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**APPENDICES**

Appendix A: A diagram of the strategic planning model
Appendix B: The original Corporate Plan for the Youth Affairs Department
Appendix C: An enhanced strategic framework for the Youth Affairs Department
Appendix D: Original Strategic Plan for Environmental Health Department
Appendix E: Enhanced Strategic Plan for Environmental Health Department
Executive Summary

This case study presents an extrapolation of a recent Technical Assistance (TA) in strategic planning with the Youth Affairs Department (YAD) and the Environmental Health Department (EHD) of the Government of St. Vincent and The Grenadines (GSVG) mobilised on the basis of a request from the GSVG to CARICAD, and funded under CARICAD’s Strategic Planning in Public Services Project.

The case highlights the fact that both of these agencies needed to have their strategic direction examined and improved. This was achieved during a five-day consultative process for each department respectively. Both agencies were the subject of recent diagnostic reports. The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in 2002 conducted a study of the role of the Environmental Health Department (EHD), and CARICAD jointly with the Commonwealth Youth Programme in 2000, examined the needs of the Youth Affairs Department (YAD). The reports called for a restructuring of both departments, and identified the need to strengthen internal capacity and strategic direction.

While both agencies had strategic plans in place, the plans had a number of shortcomings. As part of the process, a strategic planning model developed by the consultant was used to evaluate the plans and address their shortcomings. In both cases the quality of the plans was significantly improved and participants from both departments felt a renewed sense of hope. This case shares the planning process, issues and concerns associated with establishing a strategic management culture within the public service, the lessons learnt, and recommendations for the respective agencies with respect to managing strategically.

As a point of departure, a series of meeting was held with interdisciplinary teams to articulate the results and outputs specifically articulated for the YD and the EHD, and summary work plans were developed, which identified the main objective, inputs, related activities, time frames and key outputs for each department were developed.

Analyses and sessions with staff of either department revealed the prior existence of corporate/strategic plans. Since 1984, in Phase One of its Reform Process the GSVG had required all ministries and departments to establish strategic plans, and linked annual operational plans with a view to improving efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Service and with a view of developing and implementing a National Plan. There was evidence that while CARICAD and CAPAM had both played a significant role in facilitating the practice of strategic planning, there was some concern that Heads of Departments (HODs) either did not understand the idea of strategic planning or were not completely in favour of the practice.

1 St. Vincent and the Grenadines became politically independent from Great Britain on October 27, 1979 and inherited a Westminster Parliamentary Democracy system of government. The country is an archipelago in the Eastern Caribbean, lying 100 miles to the west of Barbados. It is of St. Vincent as the main island, and stretching some 40 miles to the south, a chain of 34 islands and cays referred to as the Grenadines. The main islands in this chain are: Bequia, Mustique, Canouan, Mayreau, Union Island, Palm Island and Petit St. Vincent. The population is estimated at 111,000.

2 The CARIFORUM / EDF Project 8/ACP/RCA/005 is designed to support the application of strategic planning in the Caribbean Public Service and has as its primary beneficiaries the Member States of CARIFORUM – Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago.
This notwithstanding, among the forces that were responsible for driving the need for strategic planning in public service in the GSVG, was the Government’s commitment towards greater public accountability to delivering value for money, and the existence of public pressure for improved service (more with less) - The public is increasingly demanding that the government do more with less. People want less taxation, but more services. As such, reforming the public sector to obtain greater efficiency and productivity has become an imperative for the GSVG.

In the current context, the request to CARICAD for technical assistance in the area of strategic planning appears to have been driven by the recommendations from recent reports on both the YAD and the EHD, which called for, among others: a greater programmatic focus, and improved organizational structure and the improved quality and capability of HR. Consequently it was felt that the departments had to affirm their strategic direction and use that direction as the basis for restructuring the department. Strategic planning was accepted as the rational tool for facilitating organizational improvement and restructuring.

Given that the short-term focus of the intervention was the enhancement of the strategic direction for both departments, it was agreed that emphasis would be placed on removing the shortcomings of the current strategic plans. The project did not allow for observing or evaluating long-term developments. However, for the long-term, it was hoped that the strategic framework would be deployed throughout both departments.

