

Integrated Planning Process

Regional Strategic Planning Guide



*Targeting the vulnerable through
increased access &
equitable service delivery*

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International Services: Regional Strategic Planning Guide

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ACRONYM LIST

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARC	American National Red Cross
CAS	Cooperation Assistance Strategy
DIP	Detailed Implementation Plan
EOA	Environmental and Organizational Assessment
ISD	International Services Department
LOP	Life of Program
MCUA	Multiple Criteria Utility Assessment
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NHQ	National Headquarters
NIRC	Needs, Interest, Resources, and Capacities
NS	National Society
OD	Organizational Development
ONS	Operating National Society
PDP	Performance Development Plan
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PNS	Participating National Society
PRA	Participatory Rural Assessment
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RCRC	Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
RF	Results Framework
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SWOT	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TS	Technical Solutions
UNAIDS	United Nations (agency on) AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

Document Purpose: The regional strategic planning guide provides direction to ARC field and HQ teams in the development of regional strategic plans. A companion document, “Country Annual Planning Guide” provides guidance for the development of annual plans, which operationalize the strategic plan. The guide is complemented by a training package which includes explanatory slides, handouts, and tools.

Author: Strategic planning, in general, is to be carried out by ARC field personnel as determined by ARC management. Regional management, both field and NHQ, will oversee the planning process and will be assisted by Program Officers and assigned Technical Solutions (TS) personnel.

Benefits: The strategic plan identifies opportunities and develops goals and objectives that can be achieved over a three year period. It provides a road map and clearly communicates ARC interests and direction in a given region or country. The annual plan is an internal document which clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of various ARC staff in implementing the strategic plan on an annual basis.

Output: Each region, as determined by International Programs Management, will produce a Strategic Plan following the template provided. In select instances, targeted countries, will also be expected to complete a Strategic Plan. All countries completing a country strategic plan or participating in a regional strategic plan will also complete a country annual plan following the template provided.

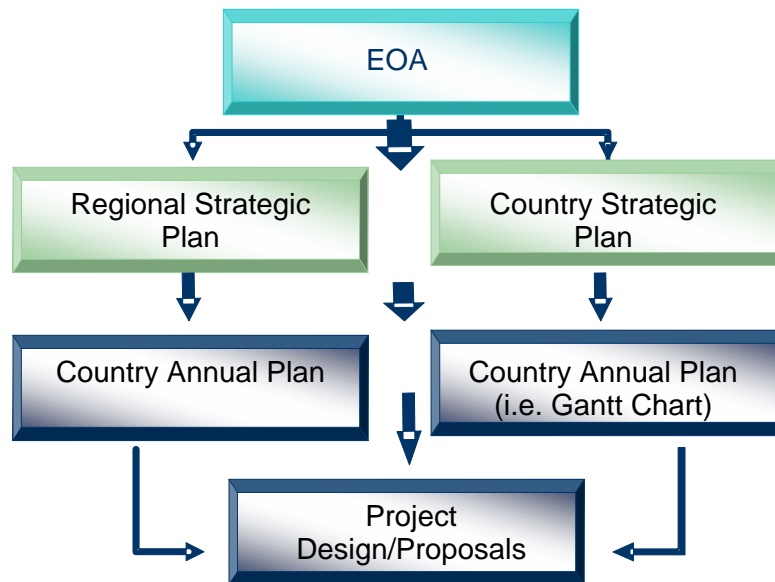
Regional Strategic Plan:

1. Executive Summary
2. Regional Strategy Statement
3. ARC Regional History & Profile
4. Regional Problems & Trends
5. Strategic Issues and Strategies
6. Goals and Objectives
7. Timeline
8. Monitoring & Evaluation
9. Resources:
 - a. Revenue Estimates
 - b. Expense Estimates

Country Annual Plan:

1. Regional Strategic Direction
2. Country Strategy Statement
3. Strategic Priorities Summary
4. Core Services
5. Gantt Chart: Country Goals, Objectives & Critical Activities
6. Monitoring and Evaluation
7. Challenges
8. Table of Organization
9. Financial Plan: Income & Expenses Summary
10. Appendices:
 - a. Detailed Budget

1. OVERVIEW OF THE INTEGRATED PLANNING PROCESS (IPP)



IPP facilitates the development of global, regional, and country-level initiatives designed to increase access to quality and equitable services, by strengthening the Red Cross Movement service delivery system.

The planning process has three primary components:

1. ***EOA: Environmental & Organizational Assessment.*** A broad assessment tool designed to determine the value-added of ARC involvement by examining the needs, interests, resources, and capacities within a targeted country.
 - i. **Geographical Targets:** To be determined by regional (field and NHQ) and IRD senior management together based on previous positive geographical experience and perceptions of needs, interests, resources, and capacity.
 - ii. **Timing:** EOAs are developed every three years and updated annually. EOAs can be done at any time, but should follow a regular schedule so as to better facilitate other components of the IPP. EOAs should be completed or updated between June and August each year.
 - iii. **Responsibility:** Where ARC has a presence, ARC field personnel as determined by ARC regional management will complete the EOAs with support provided by the Regional Program Officer. For non-presence countries, ARC Program Officers will complete the EOAs. Technical personnel can assist the regional teams.

2. ***Regional Strategic Planning:*** A road map for a targeted region (and in some cases, countries) that articulates ARC's comparative advantage in a region. The plan specifies goals and objectives that can be pursued over a three-year

period that will have a positive impact on the broader strategic goals of the American Red Cross.

- i. **Geographical Targets:** To be determined by regional (field and NHQ) and International Programs senior management together based on previous positive geographical experience coupled with EOA findings and recommendations. The target will include the specific countries for a given region.
 - ii. **Timing:** Regional Strategic Plans are to be created or updated every three years and should be completed between September and November. This will facilitate the development of country annual plans and budgets for the following fiscal year.
 - iii. **Responsibilities:** Developed by ARC field personnel as determined by International Programs senior management with participation from Regional Directors, Program Officers, and assigned Technical Solutions personnel.

