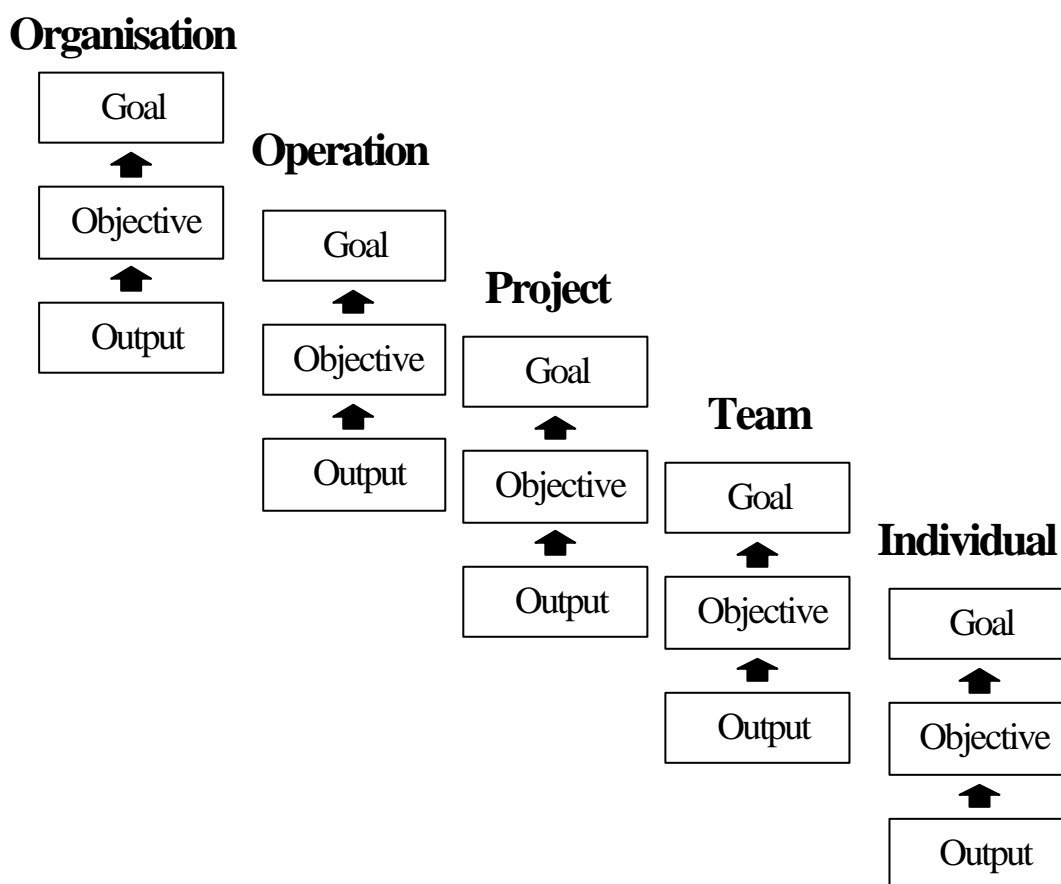
The "Results→ Means" Distinction

The "Results→ Means" distinction refers to the "what" and the "how" of planning applied at all levels of an operation. Results are "what" we want to achieve and Means are the activities for "how" we will go about achieving the right results.

The value of the "Results→ Means" distinction lies in recognizing that objectives set at lower levels tend to be seen as activities at higher levels.

For example, a leadership workshop in a camp may be viewed as an input, an activity or means, an output, or an objective depending on one's perspective or level on the event. At the country level the workshop is an input into ensuring effective beneficiary participation. At the site level it can be viewed as an output leading to the achievement of an objective focusing on ensuring effective community leadership in camp management. For the organizers of the workshop, their objective is conduct an effective workshop that would positively impact life for beneficiaries in the camp.

The following chart depicts the relationship between levels of objectives in a typical UNHCR operation:



Time Frame

In almost every planning situation, viewing the time frame as consisting of short-term, medium-term and long-term increments facilitates the planning process. It allows for the phasing of inputs, activities and objectives in a manner which makes the overall operation or project more manageable and results more

readily measurable. It also allows changes in implementation approach to be introduced in a phased manner. For example, in the early stages of an emergency, it may be difficult to achieve significant beneficiary participation but it may be possible in the medium and long term. Phasing of objectives on a short-term, medium-term, and long-term basis implies that the short and medium term objectives will be sub-objectives of the long-term objectives.

These three elements - **Levels**, the "**Results→ Means**" **Distinction**, and **Time-Frame** - together provide the basis for a hierarchy of mutually-supportive objectives and activities at all levels of an operation among all partners concerned. Planning decisions taken at one level must take account of decisions at the other levels. At the same time, decisions at all levels should be mutually reinforcing.

1.14 UNHCR "Best Practice" Planning Principles

The PARinAC (Partnership in Action) process, evaluations, and Protection, Emergency, People-Oriented Planning and Programme Management Training workshops with UNHCR and Operational Partners have provided opportunities for UNHCR staff members and our operational partners to reflect on what is effective planning in the context of UNHCR operations. The results of this ongoing process can be illustrated as a series of UNHCR-Operational Partner Best "Practice" principles which should inform the operations planning process in all operations.

" **Best Practice**" in this context refers to the way, based on experience and lessons learned, UNHCR and its partners should carry out the essential tasks of an operation. In other words, it is doing the right things the right way. UNHCR-Operational Partner Best Practice for effective planning can be expressed as a series of principles which should serve as a basis for decision-making during the planning process.

UNHCR Planning "Best Practice":

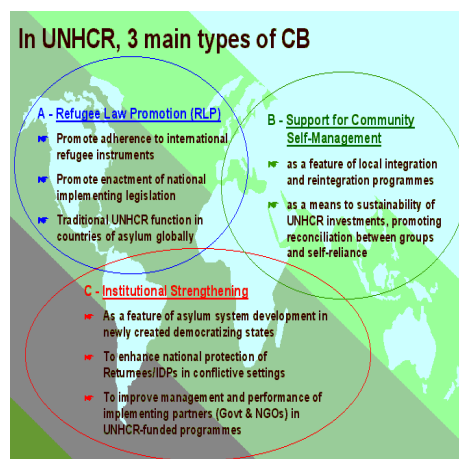
- ◆ Before planning activities for a given operation are initiated, Senior Management has clarified relevant policy issues and articulated criteria to facilitate decision-making.
- ◆ Team members view planning as a continuous process.
- ◆ Teams use the planning process for identifying policy issues which require resolution and ensure these issues are brought to the attention of senior managers for resolution.
- ◆ Planning is participatory and UNHCR planning teams include staff members at all levels, the beneficiaries and operational partners in the process from the earliest stage in all aspects of planning: from definition of objectives to determining means for achieving them to establishing performance criteria to agreeing on means for monitoring progress.
- ◆ Effective planning depends on the establishment and maintenance of effective lines of communication and coordinating structures.
- ◆ Effective teams use planning processes to overcome the tendency for communication breakdowns within teams.
- ◆ Team members view long term planning as essential in all situations, and attempt to push the planning horizon forward from the earliest stage of any operation including emergencies.
- ◆ Effective planning begins with detailed situation analysis including an analysis of resources, opportunities and constraints that provides the basis for well-articulated planning assumptions.
- ◆ UNHCR teams coordinate planning processes at all levels.
- ◆ Effective planning has a regional and situational focus in addition to a country/site focus and is always consistent with UNHCR's Mandate and policy in a given situation.

- ◆ Effective teams plan for and manage the planning process itself.
- ◆ Effective teams develop a variety of scenarios including shortfalls of funding and develop contingency plans around those scenarios so as to ensure maximum flexibility and capacity for implementation.
- ◆ Effective teams recognize the potential in planning for building teams, motivating individuals, and establishing a sense of ownership.

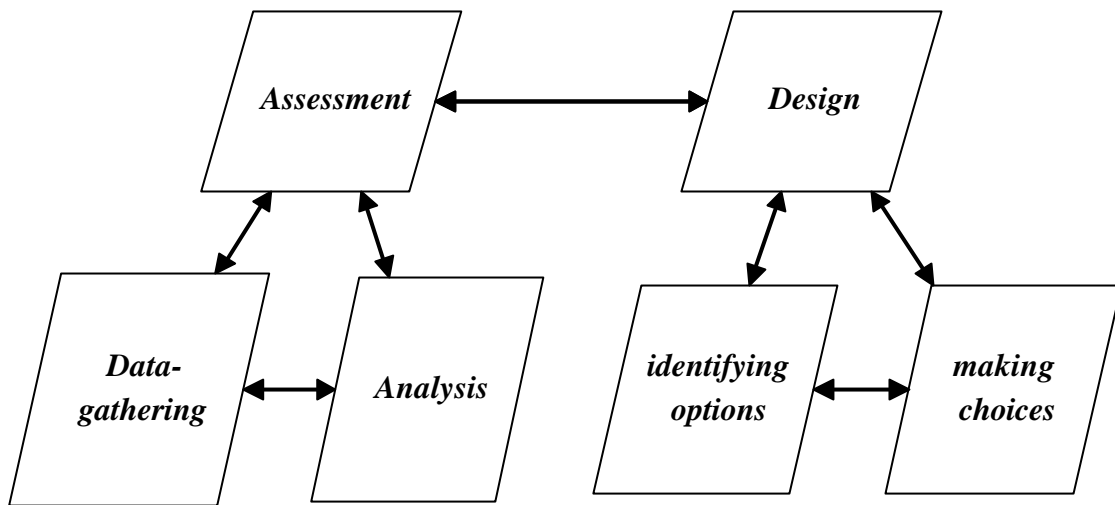
Chapter Two: Planning Models and Processes

2.1 Planning: A Conceptual Model

The use of models to illustrate the planning process can be a helpful way of understanding the planning process and creating understanding and agreement within teams. While complicated models for describing the planning process have been developed, there is clear value in simplicity, particularly when simplicity is combined with a recognition that it is also useful to acknowledge and deal with the complexity that reality brings. One useful model of planning is to see the process as consisting of two integrated activities - **Assessment** and **Design** - as shown in the diagram below:



During the planning process, planners typically move back and forth between these two activities as the planning process unfolds. The two activities of *Assessment* and *Design* can further be broken down as follows:



2.2 The Planning Scenario

Viewing the planning process as the interaction of two inter-related activities - *assessment and design* - has the value of providing a framework for thinking about planning. There is a need, however, to provide a means for distinguishing between the two activities. The means that these guidelines suggest is the concept of the *Planning Scenario*. As defined in Chapter One, the planning scenario in a given situation *is the group of planning assumptions planners use to provide a basis for developing a project, operation or strategy*. Another way of describing the concept of the planning scenario is to see it as the "fixed" picture of the situation that planners need in order to go forward with and finalize a project or operation design. The diagram below attempts to capture the "bridging" role that the planning scenario plays in a given situation:

In most UNHCR operations, the planning scenario is "fixed" on the basis of the assessment of the given situation and which allows the design to be finalized, consists of facts and assumptions focusing on the following areas:

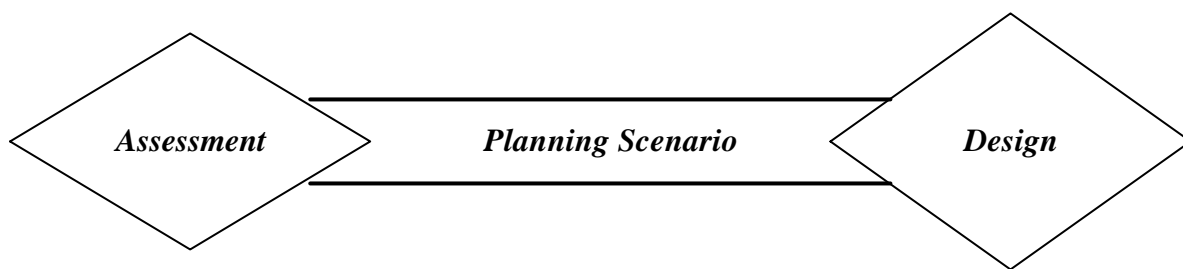
Time Frame:

Beneficiaries (Number, location, profile, trends, etc.)

Operational Partners (Role and Contribution)

Availability of Financial Resources

Government Policy

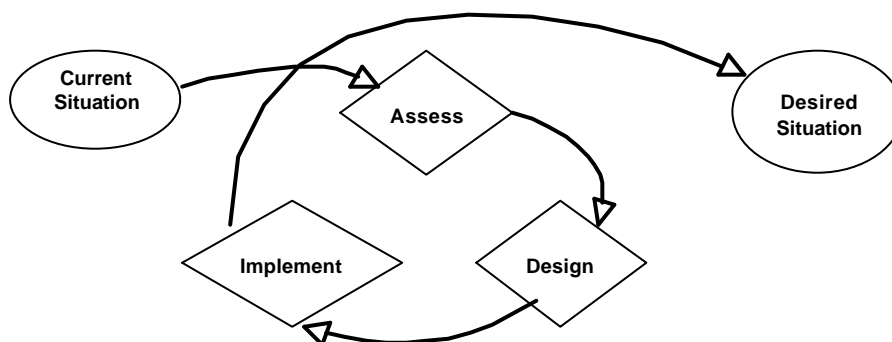


Special Issues/ Constrains

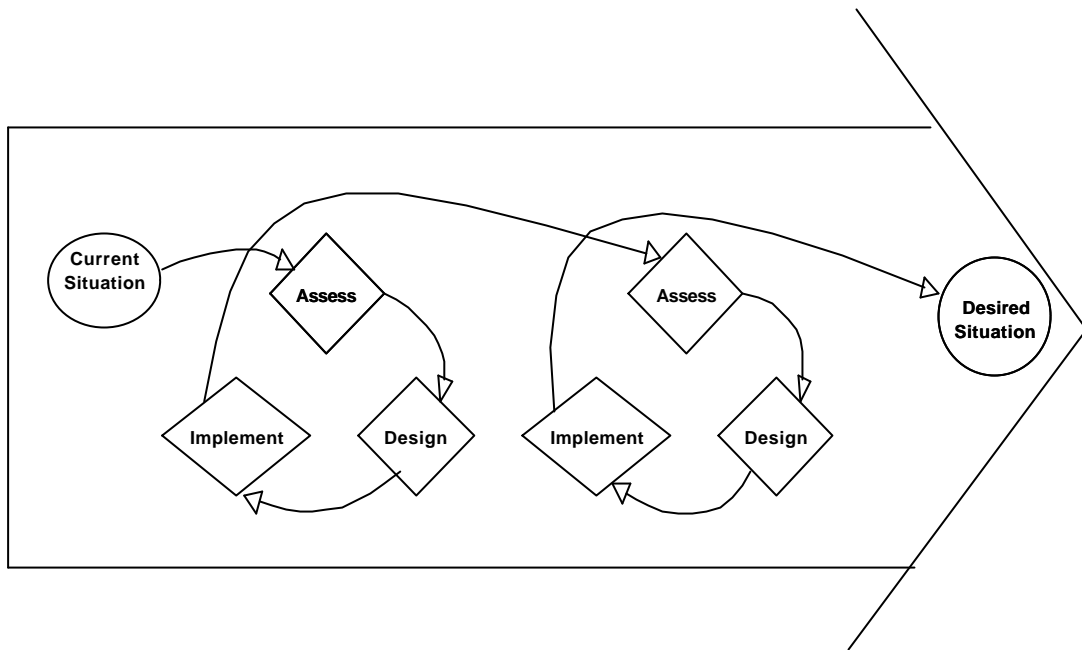
The advantage of seeing the planning process in these simplified terms is that it facilitates the planning of the planning process by helping team members see at what point they are in the process and what type of activity will be most appropriate.

Seeing planning in this way suggests a simple model for illustrating the manner in which plans are implemented, as shown in the following diagram:

The problem with this model is that it does not capture the dynamic nature of planning. Effective planning in the UNHCR context is much more of a continuous process in which plans are adapted in response to changing circumstances. The following diagram attempts to capture this aspect of planning:

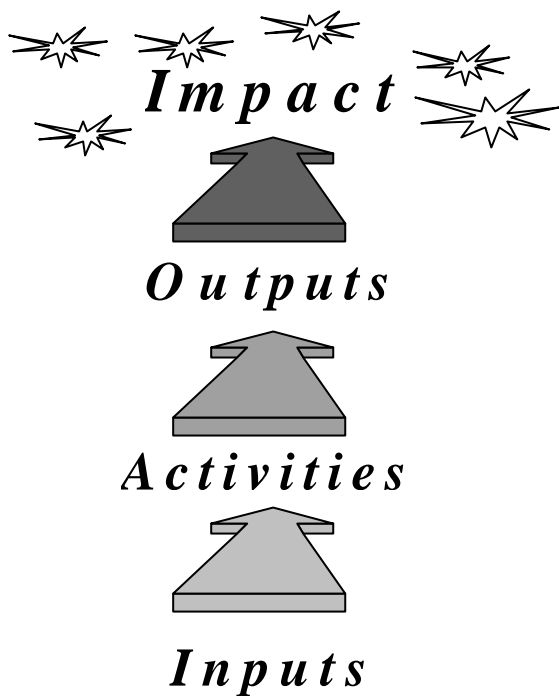


This view of planning suggests that planners "spin off" operation and project plans as needed. These plans reflect the "fixed" picture of the operation or project at given moment in time. However, just as operations and projects are dynamic, so should be the planning process.



2.3 Planning for Results and Impact

Plans are only effective if they lead to the right results, i.e., the desired impact. The following diagram shows a helpful way of thinking about planning and plans so that they do result in the desired impact.



In this model, planners determine the desired impact, identify the outputs which will have that impact, identify the activities which will achieve the right outputs, and determine the inputs needed to carry out the desired activities.

2.4 Planning as a Continuous Process

As stated earlier in this chapter, these guidelines suggest planning should be viewed as a continuous process. The following diagram provides another view of planning. This view attempts to capture the "phases" of a typical planning process:

This view of planning is a more traditional view linked to a standard management cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring/ control and evaluation. It also offers advantages in terms of assisting planners in managing the planning process which is discussed in the next section.

2.5 Managing the Planning Process

In order for planning to be "continuous", and for any planning process to be effective, it is essential that the planning process itself is planned and agreed upon by everyone who will be involved and affected. Time invested in planning the planning process in the early stages of the process will pay off in increased efficiency later on. The first step in any planning process is always "to get organized" which can be summarized as follows:

Is there a "problem" to be solved?

If so:

- get commitment from key players;
- determine if outside help is needed;
- form a planning team;
- outline a planning process that makes sense to you and the team and which includes all the key people/ organizations that must be involved.

Chapter Three: Strategy and Strategic Planning

3.1 *Basic Assumptions about Strategy*

In approaching the concept of strategy, these guidelines make the following assumptions:

- ◆ UNHCR has far more experience in strategic thinking, strategic planning and strategy development than what is documented and acknowledged.
- ◆ The KISS principle (Keep It Straightforward and Simple) should be applied when discussing strategy and strategy development.
- ◆ Focusing on strategy and strategy development in UNHCR operations will encourage solutions-oriented programming of protection and assistance.

By approaching the issue from this point of view, these guidelines attempt to avoid the potential problem that sometimes occurs in discussions of strategy and strategic planning, i.e., that the concepts become so esoteric and abstract as to be of little value to the manager in the field.

3.2 *Strategy and Strategic Planning in the UNHCR Context*

Strategy and Strategic Planning has its origins in the military dating back as far as Sun Tzu in China and the generals of ancient Greece.

In the modern era it's military applications have been adapted in the private sector to assist organizations plan effectively for the future by answering fundamental questions about what an organization intends to be in the future and how it intends to get there.

Increasingly public sector and non-profit organizations have utilized strategic planning techniques to redefine their mission and determine what services and programmes they will offer.

The focus of this chapter is on strategy and strategic planning in field operations for UNHCR's beneficiaries. The questions that "traditional" strategic planning attempts to answer about the future mission of an organization are, of course, also relevant to UNHCR as an organization. They are not, however, the subject of these guidelines which focus on operational strategy: how UNHCR works to achieve solutions to refugee problems.

The concepts and techniques which are presented in these guidelines to a large extent represent a synthesis from various UNHCR training programmes in protection, programme management, broad management skills and emergency management.

3.3 Strategy: Fundamentals

Strategy, at its most basic, is a clear vision of what you want to achieve, why, as well as an overall sense of the means required and time frame to achieve it.

Strategy in the UNHCR context focuses on operations and activities at the macro level, the "big picture", and more specifically, on longer term problems or issues that will continue to be of concern if not addressed. Its purpose is not to go into details of operations or projects. Effective strategy, however, supports operations and project planning at all levels.

The concept of strategy and strategic planning can be applied at regional, country work unit levels. In each case the emphasis is on the "big picture". Taking a strategic approach implies focusing on the most important issues and problems and defining solutions at the appropriate levels.

