

Annex: Planning for Strategic Planning

1. Checklist: Laying of the foundations

Did you:	YES	NO
Assure institutional commitment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocate an adequate budget?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearly define the purpose and objectives of the planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Think about leadership and identify a “Champion’ who will lead the planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish an efficient planning team?		
Terms of Reference established?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Composition defined, formal time allocation for members?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assess the availability of the necessary skills?		
In-house?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outside?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure that your institution understands its external environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economic trends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Political, institutional context?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scientific and technological context?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Matching of means and goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conduct a self-assessment of your institution's own position, its strengths and weaknesses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify all stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Checklist: Planning of the planning

Did you:	YES	NO
Create a working environment for the planning team that is conducive to innovative thinking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish a detailed workplan according to your specific needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Define a realistic schedule?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commit adequate funds dedicated to the planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire all lacking skills, e.g. by outsourcing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Define practically useful criteria for continuous control of quality, performance and progress?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Define mechanisms for capturing experience and implications throughout the planning process, and incorporation of the lessons learned in the process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Checklist: Negotiating the plan

Can you/did you:	YES	NO
Demonstrate continuous and firm commitment by top management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seek input and buy-in from all staff categories?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consult with all stakeholders: negotiate common vision, define Center's position in the geographic, socio-economic, and technological continuum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involve all stakeholders in the analysis of the external environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Obtain agreement of all stakeholders on your institution's guiding principles and core values?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep in mind that your institution's strategic plan should become an integral part of the global perspective of the stakeholders' community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allow for feedback mechanisms to ensure evolution of the planning process, and revision of key assumptions, partnerships and procedures throughout the planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Checklist: Producing the product

Did you put in place schedules to:	YES	NO
Review and assess the planning process regularly, in order to ensure conformity with the goals and purpose defined at the outset?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrate feedback-loops in order to ensure:		
Re-assessment of key assumptions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrate lessons learned during the planning process and modification of original plan where necessary, while respecting the originally defined goals and purposes of the planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitor continuously for important changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider that the achievements of the planning process (reinforced partnerships, common understanding etc.) are products as much as the final document itself, and define how to use these?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. The final document

The final strategic plan should be:

- Concise
- Flexible, and allow for reaction and adaptation to unexpected changes in the environment
- Validated by all stakeholders
- Be clear and explicit about
 - ~ The mission
 - ~ The vision
 - ~ The context of the operation
 - ~ The means mobilized
 - ~ Indicators to measure success
 - ~ Indicators to evaluate coherence of future actions with the spirit of the plan
 - ~ Clear boundaries not to be trespassed
 - ~ Guidelines for strategic alliances
 - ~ Organizational principles

The final strategic plan should not be:

- Long and voluminous
- Rigid
- Specific about objectives, projects, organization and assignment of resources
- An exhaustive study of the present and future operational context of the Center
- A binding contractual or legal document between partners

6. Working example of matrix used in the analysis of components of a "Cornerstone" (the example of Cornerstone 4, Updating and Adapting to Changes)

Corner-Stone	Content (elements/ ingredients)	Key Strategies & Processes	Possible ways to implement	Quality/ Performance Criteria	Good case/ example
UPDATING AND ADAPTING TO CHANGES	Consciously detecting important change	Up to date contact with the sector, development and new science. Analysis of mega-trends' implications for Center strategy.	Assignment of staff responsibilities. Proactive collection of data. Monitoring of key data sources/ focus workshops. Means to correlate and interpret. Centralized system capacity for such analysis/data collection. Detailing implication for Center/sector strategy.	Demonstration of up to date knowledge of the external environment. Peer review. Effective knowledge management. Defined and flexible partnerships with key actors. Implications described/reported in a timely manner.	ICRISAT SAT futures (see Box 1). CIMMYT special topic reviews (see Box 3).
	Re-evaluating key assumptions	Interpretation of changes.	Periodic or event-related evaluation of strategic assumptions (e.g. boundaries, modalities, partner efficiency, feedback to priority setting process) related to major external change or shocks.	New knowledge reviewed and applied to key elements of strategy. Updated assumptions. Revision of (components of) strategy.	WorldFish review of sector and resource systems (see Box 4).
	Allowing for innovation	Understanding new possibilities and applications from "external" environment. Maintaining an environment conducive for innovation.	Means to stay in touch with new developments. (conference, parallel fields, visiting scientists, feasibility or pilot studies). Donor support for venture science. Maintaining space and opportunity for creativity and new applications.	Evidence of application of new and relevant science in research program. Support for new area of development. Seminal papers. Center-led ideas incorporated into effective project and adopted by others. Research staff satisfaction and more.	CIAT fund International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI)
	Learning from experience	Capturing both positive and negative experiences and implications for key strategic assumptions and rate of progress.	Program review. Impact audit. Periodic/structured evaluation of Center and partner experiences in relation to key assumptions (including process of priority setting and adaptation to change).	Substantive reviews and evaluation held. Findings applied to strategic mission.	