 - b. ***Country Annual Planning:*** The operationalization of the Regional Strategic Plan. Updated annually, the country plan specifies who will do what and when. It also demonstrates the link to the broader regional strategic direction.
 - i. **Geographical Targets:** Each country specifically identified by the Regional Strategic Plan.
 - ii. **Timing:** Prepared/updated annually between February and May during the budgeting process. Implementation follows the ARC fiscal year and will incorporate staff performance development plans.
 - iii. **Responsibilities:** Carried out by ARC field personnel whose country has participated in a regional strategic planning process. Country annual plans are to be completed in the field with input from Regional Program Officers.
3. ***Project Design & Proposal Writing:*** Technical guidance designed to help field and NHQ teams produce quality projects at both the country and regional levels. The process helps staff more easily meet and exceed donor requirements and can contribute to resource development.
- i. **Geographical Targets:** The majority of opportunities will be pursued within countries identified by the EOA and Regional Strategic Planning Process.
 - ii. **Timing:** Varies and will depend on donor requirements.
 - iii. **Responsibilities:** Generally carried out by teams consisting of Regional field and HQ personnel together with TS; Inputs are also provided by support units i.e. Business Operations, Finance, Risk, Legal etc.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING INTRODUCTION

Strategic planning is a management tool to aid ARC in sharpening its focus and effort in a given region or country. With a clear focus, resources can be allocated and utilized more effectively and efficiently.

Strategic planning provides an organization with a road map for three to five years and enables an organization to:

- Examine and analyze the environment in which they operate
- Examine and analyze trends that affect the way business is carried out
- Identify issues that must be addressed in order for the work of the organization to be carried out successfully
- Identify ways to address those issues

For a strategic plan to be successful, an implementation plan specifying the roles and responsibilities of staff must also be developed. An implementation or country annual plan will:

- Identify priorities to be addressed in the upcoming fiscal year
- Provide a clear understanding of what needs to be done, when, and by whom (and can thus tie in with individual performance plans)
- Identify resource requirements and their sources
- Identify how progress will be monitored and communicated

Typical Strategic Planning Processes

Strategic Planning can be facilitated in a variety of ways, over short or long time spans, at little or significant cost to the organization. The methods used, time taken, and resources expended will depend on a variety of factors including:

- Financial resources and time available
- Size of the gap in planning documents and other tools providing direction for a given country or region
- Level of flux currently in a given country or region
- Level of change predicted for the future
- Stability of the parent organization (ARC NHQ)
- Stability of implementing partner(s)
- Level of interest in a given region by priority stakeholders, especially the ONS and key donors

The above factors notwithstanding, a typical strategic planning process will pursue the following steps (but not necessarily in this order):

- Agreeing on a process
- Clarifying organizational mandates

What is strategic planning?

“...a systematic process through which an organization agrees on—and builds commitment among key stakeholders to—priorities which are essential to its mission and responsive to the operating environment.” (Allison, 1997:1)

“... a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it” (Bryson, 1995:x)

- Understanding stakeholders
- Assessing the environment (SWOT):
 - External environment: opportunities and threats (including trends, resources, competitors, collaborators)
 - Internal environment: strength and weaknesses (including internal resources, current strategies, past performance)
- Establishing a strategic direction for the future
- Establishing core values
- Identifying strategic issues
- Adopting a plan
- Developing an implementation plan
- Developing a Strategic Plan benchmarks (like an M&E plan)

Strategic Planning within ARC and International Programs

International Programs operates as a business unit within a department and is part of a larger organization. Planning, both strategic and business, occur at multiple levels within the department and the organization as a whole. Given these additional levels, strategic planning within targeted IRD regions and countries can be modified to account for various planning steps that will already have been completed by the organization. Specifically, International Programs regional strategic planning can eliminate the following steps:

- Clarifying organizational mandates
- Establishing a mission
- Establishing core values

Other steps will already have been wholly or partially completed during the environmental & organizational assess (EOA) process. These include:

- Understanding stakeholders
- Assessing the environment: external opportunities and threats (needs, interests, resources); and, internal strengths and weaknesses (partially examined through capacity). These may, however, need to be updated.
- Identifying strategic issues (NIRC with core competencies and ONS)

Strategic Planning within the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Programs Regional Strategic and Country Annual Planning processes are designed to complement, draw from, and feed into the Federation and National Society-supported Cooperation Agreement Strategy; the Federation equivalent to country level planning. The CAS process, products, and even the acronym have gone through many changes over the years. Today, CAS is a mechanism by which National Societies and the partners that support them organize their resources to achieve priority or shared goals.

What is CAS? - Cooperation Agreement Strategy

- A planning process and framework for establishing and sustaining long-term partnership (both within and external to the Movement) in a given country
- A way of coordinating and integrating plans of various Movement actors and their partners in a given country
- A mechanism for joint planning and coordination
- CAS assumes target country national societies and their RCRC partners already have strategic and related plans in place; CAS is a mechanism for integrating those plans

For those with a Federation-issued user ID and password, additional information can be found at <https://fednet.ifrc.org> – go to *Movement Cooperation* site on Fednet.

“Guidelines for facilitating a Cooperation Agreement Strategy”
May 2003.

A country-level CAS will not replace an International Programs country annual plan or regional strategic plan. Rather, International Programs will need this level of detail, specifying its SWOT, goals, objectives, and primary interests in order to participate meaningfully in the CAS.

CAS General Action Steps

Under the lead of the ONS and coordinated by the Federation:

- Develop timetable and plan of action for CAS process
- Ensure a good NS strategic plan exists
- Review the National Context (environmental assessment)
- Determine and ensure good PNS & ICRC strategic objectives and support for the NS
- Ensure coherence and coordination of all support to NS
- Build the strategic vision of the CAS
- Compile all information into CAS document
- Approval of CAS document
- Monitoring and review of CAS

The National Society of the target country is responsible for developing the timetable and plan of action for the CAS; the Federation is responsible for coordinating the process, while all current and potential Movement partners are supposed to contribute to the process as it moves forward.

The CAS process takes up to 10 months to complete following the general action steps described in the box to the left. The process

results in a 10 – 20 page document that specifies how Movement partners will work together to meet or complement objectives specified in a National Society's strategic plan over a three year period. The CAS does not necessarily follow the same schedule in each country. For International Programs staff facilitating their own strategic or annual plan, the CAS process can give you insight into the priorities of the Movement partners, the needs of the country as viewed through the Movement lens, and will provide you with an outlet to coordinate your own priorities with that of your Movement partners.