3.4 Strategic Approach to Operations Planning:

To take a strategic approach to the planning of operations implies that UNHCR and its operational partners will approach their task in a coordinated way which gets the assessment and design of an operation right at all levels: overall strategy at the Headquarters, regional, and country levels as well as the planning of activities at the site level where protection and assistance is organized for the beneficiaries. The following list attempts to list some of the characteristics of what a strategic approach to operations planning would look like:

- ◆ clear understanding of external environment;
- ◆ combined focus on the "big picture" with detailed assessment of the situation "on the ground";
- ◆ readiness to apply lessons learned;
- ◆ well-aware of opportunities and constraints;
- ◆ well-aware of internal capacity;
- ◆ well-aware of resource availability;
- ◆ planning horizon as far away as possible;
- ◆ viewing desired results in terms of the short, medium and long-term impact;
- ◆ recognition of importance of participation;
- ◆ recognition of need for flexibility;
- ◆ recognition of planning as a continuous process;
- ◆ use of planning for team-building.

This list, in fact, applies to any effective planning process, not just a strategic approach to operations planning. The principles of strategic planning, however, remind planners of the importance of being clear about the rationale of an organization's involvement, the overall purpose or mission of the operation, and the importance of continued assessment of the external environment.

3.5 Aspects of Strategy

Strategic planning processes play an important role in the development of an effective strategy. Effective planning processes are not, however, enough. The following list indicates some of the other ingredients for effective strategy development:

- ◆ Information

- ◆ Creativity
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ Teamwork
- ◆ People-Oriented Approach
- ◆ Historical perspective
- ◆ Application of the "right" lessons learned

Planning is the focus of these guidelines, but all these ingredients and more are essential if UNHCR and its partners are to develop effective strategies which achieve the right results.

Another way of approaching strategy and strategic planning is to identify the characteristics of effective operational strategy. The following list attempts to do just that:

- ◆ focused on the big picture and the long-term solution to the refugee problem;
- ◆ builds on complementary strategies of other actors in the operation;
- ◆ deals with the whole situation;
- ◆ "appropriate" flexibility based on continuous risk analysis of potential actions and continuous monitoring of the degree of change/ stability in the situation;
- ◆ easily communicated;
- ◆ facilitates policy-making;
- ◆ supports more detailed planning.

There are three key factors in strategy development which planners need to continually keep in mind as the planning process goes forward. These are:

- ◆ change,
- ◆ time-frame,
- ◆ risk.

The rate of change in a situation determines the extent to which long term planning can take place with confidence. In situations in which change is constant such as civil war situations, strategic plans must put an emphasis on short term planning while keeping in mind the overall strategic intent of the operation. In stable situations long term planning can go forward. There are situations, however, in which the time-frame is fixed. For example in many of UNHCR's repatriation operations, the date of an election has necessitated that returnee arrive home in time to register and vote. As a result certain aspects of these operations needed to be implemented prior to a deadline in less than ideal conditions. In such situations, the concept of risk takes on increasing importance. Potential actions must be weighed in terms of their potential for success as well as for negative consequences in the event they are not successful. Effective planning demands that risk analysis take place. Thorough analysis of these factors -*change*, *time-frame*, and *risk* - can help provide an indication of the type of strategy that may be appropriate. This issue is taken up in the next section.

3.6 Types of Strategy

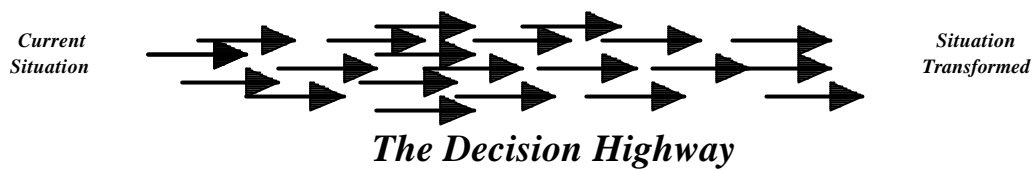
As a way of getting a handle on the abstract concept of strategy, and as a means of assisting planners in determining what types of strategic plans are needed in a given situation, these guidelines distinguish between general two types of strategy:

- ◆ Deliberate Strategy

◆ Emergent Strategy

Types of Strategy

Deliberate Strategy



Emergent Strategy

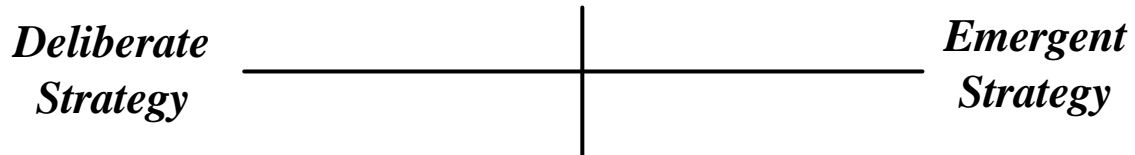


These two types are illustrated in the diagram that follows. In the diagram the small arrows represent key decisions that must be made in order to ensure progress towards achieving the desired situation. The arrows in the diagrams represent key decisions; thus emphasizing that any strategy or plan will necessarily entail close monitoring and adjustment.

The idea behind characterizing, and simplifying, the concept of strategy as being of two types, deliberate and emergent, is to assist us in determining what types of plans and planning processes will be appropriate in a given situation. It is taken for granted, however, that regardless of the type of situation UNHCR is facing, close monitoring and adjustment of our plans will be necessary.

If we accept the generalization that there are two types of strategy, then we can think about the types of strategy as existing on a continuum as shown below

A Strategy Continuum



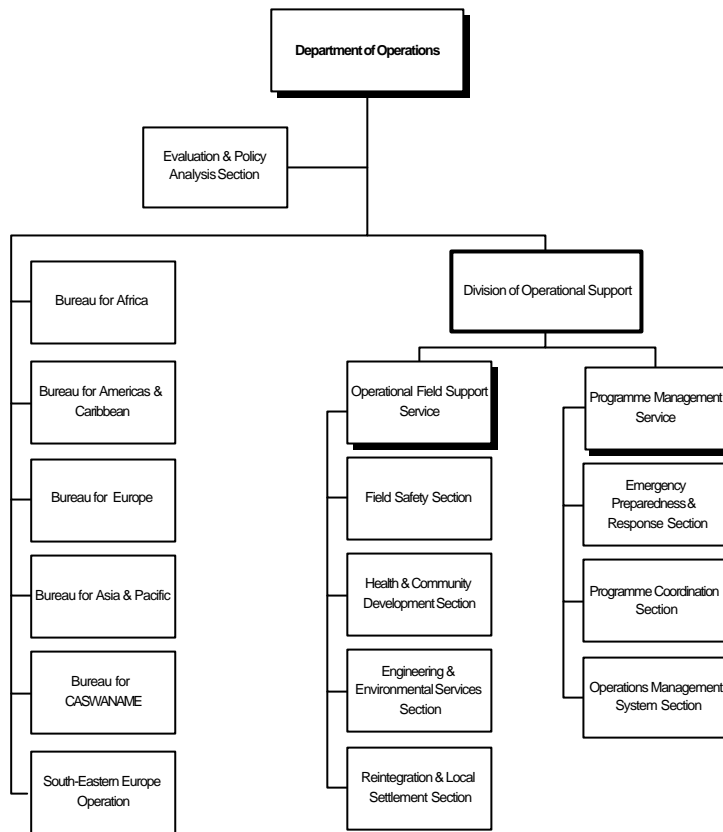
In general, in stable situations in which risk is minimized and the planning horizon or time frame can be relatively long-term, deliberate strategy is appropriate because activities and outputs can be planned in detail with a high degree of confidence they can be implemented successfully.

In highly unstable situations in which risk is high and the planning horizon is short, emergent strategy is most appropriate. Emergent strategy implies that short-term actions will be taken in a manner consistent with the overall strategic intent of the operation, but with a recognition that, in effect, what worked yesterday may not work today and probably won't work tomorrow. In such situations, ongoing contingency planning is essential.

UNHCR operations contain elements of both extremes. They also move along the continuum as progress is achieved or political conditions change.

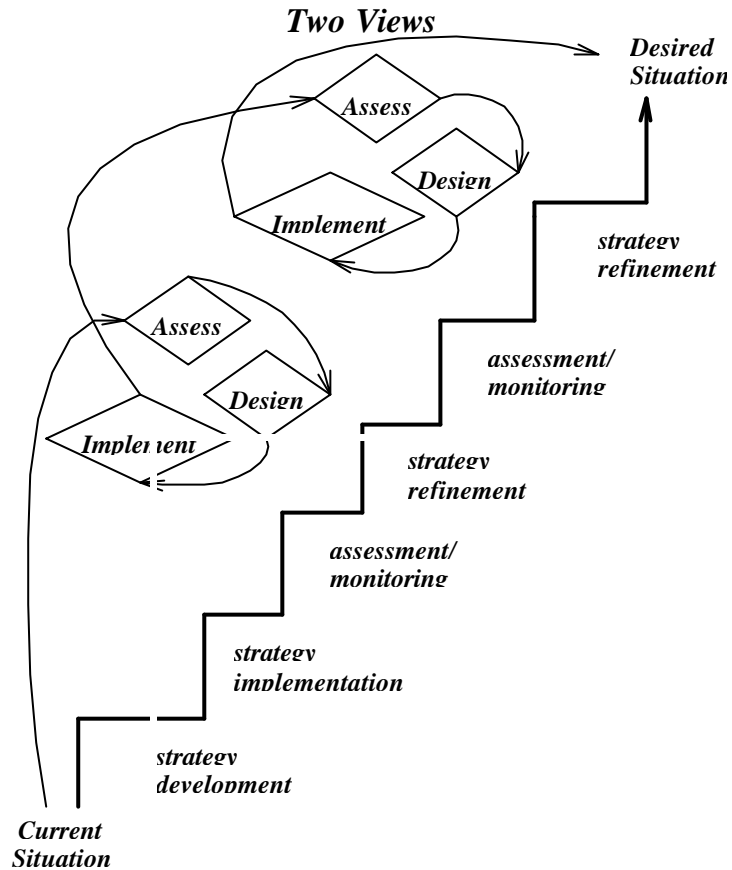
3.7 Strategy Development in UNHCR Operations: A Basic Model

The following two graphics provides a basic model for strategy development within the context of UNHCR operations. The first shows the basic model which is an adaptation of the basic planning model presented in Chapter Two. The second graphic attempts to capture the idea of strategy development as a continuous process:



The second model provides two views of strategy development and attempts to capture the idea that strategy development needs to be a continuous process. One view suggests a spiraling effect while the other suggests a staircase effect in which progress is achieved step-by-step.

Strategy Development As a Continuous Process:



Another way of clarifying the Strategy Development Process is to identify the key questions that each step or phase in the process is trying to answer. The following graphic does this:

1. **Situation Assessment:**
What is the current situation? What are the core problems to be addressed?
2. **Vision Development:**
What results and impact do we want? How will we measure our success?
3. **Implementation Strategy:**
*What means will we use to achieve our desired impact?
How will we organize ourselves in order to achieve the rights results?*
4. **Risk Analysis:**
Is our strategy feasible, relevant and realistic? How will we manage risks?
5. **Strategy Implementation**

The following section of the guidelines goes into detail on each phase in the model by providing a definition of the term, key questions that should be answered in the planning process during that phase,

and examples of techniques we can use in planning. The section does not go into detail on the techniques themselves as they are described in Chapter Six of these guidelines on planning.

Situation Assessment:

Situation assessment involves taking stock of the current situation with a focus on key issues/ problems and their implications. It includes a thorough analysis of the external environment as well as an assessment of internal capacity of all actors involved in an operation. It is a process of information gathering, analysis and interpretation as well as forecasting of trends. It provides a basis for the planning to follow.

In the Situation Assessment phase of a strategic planning process the following questions, a minimum, should be answered:

- ◆ What is the current situation?
- ◆ What are we currently doing to effect change towards the desired situation?
- ◆ What are the core problems we must address, and what are their causes and effects?
- ◆ What are our own and our partners' strengths and weaknesses?
- ◆ What opportunities exist that we can take advantage of?
- ◆ What constraints must be overcome or deal with?
- ◆ What lessons have we learned thus far that we should apply in the future?

In carrying out a situation assessment, planners have a range of techniques to draw from, ranging from the techniques of needs and resource assessments undertaken at the site to detailed surveys by specialists. For any assessment process to be effective, a People-Oriented Approach is required which ensures that planners have a clear picture of the potential beneficiary population and their communities, their activities, and their resources. The list that follows includes many of the techniques that planners use at different stages in the assessment process:

- ◆ Mission Statement Development/ Review
- ◆ Policy Gap Analysis
- ◆ Challenges Inventory
- ◆ Core Problem Analysis
- ◆ Stake-holder Mapping and Interest Inventory
- ◆ SWOC Analysis
- ◆ Progress Review
- ◆ Research/ Studies/ Surveys
- ◆ Expert Opinion
- ◆ People-Oriented Planning
- ◆ Core Problem Identification and Analysis

Vision Development:

Vision is our image of how things should be, i.e., the desired situation in terms of how we want the situation to be transformed as a result of the impact of our and our partners' efforts. Vision is described in terms of goals, objectives and scenarios.

Key Questions that should be answered in during vision development include:

- ◆ What is the desired situation we want and within what time frame?
- ◆ What overall impact do we want our efforts to have?
- ◆ What is the chain of results necessary to achieve the overall impact we want?
- ◆ If we make maximum uses of all available resources in the most efficient way possible, what will be the result?
- ◆ How will we measure our impact?

Planners typically approach the development of vision, i.e. the setting of objectives, in three ways, and often in combination. These are:

- ◆ Mission and Objectives Definition
- ◆ Scenario(s) Development
- ◆ Core Problem Translation into a Hierarchy of Objectives/ Chain of Results

The first approach - *Mission and Objectives Definition* - involves working from the mission of an organization to the setting of objectives. In the UNHCR context, this means interpreting UNHCR's mandate in a given situation, analyzing the situation, and then setting a hierarchy of objectives which are consistent with the "mission" and the situation assessment.

The second approach - *Scenario (s) Development* - involves developing scenarios which provide a "best guess" about what is likely to happen in a given situation. These scenarios are then assessed in terms of their likelihood and a choice is made in terms of which one or ones are likely to be most accurate with objective setting going forward on that basis. In the UNHCR context, this approach is often used in situations in which contingency planning is needed.

The third approach ***Core Problem Translation into a Hierarchy of Objectives/ Chain of Results*** is the process of translating the analysis that has taken place in the assessment phase into a hierarchy of objectives which if implemented should achieve the results and impact that is desired. In effect, an operation should deliver a chain of results which lead to the achievement of the goals of the operation.

Typically, effective vision development involves all three techniques techniques.

Implementation Strategy:

To identify the implementation strategy is to creatively determine the means for achieving your vision (objectives). It involves identifying a range of means (i.e., tactics, the "how") for achieving your vision and determining which ones seem most appropriate.

Effective teams do not allow themselves to be bound by traditional or standard solutions to how to achieve their vision, but instead attempt to identify new ways to approach their problems and how to solve them.

Key questions that should be answered in this phase include:

- ◆ What are all the options and alternatives we have available to achieve our vision/ objectives?
- ◆ What new and creative approaches can we take to make more efficient and effective use of our resources?
- ◆ What are the activities necessary to be implemented to deliver the outputs which collectively will achieve the desired impact?

The following list includes some of the techniques planners have at their disposal for identifying strategic options:

- ◆ Brainstorming

- ◆ Lateral Thinking
- ◆ The Outside Expert
- ◆ External Strategy and Operations Review
- ◆ People-Oriented Planning

Risk Analysis:

Risk Analysis involves testing the feasibility and practicality of the means that have been identified for meeting objectives in order to arrive at the means that have the greatest potential for success. It involves identifying the forces that will support successful implementation and those that may have a negative impact and therefore involve risks. Of particular importance is determining how important risks will be managed.

Key Questions that should be answered in this step in the planning process include:

- ◆ Is our strategy (our objectives and the options we are considering for achieving them) relevant to the expressed needs of the beneficiaries, their communities, and the country?
- ◆ Are there environmental factors, positive and negative, which will affect the potential success of our strategy?
- ◆ Are there other actors involved in protecting and assisting our target beneficiaries and are we cooperating with them to achieve maximum impact?
- ◆ Do we have the necessary resources?
- ◆ Do we have the necessary capacity?
- ◆ Is our strategy compatible with UNHCR's mission and policy?
- ◆ Are we making the best possible use of our potential?
- ◆ Have we fully taken into account all of the potential risks if we implement our strategy?
- ◆ How will we manage the risks we have identified?

Planners have a range of techniques available for testing the feasibility of a strategy ranging from the feasibility testing that specialists can undertake for technical activities to simple techniques that can be applied in a planning session within a team. A discussion of feasibility in the technical sectors is beyond the scope of these guidelines and persons needing advice should contact the Programme and Technical Support Section at UNHCR Headquarters. The following techniques are discussed in Chapter Six of these guidelines:

- ◆ Force Field Analysis
- ◆ Feasibility Testing through Questions
- ◆ Stakeholder Mapping and Interest Inventory
- ◆ Risk Analysis

Strategy Implementation

Implementation begins once the initial phase of planning is complete. Planning continues, however, in the context of monitoring not only in terms of progress in implementation but also monitoring of changes in the external environment and situation that demand that the implementation plan be adjusted. The following list provides suggestions for how planners can attempt to prepare themselves for successful implementation of a strategy:

- ◆ Plan to take stock of progress by building in monitoring mechanisms with indicators to

measure impact.

- ◆ Assume your strategy will be adapted and refined over time.
- ◆ Expect the unexpected.

Chapter Four: Operations, Programme and Project Planning

4.1 Operations Planning in the UNHCR Context

An operation in the humanitarian context in which UNHCR works may consist of many projects with many partners or just a few activities with a single partner. It may consist of multiple levels (region, situation, capital, sub-office, site) or it may exist on one level. These guidelines assume that the planning process for both complex operations and simple operations is for the most part the same. More complex operations obviously involve more detailed planning processes involving a greater range of participants than simple operations with a handful of partners.

There are a variety of types of operations plans that are developed within the context of UNHCR including the Country Report and Operations Plan, Project Submissions, Contingency Plans, Sub-Project Agreements, Training Plans, CMS Objectives, Competency Development Plans, Obligation Plans, etc.

Some of these plans are required within the framework of the Programme Management System as it evolves into UNHCR's new Operations Management System. Foremost among these are the *Country Operations Plan*, newly retitled in 1999 as the *Country Report and Operations Plan, CROP*, which is a requirement for each of UNHCR's country programmes and which is prepared each year as a basis for prioritization and allocation of resources. This plan which is currently submitted on a yearly basis in March has been redesigned within the OMS context to serve as a strategic planning and management tool for field operations. It is a summary of the UNHCR country strategy in a given country. Besides providing an overview of the UNHCR operation comprised of programmes for each caseload and theme in a given country, the Country Operations Plan provides a basis for the reporting and planning documentation which is submitted to UNHCR's Executive Committee. The current format of the UNHCR Country Operations Plan consists of the following components:

- ◆ Part One- Overview (Executive Summary)
- ◆ Part Two- Situation-Based Progress Report and Strategic Plans
- ◆ Overall Country Management Issues
- ◆ Annexes

Section 4.2 of Chapter 4 of the UNHCR Manual and the yearly programming instructions issued in January each year provide detailed guidance for preparing the Country Operations Plan.

The Country Operations Plan is an important document for both UNHCR Headquarters and UNHCR field operations. It is not, however, written at a level of detail to provide detailed guidance for the management of field operations. For complex operations, particularly emergencies and repatriation programmes which cover several countries, a separate and more detailed operations plan is needed.

Project Plans, i.e. project descriptions, remain the primary description of UNHCR's protection and assistance activities. While these typically contain a greater degree of detail than the Country Operations Plan, they also do not provide a sufficiently detailed description of programmes and projects to serve as a management tool. As with the Country Report and Operations Plan, a more detailed management plan is required. It is this type of operations plan that this chapter will focus on.

In order to distinguish between the *Country Report and Operations Plan (CROP)* submitted in the Spring and the second type of operations plan, these guidelines will call the second type of operations plan, a *Field Operations Plan*.

The Field Operations Plan can be a useful management tool because it encompasses all aspects of an operation regardless of the source of funding. This is an important point because in complex operations there may be a range of partners involved who have access to a variety of funds beyond UNHCR funding. If there is no mechanism for ensuring proper coordination, there is a risk of duplication of assistance activities and inconsistent application of standards. A Field Operations Plan which is prepared collaboratively and updated regularly can be an effective tool in ensuring effective coordination.

What is a Field Operations Plan?

