



twif

**tug of war
international
federation**

Development National Associations

guidance notes

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Before You Start

No Sports Development Plan can be written by one person. A good development plan can breathe life into your sport - do not take chances with the planning process. Here are a few simple rules to follow.

- Form a Planning Team. It does not need to be a large group but it does need to be capable of doing the work. Ensure that you have access to any specialist knowledge required and recruit a suitable person or persons to the team at an early stage or at least open up some lines of communication. Most professionals and experts are willing to give some time to voluntary organisations – especially if it is for a one-off or time limited period.
- Agree what you want the planning process to achieve and ensure that team members clearly understand what is involved. There will be time later to decide who does what.
- Set out an initial timetable or schedule of work (if needs be, it can be changed later)

THE BENEFITS OF THE PLAN

The plan itself is of immense value.

It will:

- Help all those associated with your Association understand what the organisation is doing and why
- Give a clear direction to all members
- Demonstrate to stakeholders and funders how the Association manages and will manage its development
- Helps to attract the right skills needed to achieve individual tasks.

Basically this is a “Plan for a Plan”. Having a Planning Team will help to move the project forward. It will also help to make the process an enjoyable experience rather than a chore.

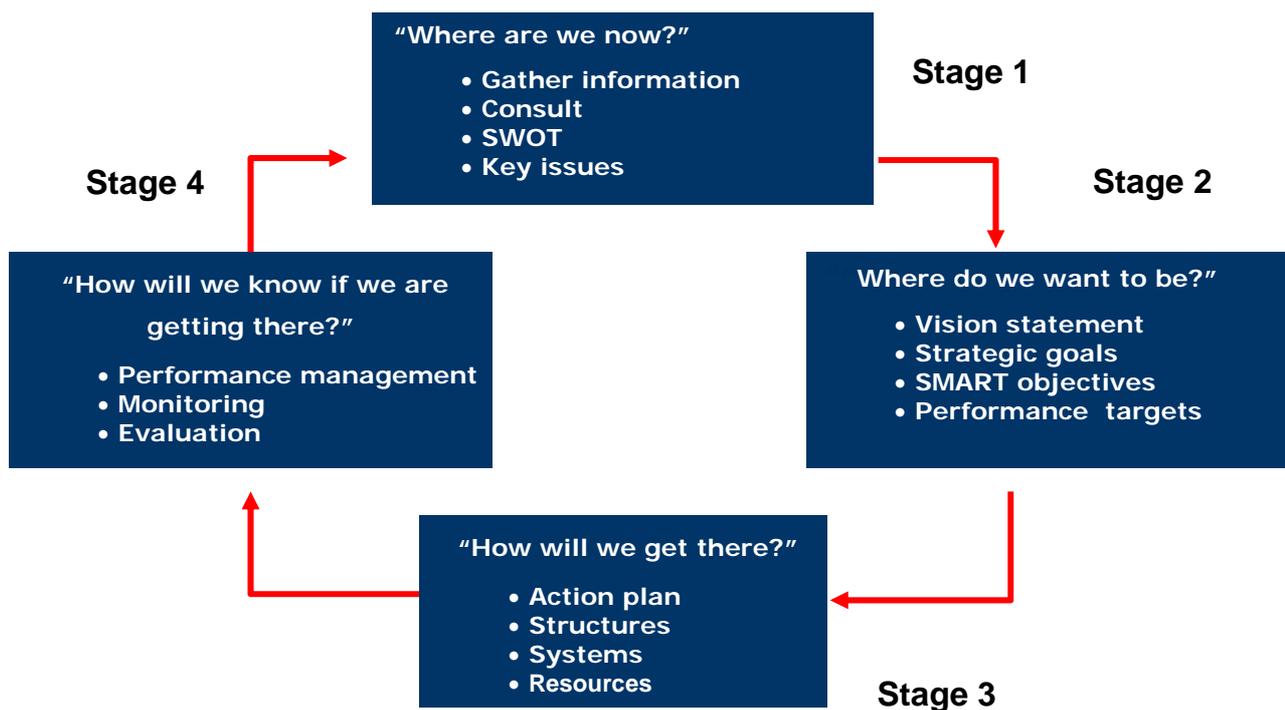
The Planning Model

Planning is a four stage process. It starts with

1. A review of your current situation
2. A realistic vision of where the organisation wants to be in relation to the Tug of War Sport
3. An action plan that will turn the vision into reality
4. Monitoring progress against the plan at regular intervals.



The Planning Process



STAGE ONE - “WHERE ARE WE NOW?”

The planning process starts by developing an understanding of the current situation. This is achieved by getting a thorough response to the question,

“Where are we now?”

A good way to start is to set the “**Strategic Context**”. This is a statement on the major external issues affecting the Association. For example, it might include the impact of a new national strategy or government policies on Equality and Targeting Social Need.



The next task is to gather information and consult those around us about our current situation. This information and feedback can be used to carry out a SWOT analysis.

The S and W stand for the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation. In the context of clubs this might include factors such as the extent to which parents are involved, the growing or declining numbers of participants, the level of coaching skills, the facilities, the structure of organised competition or the networks that the organisation has developed.