The quality and utilization of the CAS varies from country to country. These will be strongest in countries where Federation maintains a large presence. In recent years, National Societies have begun facilitating their own CAS process with limited input from the Federation. International Programs staff should inquire about such plans in their countries of concern and should encourage the CAS development (including participating in it) as their own strategic planning process is getting underway. The ARC Regional Strategic Plan can be used to represent ARC's interests and strategies during the CAS processes and help ensure coordinated approaches among Movement partners in a given country.

Who Plans within International Programs?

Strategic planning is most appropriate for medium-sized, homogenous sub-regions. Although they are referred to as *regions* in this guide, geographically, we are really referring to sub-regions. For example, a strategic plan for all of Africa would likely be very generic and would not provide specific enough guidance to the various sub-regions within the continent. Strategic plans for East Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa would be more useful. Regional management could then roll them up into one summary planning document for marketing or other purposes. The regional strategic planning process would be useful for Central Asia, but not Europe, Central Asia, Middle

East (EuCAME) as a whole. Throughout this guide, think of sub-regions when the term region is used.

Strategic planning will not be appropriate for every region or country. This will be negotiated between the field and NHQ based, in part, on the results of the EOAs. In general, all ARC regional delegations with more than one year of project funding will develop a strategic plan for agreed upon core countries (country selection will be based on EOA recommendations concerning needs, interests, resources, and capacity). Individual countries that are not part of a larger ARC regional delegation, that have more than one year of project funding available and that have identified significant opportunity through the EOA process, will also develop a strategic plan. Countries with considerable public resources that represent an outlier from other countries within a regional delegation or feel the need for additional direction (even though they may be part of a regional delegation) should also pursue strategic planning. Strategic Planning is not recommended for country delegations that have only one externally funded grant, no public monies, and are not intending to expand the government portfolio. The information identified through the EOA process should provide enough direction for country delegations fitting this profile. Strategic planning, depending on ARC field presence, will be field driven and, in general, will include field management, International Programs Program Officer, TS staff as appropriate, and NHQ regional management; other stakeholders are included, and are discussed in greater detail below.

For more guidance about core countries or the approval process, please refer to:

1. International Programs Business Development Manager for the Country Selection Matrix for additional guidance on how to identify countries within a region for strategic planning).
2. IP4 policies and procedures document for additional details on who plans and how plans are approved.

Who participates in the International Programs Regional Strategic Planning Process?

In general, strategic planning will be facilitated by a core planning team with input and participation from external stakeholders. The actual strategic planning session is attended primarily by the core team. Input from other stakeholders is gathered before and after the primary strategic planning sessions, so as to provide sufficient information (or point to the need for additional information) for the core team to use their time effectively, as well as in private. Potential stakeholders and participants are suggested below.

Core Planning Team Member Suggestions:

- ARC Regional or Country Management (HOD, HORD)
- ARC Project Delegates
- ARC National Staff
- NHQ Program Officer
- TS
- Other International Programs management as warranted

External Stakeholder Participation Suggestions:

- National Society Management (with planning or programmatic responsibility)

- Key Program Staff
- Federation Leadership (Regional Planning & Coordination person if available, or those facilitating CAS process)
- PNS
- ICRC Leadership

Donor Stakeholder Suggestions:

(Will depend on those supporting the region in question and the relationship to Red Cross).

- USAID Mission – Programmatic Staff
- AID/Washington: OFDA, FFP
- USDA
- World Bank
- UN Organizations: UNICEF, WHO

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders during Strategic Planning

Core team members and attendees at the Regional Strategic Planning meetings should be stakeholders involved in RCRC programmatic or organizational work who will be able to participate in a meaningful way. There should be a good mix of representation including country national staff and delegates, regional staff, ARC national headquarters staff, the National Society, the Federation, or ICRC, as appropriate. It is important that national ARC staff are aware that their full participation is needed and welcomed. Sometimes the invitation alone does not empower participants to speak up on substantive issues raised during the workshop—and it is important that they are made comfortable in doing so.

Delegations may find it helpful to divide their strategic planning team into different groups of stakeholders to determine how best to proceed with developing and reviewing a strategic plan for their delegation.

Core Team: The Core team would be responsible for the initial draft and in finalizing the deliverables of the strategic planning workshop or meeting. This is likely the same group that produced the EOA. If the delegation is under the umbrella of the Federation or ICRC, a Federation or ICRC Representative could be part of the team as well.

Donor Team: During the EOA process, the core team should have identified some key donors with available or potential funds to implement program recommendations. Once the strategic plan's outline is completed, it may be useful to call donor meetings to introduce the new strategic direction before implementing the plan.

If no funding opportunities emerge during the donor meetings, the team must decide how important the activity is to the delegation. If it is significantly important, they may need to adjust their organizational development objectives to reflect greater time spent on resource acquisition. If the team feels the activity is not that critical to meeting the needs or interests of the region, country, or ONS, then the team may decide to divest the strategic objective or strategy before too much time has been spent developing it.

Partnership/Coordination Team: There is a similar rationale for the

partnership/coordination team. During the EOA process, the core team should have identified areas where partnership and/or coordination may be required to implement certain strategies. Once the first cut has been made at prioritizing the EOA recommendations it will be helpful to do the same with potential partners. This allows you to determine if there is interest and capacity on the part of the potential partner before the team develops that area more fully.

Beneficiary Team: A challenging element to planning is getting participatory feedback from beneficiaries early enough that demand for ARC/ONS services can be determined without raising expectations. A middle-ground solution may be to conduct a non-technical discussion of core strategies that are being proposed with key community leaders or representatives of the local Ministry of Health (e.g., the District Health Officer). These discussions should take place in the proposed project's geographic areas of the country.

General Steps International Programs Regional Strategic Planning Teams will pursue:

Each step listed below is described in detail within this guide.