Compiled on the basis of a detailed **assessment of the situation** in terms of

- ◆ **external factors**- opportunities and constraints
- ◆ **internal factors**- strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ key **issues** which will have an **impact** on the operation;

and an **ongoing analysis** of:

- ◆ **beneficiaries and their communities** in terms of **needs and resources**;

a **Field Operations Plan** is a comprehensive document that:

- ◆ establishes the **planning scenario** and key **assumptions** for the operation,
- ◆ sets the **hierarchy of objectives** for the operation usually on a site and sectoral basis,
- ◆ describes key **activities** for meeting the objectives,
- ◆ describes the **managerial structure** in terms of roles and responsibilities of all operational partners,
- ◆ describes essential **coordinating mechanisms**,
- ◆ establishes the **time frame** for the operation including a **work plan** with lead times, milestones and deadlines,
- ◆ and includes an overall **budget** incorporates all sources of funds.

On the following pages is description of the Logical Framework and the OMS adaptation of the logical framework, the OMS Design Matrix. These are useful tools for planners as they provide a logical and coherent means for summarizing the key elements of a design for an operation, programme, or project.

4.2 Key OMS innovation: The Logical Framework

The logical framework is a design matrix which summarizes the key elements of a operation, programme or project and is particularly useful as a team planning tool which supports effective assessment and design processes . It is used most effectively as part of a participatory methodology for operations and project planning, monitoring, and evaluation which emphasizes:

- ◆ the setting of proper objectives,
- ◆ definition of measurable indicators,
- ◆ identification of critical assumptions and area of risk,
- ◆ determination of means for verifying project accomplishments, and
- ◆ definition of the resources required for implementation.

The logical framework was introduced in 1969 by USAID, and has been widely adapted by the international donor community and bilateral development agencies (USAID, DFID, DANIDA, CIDA, etc.), by multi-lateral institutions (World Bank, Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, UNDP, WHO, ILO, etc.) and by many NGOs. There is a wealth of

reference materials, training and consultancy support available on implementing the logical framework approach.

Overview of the Logical Framework

The logical framework captures in summary form the hierarchy of objectives, performance indicators, means of verification, and assumptions/risks of projects and programmes. Once these elements of a programme and project have been defined, the logical framework supports the development of the work breakdown structures, workplans, responsibility charts, and budgets which are necessary for implementation to go forward in a systematic manner.

The logical framework is already understood within different parts of UNHCR. For example, the U.K.'s Department for International Development requires that all UNHCR requests for funding be formatted using the logical framework. Offices in central Europe have used the logical framework for the design of their projects in recent years. Aspects of the approach were incorporated into the design of the UNHCR Programme Management System in the 1980s.

The standard logical framework is a 16 box matrix which summarizes the key features of a programme or project and which is organized as follows:

Hierarchy of Objectives	Performance Indicators	Means of Verification for Monitoring and Coordination	Assumptions and Risks
Goal: <i>a statement of the overall goal the operation/project is contributing to achieving</i>	<i>quantitative ways of measuring or qualitative ways of judging progress towards/ or achievement of the overall goal</i>	<i>description of the means for gathering data on and assessing performance against indicators</i>	<i>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary in order for the goal to be met</i>
Objective: <i>a statement of the specific objective in terms of change or benefit to be achieved by the project</i>	<i>quantitative ways of measuring or qualitative ways of judging progress towards/ or achievement of the objective</i>	<i>description of the means for gathering data on and assessing performance against indicators</i>	<i>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary for the objective to be met</i>
Output: <i>the specific deliverables/results expected from the project</i>	<i>quantitative ways of measuring or qualitative ways of judging progress towards/ or achievement of the outputs</i>	<i>description of the means for gathering data on and assessing performance against indicators</i>	<i>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary for the outputs to be achieved</i>
Activities: <i>the activities that must be carried out in order to produce the outputs</i>	Inputs: <i>a description of the resources required to produce the outputs</i>	<i>A description of cash flow requirements over the duration of the project</i>	<i>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary in order for the activities to be carried out</i>

The matrix serves as a discussion tool for programme planners and stakeholders to agree on and record the key elements of the design of a programme or project. Its strength lies in its orientation to results, its emphasis on the concept of cause and effect, and its usefulness in working through the logic of a programme or project in a systematic and transparent manner.

Agencies have experimented with and adapted this basic framework in response to their own requirements and purpose. For example, in emergency contexts, the design matrix has been used as a work-in-progress tool for capturing design choices made in the context of a dynamic and complex planning environment. The Canadian International Development Agency has, for example, retained the 16 box structure but modified the columns to complement its efforts to introduce results-based management. Other agencies have introduced other changes. The diverse adaptations and usages of the logical framework approach are indicative of its value and flexibility. The fact that software support for the logical framework approach is available in the commercial market is another element in its favour.

The logical framework works best as part of a participatory methodology . The key to its effectiveness lies in using the matrix and associated techniques and processes as means for involving key stakeholders in the planning process and agreeing what is to be achieved and how. Simply requiring completion of the matrix without ensuring that a participatory and inclusive planning process has been implemented limits the effectiveness of the tool.

Adoption of the Logical Framework Approach by UNHCR

The OMS Team proposes that UNHCR introduce the logical framework in a phased manner as a standard presentation format for the planning and documentation of UNHCR programmes and projects. The OMS team is recommending the introduction of the logical framework because its strengths as a tool correspond to a number of areas of weaknesses in UNHCR programme and project design: explanation of rationale, setting of objectives, definition of performance indicators, and documentation of assumptions and risks. In doing so, the logical framework should be adapted to UNHCR's requirements and introduced in a flexible manner. The specific adaptations the OMS Team is suggesting are to:

1. include a column into the matrix relating to problem analysis and rationale for involvement in order to encourage improved problem analysis;
2. include a row at the bottom which focuses more explicitly on financial management; and
3. incorporate a range of tools and techniques for effective assessment and design into UNHCR's adaptation of the logical framework based on UNHCR best practice.

The OMS team is also proposing that the design matrix view of operations plans be one of the organizing principles for the way in which programme management information is recorded and available for viewing in UNHCR's new Protection and Programme Management software systems. It would also be one of the views from which the new Supply Chain and Finance Systems would be accessed. The revised matrix which the OMS team is proposing for testing and evaluation in UNHCR operations is shown below:

OMS Design Matrix

Rationale for HCR Involvement	Hierarchy of Objectives	Measurable Performance Indicators	Monitoring and Coordination	Assumptions/ Risks

<p>Overall Problem</p> <p>a description of the overall problem the operation is attempting to address</p>	<p>Goal of Operation</p> <p>a statement of the solution the operation will seek in response to the fundamental problem the operation is addressing</p>	<p>a description of quantitative ways of measuring or qualitative ways of judging progress towards/ or achievement of the overall goal</p>	<p>description of the means for gathering data on and assessing performance against indicators</p>	<p>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary for the goal to be met</p>
<p>Core Problem by Sectoral Area(s)</p> <p>a description of the core problem(s) at the level of sector which the operation will address</p>	<p>Sector-Level Objectives</p> <p>the statement of impact in a specific sector to be achieved in terms of changes or benefits</p>	<p>a description of the effects of the core problem being addressed which will be monitored as indicators of impact/ progress at the sector level</p>	<p>description of the means for gathering data on and assessing performance against indicators</p>	<p>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary to for the objective to be met</p>
<p>Causes</p> <p>a summary of the causes which are resulting in the core problem</p>	<p>Outputs (specific deliverables)</p> <p>a statement of the specific outputs (deliverables) which will be produced as a result of the overall activity(ies)</p>	<p>a description of the effects of the core problem being addressed which will be monitored as indicators of impact/ progress at the output level</p>	<p>description of the means for gathering data on and assessing performance against indicators</p>	<p>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary to for the outputs to be achieved</p>
<p>Related Activities</p> <p>a description of activities currently underway or planned by related actors to address core problems</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>a description of the activities that must be carried out in order to produce the output</p>	<p>Work Breakdown</p> <p>A breakdown of the activities into manageable tasks</p>	<p>Workplan</p> <p>A breakdown of the groups of tasks in order to establish relationships and schedules</p>	<p>external factors, conditions, events which are necessary to for the activities to be carried</p>

4.3 Operations, Programme and Project Planning

Within the context of UNHCR's operations, the way in which the organization uses the terms operation, programme, and project can be confusing for persons not familiar with the UNHCR System. The confusion stems from the very specific way in which UNHCR uses the terms programme and project. Before describing the UNHCR usage, it is helpful to consider the full range of programmes projects that may exist within a UNHCR operation.

Using the generic definition of a project as being *an activity or activities requiring inputs which will result in outputs which will have an impact on a group of beneficiaries*, we can identify a broad range of projects that exist within a typical UNHCR operation. Programmes are typically described as *a group of projects sharing overall goals and beneficiaries*. Some of these programmes and projects in a UNHCR operation are funded and implemented directly by UNHCR, some are funded through UNHCR and implemented by a partner. Projects of this type fall within the framework of the UNHCR Programme Management System.

Within a UNHCR operation there may be projects funded outside of UNHCR and implemented by an operational partner. Some projects do not necessarily require financial inputs, but still can be considered projects. An information campaign designed to encourage beneficiary participation may not necessarily require significant financial inputs yet can still be conceived and implemented as a project. Thus, there may be a broad a range of projects within a UNHCR operation.

More specifically, the UNHCR Programme Management System has traditionally used the term project to refer to all the assistance activities of the same type from the same source of UNHCR funds to a specific population of beneficiaries, usually in one country. Within the framework of the UNHCR Programme Management System, agreements for project activities with implementing partners are known as sub-agreements as they fall within the parameters of a UNHCR project.

The new Operations Management System is proposing that UNHCR adopt a more mainstream definition of programme and project along the lines of the definitions described above.

These guidelines refer to all types of projects whether they are receiving UNHCR funding within the context of a UNHCR operation or not.

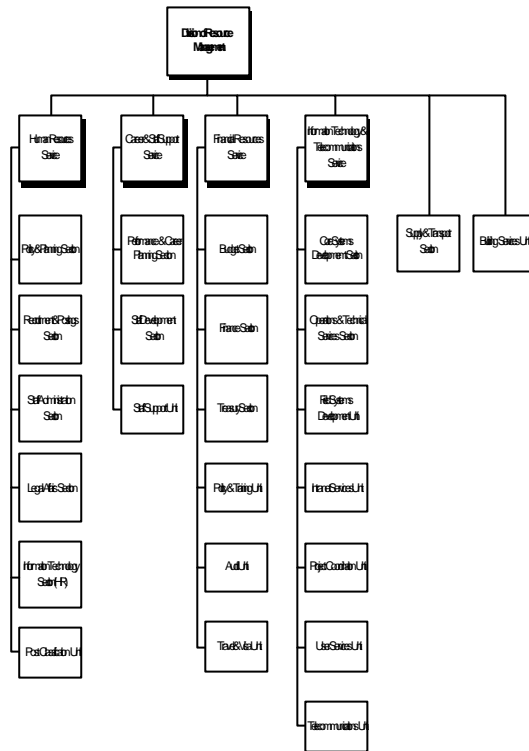
Under normal circumstances a UNHCR programme and related projects will be designed within the framework of a UNHCR operations plan which describes the full range of UNHCR activities in a country. The UNHCR operations plan will have been developed within the larger framework of a UNHCR strategy for dealing with a refugee situation or a situation in which UNHCR has become involved with beneficiaries of concern to the Office. All three levels - *strategy, operation and project* - should be integrated and mutually supportive.

Programme and project planning within UNHCR field operations always must be a collaborative process involving UNHCR field teams and their operational partners. It takes place often, but not always, within the context of a larger operation or programme which is addressing the problems and needs of a beneficiary population. The operation may be conceptualized in regional manner so that it encompasses the country of origin and country or countries of asylum. As stated above, programme and project planning typically takes place within the context of a single country with the aim of being consistent with and complementary to programmes and projects in neighbouring countries.

UNHCR programmes projects are not limited to assistance activities. Protection activities can and should be conceived as programmes and projects. Nor is it necessary that every programme and project involves funding. There are often activities in an operation which may not require financial inputs but which can be conceived as projects as they have specific beginnings and endings and have inputs, activities, and outputs.

A Typical Operations and Programme Planning Process

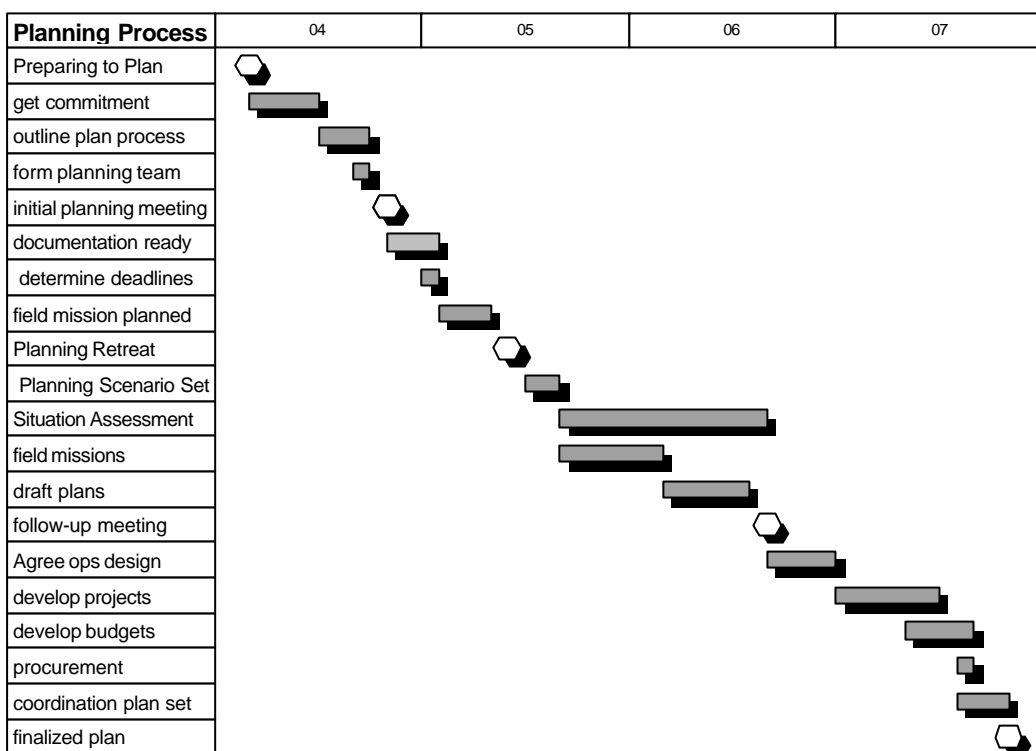
In order to discuss the operations planning process, it will be useful to recall the following model for planning at the strategic, operations, or project levels which was presented in Chapter Two, in this instance in a slightly more detailed version to include workplanning and budgeting:



An effective operation planning process involves translating these overall steps into specific action at the field level. How that translation of overall phases into specific steps depends on a number of factors. These factors can be thought of as questions:

- ◆ Is the operations plan an initial plan? A revised plan?
- ◆ How many actors need to be involved in the planning?
- ◆ How much time is available for planning?
- ◆ Is specialized expertise needed in order to compile an effective plan?

As seen in a time line below, the planning process needs to be broken down into steps that makes sense to the planning team. The planning process needs to be agreed upon by all concerned.



4.4 Operations Design

Because of broad range of potential actors involved in an operation ranging from the beneficiaries themselves to the government(s) concerned, operations design must necessarily be a collaborative process. For the operations design process to be effective, it is helpful for the operations planning team to have a long term view or vision of how they want the operation to evolve. Ideally, this long-term view includes the conclusion to the operation in which UNHCR phases out and is no longer involved protection and solutions have been achieved. The challenge is to create and nurture the longer term vision.

One way to achieve this long-term view is to encourage the key actors in the operation to take a strategic approach to the design of the operation.

Taking a strategic approach to operations design and operations management can encourage staff members, their organization and their partners to understand the impact of the external environment on their efforts and to adapt flexibly to changing circumstances. Achieving a strategic approach, however, is not easy. Day-to-day problems and the detailed flood of information and issues that managers and their teams deal with make it extremely difficult to step back, reflect upon the "big picture" and consider the larger issues which are affecting the operation. Nor is it easy to manage the day-to-day operations toward the longer term-vision.

To help create an atmosphere in which such consideration can take place, it is often useful to get away from the office or site periodically in a workshop or retreat setting for a day or two or three to reflect on the overall operation and its future direction. It also can be helpful to involve an outside facilitator who can focus on the "process" and is not caught up in day to day operational details or particular positions on controversial issues.

Another way to encourage a longer term view is to organize planning activities which specifically take on the questions of what constitutes an effective operation in the given situation and what should the longer

term vision of the operation should be. Focusing on "big picture" questions such as these in an atmosphere in which open discussion takes place will not only help to ensure that the operation is on track but also serve a powerful team building function.

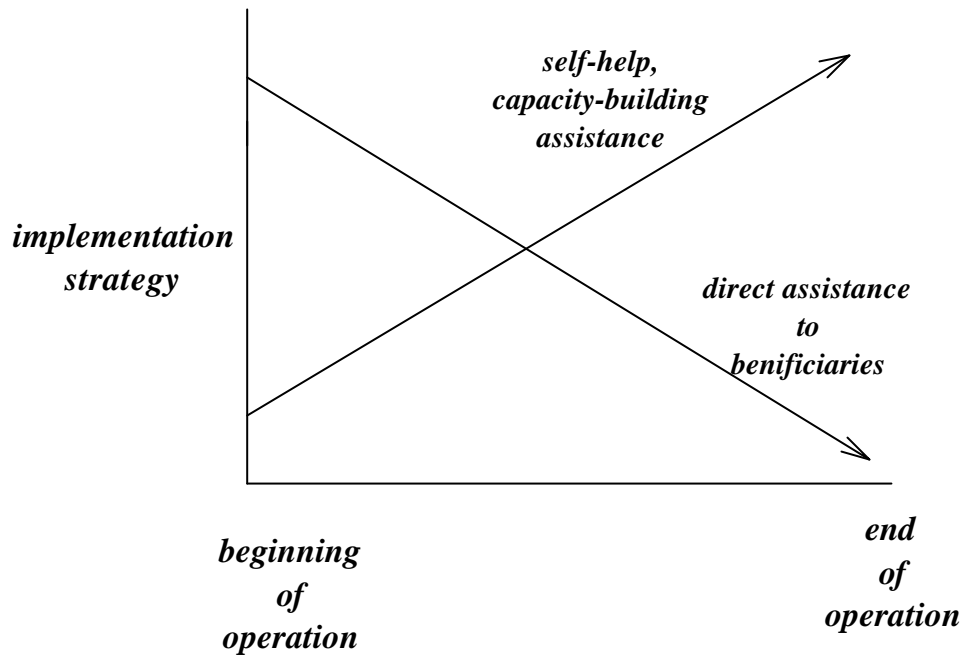
For example, a planning team focusing on what an effective operation might be in a given situation might identify the following characteristics of an effective operation:

An Effective Operation:

- ◆ achieves the right results;
- ◆ ensures value for money;
- ◆ has a strong people-orientation;
- ◆ has a strong solutions-orientation;
- ◆ emphasizes beneficiary participation to the fullest extent possible;
- ◆ emphasizes capacity-building;
- ◆ etc.

The value of addressing such questions with all operational partners together is that through this process a shared sense of vision and purpose can be developed.