The steps of the planning process are summarized as follows:

Step 1: The consultant provides an overview of the strategic planning model to be used. This provided an opportunity for the respective planning committees to ask questions and seek clarification where necessary. Once the members understood the model and agreed with its logic; it made it easier to accept any critique of the current plan since the model was going to be used as the basis for critiquing the existing plan.

Step 2: The consultant reviews the current strategic plan and prepares a report of the findings to the Committee - The review findings are discussed and an attempt is made to reach a consensus on the issues with the current plan. This exercise provides a great learning opportunity for the committee.

Step 3: The shortcomings are addressed using the strategic planning model and its accompanying templates.

Step 4: The committee commits to rewriting the strategic plan with the new information. The plan is communicated widely and the operational plan for the next fiscal year is subsequently developed.

Given the existence of corporate / strategic plans, it was agreed that it was not necessary to go through all stages of the strategic planning process. Rather the idea was to focus on enhancing the current plans. Accordingly, the following process was used:

1. Review the existing plan for quality and to determine what areas of the plan needs enhancement.
2. Present a review of the strategic plan to the group and explain the shortcomings.
3. Assemble the necessary materials/templates to accommodate the enhancement of the current plan.
Methodology

In both cases it was necessary to indicate clearly the key result areas (KRAs), as mission-related activities that represent the broad categories or areas of activity where the agency must achieve success in the eyes of its customers and stakeholders. For each KRA, the prioritised results to be delivered had to be further delineated. Specifically the question asked of each KRA was what specific result core customers and stakeholders would want to be delivered. Equally important to be addressed in the context of the mandate of the agency, was what results were implied by the legal statutes that were governed the entity. Once identified, the desired results were prioritised based on several factors that included, among others; the relative importance of stakeholders, current performance gaps, future trends and interest of the political directorate. These prioritised results helped to shape the strategic focus of the agency. In addition the following steps were undertaken with each entity:

- For each result, one or more key performance indicators (KPIs) were identified to allow the organization to determine whether it is achieving those results.
- Each KPI required the establishment of performance targets and timeframes.
- One or more strategic initiatives were developed to achieve performance goals, and prioritised for implementation purposes.
- Internal/operational priorities that directly impact the capacity to achieve results were identified through a KRA-based SWOT analysis.
- A performance cause and effect analysis for each mission related KRA, was conducted to establish and prioritise the internal capacity issues that led to inadequate performance.
- Internal capacity building issues were identified and prioritised.
- Performance (input/output) measures were established in keeping with the business process and the learning and growth perspectives of the balanced scorecard model by Kaplan and Norton.
- Short-term and long-term performance priorities were set.
- The strategic plan was linked with the annual operational plan (AOP).

As a general critique of the strategic planning process used to develop the earlier plans, there is not sufficient evidence to suggest that the procedure for establishing critical issues were sufficiently robust. For example, the main areas identified for YAD, from the plan, seem not to have been diagnosed from a thorough external environmental scan or thorough stakeholder consultations. In terms of the EHD, a review of the strategic plan in place highlighted the existence of key gaps relating to:

- Inadequacy of the vision and mission statements
- Lack of explicit desired results/outcomes for each key result area
- Lack of performance indicators for desired results
- Lack of operational priorities to be directly aligned to the strategic priorities

For both departments, desired results and accomplishments were eventually based on several factors:

.1 Mandate
.2 Ability to impact the result
.3 The perceived value of the accomplishment among key stakeholders

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In addition to identifying desired outcomes, performance measures for each outcome were brainstormed. Each measure was subjected to the SMART measure test\(^4\). For each measure a scale from 0-10 was used to subjectively assess baseline performance. Most of the data for the measures were not available because specific performance measures had not been developed before.

Findings

At the end of the Technical Assistance activities with both departments, seven of the eight steps were completed. The biggest drawback was lack of readily available performance data. This made it very difficult to set performance targets or to properly conduct a cause and effect analysis. Because of this, in a number of cases the targets were simply guessed and would need to be revisited and improved.

While the activity did not culminate in a written plan, the important process and methodology were well set in place and appreciated. Participants in commenting on the project, process, short-term outcomes, and long-term expectations expressed in the majority, that the exercise was a necessity. The positive feedback could be summarized as follows:

- people felt good about the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions.
- the process forced them to think about the work they do and the value they attempt to create for customers and stakeholders.
- the process provided a new experience for them, in that they were simply not used to thinking about their departments in such a profound way
- people learnt a lot about the logical relationships between mission, vision, results, performance measures, targets, strategies and budgeting.