- Agreeing on a process (given financial resources and time available); options include: a.) 1 day workshop; b.) 3 day workshop; c. four 2-3 hour meetings spread out over a month
- Preparing for the Process
- Assessing the Environment
 - Understanding Stakeholders (from EOA)
 - SWOT (from EOA)
 - Identifying Strategic Issues
- Developing Regional Strategy Statements
 - Reviewing and understanding ARC Mission and strategic direction
 - Reviewing and understanding International Programs vision and strategic direction
 - Establishing regional strategy statement
- Developing Strategies
 - Finalizing strategic issues
 - Identifying strategies
 - Developing corresponding goals and objectives
- Writing the Strategic Plan
 - Developing Strategic Plan benchmarks (like M&E plan)
 - Developing a budget
- Developing an annual plan (described in the second half of the guide)

Strategic Planning Methods & Tools

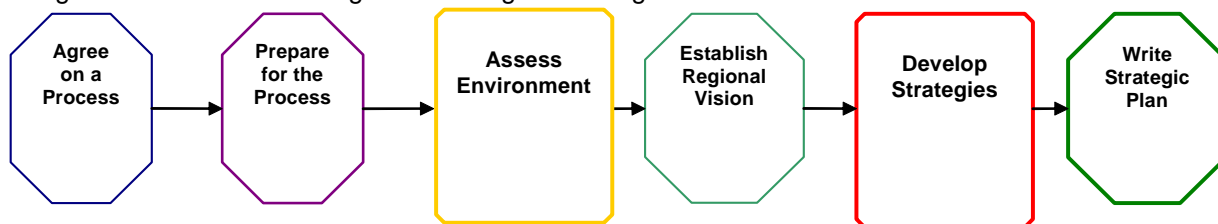
Methods

- Secondary data review
- Key informant interviews (as needed)
- Workshops/Meetings
- Group Discussion

Tools

- Federation, NS, ARC, other technical service provider Planning Documents
- ARC ISD P4: Planning Process, Policies & Procedures document
- Planning Profile Questionnaire
- Strategic Plan Retreat Options
- Strategic Plan Element examples (strategy statements, goals, objectives, strategic issues, strategies, etc.)
- Stakeholder analysis worksheets
- SWOT identification analysis tools
- Now and Future Tool
- Strategic Plan Template & Gantt Chart
- Sample Regional Strategic Plan

Diagram of International Programs Strategic Planning Process



3. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS GUIDANCE & TOOLS

The strategic plan identifies opportunities and develops goals and objectives that can be achieved over a three year period. The following section outlines the process and describes tools that will help teams accomplish this regardless of the workshop option chosen (e.g., one day workshop, three day workshop, or series of meetings).

Integrated Planning Process: How do the EOAs fit into the Regional Strategic Planning Process?

Much of what was developed during the EOA stage can and should be used in the strategic planning process. The EOA process has been about expansive, exploratory thinking. The strategic planning team will now go through a process whereby they will weigh all the data and recommendations before them and reach a consensus on the core business of ARC in the target region over the subsequent three year period. The following table demonstrates how the various EOA elements can be used to develop each strategic plan section.

From EOA	Answers the Question	Used to Develop?
Target Groups	Who?	Program Strategic Objectives
Target Geographic Area	Where? (may overlap with Who)	
Main Problems and their Causes for Target Groups/Geographic Area	What?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Indicators • Country Overview • Trends • ONS Overview • ARC Sector Strategies 	Why? (the intersection of needs, interests, resources, and capacities)	Provides the narrative explanation (justification) for final selection of Program Strategic Objectives
Broad sectoral or multi-sectoral strategies required to address problems and their causes for target groups	How?	Strategies to achieve Program Strategic Objectives
Key Partnerships that may be needed	With Whom?	Strategies to achieve Program Strategic Objectives
Key Resources that may be available to implement interventions in the above areas of interest	How?	Budget: Income Targets

Regional Strategic Planning Process Guidance

The following tables illustrate the key activities within each step of the strategic planning process along with tools and expected outputs.

Agree on a Process

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Tools</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Review options		Schedule for process elements
Select option		
Draft Schedule		

Prepare for the Process

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Tools or Action Step</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Identify core team		List of core team and responsibilities
Identify other participants		
Invite participants		
Confirm participants		Participant list
Confirm schedule		Itinerary & Detailed schedule for meeting

Prepare for the Process – Technical Matters

Update and Distribute EOAs		
Distribute Planning Profile Questionnaire	Planning Profile Questionnaire	
Obtain relevant planning documents (i.e. NS Strategic plans, CASs, International Programs Business Plan, USAID regional strategy, Mission Strategic Plan, etc.)		
Receive and summarize Planning Profile questionnaires	see Planning Profile handout and facilitator guidance	Planning Profile Summary
Review and compile ARC performance data for each country in the region		
Conduct stakeholder meetings as necessary	see Stakeholder Outreach tools	

Prepare for the Process - Administrative

Distribute technical materials to participants		
Arrange meeting space (and any other logistics, coffee break, per diem, etc.)		
Arrange for necessary technical equipment (LCD, flipcharts, markers, access to photocopier, laptop, etc.)		
Confirm roles and responsibilities of core team (e.g. facilitator, note-taker,		

etc.)		
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Assess the Environment

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Tools or Action Steps</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Review ARC past performance in region or country	ARC Evaluations Audit Reports Annual/Quarterly Reports Marketing Materials	1-3 page summary of ARC performance highlighting operational results (e.g. #'s reached, health impact, resources utilized etc.
Identify internal strengths & weaknesses	Internal Strengths Worksheet Internal Weaknesses Worksheet	Bulleted list of internal strengths Bulleted list of internal weaknesses
Identify external opportunities & threats	External Opportunities Worksheets External Threats Worksheets (& Key Needs) EOA	Bulleted list of external opportunities Bulleted list of external threats & Key Needs
Analyze SWOT	SWOT Analysis Option 1 SWOT Analysis Option 2	
Identify priority stakeholders & opinions on SWOT ¹	Stakeholder Key Questions Worksheet	1-3 page matrix summarizing stakeholder opinions
Identify key issues (both programmatic and organizational)	Priority Discussion, SWOT Grid	Master list of key issues (8 – 12)

Establish Regional Strategic Direction

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Tools or Action Step</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Review ARC Mission, ISD Vision		
Review EOA, SWOT, Strategic Issues		
Establish regional strategic direction	Answer Vision Questions “Now & Future” Tool Vision Examples	Strategic Direction Statement
Review ARC values and RC/RC Fundamental Principles		
Develop additional values if warranted/wanted	Values Statements Values Examples	Additional values statements if warranted
Adopt 5 year goals	Goal Examples	List of 5 year goals (3-5)

Develop Strategies

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Tools or Action Step</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Agree upon strategic priorities	Review master list of key issues; build consensus and identify top 4 - 8	List of 4 – 8 strategic priority areas
Identify and frame strategic issues	Review above list; discuss issue areas and frame as a question	List of key strategic issues
Identify strategies to address issues	Brainstorm on ways to address issues	List of 1 – 4 key strategies to address each issue

¹ If stakeholder analysis is conducted after the SWOT, the SWOT should be updated using the stakeholder information.