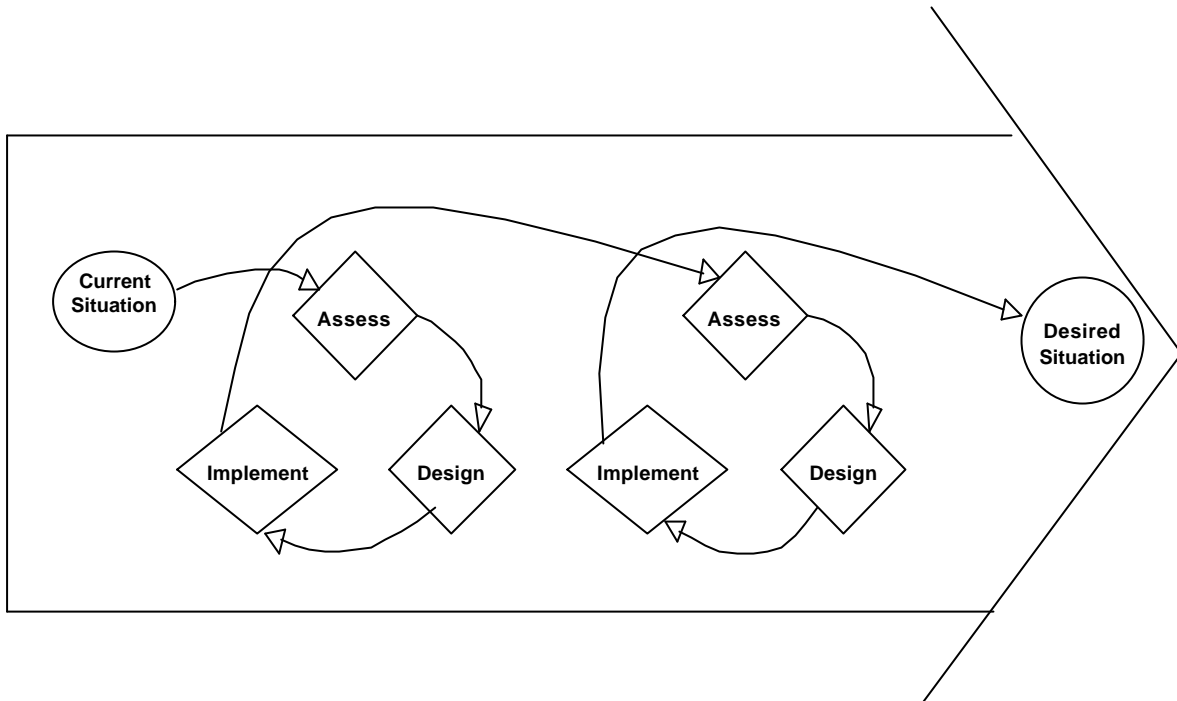
A second example will also illustrate the value of taking a long-term, strategic approach to operations design. Most operations in UNHCR begin as emergencies, and in the early stages of the operations design process, planners must make a fundamental choice between direct and capacity-building approaches in terms of how assistance will be provided to the beneficiaries. Due to urgent need for assistance to be delivered quickly, there is a tendency in the beginning to use direct assistance in which services are provided directly for the beneficiaries. At the same time, if beneficiaries are not involved directly in the design and management of the assistance from which they will benefit, there is a real risk of a "dependency syndrome" developing. The graph that follows attempts to show how operations planners might want to see the approach for delivery of assistance evolve over the life of an operation:



When planners and managers take a strategic approach to operations design in which they have made a serious effort to develop a long-term vision of the operation together, they have a far better chance of ensuring that their day-to-day decisions will lead to the right results and solutions.

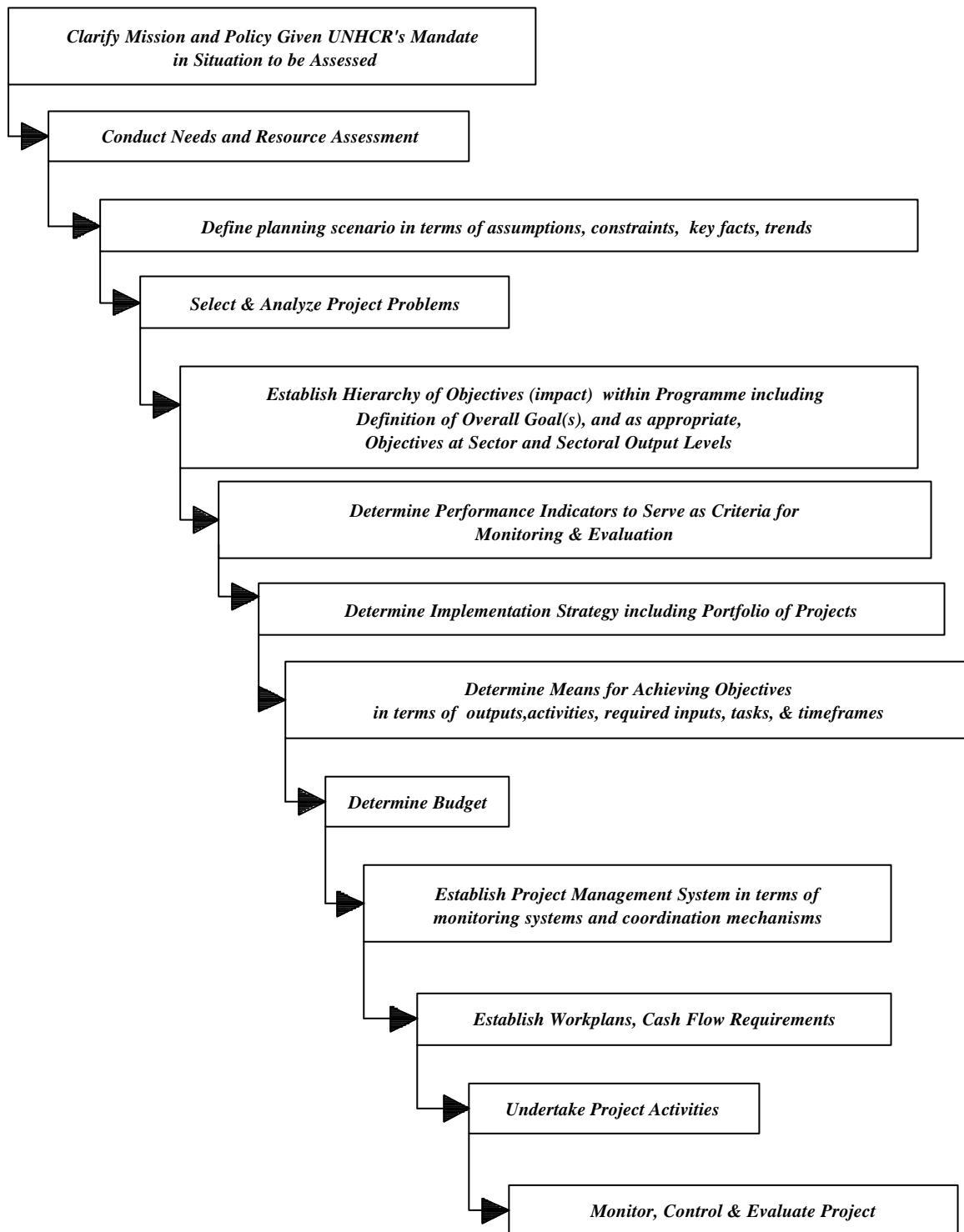
4.5 Programme and Project Planning: A Process View

Programme and Project planning follows the same basic process as for developing strategy or planning an operation. This process is described in the figure below:



As project planning in the UNHCR context is normally a collaborative process involving a series of steps that must be agreed upon among partners, a shared understanding of the process is essential. The diagram on the following page shows a more detailed view of a typical project development process:

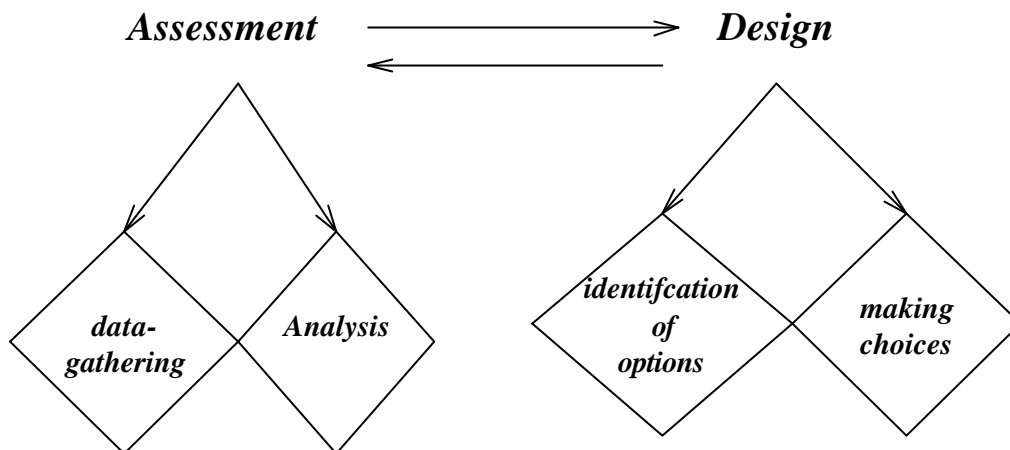
*A Typical Programme/ Project Development Process**



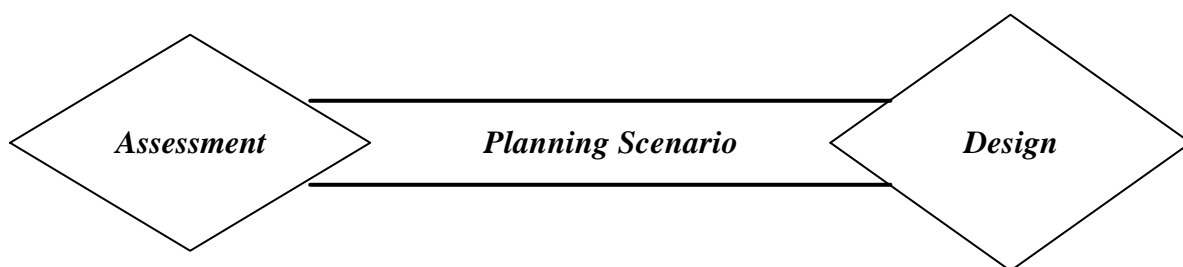
** Circumstances in a particular situation (e.g., emergencies) may dictate a re-ordering of the steps or only only partial completion of the steps before beginning project activities*

4.6 Designing for Impact

In Chapter Two, a model of the planning process was presented which described planning as consisting of two integrated activities- *assessment and design*. The design process was further broken down into additional integrated activities: *identification of options and making choices*. The following diagram from Chapter Two attempts to show this conceptually:

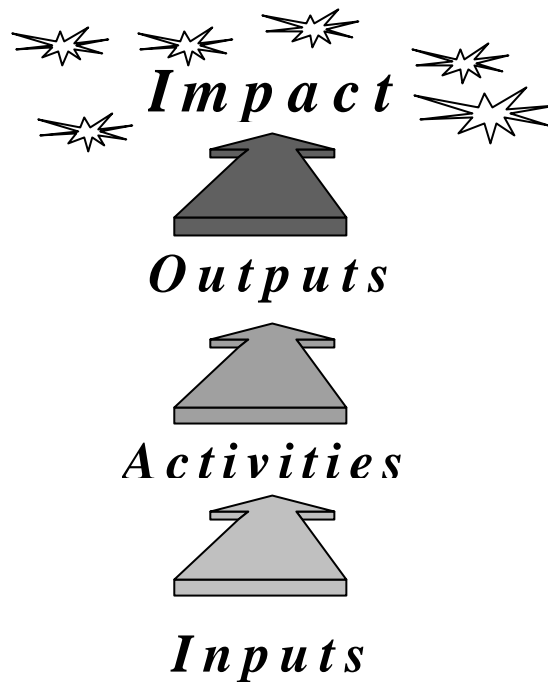


Chapter Two also discussed the concept of the *planning scenario* which represents a "fixing" of the results of the assessment so that the design process can go forward. This bridging effect that the planning scenario serves is shown in the following diagram:



The project planning process, like the operations planning process and the strategy development process, involves working through the steps of *assessment, planning scenario* and *design* in order to develop a project.

Before identifying the components of a typical project and projects that fall within the framework of the UNHCR Programme Management System, it is useful to recall the model on planning for results that was presented in Chapter Two:

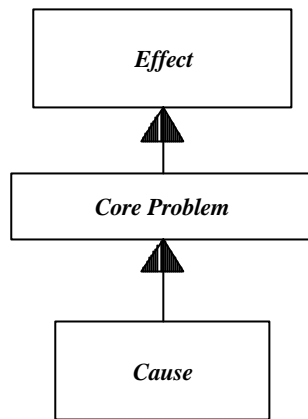


This model, which attempted to capture the manner in which planners conceptualize their strategies, operations or projects in order to achieve maximum impact, is also useful to project planners in reminding them of the key components of a well designed project. These components include the following:

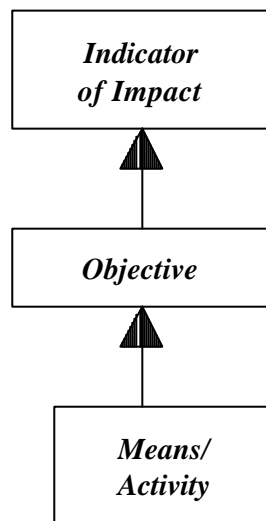
- ◆ overall objective(s)
- ◆ outputs which will lead to impact
- ◆ critical success indicators defined at the objective and output levels for measuring impact, i.e., the achievement of objectives
- ◆ activities for creating outputs which lead to achievement of the overall objective(s)
- ◆ inputs (financial, material, human) required to carry out activities
- ◆ time frame/deadlines for implementation of the project defined at the activity and output levels
- ◆ assumptions defined at any level within the project and which are necessary for the project's success

The OMS Design matrix discussed earlier in this chapter provides a useful framework recording the choices project planners have made in the design of their project.

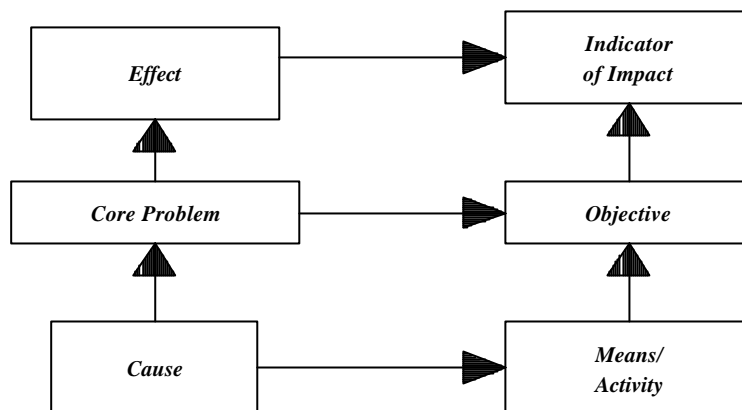
Project planners arrive at their choices as a direct result of the assessment phase of the planning process. If carried out effectively, the assessment will provide a "picture" of the beneficiaries and the context in which the operation and project are situated. Chapter Six goes into detail regarding the assessment and vision development technique of Core Problem Analysis, but it will be useful at this point to describe the manner in which problem analysis, which is at the heart of effective assessment, informs the design phase of developing a project. The series of diagrams that follow attempt to capture their relationship to each other. The first diagram shows the basic cause and effect analysis of a core problem identified in the assessment stage of the planning process:



The next diagram which follows shows the relationship between an activity and an objective so that the end result is impact:



The diagram on the following page shows the important relationship between the essential components of the cause and effect analysis of a problem and the essential elements of the project design process:



A simple example will help to describe the relationship. In a typical refugee emergency in which there is a large scale influx of refugees into a country of asylum, a **core problem** in the education sector in the earliest stages of an emergency could be the *fact that most of the primary school aged children are not in schooling of any kind*.

One of the main **causes** of this could be a *lack of resources within the refugee community to organize classes or schools*. One of the many possible **effects** of this could be *increased anxiety among parents that their children are falling behind their peer group*. Treating the cause of the problem - lack of resources by an **activity** - *providing resources to the refugee community* - will address the core problem.

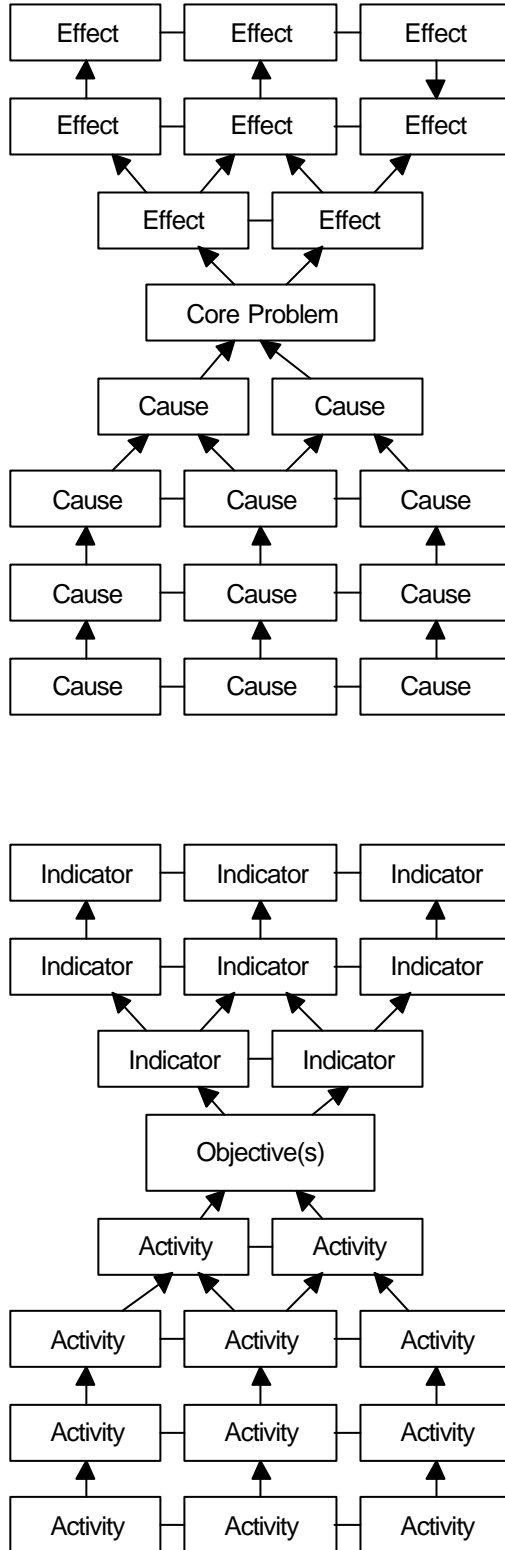
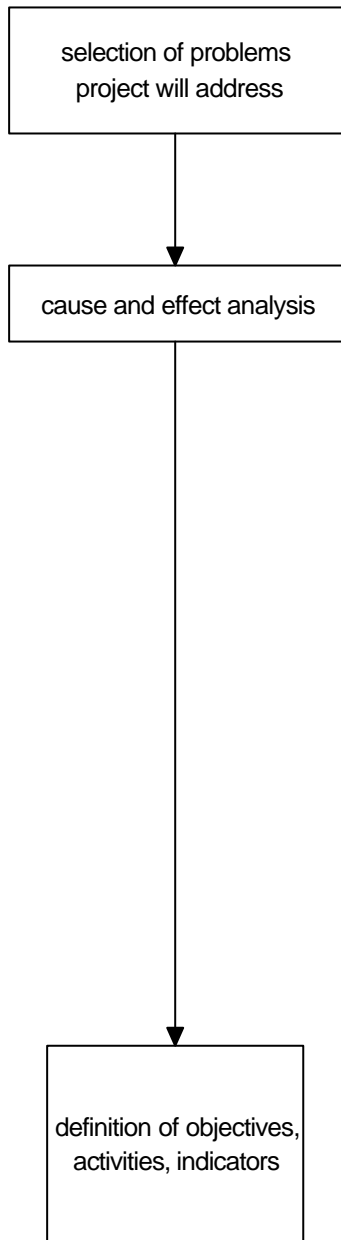
The **core problem** - *lack of education activities for children*- get restated in the **objective** setting phase of design as an objective as follows - *80 % of all primary school aged children in XXX will attend school on a regular basis*. The **effect** - *anxiety among parents* - is redefined as an **indicator of impact** as follows- *a reduction in anxiety among parents as measured in terms of complaints to settlement/camp staff*.

The key point in terms of the relationship between assessment and project design is the fact that ***without effective assessment which focuses on the beneficiaries, their activities, and their resources, there cannot be effective design.***

The reality of project design is that there are usually a range of causes and effects that exist in a hierarchal relationship to each other. If project planners can agree with each other about the causal relationships, it is likely that not only will too many options be identified for addressing the core problem, but the subsequent design choices are likely to be poor with the result being an ineffective design.

Without an effective assessment process and consensus around the analysis, there is likely to be severe disagreement about what the final project design will look like. The key, as with all good planning, is a good planning process. The diagram that follows provides a more detailed example of the relationship between the key elements of the assessment and design process.

The Relationship between Assessment and Design



4.7 The Reality of Programme and Project Design

The reality of programme and project design within the context of UNHCR is that resources, particularly financial resources are limited. What this means in practical terms is that it may not be possible to design programmes and projects which will fully address the core problems that have been designed in the assessment process.

The result may be that project activities may only be able to address some of the causes of the core problems rather than the core problems. Project planners have to make tough choices. Given this reality, the assessment process becomes even more important because it is necessary to choose activities that will provide the greatest impact and the greatest value for money. The only way to determine what activities will achieve the broadest possible impact in advance is to ensure that there has been the best possible assessment process. This will significantly contribute to sound choices in the final design of the project.

4.8 Establishing Hierarchies of Objectives

The term "Objective" should be seen as a general category that encompasses a range of "sub" and "higher" objectives at a variety of levels. The end result in a programme is a hierarchy of objectives which complement and build on one another in a chain of results which together represent the necessary steps in achieving the desired end result.