Of a fundamental nature, many of the participants recognized that their normal approach to work was not result focused, but task focused.

Much of the data necessary to finalise the strategic plan is available. However, both the YAD and EHD must first find time to review and validate the information produced. Once validated, the final set of strategic priorities and strategies need to be determined and the final plan can be written. The following activities must be accomplished in order for the strategic planning process to be successfully completed:

1. The planning teams will need to review their respective reports to 1) ensure common understanding of the suggestions and ideas to date and 2) to validate key elements of the planning process. Given that much of the work was accomplished in small breakout groups, there is a need for members to review and critique, or support decisions to which they were not party.

2. The planning teams must complete the assessment of each programme initiative suggested using appropriate decision criteria. Further, the teams must complete the programme planning activity so that each programme can be properly scrutinized for integrity and merit.

---

\(^4\) SMART Measure Test: **S** – specific, **M** – measurable, **A** – achievable, **R** – reliable, **T** – timely
3. Given the brain-stormed list of programmes, the planning teams must prioritise programmes under each KRA. Given that some programmes address the same issue or have an overlap in their impact on desired outcomes, a prioritised list of programmes is necessary in the event of budget insufficiency.

4. To support program-based budgeting and annual performance planning, first year performance priorities need greater scrutiny. The objective is to develop a shared set of priorities for year-one.

5. Use the annual performance plan to develop the programme budget. Develop three budget contingencies: 1) a worse case budget; 2) a best-case budget; and 3) a most likely budget. The EHD must develop a shared understanding of the performance implications for each scenario.

6. Finalize the strategic plan. Write a communicable version of the plan highlighting pertinent information.

7. Develop a communication and monitoring strategy for the strategic plans

While there is much support for strategic planning among the members, and many feel that much benefit can be derived from its proper implementation, there is a strong reservation about the likelihood of successful implementation. Many simply feel that senior administration 1) does not understand the process, 2) does not fully support the process; perhaps, because they don’t understand it, and 3) may not be ready for the changes implied by a strategic management culture.

Many of the participants articulated that in order for a strategic planning culture to be sustained, there was a need for more meetings, improved communication, and stronger teamwork. Many fear that the lack of an appropriate leadership style will lead to the premature failure of strategic planning. Senior leadership commitment is heavily viewed as of greatest priority to implementing the results of the strategic plan.

In general, several issues emerged as barriers to the institutionalisation of a strategic management culture in the public service in SVG. Among these were:

1. Lack of long-term commitment at the level of leadership to strategic planning and strategic management. Strategic planning must not be seen as a one time process producing one-off outputs, but rather the starting point of a new management culture – managing for results.

2. Lack of a results-oriented focus in the public service: Currently public servants are activity driven and have a cursory sense of how their work contributes to creating value for customers and stakeholders. As such, there are no performance measures and indicators. Accomplishments are viewed in terms of completing tasks. The corporate plans for YAD and EHD in Appendices B and D respectively attest to that fact.

3. Lack of data: Because of a lack of a results-oriented focus and a lack of performance measures and indicators, data for planning and decision-making is not readily available. There is no annual performance report generated by either department. The lack of data made it extremely difficult to set performance targets or to prioritise performance objectives, since information about performance gaps was not available.
4. Lack of an understanding of the concept of value: There is a need for public servants to understand their department or ministry’s value proposition. Few seem to have a grasp of the value that customers and stakeholders expect to derive from the activities of the organization. It is necessary to have public servants become familiar with the concept of their agency’s value proposition and how the organization produces value from its operations.

5. Low level of leadership maturity: By low levels of leadership maturity we are referring to the readiness of the agency’s leadership to manage in a complex environment based on principles of: participative democracy; meritocracy; employee involvement and empowerment; value propagation; partnerships; strategic alliances; fact-based decision making; strategic thinking; and an emphasis on results. Both senior and middle public sector managers require leadership skills development to function in a reformed public sector. We must ensure that positions are not held based on technical knowledge or relationships, but rather on the basis of leadership capabilities.

6. Lack of a consistent framework across ministries: The strategic management approach used across the various agencies needs to conform to a set of principles and practices. At present, there is no formalization of the strategic management process.