	See examples	
Develop corresponding goals & objectives	Turn strategic issues into goal statements Turn strategies into objective statements Identify critical activities to address objectives	For each strategic issue, list: Goal(s) Objectives Critical Activities

Write the Strategic Plan

Key Activities	Tools	Outputs
Summarize above outputs following Strategic Planning Template	Strategic Planning Template Strategic Plan Example	ARC Mission Statement ARC Values Regional Values Regional Strategy Statement ARC Regional History & Profile Strategic Issues & Strategies Goals & Objectives Appendices: Summarize SWOT and Stakeholder Opinions
Develop key indicators for goals and objectives	Strategic Plan M&E Guidance M&E Examples	
Develop 3 yr. Gantt Chart highlighting timeframe for each objective and lead person (or position in a delegation) responsible for implantation	Gantt Chart Guidance Gantt Chart Example	Completed Gantt Chart
Develop summary benchmarks for key indicators (when, who, how etc.)		Completed M&E template
Develop Budget: Expenditures – 3 yrs Income – 3 Yrs	Income estimates based, in part on opportunities identified and current income sources Expenditure estimates based on current FY baseline + growth expectations	Completed budget (income & expenses)

Implement the Strategic Plan

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Tools</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Obtain approval for Strategic Plan		
Develop Country Annual Plan	See Country Annual Plan Guide	
Begin implementation of annual plan		
Begin Strategic Plan benchmarks		

4. PREPARING FOR AND SELECTING A STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

A range of time and money can be spent on strategic planning. It is best if the teams facilitating and developing a plan decide for themselves the level of resources allocated to this activity. While all International Programs teams engaging in strategic planning must produce the same output, i.e. a plan following the template provided, they can choose from at least three options regarding the process to achieve this output.

Planning teams can change the order of activities as they see fit, e.g. some teams prefer to develop a strategic direction first and then determine issues facing them based on that strategy statement. Others will prefer to develop the strategic direction only after opportunities, threats, stakeholder opinions, and clients' needs have been thoroughly examined. There is somewhat subjective order and it should depend on the needs and interests of the planning team.

The options are detailed in tables on the following pages. Below is a comparative snapshot of each option highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, and other considerations. Section 3 will detail the various methods and tools listed in the tables below. Tools and examples can also be found on the accompanying CD as well as in the 'Training' and 'Handouts' sections of this guide.

Regional Strategic Planning Workshop Options

Strategic Planning Options	Time Commitment	Group Size	Cost	Preparation	Participant Diversity	Facilitator Skills	Other Comments
Option 1 – 1 Day Workshop	1 Day for workshop plus 1 to 5 days preparation, plus 1 to 2 days post workshop for lead organizer to complete; May require follow-up meeting with core group to finalize outputs	Small 4-8	Moderate \$100 - \$1,200 (depends on NHQ travel costs & venue costs)	Moderate to High: *EOA Review *Stakeholder Mtgs/data gathering *Planning Profile (1-5 days)	Moderate Primarily ARC Country and National Staff; some external possible	Good time management; Facilitator should be skilled in strategic planning; Knowledge of region highly beneficial	Ideal for plans that need to be updated; participants need good knowledge of region and stakeholders
Option 2 – 3 Day Workshop	3 days plus 1 to 2 days preparation. and 1 day to for lead organizer to summarize and finalize outputs	Moderate can vary over 3 days 10 – 14	Moderate to High \$300 - \$8,000 (depends on venue & travel costs)	Low to Moderate Stakeholder Data collection if needed Planning Profile optional	High Local, Regional and External	Allows for multiple facilitators of varying skill and experience or skilled external facilitator	Ideal for large regions, or countries and persons new to strategic planning, or for areas where there has been considerable change
Option 3 – Series of	Series of meetings over one-month	Small 4-6 (particip	Minimal	Low to Moderate; prep work can	Moderate - High Local,	Requires mtg moderator –	Ideal for updating country plan;

Meetings	period; + 3 days preparation and work in-between and considerable post meeting work	ants can vary by meeting)		be done prior to each meeting	regional & external in different meetings	e.g. HORD or Manager	local stakeholders could be invited to specific meetings
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Option 1: 1-Day Workshop

Following are proposed topics and the, time consideration. Planning teams will need to build in breaks according to participants needs and local customs.

Proposed Topic	Methods & Tools	Output	Timeframe
ARC Past Performance and EOA Data Planning profile and staff readiness assessment	Summarized, presented and reviewed prior to session See "Planning Profile" tool; it should be completed and analyzed prior to session		
Planning Profile: Review barriers and issues	Group discussion and prioritization See guidance on analyzing responses on page one of "Planning Profile, facilitator instructions"		45 minutes
<i>Assess the Environment</i>			
Internal Strengths & Weaknesses	Group Brainstorming See SWOT Worksheets	Bulleated list of S,W	45 minutes
External Opportunities and threats including Stakeholder opinions	Group Brainstorming See SWOT Worksheets	Bulleated list of O,T	1 hour
Discuss current services & future needs of clients & beneficiaries	Group Brainstorming		30 minutes
Identify key issues	Group Discussion and consensus See SWOT Analysis Tool	List of key, priority issues	1 hour
<i>Develop Regional Strategy Statement</i>			
Develop strategy statement components:	Group Discussion and consensus Assign one member to pull components together into three different statements for group to vote on later See Strategy Statement examples	Strategy Statement Services Beneficiaries Values 5 yr. Goals	30 – 60 minutes
<i>Develop Strategies</i>			
Identify strategies to address issues and key activities	Break up into small groups according to expertise and topic area of issues identified See "Strategy Development Handouts", Options 1 and 2	List of strategies and key activities	1 ½ hours
Identify timeframe for addressing key strategies and activities; list potential benchmark indicators	Break up into small groups according to expertise and topic area of issues identified	Timeframe and draft list of indicators	1 hour

Considerations for selection option 1 – one-day workshop:

- Good facilitator required (to accomplish all outputs in 8 hours or less)
- Much work done in pre-planning stage (EOA review, stakeholder meetings/data, planning profile etc.)
- Group size should be small (4-8 persons). External stakeholder opinions sought before and after planning session
- Ideal for country planning where previous plans exist and need updating
- Will require 5 – 10 hours post meeting for the lead facilitator to write up outputs, seek stakeholder opinions and complete Strategic Plan template
- Draft will be distributed to core planning team; brief follow-up meeting may be needed
- Budget Estimate: \$100 - \$1,200 (assumes limited ARC NHQ participation; most participants are local; budget covers meeting room, refreshments, flipchart paper etc.)