In order for this hierarchy of objectives to be properly constructed, it is useful to introduce additional terms that can be used at the various different stages. To allow for a greater degree of precision in the planning process, terms like goal and output can be used to distinguish between low-, medium-, and high-level objectives. This approach has already been adopted by other organisations which make distinctions between target, aim, outcome, etc. (see box below). As described in Chapter One, the new OMS encourages the use of the following terms and definitions:

Goal	<i>the desired result of UNHCR programmes in terms of overall solutions; goals are established at the organisational and programme levels.</i>
Objective	<i>a statement of desired result, or specific accomplishment often established at the sectoral level</i>
Output	<i>defined deliverables which enable objectives and impacts to be achieved;</i>

Objectives existing at all levels of an operations plan should be complimentary and build on one another. The achievement of lower-level objectives should lead to and support the achievement of those at a higher level. The matrix below gives an idea of how these new terms can be used within the UNHCR planning process and where they sit in terms of level.

TYPE OF OBJECTIVES	FOCUS
Organisational Goals and Objectives	<i>Mandate/ Organisational "corporate" strategy</i>
Operation/ Programme goal	<i>Country of origin caseload/ Theme at the country or "situation" levels</i>
Sectoral objectives	<i>Core problems to be solved</i>
Outputs	<i>Deliverables</i>

Organisational goals and objectives

UNHCR's overall objectives, or *organisational goals*, are embodied in its mandate which has been elaborated by the UN General Assembly, ECOSOC and EXCOM.

Operational goals and objectives

An overall goal or set of goals should be determined for each UNHCR operation, whether it be for a determined caseload, group of caseloads, or theme (e.g. capacity building) at every stage of the operational cycle.

Sectoral objectives and outputs

Sectoral objectives address **core problems** faced by the beneficiary group (e.g. lack of national protection, inability to meet their own basic needs or achieve self-sufficiency, lack of community structures, etc.).

Outputs

Outputs address the **causes of core problems** and should lead to impact. This level corresponds with the "planned achievement" of a sector-activity of the FMIS Budget Structure.

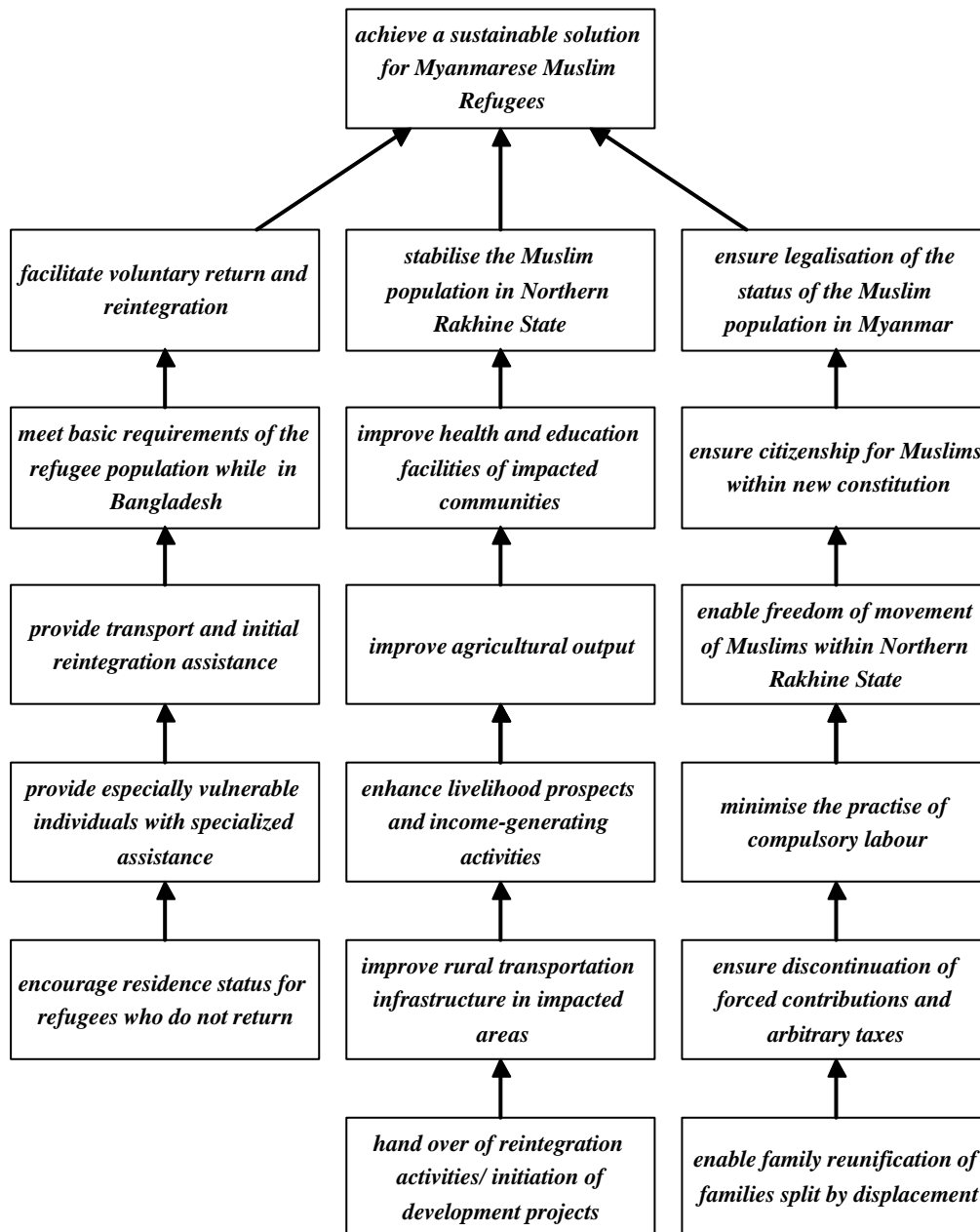
Activities and Inputs

Activities are the group of tasks necessary to transform the required inputs into the desired outputs.

When an operational goal is well defined, it can subsequently be broken down into a "chain" of mutually supportive objectives. The following graph provides a visual presentation of this breakdown based on a real-life scenario.

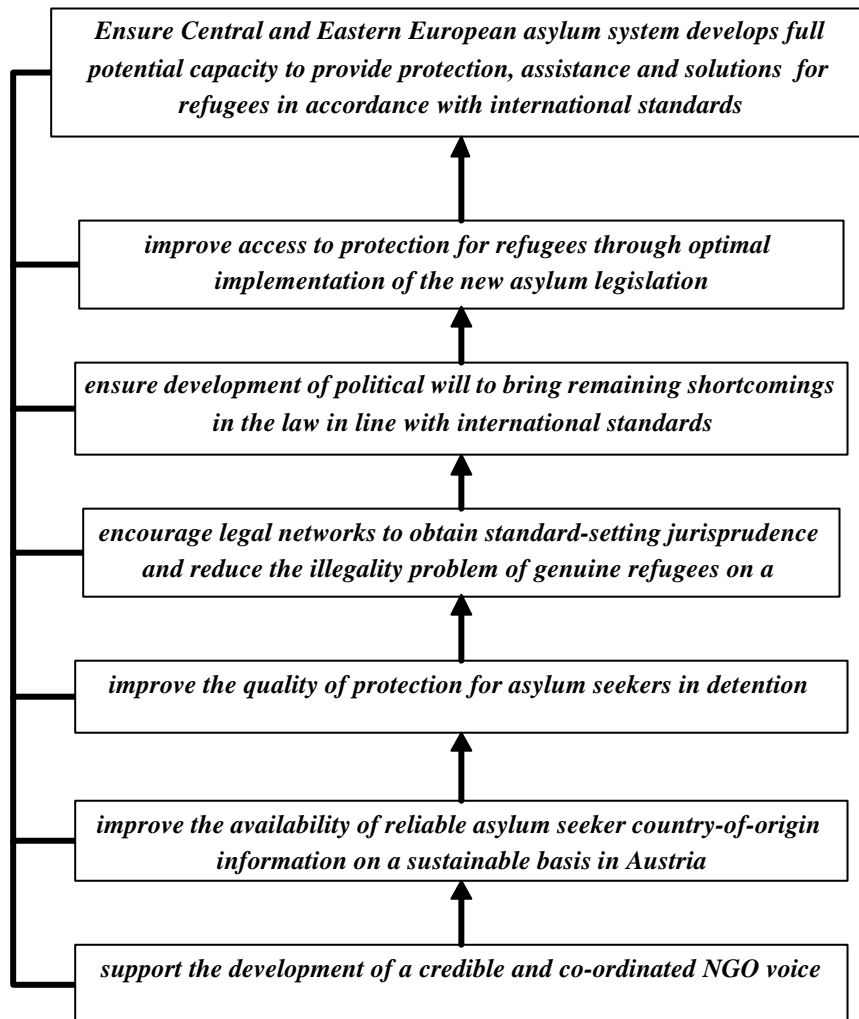
The following diagram provides an example of a hierarchy of objectives for one UNHCR operation.

Repatriation and Reintegration of Myanmar Muslim Refugees in Bangladesh to Myanmar



Below is another example of a hierarchy of objectives drawn from a protection-oriented programme:

Hierarchy of Objectives for Asylum System Development in Austria



Below this level of objectives would be the specific deliverables designed to create the impact described in the objectives. A key challenge will be to define indicators of impact which will show that the objectives are being met.

Chapter Five: Participatory Planning Techniques and Methodology

5.1 Assessment

In this section the following "workshop-oriented" techniques and methodologies are described:

- ◆ Mission Statement Development/ Review
- ◆ Country "Breakdown"
- ◆ Beneficiary "Breakdown"
- ◆ Policy Review
- ◆ Policy Gap Analysis
- ◆ Challenges Inventory
- ◆ Core Problem Analysis
- ◆ Stake-holder Mapping and Interest Inventory
- ◆ Gender Analysis Design Implications
- ◆ SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Constraints) Analysis
- ◆ Progress Review
- ◆ Research/ Studies/ Surveys
- ◆ Expert Opinion
- ◆ People-Oriented Planning

Mission Statement Development/ Review

A useful technique for encouraging team members to focus on strategic issues and understand policy in an operation is to involve them in the development of mission statements. A mission statement is essentially a statement of purpose which explains in a concise manner why the Operation, organization, unit, or team exists and what it intends to do. For example, the following mission statements were drafted as part of strategic operations planning workshops:

UNHCR's Mission in Sri Lanka

***In the absence of peace.... and continuing forced displacement....
UNHCR's Mission in Sri Lanka is to:***

- ◆ ***encourage the re-establishment of national protection;***
- ◆ ***prevent displacement;***
- ◆ ***stabilize displaced populations;***
- ◆ ***facilitate return, resettlement and relocation;***
- ◆ ***build capacity.***

UNHCR's Mission in the Ukraine

- ◆ ***UNHCR's Mission in the Ukraine is to build the capacity of governmental authorities and NGOs to meet the basic protection and assistance needs of refugees and asylum seekers and to resolve questions of statelessness.***
- ◆ ***UNHCR will provide direct support for asylum seekers and refugees until the authorities are in a position to assume their responsibilities and promote durable solutions to the issue of statelessness, through a proactive citizenship campaign and by addressing the needs of the returning formerly deported peoples who are in a refugee-like situation in Crimea.***

The development of missions statements can be an important part of strategic, operations and project planning at any stage in the process. A mission statement exercise can serve to focus attention on the purpose of the operation and indicate where it is going and what it is trying to achieve.

Mission statements focus on the organization, unit, or office's vision about the future. They can provide a foundation on which strategic plans can be built. They can also lead to statements of core values and guiding principles which can provide guidance in the implementation of the programme and the achievement of desired objectives.

Mission statements are best prepared in planning workshops in which plenty of time can be spent in examining the issues and their implications thoroughly. Key people from throughout the organization, partners, unit or office should participate in the development of the mission statement. Once developed, it should be widely communicated to all the relevant staff within an operation. Moreover, it should be tested in practice to determine whether it is providing guidance in implementation of the Operation and achievement of objectives.

A useful frame for developing a mission statement is as follows:

The purpose of _____ is to _____

in a way that _____

so that _____

Country Context "Breakdown"

Effective planning requires that the overall context of a situation be taken into account. The **Country Context "Breakdown"** technique provides a means for using the resources of a group in a planning meeting or workshop to identify the key "facts" about the country context that must be taken into account, and more specifically, to identify the design implications of these facts for the operation or project.

The technique makes use of STEP (Socio-economic, Technical, Environmental, Political) as an

analytical framework for dealing with the complexity of focusing on the country context. The STEP Analytical Framework consists of the following:

S	<i>Socio-Economic</i>	refers to the society and the economic situation;
T	<i>Technical</i>	refers to aspects of technology, infrastructure, state of development;
E	<i>Environmental</i>	refers to the surroundings in which operational and project activity will take place, in particular, communities interaction with the natural environment and utilization of resources;
P	<i>Political</i>	refers to the role and action of governments at all levels, the role and action of civil society as well as the distribution of power.

Depending on the size of the group, the following process should be carried out collectively, or carried out in small groups and then combined:

1. *explain purpose and process for this exercise, i.e., to identify to identify the key "facts" about the country context that must be taken into account, and, more specifically, to identify the design implications of these facts for the operation or project.*
2. *in brainstorming mode, identify the key "facts" for each of the STEP categories which must "inform", i.e., be taken into account in the design of the operation or project;*
3. *prioritize the ten most important facts which must be taken into account in the design;*
4. *using the ten key facts just identified, for each fact identify the implications of these facts in terms of the operation or project.*

The results of the exercise should be used to inform the formulation of objectives and design of activities. The results can also be used as a checklist at the feasibility stage of the design process as a means for testing whether the design is consistent with the analysis that has taken place in the assessment stage.

Beneficiary "Breakdown"

The key to effective planning and getting the right results is keeping the focus on the beneficiaries. This entails an ongoing effort to gather information about the beneficiary population through a variety of means including detailed registration of individuals and families to sampling and rapid appraisal.

Within a planning workshop setting, information gathering and analysis efforts prior to the workshop should be used as a basis for creating a profile of the population in terms of groups and sub-groups for whom specific measures are required, either in terms of specific targeted assistance or tailoring of generic protection and assistance activities for specific groups and sub-groups.

Beneficiaries may be categorized in a variety of ways including gender, age, family size, family composition, place of origin, background, date of arrival, degree of vulnerability, skill profile, capacity, level of education, religious belief, groups out of etc. Of particular importance is the identification of groups/ sub-groups which are present in "abnormal" numbers in comparison to the normal age/ gender/ task distribution within the population. The key task for planners is to identify what criteria should be used as a basis for designating sub-groups for whom specific programming in the form of targeted activities or programme adaptations are required.

A technique which can be used to facilitate this process is known as **Beneficiary "Breakdown"** which involves "breaking-down" the beneficiaries into groups and sub-groups which have specific needs beyond those addressed by the standard protection and assistance package.

The process for carrying out a **Beneficiary "Breakdown"** exercise in a workshop setting is as follows:

1. *Explain the purpose of the exercise, i.e., to develop a "breakdown" of the beneficiary population in terms of groups and sub-groups for whom specific protection and assistance measures are required;*
2. *Take stock of the efforts to understand and gather information about the beneficiary population including registration exercises, gender analysis exercises, demographic/ cultural profiles, surveys, informal knowledge, use of experts, and assess their adequacy in terms of providing the information and analysis needed to design an effective programme;*
3. *On the basis of this stock-taking, determine whether additional efforts are required, and establish a plan for considering this issue in a more comprehensive manner;*
4. *Ask the group (or in small groups if the numbers are large) to identify the sub-groups within the overall beneficiary population which are important in terms of the design of the operation or project.*
5. *Review the list of groups/ sub-groups in terms of comprehensiveness, particularly in terms of whether the needs of women, children, adolescents, the elderly, the chronically ill, isolated population, etc, have been included;*
6. *Having created the list, the next step is to determine the relative size of these groups within the overall population, and to assess the extent to which hard data supports the projections of relative size;*
7. *Once the sub-groups are identified and their relative size understood; the next step is to determine the specific protection and assistance needs these groups have in terms of specific problems which must be catered to in the operation or project design by sector;*
8. *Once the specific needs have been identified, the final step in this exercise is to identify the specific design implications these in terms of targeted activities or adaptations of standard activities for the whole population are required in the operation or project.*

The results of the exercise should be used to inform the formulation of objectives and design of activities. The results can also be used as a checklist at the feasibility stage of the design process as a means for testing whether the design is consistent with the beneficiary and gender analysis that has taken place in the assessment stage.

The following chart can be used to assist in the analysis:

Beneficiary "Breakdown"

Group/ Sub-Group	Relative Size/ % of overall population	Specific Protection and Assistance Problems	Design Implications by Sector
1.			
1.			
1.			
1.			
1.			

Policy Gap Analysis

Chapter One of these guidelines emphasized the importance of policy in ensuring effective planning processes which support the achievement of desired results. It is inevitable, however, that issues will arise in operations which have not been anticipated. When this happens, and when the issues are delaying progress in implementation, policy decisions are needed.

In Chapter One the following working definition of policy was presented:

Policy is statement of commitment by an authority to a course of action or procedure or guideline based on "universal" criteria determined in response to alternatives.

Typically, policy issues may have a macro-level or micro-level dimension. For example, UNHCR's overall policy on return for a given beneficiary population to a country where civil conflict still exists may be to promote return to areas of known safe areas. A lower-level aspect of that overall policy may be to provide special transport arrangements for the chronically ill. In either case, clarification as to how the policy should be applied may be needed.

Effective planning processes should bring to the surface issues and problems for which policy decisions are needed. One way of ensuring that a planning process will make this happen is build **Policy Review** and **Policy Gap Analysis** directly into the planning process. This can be done in a group meeting or workshop by using the following techniques:

Policy Review

The purpose of the **Policy Review exercise** is a structured discussion designed to review the current overall policy framework for the operation or project in order to identify any gaps or ambiguity. If gaps or ambiguity exists, this exercise provides an opportunity to provide clarification from senior managers. If clarification is not possible as key decision-makers are not present, the exercise provides an opportunity to determine an appropriate course of action for remedial steps to get clarity on policy.

The **Policy Review** exercise can be carried out in a series of logical steps as follows:

1. An explanation of the purpose purpose of this segment, i.e., to review the current policy framework for the operation;
2. Brief consideration of policy as a concept in terms of its macro and micro dimension;
3. Identification and summary of the key policy documents which provide guidance on the operation (Examples of typical Policy/ strategy documents in UNHCR operations include Bureaux Strategy Papers, Policy on Specific issues, e.g. UNHCR Policy on Internally Displaced, UNHCR Policy on Children, UNHCR Policy on Women, etc.)
4. Identification of areas of concern? Ambiguity? If such areas exist, is the ambiguity hindering the operation/ project? If so, how? How can they be resolved? Are they issues which should be addressed in this meeting/ workshop?
5. Clarification of issues which can be resolved quickly or demand resolution as they are critical to the strategic operations plan;
6. Determination of follow-up action, in particular bringing of policy issues to decision makers/ senior management.
7. *Summation of results*

Policy Gap Analysis

The **Policy Gap Analysis** exercise is another technique which can be used in meetings and workshops in order to create an opportunity to clarify policy and to ensure that policy has been defined on issues where it is needed. The steps to be followed in the exercise are identified below:

1. Ask members of the planning team to take stock the important problems they believe their operation or project needs to address.

2. Having identified all the important problems, team members should then review the problems in terms of what is required to solve the problem. In other words, do they need guidance or a decision in order to make progress in solving a problem or not. Typically, solving operational problems requires one or more of the following measures:
 - ◆ Additional Expertise
 - ◆ Additional Time
 - ◆ Additional Resources
 - ◆ Additional Investigation
 - ◆ Commitment from Key Actors
 - ◆ Policy Decision(s)

The chart that follows can assist team members in identifying problems for which micro-level policy decisions are needed:

Policy Gap Analysis Chart

<i>Prioritized Problems</i>	<i>Solution to Problem in Sight? (Yes/ No)</i>	<i>If no solution in sight, what is needed to solve problem?</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>Additional Expertise</i> ◆ <i>Additional Time</i> ◆ <i>Additional Resources</i> ◆ <i>Additional Investigation</i> ◆ <i>Commitment from Key Actors</i> ◆ <i>Policy Decision(s)</i> ◆ <i>Other Reason(s)</i>

Challenges Inventory

Challenges Inventory is a simple brainstorming technique which can be used in planning workshops or

meetings to quickly identify the challenges or problems in the external environment and their internal implications which UNHCR and its operational partners must address in order to achieve their objectives. The technique can also be used as an ice breaker to encourage participation within a the group.