The O and T stand for opportunities and threats. Opportunities for a sporting organisation might arise for different reasons. The success of a local club on the international stage can create wonderful opportunities for local clubs or Governing Bodies to develop facilities and coaching structures to build on the awakened interest of the youth, or, for example, a revitalised Governing Body with funding for Coach Development can open opportunities for local clubs. Threats to sporting organisations can include, for example, lack of success at domestic and international level.

It is important also to consult with a broad cross section of interested parties from inside and outside the organisation. Thus, one of the first tasks will be to draw up a list of people with information that you need. The first call will often be with a Sports Development Officer who is employed to support organisations such as yours and can offer advice on:

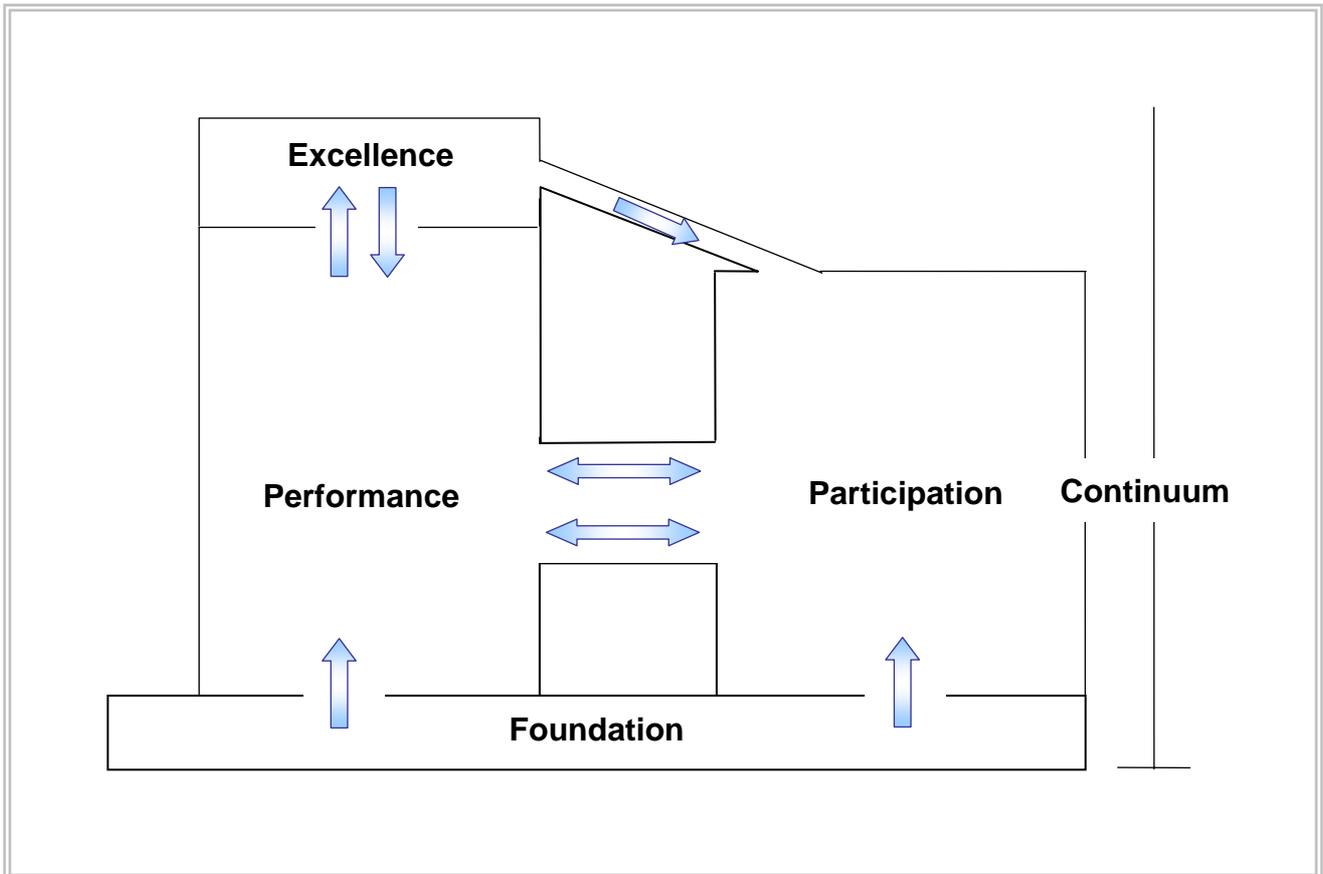
- Current trends and developments elsewhere
- Coach Education Courses
- Sports leaders' courses and support
- Sports administration support
- Financial support
- Local sports development networks

You might also consult participants, potential participants, spectators, club members, local Councils, and not least your Sports Council itself.

The process of consultation does much more than inform your group about what is going on in your sport.