Option 2: 3-Day Workshop

Proposed Topic	Methods	Output	Timeframe
Agenda, Roles & Responsibilities	Group Review and Discussion	Agreement on Agenda; roles of participants: e.g. note taker, primary writer of plan, etc.	30 minutes
Assess the Environment			
Review ARC Past Performance and EOA Data	Group Discussion	Bulleted list of ARC success and challenges List of key needs and challenges as identified in the EOA	1 Hour
Identify Strengths and Weaknesses (of ARC and ONS) <i>Could include external stakeholders</i>	Group Discussion or Small Groups Achieve Group Consensus	Brief bulleted list of strengths and weaknesses	75 minutes
Identify Opportunities and threats (for both ARC and ONS) <i>Could include external stakeholders</i>	Group Discussion or Small Groups Achieve Group Consensus	Brief bulleted list of opportunities & threats	75 minutes
Analyze SWOT	Small Group Work Report Back – Plenary	SWOT Analysis Grid and/or list of emerging issues	1 hour
Stakeholder Analysis & Opinion of SWOT <i>Could include external stakeholders</i>	Group Discussion	Revised SWOT as appropriate	45 minutes

Preliminary identification of issues	Group discussion using SWOT analysis as guide	List of key issues	1 hour
Day one wrap up	Facilitator reviews Day One outputs & sets up for Day 2		15 – 30 minutes
Day Two – Review of Day's agenda	Facilitator reviews Day Two Objectives and Activities		15 minutes
Proposed Topic	Methods	Output	Timeframe
Establish Master List of Key Issues	Group Discussion (drawing on SWOT and EOA data)	Final list of key issues	30 – 60 minutes
Develop Regional Strategy Statement			
Develop Strategy Statement components	Group completes Now and Then Worksheets individually and then discusses Facilitator achieves consensus Group Values Discussion as Warranted Group Discussion of 5 year Goals	Regional Strategy Statement: Direction Services Beneficiaries Values 5 year Goals	60 - 75 minutes
Develop Strategies			
Develop Strategies	Group Work (split up into groups; group issues according to topic/core competency) Groups to develop core strategies & critical activities to address issues Report Back in Plenary Session Facilitator achieves consensus on key strategies	List of Core Strategies per each issue area	2 Hours
Develop Objectives and Critical Activities	Group Work (same groups as previous); Groups develop objectives (out of strategies) and continue critical activity development Report Back in Plenary Session Facilitator achieves consensus on Objectives and Critical Activities	List of Objectives and Critical Activities per each Strategic Issue identified	2 Hours
Day Two wrap up	Facilitator reviews Day Two outputs & sets up for Day Three		15 minutes
Day Three – Review of Day's Agenda	Facilitator reviews Day three objectives and activities		15 minutes
Writing Strategic Plan			
Budgeting: Expenses	Ops Support of Finance Delegate to present Baseline budget (current FY; major categories only) For each category, given strategic objectives and planned critical activities, map out budgets for next three fiscal years)	Draft 3 year field budget	1 ½ hours
Budgeting: Income	Group Discussion of income targets necessary given planned expenses; map out income estimates per	Draft Income budget for next three fiscal years	1 ½ hours

	donor identified including core income		
Develop key indicators	Group Work (same groups as previous day) develops indicators per each objective; also considers global indicators that could be used (e.g. MDGs) Report back in Plenary Session Facilitator achieves consensus on indicators	List of indicators per each objective	75 minutes
Identify timeframe for addressing each issue	Group work or Group Discussion in Plenary Session Group determines: length of time needed to address each objective, when it could start, when completed, lead person, and implementers	Draft Gantt Chart	1 hour
Day Three Wrap-Up	Group Review of all outputs Discuss next steps including who will be doing what and by when	Follow-Up Action plan	45 minutes

Considerations for option 2, three-day workshop:

- Requires time to plan and organize
- Facilitation can be done by multiple persons over the 3 day period
- Can better accommodate out-of-country stakeholders (e.g. Federation, ARC NHQ etc.)
- In-country stakeholders & partners may be able to commit to one day or portions of the agenda
- Group size can vary over the three days; core planning team = 4-6, with other participants and stakeholders ~6-8; (Total 10 – 14)
- Budget Estimate: From \$300 (refreshments, room and supplies only), up to \$8,000 (basic items plus int'l airfare, local airfare, hotel accommodations, per diem etc.); costs can be reduced by planning the 3-day workshop during other trips to the region.

Option 3: Series of Individual Meetings

- (i.e. four, 2-3 hour meetings over 1 month period)

Proposed Topic	Methods	Output	Timeframe
Pre-Meeting Work: a) Planning Profile & Staff Readiness Assessment b) EOA c) ARC past performance d) Donor Meetings (can be done pre-meeting One or Two; and summarize donor responses from other meetings throughout the year)	a) Staff and Participants individually complete worksheets via hardcopy or email b) participants review c) participants review	a) Planning Team lead collects and summarizes responses	a) Distribute 1 week prior to first meeting; Takes 45 minutes to complete Takes 1-2 hours to collect and summarize depending on number of participants b) Distribute at least 1 week prior to first meeting c) Distribute at least 1 week prior to first meeting
Meeting One: a) Distribute and discuss planning profile responses (issues,	Group Discussion	Summarize (bullet points) each topic area	3 hours