The basic technique consists of two steps:

1. identify external issues confronting UNHCR and its partners in the current situation;
2. *then identify the internal management challenges these external management challenges pose.*

The technique works most effectively when used as a wall card exercise in which each individual challenge is written on a card or piece of paper and posted on a wall or board. The next step is normally to group both the external and internal challenges into themes. Additional steps can be to prioritize the challenges in terms of urgency and importance and to analyze the challenges in terms of how they relate to each other.

In a typical planning process, the next step would be to restate the prioritized challenges as **problems** which can then be analyzed in terms of **cause and effect**. This process is described in the next section on **Core Problem Analysis**. The next step in the process would be to restate the problems as objectives. This is described in Section 6.2 on Vision and Objectives. The simple chart that follows can assist team members conduct an inventory of challenges. Please note there will not always be a one to one relationship between external and internal challenges.

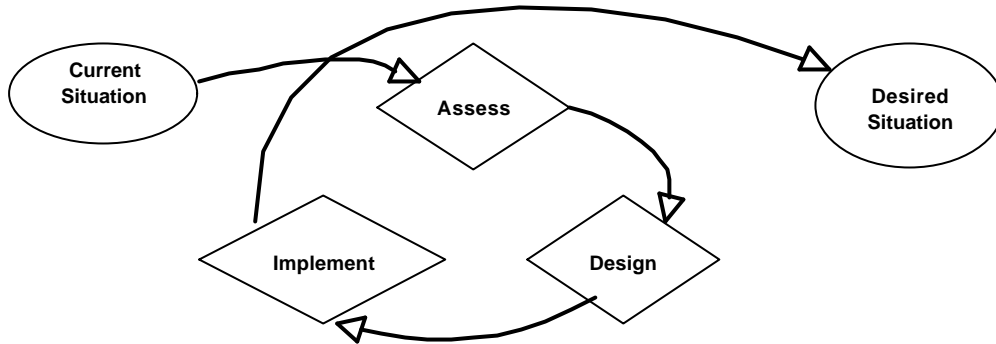
Challenges Inventory

<i>External Challenges</i>	<i>Internal Challenges</i>

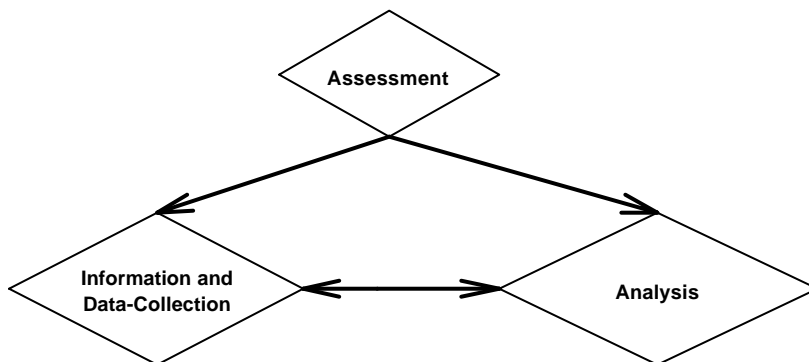
Core Problem Analysis

Core Problem Analysis, which is also described in Chapter Four on operations, programme and project planning, is an important step in any planning process. Recall for a moment the

planning model described in Chapter Two which was depicted as follows:

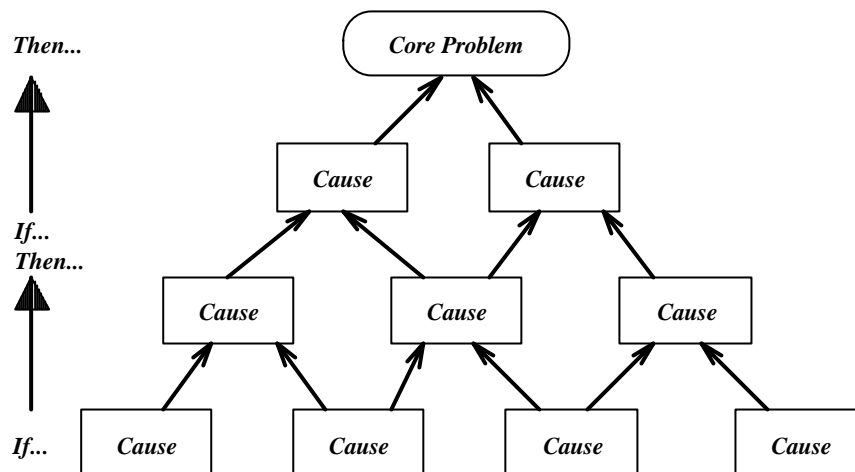


In any planning situation the first step is assessment. You will recall as well the model for describing assessment which was depicted as follows:

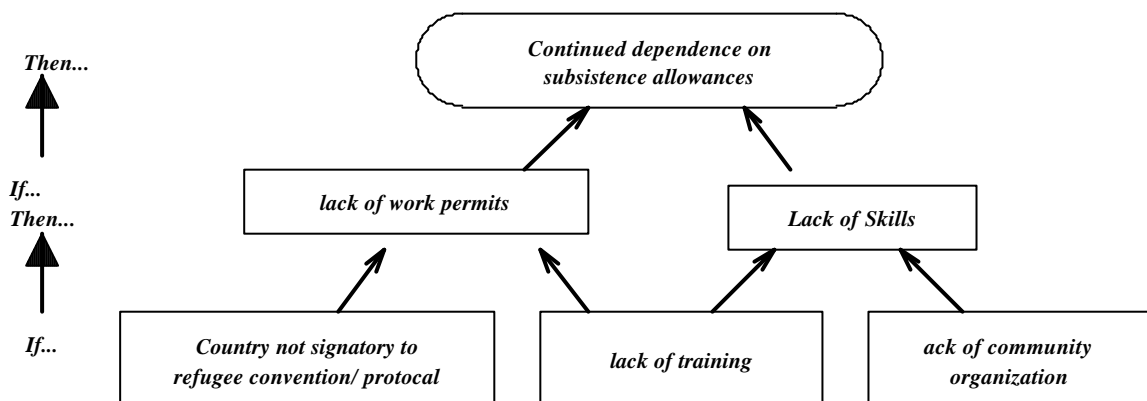


Core Problem Analysis is a means for identifying the key problems that a strategy, operation, or project must solve in order to be successful. Building upon the first stage of the assessment process, information and data-collection, **Core Problem Analysis** involves the following basic steps:

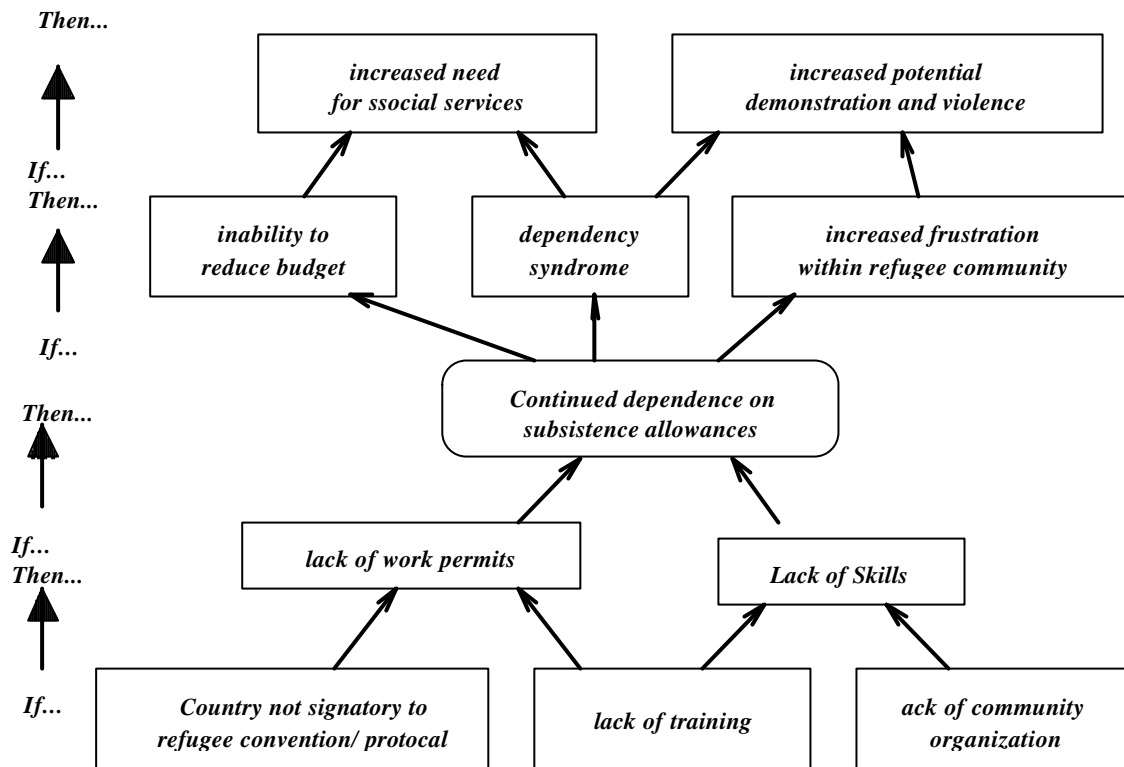
1. Identify the core problems that must be solved for the operation to be successful
2. Group the identified problems in overall themes
3. Identify the causes of the problems by placing each of the problems in a hierarchal relationship to each other with the core problem at the top and causes below. To get the logic right for the causes, apply **If...then...** logic in order to get the levels right. The end result should be a pyramid effect as shown in the diagram below:



The following chart shows a simplified example in an urban refugee programme with the identified core problem being "*continued dependence of urban refugees on subsistence allowances*":



It is useful to also show the effects of the core problem, particularly if a solution is not found. This is shown in the diagram that follows which continues with the example of the problem - *continued dependence of urban refugees on subsistence allowances*:



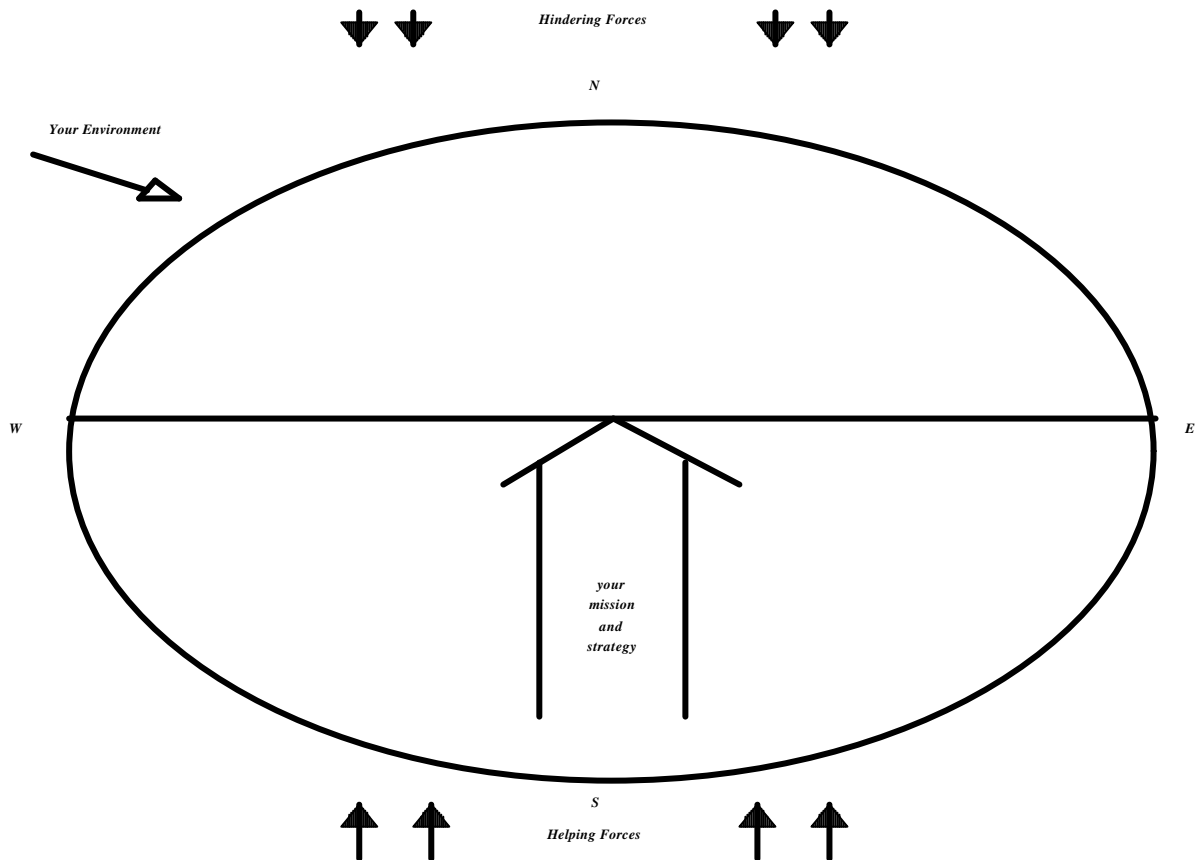
Cause and effect analysis of the core problems identified in a situation, when built on effective data-collection, provides the basis for an effective design. How it does this is discussed in the next section of this chapter which focuses on techniques for vision and objectives.

Stakeholder Mapping

The term "stakeholder" refers to a person or group or organization who have strong interest in the success or failure of an endeavor. In the context of developing a strategy, operation or project, identifying stakeholders is an important part of the assessment process. Once stake-holders have been identified and their interests analyzed, planners can make decisions about how best to take advantage stake-holders who can positively contribute to success and how to influence and minimize the negative impact of stakeholders who may have a negative impact on the plan.

The chart on the following page is an example of a stakeholder map. The circle represents your overall environment. The line which cuts across the diameter of the circle represents the dividing line between the "Hindering Forces" who are not supportive of the objectives of the plan and "Helping Forces" who are supportive. Stakeholders with the strongest interests, either positive or negative, should be placed at the extremes. The Interest Inventory which follows the stake-holder map provides a basic tool for identifying and analyzing the interests of key stakeholders.

Stakeholder Map



Directions:

1. Locate your key stakeholders on the map. Please note that Far North represents the strongest opposition and Far South represents strongest support.
2. Once you have identified the key stakeholders which will support or hinder your success, use Interest Inventory on the following page to assess their interests.

Interest Inventory

Directions:

Effective strategy, operations and projects steer a way forward among competing and supportive interests. The **Interest Inventory** will assist you in identifying the interests of key stakeholders who are likely to play an important role in your achieving, or not achieving, your objectives. The **Interest Inventory** focuses on Basic Interests, Underlying\ Hidden Interests, and Potential Interests. Basic interests refers to basic, stated concerns. Underlying and hidden interests tend to lie behind basic interest and are often related to security or position. Potential interests are not necessarily known to the stakeholder, but if brought to light can encourage the stakeholder to become more sympathetic and supportive of your objectives.

Stakeholder: _____

<i>Basic Interests</i>	<i>Underlying\ Hidden Interests</i>	<i>Potential Interests</i>

Gender Analysis Design Implications

Gender analysis focuses on understanding and documenting the differences in gender roles, activities, needs, and opportunities in a given context in order to use this analysis to design operations which are responsive to the diversity within a given beneficiary population. Gender analysis involves the disaggregation of quantitative data by gender as well as the collection and analysis of qualitative data. It highlights the different roles and learned behavior of men,

women and children based on gender attributes. These vary across cultures, class, ethnicity, income, education, and time; thus, gender analysis does not treat women, men or children as a homogeneous group or gender attributes as immutable.

The concept of gender analysis arose from the need to mainstream women's interests while at the same time acknowledging that men, women and children could not be treated as homogeneous groups. It was realized that women's needs were better understood when viewed in relation to men's needs and roles and to their social, cultural, political, and economic context. Gender analysis thus takes into account women's roles in production, reproduction, and management of community and other activities. Similarly with men, men's roles are better understood in relation to women's roles, and thus gender analysis takes into account men's role in child rearing, household management, and family relations.

Not only is gender analysis an important in the assessment and design process of strategies and programmes but it plays an important role in monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of programmes and projects.

Gender analysis helps:

- identify gender-based differences in activities as well as access to resources
- provide a basis for how programme and project activities need to be adapted in order to respond to the needs of different sub-groups within the population;
- enable operations to achieve the goals of effectiveness, efficiency, equality, and empowerment.

There are a number of key concepts in gender analysis which are useful for planners:

Practical gender needs: These relate to men and women's traditional gender roles and responsibilities and are derived from their concrete life experiences. For example, when asked what they need, women usually focus on immediate practical needs for food, water, shelter, health, and so on.

Strategic gender needs: These generally address issues of equality and empowerment of women, though they can also refer to men and children . The focus is on systemic factors that discriminate against women and men. This includes measuring the access of women, as a group compared with men, to resources and benefits, including laws and policies (such as owning property). Strategic gender needs are less easily identified than practical gender needs, but addressing these needs can be instrumental in moving toward equity and empowerment.

Intrahousehold dynamics: The household is a system of resource allocation. All members of a household-men, women, and children-have different roles, skills, interests, needs, priorities, access, and control over resources. Any development intervention that affects one member of the household will positively or negatively affect all others; hence, it is important to understand these interdependent relationships, the rights, responsibilities, obligations, and patterns of interaction among household members.

Interhousehold relations: Individuals and households belong to larger groupings (such as professional or religious groups or extended families) with whom they are involved in labor exchanges, flows of goods, and other alliances for survival. It is important to understand the social organization of these larger networks and the gender differences in roles, functions, and access.

Because gender analysis is part of the overall planning process, the composition of the planning team, timing of data collection, tabling of issues, and integration of gender concerns into overall objectives is critical early in policy and project formulation. The following principles and approaches should be applied by planning teams in order to help ensure effective gender analysis takes place:

Gender Analysis Design Framework

Planning as a Process	Programmes that intend to be gender responsive depend on flexible planning processes that are interactive, adjust objectives based on feedback, and enable beneficiaries to be active participants in the planning process.
Gender Diagnosis	Data collected should be organized to highlight key gender problems, underlying causes of problems for men and women, and the relationship between problems and causes.
Gender Objectives	Objectives clarify what gender problems will be addressed and what the practical and strategic goals are. It is important to negotiate consensus on objectives at policy, managerial, and working levels.
Gender Strategy	Clear operational strategies, which will be used to achieve stated objectives, must identify the incentives, budget, staff, training, and organizational strategies to achieve stated objectives.
Gender Monitoring and Evaluation	Flexible planning requires gender monitoring and evaluation to enable adjustment to experience and to establish accountability of commitment to achieve gender-specific priorities

The process of Gender Analysis, like People-Oriented Planning, involves information analysis of five major categories of information which must be collected as part of the assessment process:

1. **Beneficiary Demographics**
2. **Activities Analysis**
3. **Resources, access, and control Analysis**
4. **Equality analysis**
5. **Problems, constraints and opportunities.**

The extent to which information is collected on particular issues depends on the nature of the problems being addressed and the quality and depth of information already available.

As with gathering information about the beneficiary population, gender analysis should be an ongoing aspect of the assessment and design process for an operation or project. The following technique, **Gender Analysis Design Implications**, can be used as means for bringing together the previous gender analysis work that has been done in order to determine the design implications of that work for the operation or programme. It is not, of course, a substitute, for thorough gender analysis.

The technique can be used in a planning workshop and carried out either in large or small groups. If small groups are used, results should be consolidated in plenary.