- It can generate excitement about your project in the wider community
- It will provide insights and ideas to allow you to alter course if necessary
- It will identify sources of help and introduce you to potential key partners

Another way of examining your organisation is by considering one of the models of the Sports Development Continuum as illustrated:



- Excellence :** Achievement of a standard according to absolute criteria
- Performance:** Process (or desire) of getting better at a particular activity
- Participation:** Taking part in defined activities for recreation
- Foundation:** Acquisition of basic skills

This allows sporting organisations to consider their strengths and weaknesses with regard to their roles in developing the sport at different levels. Sporting organisations can often straddle different layers of this continuum but may focus on one layer at a time.

Developing a good understanding of your target markets (participants) and where the organisation fits within its marketplace is part of answering the question of “Where you are now?” Such understanding can lead to innovative strategies to reach out to new participants.

Information and feedback can be summarised in a SWOT analysis that, if done in a challenging way, will highlight key issues for the development of the sport.

STAGE TWO – "WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?"

A thorough SWOT analysis, through Stage One, will set the scene for creating **strategic goals**. It is useful to start with an overall vision statement to describe how you want things to be in the future. A vision statement is a pen picture of what you want the Association to have achieved by the time you have successfully implemented your plan. This will help you to set goals for the plan. Typical goals might be about the development of a "Centre of Excellence" or creating a new league structure or increasing local participation levels at national and international competition.

Strategic goals are the broad statements of purpose or the overall aims of the organisation. It is quite alright if they are somewhat aspiration in nature because you will go on to be quite specific in setting out detailed objectives, targets and actions at a later stage.

Agreeing challenging but **realistic objectives** will help to progress your plan at a good pace. One golden rule of planning is that you must make your objectives and targets **SMART** –

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound

Targets are a means of breaking the objectives into stages that can be monitored as the plan unfolds. In using the analogy of a journey, targets are like stepping stones whilst objectives are milestones and goals or vision statement are the journey's end. You might consider setting targets around the 4E's as illustrated below:

- **Economy** Targets related to budgets and financial performance
- **Efficiency** Targets for output levels e.g. cost per participant
- **Effectiveness** Targets related to achieving goals and objectives
- **Equality** Targets for equality of opportunity, access and participation

STAGE THREE - “HOW WILL GET THERE?”

The first two stages of the planning process will have clarified the current situation and established clear goals and objectives for the organisation.

The third stage in the process is to plan how your Association is going to “get there”. It concerns developing a robust and practical action plan to ensure that each objective will be achieved. What are you going to do, who will do it and when?

But good intentions are meaningless without the resources to make them happen. You will need to show what organisational structures and what systems need to be in place to ensure that things run smoothly.

“How will we get there?”

- ✓ action plan
- ✓ structures
- ✓ systems
- ✓ resources

A typical action plan might be based on the following table:

Action	Who?	When?	Resources Needed	Outputs/Outcomes ¹
<i>What has to be done?</i>	<i>Who will do it?</i>	<i>By what dates must they start and finish?</i>	<i>What physical, financial and human resources are needed?</i>	<i>In measurable terms, what can we expect to have achieved as a result of this action?</i>

¹ These should link back to goals, objectives and targets as appropriate.

STAGE FOUR – “HOW WILL WE KNOW IF WE ARE GETTING THERE?”

In a sporting context, even in a managerial or organising role it is appropriate to say:

“How will we know if we are getting there?”

- Performance management
- Monitoring
- Evaluation

“If you are not keeping score, you are only practising.”

Performance management is about monitoring performance against targets, identifying opportunities for improvement and delivering change. This will enable you to make decisions and take action based on facts about performance.

A Sports Development Plan with all its fine goals, objectives, targets and actions may come to nothing without a means to monitor progress. In this way everybody will “know the score” and remedial action can be taken if required.

Do not be put off if some aspects of your plan do not produce the results expected. The important thing is to understand why the results went other than planned and be in a position to change tack if necessary.

At the end of Stage Four you should know whether or not you have achieved your objectives. You may find that some results will have exceeded your expectations whilst others have fallen short. This is not unusual. There is no reason for alarm. Just revisit the model by again asking the question, “Where are we now?” and then set about restating your goals and objectives based on the experience you have gained. The second time round you find that you are better prepared and more realistic about what you are able to achieve in your circumstances and with the level of resources available to you.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING PROCESS

To have a good sports development plan you must first set up a planning team and draw up a “Plan to Plan”. Then follow the four stages:

Stage One – “Where are we now?”

- Set the strategic context
- Consider your Association in the context of the Sports Development Continuum
- List your target markets and the Tug of War services or activities for these. Identify gaps and opportunities.
- Consult widely and feedback results
- Do a SWOT analysis
- List key issues.

Stage Two – “Where do we want to be?”

- Set a vision statement
- List strategic goals
- Set SMART objectives
- Set targets

Stage Three - “How do we get there?”

- Agree an Action Plan with specific actions for each objective from Stage two
- Determine the most efficient and effective supporting structures and systems and finally, specify the resources needed to make it all work as planned.

Stage Four – How will we know if we are getting there?

- Make arrangements for monitoring your performance
- Review performance regularly and feedback
- Take corrective or new action if required.

Remember...

“The plan is something... planning is everything”