<p>expectations etc.) prioritize accordingly</p> <p>b) Discuss regional/country needs, ONS needs, etc.</p> <p>c) Discuss current services and future needs of beneficiaries and ONS</p> <p>d) Begin Strategy statement discussion</p>			
Assess the Environment, Devise Strategy Statement			
<p><u>Meeting Two:</u></p> <p>a) Strengths, Weaknesses</p> <p>b) Opportunities, Threats</p> <p>c) Identify Key Issues</p> <p>d) Finalize Strategy Statement</p>	<p>Group Discussions</p> <p>Facilitate Consensus on each topic area</p>	<p>Summarize (bullet points) each topic area</p> <p>Strategy Statement</p>	<p>3 – 4 hours</p>
Proposed Topic	Methods	Output	Timeframe
Develop Strategies, Begin to Write the Plan			
<p><u>Meeting Three:</u></p> <p>a) Finalize key issues</p> <p>b) Identify strategies and key activities</p> <p>c) Identify timeframe to address</p> <p>d) Post meeting – have member write strategic goals addressing issues; rewrite key strategies as objectives</p> <p>e) Post-Meeting – have FAD develop budget baseline and draft out years budget</p> <p>f) Send around outputs from Meeting Three to participants in Meeting Four</p>	<p>Group Discussions</p> <p>Facilitate Consensus on each topic area</p>	<p>Summarize (bullet points) each topic area</p> <p>Strategic objectives</p> <p>Out years budget</p>	<p>3 hours</p>
<p><u>Meeting Four:</u></p> <p>a) Review & finalize strategic goals and objectives (discuss management implications; other activities that will be necessary etc.)</p> <p>b) Identify core indicators</p> <p>c) Finalize timeframe</p> <p>d) Present and update budgets</p> <p>e) Draft income targets</p> <p>f) Distribute to key participants</p>	<p>Group Discussions</p> <p>Facilitate Consensus on each topic area</p>	<p>Summarize (bullet points) each topic area</p>	<p>3 – 4 hours</p>
<p><u>Post Meetings:</u></p> <p>a) Team leader writes-up</p>			

SP using template and all meeting outputs b) FAD finalizes budgets c) Others assist with appendices and other sections as assigned d) Draft plan distributed internally for review and feedback; may want to schedule a 5 th meeting to discuss depending on level of discussion from preceding meetings' outputs.			
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Considerations for option 3, series of meetings:

- Works best for Country Strategic Planning and is optimal for small internal teams. Although NS and other local stakeholders can be invited to individual meetings or portions thereof, it is recommended that these meetings be held in-between strategic planning meetings (i.e., In-between strategic planning meetings with core team, schedule stakeholder meetings to discuss process and get feedback on direction to date)
- Allows questions to be raised and researched in-between meetings
- Can accommodate busy schedules
- May take some time to recap process and progress to date at each meeting
- Is not accommodating to external stakeholders or ARC NHQ staff (but their input can be garnered in other ways)
- Budget: Minimal – cost of supplies and possibly refreshments.

Planning for Strategic Planning Meetings or a Strategic Planning Retreat

Regardless of the strategic planning option chosen, some core activities prior to the meeting are necessary in order to contribute to a successful process. These are specific to the ARC planning process and do not cover best practices for successful meetings and retreats. If this type of assistance is needed (i.e. how to run a good meeting; how to be a successful facilitator; achieving consensus etc), numerous on-line resources exist or ARC staff can contact the ARC NHQ Training and Leadership Development Department for guidance.

Prior to the event, the ARC team interested in planning should:

- Select a strategic planning team leader (generally the HORD, HOD or someone responsible for planning)
- Identify a facilitator (if needed)
- Identify and confirm a core planning team
- Have all participants review an updated EOA or all country EOAs if a regional strategic plan is being developed (EOAs need to be complete enough so that needs are clearly documented and recommendations are clear)
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of the core planning team. What is expected of the core planning team members and other stakeholders? Who is responsible for

- writing the plan? Who will assist in additional research or stakeholder interviews?
- Regardless of the meeting format, assign a note-taker to capture outputs and significant discussion points
 - Confirm the expected outputs of the meeting(s) and review the methods
 - Draft a schedule for completing all the outputs including the final plan
 - Determine the venue and assign staff person to take care of all logistics
 - Determine the review process with other external stakeholders

5. WRITING THE STRATEGIC PLAN: GUIDANCE BY PLAN SECTION

Regardless of the strategic planning workshop option chosen, the output for the planning process will be the same. This following section provides general guidance as to the content of each section of the written plan. See the end of this guide for a sample regional strategic plan for the fictitious region of Andwarsia.

1. Executive Summary (One to two pages)

Provides a summary of the strategic plan and should include:

- ARC mission statement and strategic direction
- Regional strategy statement
- Strategic goals and brief description of strategies

2. ARC Mission and Regional Strategy Statement Guidance (One to two pages)

This section includes:

- ARC Mission & Strategic Direction
- ISD Strategic Goals
- Regional Strategy Statement (new)
 - Services (to be provided by ARC in region/country)
 - Services defined
 - Values (whatever the field team deems important; can include ARC values; RCRC principles and/or newly developed value statements)
 - Beneficiaries (Explain whom these services are being provided for (beneficiaries or clients) and with whom (partners who are assisting))
 - 3 year goals. Large regional/country delegations may want to brainstorm on where they want to be in 2 years; if so, list 3 year goals (bullets) here, i.e., what will success look like in 3 years' time; what will the organization look like; what problems will have been resolved?

3. ARC Regional History & Profile (One to two pages)

Summarize significant ARC accomplishments in the region/country and current structure; accomplishments (i.e., results, both quantitative and qualitative) can be listed in bullet form; this section can be written similar to a marketing piece.

4. Regional/Country Problems & Trends (One to three pages)

This section summarizes problems, challenges, trends and their causes as identified during the EOA process for the region, highlighting those that the three year strategic plan will address.

5. Strategic Issues and Strategies

This section summarizes the issues identified and the primary strategies to address the issue. Issues can be stated as a question (e.g., how can ARC do x,y,z) or they can be written as a problem statement. If the strategic issues are very numerous, they can be categorized according to topic, i.e., core competency, strategic pillar, ARC service delivery area; or they can be a combination of these types. The sample strategic plan for Andwarsia categorizes them into two broad categories, programmatic and organizational and then

according to core competency area. There are myriad ways to identify and categorize strategic issues; some examples are given below.

Integrating the International Programs strategic pillars.

Some strategic issues will be organizational (referring to the structure and organization of ARC) while the majority will be programmatic (referring to the needs in the region, matched with funding opportunities, ONS capacities, etc.) and will likely be focused around an ARC core competency (e.g. maternal child health, disaster preparedness, etc.) For each programmatic strategic issue, planning teams should try to develop a strategy for each of the International Programs strategic pillars (ONS capacity building, community mobilization, and brokering partnerships);

For example:

Strategic Issue: How can ARC reduce under-five morbidity due to preventable infectious diseases in Central Asia?