The chart below provides a template for capturing the results of this technique which involves the following steps:

1. explain purpose for the exercise, i.e., building on the gender analysis work that has been done before, the purpose of the exercise is to identify core problems/ concerns/ opportunities for the beneficiary population and to determine the design implications these have for the operation or programme;
2. review the adequacy of the gender analysis undertaken thus far in the operation or project, and as necessary, plan for additional analysis,
3. determine the extent to which the "standard" gender categorization as shown below provide a

sufficiently precise filter for determining design implications on the basis of gender analysis undertaken thus far;

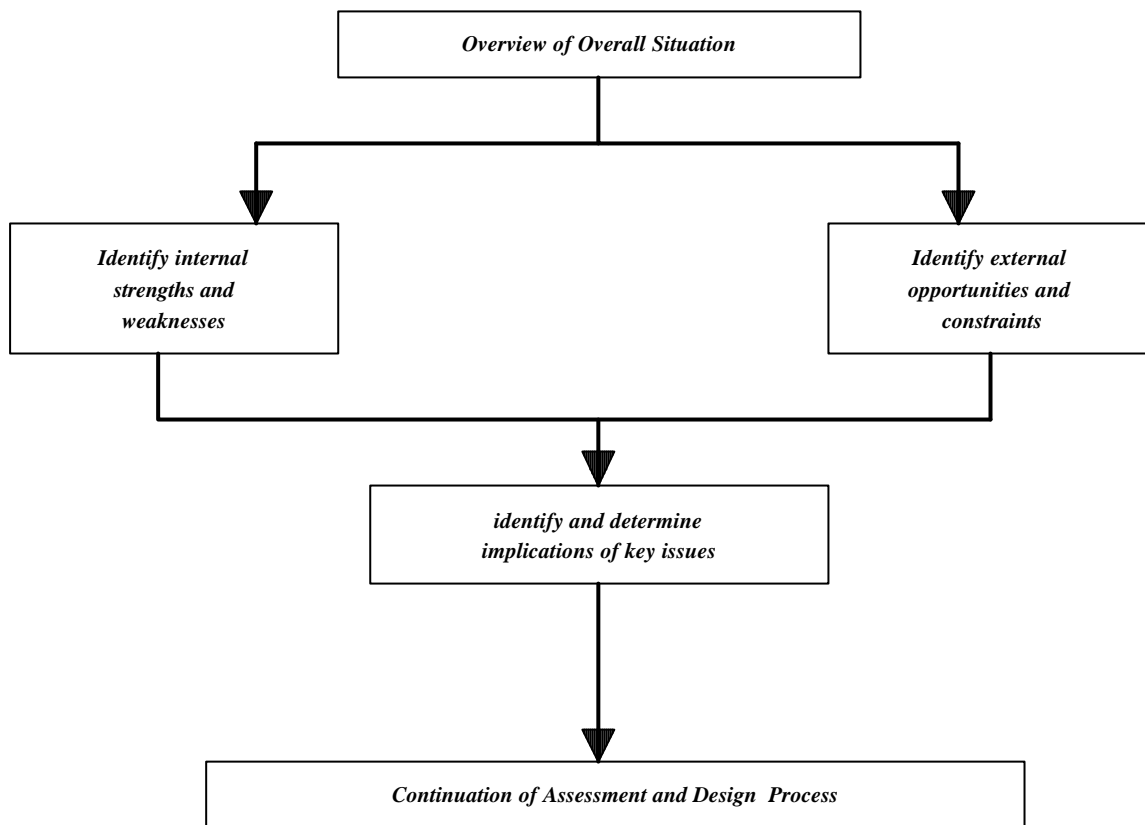
4. determine the percentage of the population by gender category;
5. Identify the core problems/ concerns/ opportunities for each category;
6. Identify the design implications of this analysis for each category by sector.

<i>Beneficiary Category</i>	<i>% of pop.</i>	<i>Core Problems/ Concerns</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Design Implication by Sector</i>
Women				
Men				
Boys				
Adolescent Boys				
Girls				
Adolescent Girls				
Elderly				

SWOC (Strengths/ Weaknesses/ Opportunities/ Constraints) Analysis

Analysis of the internal capacity, i.e. the strengths and weaknesses, of the actors involved in an operation is an important step in determining the resources that are available and the resources that are needed for a plan to be successful. Analysis of opportunities and constraints within the external environment helps to ensure a plan can be successfully implemented. The acronym S.W.O.C. is an easy way to remember these essential aspects of any planning process.

The diagram below depicts SWOC Analysis:



The chart on the following page provides a simple means for recording the results of a SWOC analysis planning exercise:

Analysis of Strengths/ Weaknesses/ Opportunities/ Constraints

Directions: The first chart below provides a framework for recording your assessment of the internal capacity of a key actor in the operation. The second chart provides a framework for identifying key issues and their implications on the operation which may be of particular importance to the key actor.

Key Actor: _____

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p>
---	--

Key Actor: _____

<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Constraints</p>
---	---

Key Issues

Prioritized Issues	Implications (short, medium and long term)
◆	◆
◆	◆
◆	◆
◆	◆
◆	◆
◆	◆
◆	◆

Progress Reviews

Regular progress reviews should be built into any strategic, operation or project plan. They are a key means for ensuring that the planning process is continuous as well as an effective means for identify lessons learned during implementation which can applied right away or in the future.

Progress reviews can be informal or formal. Informal reviews can coincide with missions from Headquarters or as a prelude to mid-year or end-of-year reporting and can take the form of field missions and workshops. More formal reviews can take on the character of ongoing evaluation exercises where specific assessment techniques are utilized to assess impact and operational effectiveness.

Research/ Studies/ Surveys

It is beyond the scope of these guidelines to describe the range of action-oriented research, studies, and surveys that can be carried out in order to ensure effective assessment of a given situation. For the generalist manager and planner it is important to recognize the value such action-oriented research, studies, and surveys can have. To be effective, however, the planner and manager must remember that techniques such as population sampling through random samples or through household surveys require a certain expertise. So do techniques such as Rapid Rural Appraisal or Participatory Rapid Appraisal.

The effective use of expertise in carrying out research and surveys will ensure a sound assessment process in which the right information and data has been gathered and analyzed. This implies effective use of technical expertise which implies careful planning.

Planners should coordinate closely with the Programme and Technical Support Section for sectoral assistance on the expertise and methodologies needed in a given situation. The same is true for protection activities of a technical nature such as refugee status determination. For such activities

planners and managers should coordinate closely with the Division of International Protection.

Expert Opinion

While not really a technique, the use of outside experts can be an important means for ensuring that plans are effective. In the context of UNHCR operations, one of the most effective uses of an expert is to bring into an operation an expert on the beneficiary group. An anthropologist, for example, who is familiar with the culture and history of a particular group can bring important insight into how best to design or adapt a new or existing operation or project.

People-Oriented Planning

People-Oriented Planning is more than a technique. It is a way of approaching strategy, operations, and projects with a focus on the real needs of the beneficiaries. UNHCR's beneficiary populations are not homogeneous. Cultural and religious differences abound. As in any large group of people, there are numerous sub-groups within a given population or community. People-Oriented Planning involves ensuring that in every operation there is a commitment to developing over the life of an operation an increasingly detailed "picture" of the people and the context in which they are found. It involves detailed analysis of women, men, and children's activities and resources prior to becoming beneficiaries of UNHCR protection and assistance, in the new context in which they find themselves, and in the situation of durable solution.

A range of guidelines and People-Oriented Planning training materials have been developed. Interested persons should contact the Senior Coordinators for Refugee Women and Refugee Children for additional information and resources.

5.2 Vision and Objectives

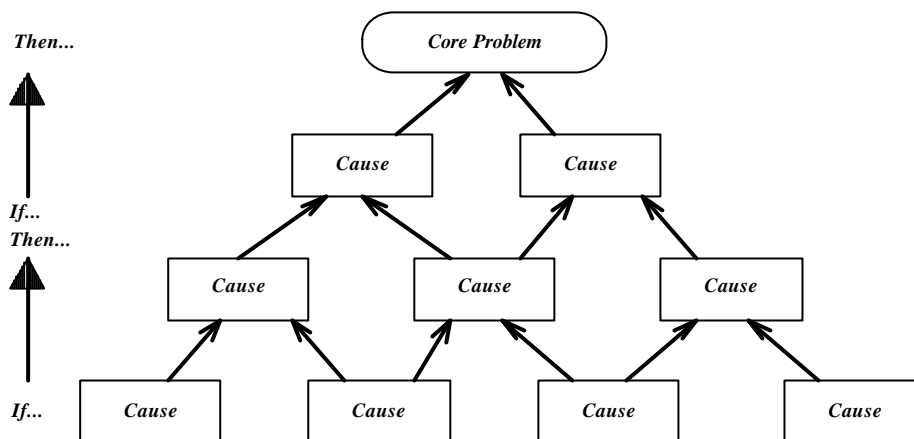
In this section the following techniques and methodologies are described:

- ◆ Core-Problem Analysis
- ◆ Scenario(s) Development
- ◆ Mission/ Goals/ Objectives Definition

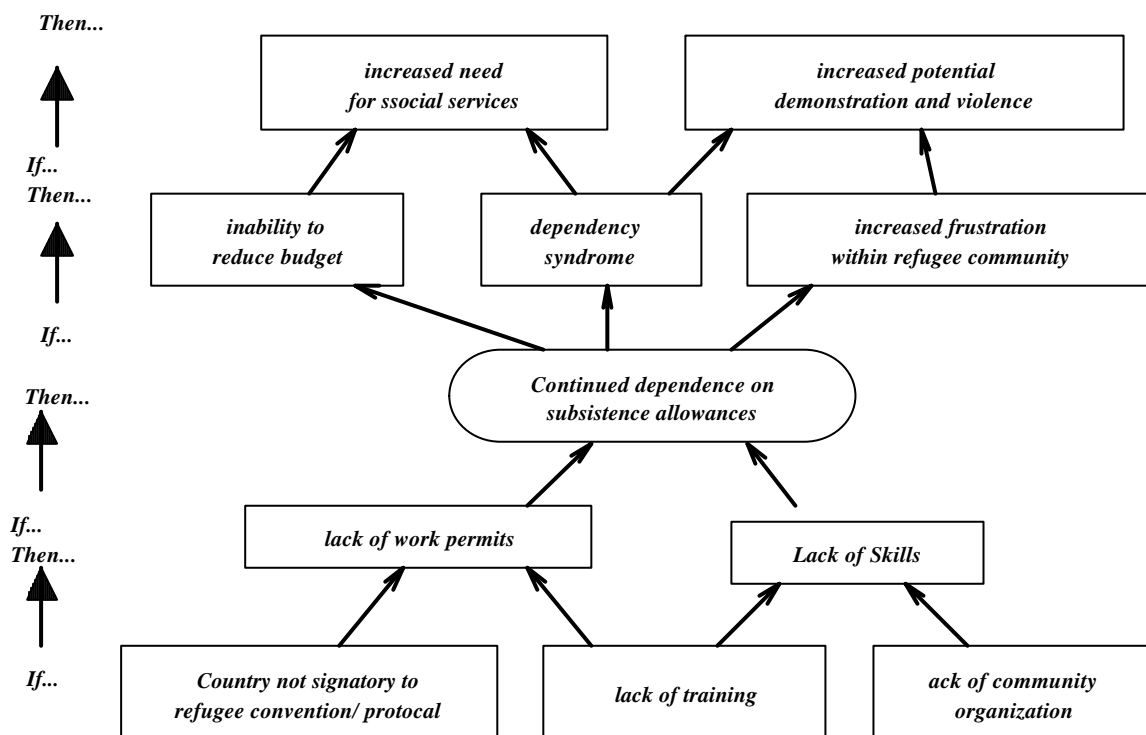
Core Problem Analysis

Core Problem Analysis has, because of its importance, been discussed previously in Chapter Four on Programme and Project Planning and in the previous section on assessment techniques. In this section, Core Problem Analysis will be discussed in terms of the way in which cause and effect analysis facilitates the objective setting process. It will help to begin with the example as shown below. The first illustration shows the basic model to use while the second shows the example:

The Model:



The worked example is shown on the following page:



In this example, the core problem which has been identified -*continued dependence of urban refugees on subsistence allowances* - can be easily transformed into an objective. Depending on the circumstances of the specific situation, the objective which results could read as follows:

Sixty per cent of all urban refugees currently on subsistence allowances will have their allowances discontinued within 12 months as a result of their found livelihood activities which allow them to be self-sufficient at a level equivalent to those remaining on subsistence allowances.

Depending on the time period involved, it might be that the objective stated above is too ambitious. Instead an objective written more at the level of causes may be more appropriate as in the example that

follows:

Within nine months sixty per cent of all urban refugees currently on subsistence allowances will have completed appropriate skills training based on their skill profile and will be actively implementing their own individual strategy for increasing their own self-sufficiency and decreasing their dependence on subsistence allowances.

The point of these examples is to highlight the relationship between the quality of the analysis and the quality of the objective setting process. The foundation for effective objective setting is effective analysis. In situations in which sustainability is a key criterion of success, core problem analysis as a first step in the objective setting process is essential.

Scenario(s) Development

The Scenario Development Approach to objective setting and vision development is most frequently used in the context of UNHCR operations for contingency planning. The approach involves three steps:

1. Establish planning time frame
2. Develop a future scenario or scenarios of the situation envisioned at the end of that time frame on the basis of current trends
3. Analyze the scenario(s) in terms of their likelihood to occur and in terms of their acceptability given the mandate and policy of the organization, office or unit concerned
4. Revise the most likely scenario in terms of the potential future situation by setting objectives which describe the desired end result given your policy and mandate

The Scenario Development Approach is also a useful technique during strategic planning workshop as it encourages participants to take a long term view and to focus on trends that are having an impact on successful implementation of a plan.

Mission/ Goals/ Objectives/ Outputs Definition

The **Mission/ Goals/ Objectives/ Outputs Definition** approach is the way in which objectives are often set in emergencies where urgent action is required. The process that is typically followed involves the following steps:

1. Clarify mission and policy in situation to be assessed
2. Undertake situation assessment in terms of mission and policy in given situation
3. Set objectives in relation to problems and issues of concern based on mission and policy identified during assessment
4. Identify the outputs (deliverables) necessary to meet the objectives and goals.

In this approach, the overall mission and policy as developed and clarified in the beginning provides the basis for the overall strategic intent of the operation or project. By establishing the hierarchy of objectives from goals down to outputs, planners can establish the chain of results necessary to achieve the desired impact.

These three approaches - **Core Problem Analysis, Scenario Development, and Mission/ Goal/ Objective** - all have in common the fact that problems - *conditions considered undesirable on the basis of application of standards* - provide the basis for objective setting.

In most UNHCR operations, all three approaches or techniques are used.

5.3 Implementation Options

In this section the following techniques will be described:

- ◆ Brainstorming
- ◆ External Strategy Review
- ◆ The Outside Expert
- ◆ People Oriented Planning

Brainstorming

Brainstorming, a planning technique, is useful at all stages of the planning process, but it is particularly effective at the implementation option stage of the planning process. Brainstorming as a technique is deceptively simple. It usually involves some variation of the following basic steps:

1. Identify and issue or problem or need of common concern
2. Identify ways of addressing the issue as creatively as possible with all input accepted and no negative criticism allowed
3. Organize and analyze the input that have been formulated (combining, prioritizing, rejecting, adapting, etc.)
4. Take decisions, make recommendations, set overall priorities, etc.

External Strategies Review

The External Strategies Review is a simple technique that may require extensive research. Essentially, to review external strategies is to seek out analogous situations in which a strategy or operation or project has been implemented previously and to review those plans in terms of applicability in the current situation. For the technique to work effectively, it is important to seek out situations which are sufficiently comparable to allow a fair comparison. It is also important to note important differences in the situations, particularly when drawing conclusions about what might work in the current situation.

The Outside Expert

Inviting an outside expert to review the results of the assessment and objectives of a strategy, operation or plan at the stage of determining implementation options can be a useful way of generating new ideas or approaches. The expert may be able to see the situation in a new way or may bring unexpected insights into the design process.

5.4 Feasibility Testing

The following techniques will be discussed in this section:

- ◆ Force Field Analysis
- ◆ Feasibility Testing Through Questions
- ◆ Risk Analysis

Force Field Analysis

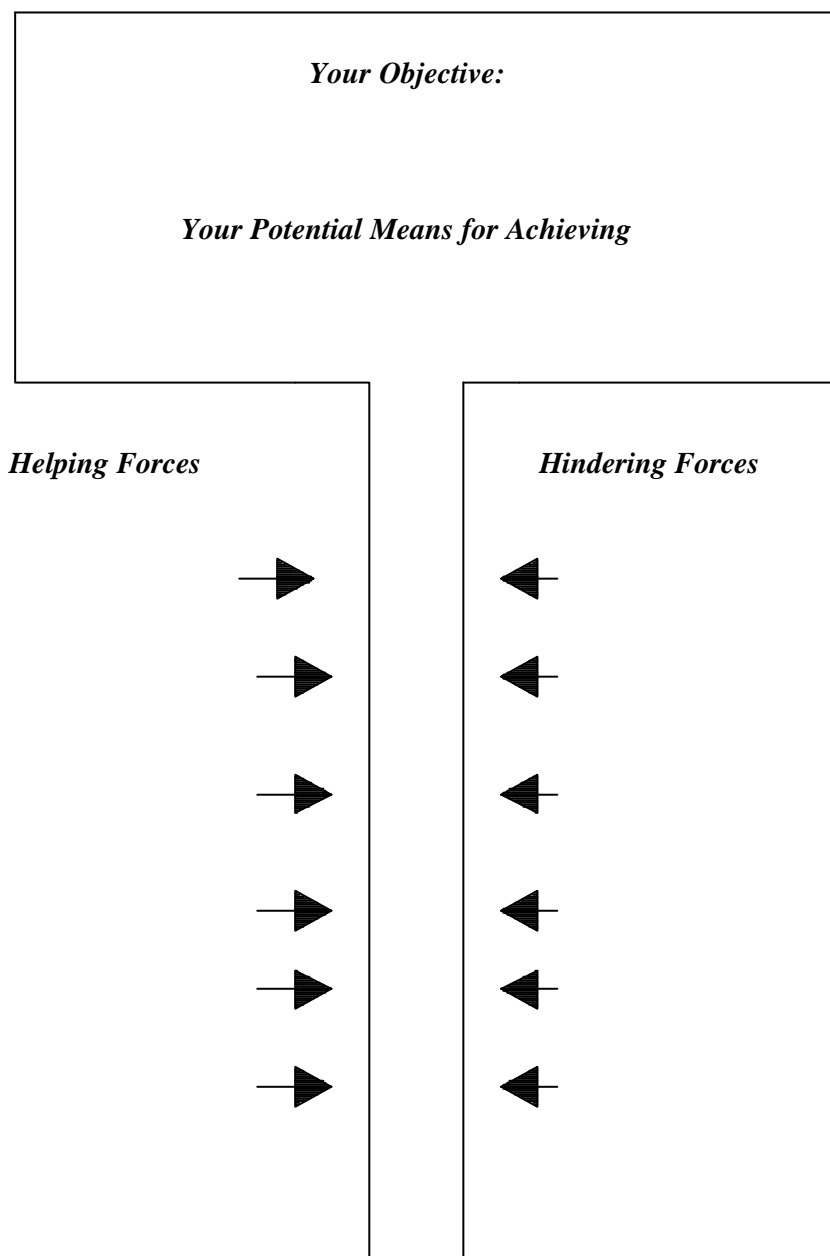
Force Field Analysis is a simple technique for reviewing the external environment in terms of the factors or "forces" that are likely to support or work against the success of your strategy, operation or project.

The chart on the following page can assist you in organizing your analysis of the forces that are likely to have an impact on your plan and thus assist you in determining which implementation options are likely to be the most effective.

The chart asks you to identify your overall objective, the overall means for achieving the objective, and the "forces" that will help or hinder the achievement of the objective. When using Force Field Analysis as a means for identifying which implementation option is likely to be the most feasible and most

appropriate, it is useful to complete a "force field" analysis for each implementation option that has been identified.

Force Field Analysis



Feasibility Testing Through Questions

This technique involves systematically working through a series of questions which planners need to consider before choosing a particular implementation option. The following list of questions are applicable to most of the situations in which UNHCR operates:

- ◆ Is our strategy (our objectives and the options we are considering for achieving them) relevant to

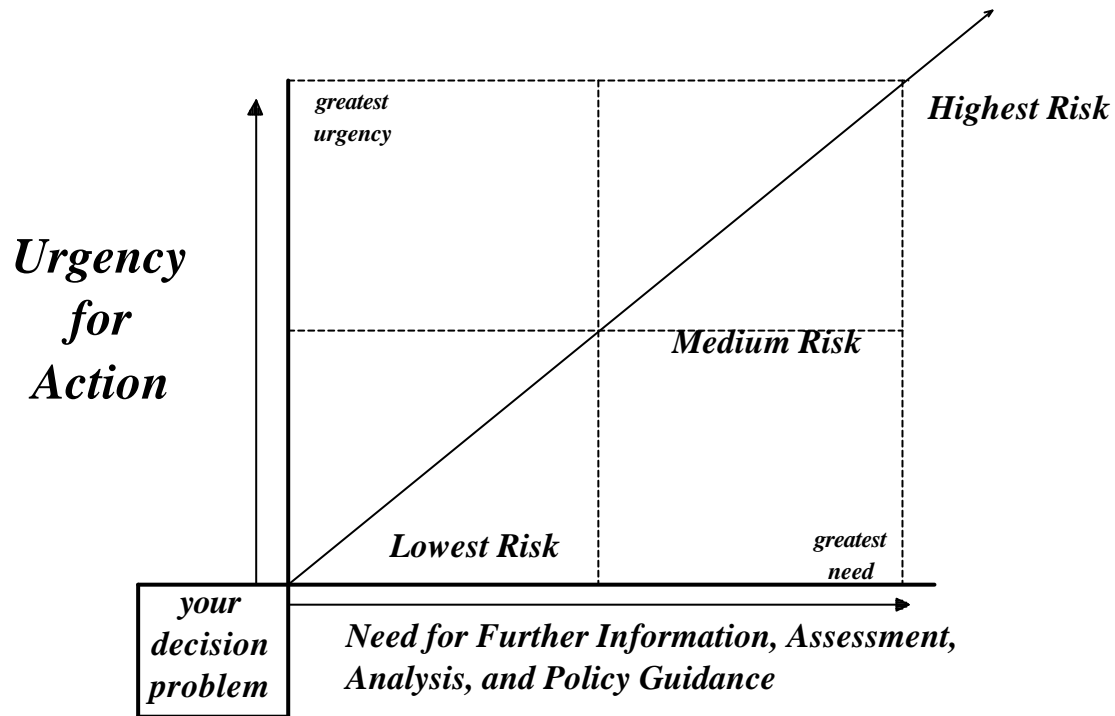
the expressed needs of the beneficiaries, their communities, and the country?