OD Strategy 1: Strengthen ONS capacity to train volunteers to teach mothers how to recognize and treat ARI and CDD

OD Strategy 2: Strengthen volunteer management capacity at branch level

Social Mobilization Strategy 1: Develop region-wide public information campaign using text messages, radio, PSA, and other media

Partnership Brokering Strategy 1: Develop ARI and CDD campaigns in conjunction with WHO and each country-level MOH

Partnership Brokering Strategy 2: UNICEF social mobilization trainers will be used to train RCRC volunteers in each country


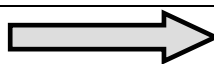
Strategic Issues, strategic, goals and objectives can be categorized if it assists the planning team and implementers in organizing their thinking and eventually their action plans. Categorizing issues, strategies, goals, and objectives may also cut down on repetition and facilitate a more streamlined strategic plan. Some categorization suggestions include:

Potential categories for issues, strategies, goals & objectives

Prime Categories	Programmatic Issues	Organizational Issues
Sub-Categories	MCH	Service Delivery Excellence
	Infectious Diseases	Management Effectiveness
	Disaster Preparedness	Leveraged Growth
	Disaster Response	Research & Development
	Food Programming	Implementation Effectiveness
	Water/Sanitation	Product Standardization
	Social Safety Nets	

6. Goals and Objectives

There are multiple ways to identify goals and objectives stemming from strategic issue and strategy identification. The simplest way is presented here; teams with more planning experience can take a more complex approach.

Strategic Issues		Strategic Goals
Example: How can ARC reduce under five morbidity due to preventable infectious diseases in Andwarsia		Example: Reduce U5 morbidity due to preventable infectious diseases in Andwarsia by 2008
Strategies:		Strategic Objectives
Example: *Identify key MCH interventions for U5 infectious diseases *PB: Partner with WHO, MOH & UNICEF *CB: Strengthen ONS to train volunteers to do outreach *SM: Have UNICEF SM trainers teach RC volunteers		Example: SO: Develop & implement Andwarsia IMCI in at least three countries by 2006 SO: Secure partnerships with WHO, UNICEF and country-level MOHs SO: Develop & implement region-wide volunteer management capacity building program SO: Develop & implement region-wide social mobilization training program for RCRC volunteers, led by UNICEF

7. Timeline: Gantt Chart

For regions with a regional presence (i.e., regional delegation, field staff with regional responsibilities etc.), a Gantt chart will be developed highlighting regional responsibilities stemming from the regional strategic plan. For the majority of delegations, roles and responsibilities in implementing the regional strategic plan will be captured in the country annual plan.

For regional delegations, strategic objectives and critical activities should be listed along with a start and end data and assigned to a specific person or persons. Insert relevant personnel titles according to your own team.

Strategic Goal:	Area of Responsibility:					Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	HORD	DHORD	Technical Delegate	Nat'l Staff	NHQ Program Officer									
Enhance leveraged growth														
Objective: Secure two new region-wide donors by 2007	X	X				S					E			
Critical Activities: Follow leads from EOA Schedule site visits for key potential donors	X	X	X		X	S								

S= Start E=End

8. Regional Monitoring & Evaluation Plans (Benchmarks for the Strategic Plan)

(Select programmatic and organizational indicators relevant for region; key indicators should be standard for all regional strategic plans)

Key Indicators	Baseline	2005		2006		2007	
		Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
# of beneficiaries served							
Value of resources raised							
Value of multi-year programming secured							
Programmatic Indicators							
# of new or updated MOUs signed							
Value of new funding for DP programs							
# of countries with National IMCI plans							
# of ONS implementing community level IMCI							
Organizational Indicators							
% decrease in grants compliance citations							

Note that some indicators will reflect institutional and/or MDG indicators. Projects in the region should include these so that they can be aggregated for the annual plans in the region's reporting requirements.

9. Resources:

a. Revenue Estimates

For the donors identified during the EOA process and subsequent partnership meetings, summarize the anticipated resource generation over the next three years. These are general estimates: more sophisticated budgets will be developed at the country level.

Donor/Partner	FY 04 Baseline	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07
USAID Missions (break down according to project area)	2 million	5 million	2 million	5 million
USAID: Global Health	1.5 million	6.5 million	0	0
Public Resources	10 million	1 million	1 million	1 million
Foundations/Corporate	15 million	5 million	5 million	5 million
TOTAL	28.5	17.5	8	11

b. Expense Estimates

A general budget covering the major categories using the current FY as a baseline should be developed; three years should be plotted out, accounting for growth or reductions anticipated during the strategic planning period; a more detailed budget will be developed during the annual planning process

Description	FY 04 Baseline	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07
Compensation+	1 million	1.5 million	1.5 million	1.5 million
Travel	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Activities	7.5 million	15 million	5 million	7 million
Infrastructure	3 million	4 million	4 million	4 million
Commodities	2 million	4 million	1 million	1 million
TOTAL	14	25	12	14

Note: Revenue estimates should equal expense estimates over the three year period (estimates don't have to match on a yearly basis if carryover is anticipated)

For Regional Strategic Plan approval procedures, see the 'Policies and Procedures' section of this guide.

Upon completion of the regional strategic plan, direct each country team to move to the implementation stage by completing their country annual plan. The Country Annual Plan is merely implementation guidance for the Regional Strategic Plan at the country level.

See also:

Country Annual Plan Guide

Country Annual Plan Training Package
Country Annual Plan Policies and Procedures

6. APPENDICES

- A. Training Package (Powerpoint)
- B. International Programs Regional Strategic Planning Flowchart
- C. Tools:
 - i. Regional Strategic Planning Workshop Options Table
 - ii. Planning Profile & Staff Readiness Assessment
 - iii. Stakeholder Summary Tool
 - iv. Questions for Introductory Donor Meetings
 - v. SWOT Worksheets
 - vi. SWOT Analysis Example Table
 - vii. Regional Strategy Statement Homework (Optional)
 - viii. Vision/Strategy Statements – Other PVO Examples
 - ix. Strategy Development
 - x. Strategy Template
- D. Sample Regional Strategic Plan