- ◆ Are there environmental factors which will affect the potential success of our strategy?
- ◆ Are there other actors involved in protecting and assisting our target beneficiaries and are we cooperating with them to achieve maximum impact?
 - ◆ Do we have the necessary resources?
 - ◆ Do we have the necessary capacity?
 - ◆ Is our strategy compatible with UNHCR's mission and policy?
 - ◆ Are we taking advantage of the complementary strategies or initiatives of other actions involved in the situation?
 - ◆ Are we making the best possible use of our potential?
 - ◆ Have we fully taken into account all of the potential risks if we implement our strategy?

Risk Analysis

Risk Analysis is important at all stages of the planning process. Elaborate techniques using computer models have been developed in economics and in the social sciences involving mathematical modeling of the potential consequences of different course of action. In the context in which UNHCR operates, the concept can be readily applied. The chart that follows provides a simple tool for determining the relative risk in any given situation. To use the chart, identify your "decision problem" and then determine the extent to which urgent action is required and the extent to which adequate information, assessment, and policy guidance is available. The chart provides a rough guide to the degree of relative risk in the situation.

Risk Analysis in Planning Situations



Directions:

In all planning exercises there is tension between the need to act and the need for further study. The chart above can help you see where you currently are with respect to these two issues. In general, the greater the risk the shorter your time frame or planning horizon should be.

You can also use this chart to help you weigh the relative risk of the options for action you are considering and to determine how much time you have available to plan.

The X coordinate which runs left to right on the chart represents the need for additional planning and further study.

The Y coordinate which runs from the bottom to the top of the chart represents the urgency for action.

5.5 Implementation and Work Planning

Work Breakdown Structure

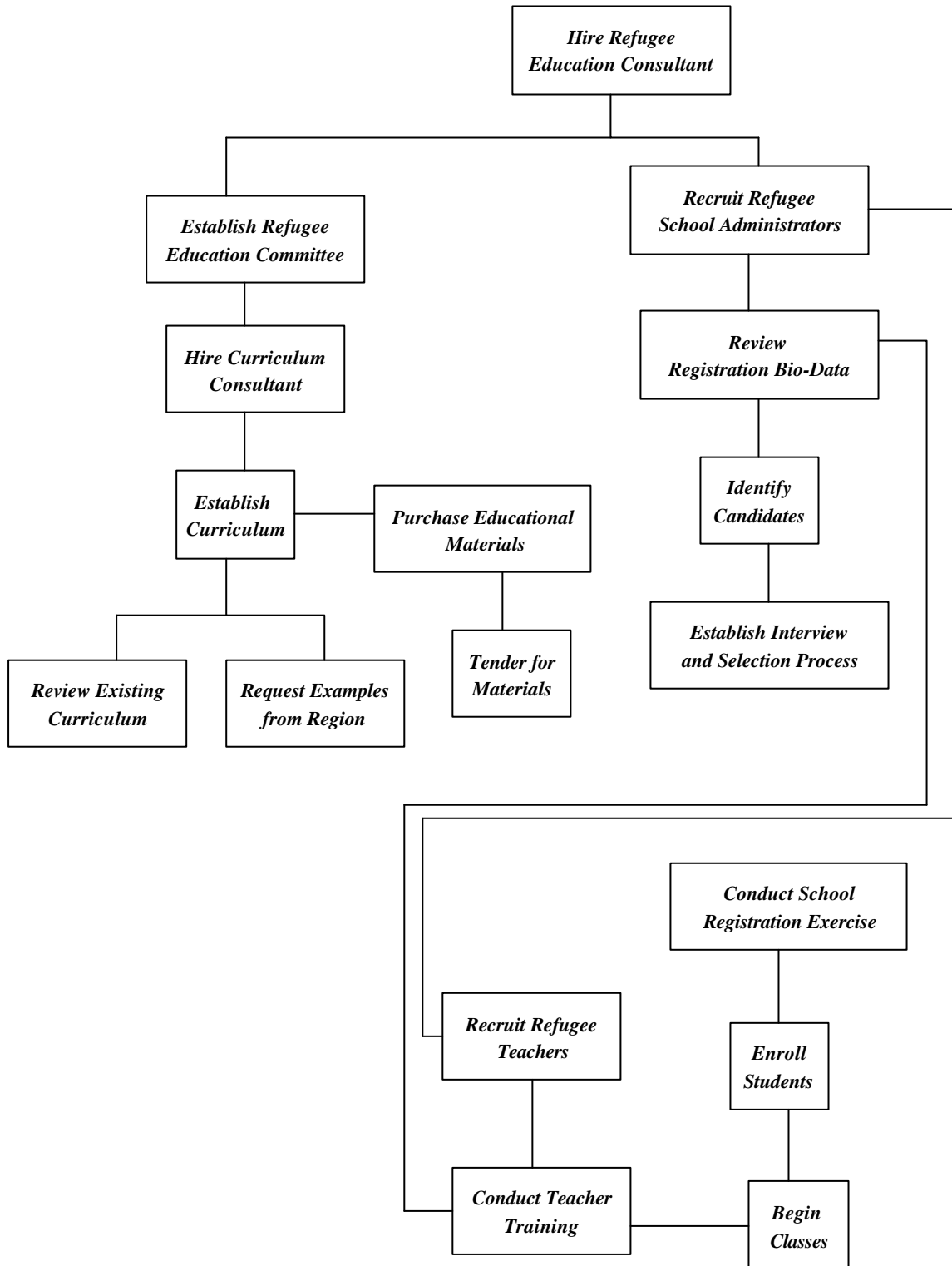
The development of schedules, work plans and time charts are an import part of ensuring that implementation of a strategy or plan will take place in a timely manner, a key consideration if we are to achieve good value for money and resources invested.

A key step in establishing a work plan, schedule or time chart is to break the work to be done down into its constituent elements. The technique of **Work Breakdown Structure** provides a means for doing so. The process of "breaking down the work" involves analyzing the key tasks that have to be carried out in a systematic manner. The process of analysis can be described as follows:

- ◆ Analyze the overall task in terms of its complexity
- ◆ Break the task down into manageable parts/steps
- ◆ Order the parts/steps into a logical sequence
- ◆ Determine which steps can occur simultaneously, which can be deferred, which are pre-requisites to others
- ◆ Determine the time frame for each step
- ◆ assign responsibility including focal points with overall responsibility for key clusters of tasks
- ◆ Establish global and individual work plans

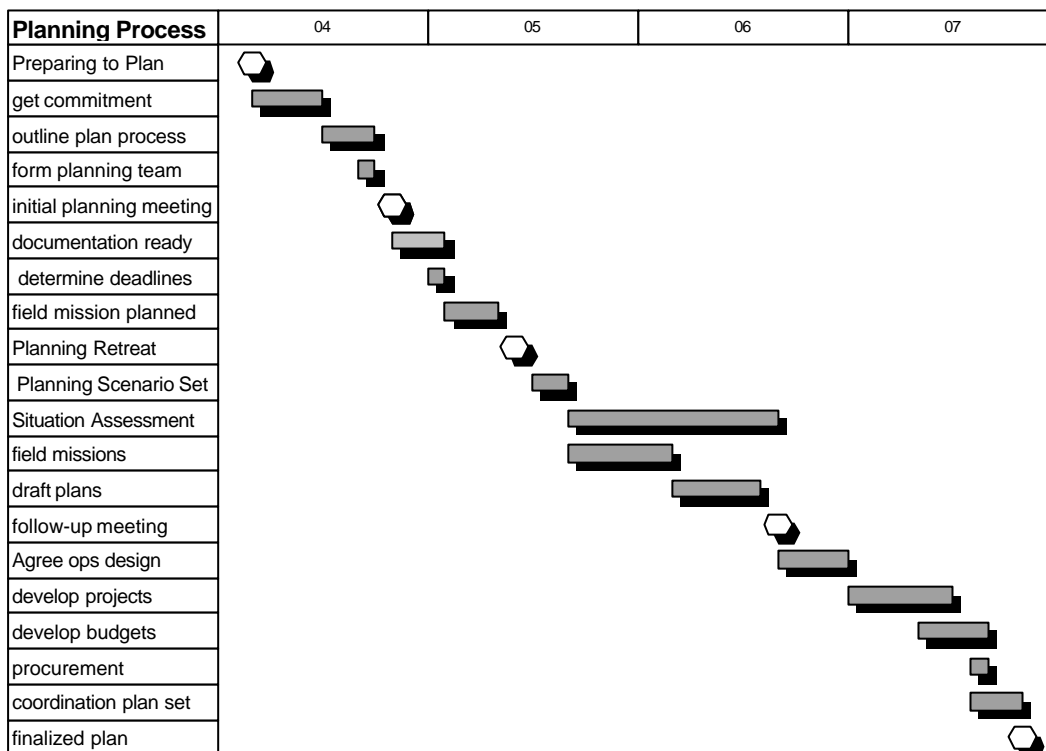
A useful planning technique for identifying the key parts of any complex task and for showing their relationship to each other is to create a chart showing the Work Breakdown Structure. The chart on the following page shows this type of chart for the education sector in a camp situation:

Work Breakdown Structure for Education Sector



Bar and Gantt Charts

One of the common and most useful techniques of planning and scheduling is the Gantt chart. a bar chart graphically shows the different task to be carried out, the duration of each task, and the scheduled beginning and end. The following example is repeated from Chapter Four on Operations Planning:



Precedence and Network Diagrams

Precedence Diagrams including the Critical Path Method and Project Evaluation and Review Technique are useful techniques for planning projects with definite beginnings and ends. Commercial project management software have made it far easier to develop the kind of flow charting these techniques require.

UNHCR's supports Microsoft Project as its standard Project Management Software. The software can be a very useful tool when a significant effort has been made to carry out the upfront planning so that outputs/ deliverables have been clearly identified. Training is often available locally for teams that would like to incorporate MS Project as a tool to be used in their operations.

Chapter Six: Budgeting

6.1 Budgeting in the UNHCR Context

UNHCR's traditional approach to budgeting in its operations can be described as a bottom-up, line item approach focused on projects in which the cost of project activities begins with the assessment of need. The UNHCR FMIS (Financial and Management Information System) budgeting system utilizes standard budget formats with an emphasis on standard objects of expenditure which are organized in a hierarchal fashion. UNHCR adopted this approach in the late eighties order to encourage effective project control and to facilitate recording of expenditure and analysis in Headquarters. As projects are the fundamental

building block of the current UNHCR Programme Management System, this discussion of budgeting will focus on project budgets. The following section discusses the new OMS approach to budgeting.

The budget hierarchy in a UNHCR project budget is composed of the following components:

- ◆ Sector
- ◆ Sector-Activity
- ◆ Item
- ◆ Sub-Item

The UNHCR budget structure or hierarchy has at its highest level in a project a sector or sectors followed by sector-Activities, Items, and then Sub-Items which represent the actual objects of expenditure. Chapter Five of this handbook provides an overview of FMIS which includes a description of the standard budget structure and codes UNHCR uses in its assistance programmes. **In order for a UNHCR project to be approved, its budget must be submitted in the FMIS format.**

UNHCR Headquarters does not prescribe a specific standard of precision or level of detail for projects, and instead has adopted a flexible approach. It should be noted, however, that the UNHCR's system has a preference for more detailed budgets, and there is an expectation that budgets will become more precise and more detailed over the life of the project. The FMIS Budget structure accommodates very precise levels of budgeting as well as budgeting in which unit costs are aggregated at higher levels within the project. An example will help to illustrate this.

If a project includes the construction of primary schools, the budget for that activity, Education Facilities Construction could be budgeted within the UNHCR FMIS as a single sub-item in which the calculation could be relatively simple, i.e., number of schools x the cost of the building construction contract (the cost of the school) = the total of the sub-item. This sub-item would be represented in the FMIS budget structure codes as I.(Education sector) 03. Educational Facilities Construction (Sector-Activity) j. (item- Services) 10070 Building Construction Contract (sub-item) or I.03.j.10070.

The same activity, construction of primary schools could also be budgeted with the various materials and supplies needed for construction such as roofing materials, timber, cement, electrical supplies, workshop supplies, etc, represented as sub-items.

The decisions as to how to budget for the activity and standard of precision or level of detail are largely ones to be made by the UNHCR Field Office and the implementing partner on the basis of the circumstances in the particular situation. Guidance is, however provided from Headquarters. In situations in which budgeting has not been carried out in sufficient detail, or there is a lack of confidence in the submission, UNHCR Field Offices and implementing partners have been requested by UNHCR Headquarters to rework their project submission and budgets in greater detail.

The implication of this approach for UNHCR Field Offices and implementing partners is that they must work together to plan the budget. **If UNHCR and its implementing partners are working effectively together, there will be preliminary discussions regarding the budget for a project before it is prepared.** These discussions are important because budgets are often sources of difficulty and conflict between UNHCR and its implementing partners. The primary reasons for these disagreements are insufficient detail and formats which are difficult to translate into the UNHCR budget format.

In the discussions during the planning phase, factors such as the likelihood of revision of the project due to changes in circumstances, cash flow requirements, the experience of the partner in carrying out the activity, UNHCR and implementing partner confidence in each other, the accounting/booking system of the implementing partner and the ease with which they can record expenditure in the UNHCR format, and others need to be taken into account. The result should be mutual agreement about the level of detail format, and content of a budget **before** extensive budget preparation is undertaken.

When project budgets are reviewed in Headquarters, there are a number of items of expenditure which are of particular concern. The most important of these is administrative costs within the project. Headquarters expects that lump sums for salaries and staff costs will be avoided and that sub-items will

be calculated on the basis of positions. In the same way significant expenditures for infrastructure will be scrutinized as well as unexplained lump sum amounts.

UNHCR expects, however, that all UNHCR implementing partners are committed to ensuring that the costing of inputs into assistance activities are costed accurately and that the best possible value for money is achieved. In addition, UNHCR expects that during the course of the life of an operation there will be more detailed and accurate budgeting.

While UNHCR advocates at the field level a bottom-up approach to budgeting closely linked to comprehensive assessment of need, there is what can be described as a degree of top-down budgeting carried out in Headquarters when projects and programmes are reviewed. Part of this top down approach is the result of political considerations related to donor interest in programmes and the potential for funding. In other contexts such as in returnee/reintegration programmes there is consideration given to the amount of UNHCR funding that should be dedicated to, for example, reintegration activities benefiting returnee-impacted communities. It also can be a factor when UNHCR becomes involved in assistance activities for a specific group but is only one of many actors providing assistance, and not the major one.

These considerations come more into play when reviewing Special Programmes. The point to be made here is that assessment of need and application of standards in the local context is the key. For implementing partners, the budgets you submit to UNHCR should be the result of careful assessment of needs and resources and accurate costing of project inputs and activities. Working in this way you will gain credibility with UNHCR and increase your chances of receiving from UNHCR the funding that both parties will consider to be appropriate.

Sub-Project budgets serve the following purposes:

- as a management tool to ensure that proposed inputs have been properly identified;
- as a means of calculating the cost of proposed activities;
- as one method (amongst others) for measuring the rate of implementation.

In general, the following guidelines should be used when calculating budgets within UNHCR operations:

- all budgets should be calculated and presented in the currency of implementation;
- current unit costs should be used with no projections made for possible inflation;
- current population figures should be used when determining quantities unless adequate justification can be presented for using a higher or lower figure;
- inputs from others, e.g. non-governmental organizations, host government, other UN agencies, refugees, etc., should be taken into account when presenting budgetary needs, and should be mentioned under the heading of "Related Inputs/Projects" in the Sub-Project Description;
- a "contingency reserve" should not be built into the budget.

6.2 The New OMS Approach to Budgeting

The OMS Team is proposing two key innovations in UNHCR's new budgeting system. These are that:

- a) UNHCR formally adopt results-oriented, performance budgeting as its standard budgeting approach and format for presentation of budgets of all activities in the Field and at Headquarters, and that
- b) UNHCR create one unified, and comprehensive budget structure integrating the current dual project and administrative support/ programme delivery budget structure and processes which will provide the basis for one budgeting system which applies for the Field (including partners) and Headquarters.

Results-Oriented, Performance Budgeting

The new OMS budgeting system is based on the concept of results-oriented, performance budgets. These are budgets which show the cost of achieving outputs (deliverables) and objectives (i.e., impact). UNHCR is very familiar with the concept of line-item object of expenditure budgets as this is the format used for both project and administrative budgets. Other types of budgeting systems, sometimes called programme, results-based, performance or functional budgeting systems, which can generically be called performance budgets and which involve the costing of objectives, as opposed to detailed objects of expenditure are less familiar as they have not been used within UNHCR.

The principal feature of performance budgeting is that the emphasis is on the outputs to be produced (e.g. reduce mortality and morbidity rates to non-emergency levels, full documentation of returnees, etc.) as opposed to an emphasis on inputs (bags of cement, salary costs, hospital beds, etc.). When a budget is formulated in output terms the legislative focus of budgetary control is shifted away from the budgeting and controlling of specific budget lines (inputs) to ensuring that the outputs (results) are delivered according to their performance dimensions (quantity, quality and timeliness) within the agreed overall price. Performance-oriented budgets thus focus more on results to be achieved, and less on how the money is to be spent within the overall allocation. Performance-oriented budgeting is premised on enhanced responsibility and accountability of programme managers for their activities and consequential delivery of results. It makes the programme manager responsible and accountable for his or her outputs while making the task of managing programmes more interesting and challenging by allowing for innovation. While budgets will not be scrutinized in the approval process at the input (line-item level), actual expenditure detail will be collected at that level and will be summarized in order that total actual costs can be compared with total budgeted cost. Managers will remain responsible and accountable for ensuring a cost effective mix of inputs.

A simple example of a performance budget for an education activity within a UNHCR programme using the categorizations from the proposed new programme and budget structures is shown in the table below:

Level	Hierarchy of Objective	Budgetary Requirement
Programme: Preparation for Solutions for Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia	Meet basic needs of 72,500 refugees in 1998 while awaiting a durable solution	\$4,500,000
Sector: Community Service and Education	Deliver Basic educational services to the 72,500 refugees in Fugnido, Bonga, Dimma and Shirkole settlements	\$400,000 (8.8 per cent of total programme)
Output Category: Primary Education	Ensure Primary Education is available for the 9,000 6-12 year olds	\$90,000 (22.5 per cent of total sector)
Output: Teacher recruitment and training	Recruit and Train 40 new teachers by May 1998	\$10,000

Output: School construction, maintenance and repair	Build and maintain two new 10 classroom buildings by August 1998 as well as maintain existing primary education infrastructure	\$40,000
Output: Primary Education Programme administration	Ensure effective primary education programme administration by maintaining employment of three locally-hired programme administrators and a team of 20 refugee volunteer administrators	\$15,000
Output: Supplies and materials	Ensure all classes and students have basic education supplies including textbooks, paper, pencils and sports and recreational equipment as of March 1998	\$25,000

It should be noted that behind a performance budget of this type the detailed costing of inputs would normally still be required, especially for new activities. Such detailed information involving costing of line-items would not however normally be scrutinized or controlled at Headquarters. For activities which are carried on over a series of years or for which relevant historical costing information for comparable activities is available, the need for a line-item budget is less important as rigorous analysis of expenditure patterns provide a basis for determining the budgetary requirements necessary to achieve objectives. As part of the new budgeting system, a series of standard budget estimation guidelines and budgeting parameters will be established in order to facilitate budgeting at a higher level, establish the flexibility and limitations within which managers can reallocate, and streamline the approval process.

The primary difference between a line-item budget and a performance budget is shown in the following table:

Type of Budget	Area of Focus
Line-Item Budget	Control of Inputs
Performance Budgets	Control of Outputs

The transition to performance budgeting has a number of important implications for how UNHCR approaches the control of its operations. As indicated in the chart above, performance budgeting changes the area of focus of managers away from control of inputs and activities to control of outputs in order to achieve desired impact. While effort will still, of course, be required in the design process to establish the detailed inputs required to achieve desired results, greater emphasis will be given to defining the hierarchy of objectives, establishing performance indicators and standards, and scheduling of activities. Once implementation has begun, variance analysis not just of budget versus actuals but also deviations from targets in terms of quality and timeliness of delivery will be an integral component of programme and project reporting.