7. No framework for promoting accountability: For strategic management to thrive, a system of performance accountability must be in place. While the GSVG has attempted to implement a Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), the accountability framework must be comprehensive in that it must include all of the necessary supports for accountability (training, grievance procedures, data collection, performance measurement, rewards and recognition, sanctions for poor performance of senior leadership, etc.)

8. Current organizational culture is not suited to the discipline of strategic planning: Strategic management culture requires among others: discipline; consistency; use of shared processes; consensus building; professionalism; innovation and creativity; good leadership and “follower ship” skills; teamwork; cooperation vs. competition; and belief in a meritocracy. It is widely held that the current culture within the public service is based on autocratic leadership, mediocrity, seniority, and nepotism. There are no easy answers with respect to how to bring about the appropriate cultural shift in the public service.

9. Inadequate levels of innovation and use of technology: It is believed that there is great difficulty to innovate the public service because of the heavy procedural nature of how work is done. Further, while there is talk of e-government, many of the systems within government are carried out manually. There is inadequate devolution of the use of technology throughout the service, and in cases where computer technology is available; much of the use is cantered on text processing. There is a need to improve the use of technology in facilitating service delivery, in analysing data, in optimising the allocation of resources, and in creating and disseminating knowledge.
Recommendations

Some of the strategies that may help improve the likelihood of entrenching a strategic management culture within the public service are listed below.

1. The GSVG should establish a written public policy sanctioned by Cabinet requiring all Ministries to develop five-year strategic plans, and two-year operational plans. That policy may be used to inform the eventual enactment of a “public sector performance law”.

2. The annual budgeting process should be linked to strategic plans. In particular, there is a need to develop a practice of allocating resources to reflect performance of Ministries and agencies. Ministries that perform well are rewarded.

3. All Ministries must develop, in alignment with their strategic plans, a performance measurement and analysis framework. That framework should be used to drive a managing-for-results-culture.

4. The GSVG must set in place a time frame for implementing program-based budgeting and performance reporting. Currently, the practice is primarily line item budgeting.

5. The GSVG needs to ensure that strategic and operational plans are highly results oriented with clearly articulated systems for propagating a results-oriented culture.

6. As part of the strategic management framework, the GSVG should establish mechanisms for vetting the strategic plans of the various Ministries, and for conducting performance audits. Further, there should be an internal mechanism (capability) to conduct programme evaluations. This independent body will provide information that can be used to validate or invalidate performance reports from Ministries.

7. The GSVG must seek to establish performance agreements with senior public sector managers, and establish a proper system of accountability.
1. Background

This case study provides an exposition of part of a technical assistance (TA) assignment conducted with the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (GSVG) on behalf of CARICAD, during the period June 3rd, 2003 to July 4th, 2004 in support of the public sector reform efforts in the area of strategic planning.

The areas identified for the TA to the GSVG were as follows:

1) Achieving alignment between the internal structure of Services Commissions Department and its strategic plan
2) Implementation of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)
3) Development of a strategic focus for the Youth Department within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.
4) Development of a strategic focus for Environmental Health.

Given the focus of this case report, only the activities and results of the processes involved in developing strategic focus with the Youth Department and with the Environmental Health will be discussed.

The Service Commissions Department was the primary liaison for the TA and established and ad hoc team of officials of different departments and ministries who met to articulate their preferred outcomes for the TA. The results and outputs specifically articulated for the YD and the EHD are as follows:

.1 Youth Affairs Department (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)
- A critical review of what was done by Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP) and CARICAD
- An articulation of a strategic focus for the department
- Identification of the initial steps to be taken, milestones, indicators, etc.
- Guidance on how the unit should be restructured to deliver services effectively

.2 Environmental Health Department
- A review of previous work done on the future of environment health
- Development of a strategic focus for the Environmental Health Department
- The department should know what it should want.
- Identification of the initial steps to be taken, milestones, indicators, etc.

Summary work plans identifying the main objective, inputs, related activities, time frames and key outputs for each department were developed, as shown from the sample table 1 below for the EHD below.

5 A full Report of the Technical Assistance Report may be obtained from the Service Commissions Department of the GSVG who served as the main counterpart, or from CARICAD.
### Table 1. Environmental Health Department (Ministry of Health)

**Sub-project: PMDS**

**Objectives:**
- To identify the key barriers to implementing PMDS
- To identify barrier-removal strategies
- To develop an improvement implementation plan using the PDCA cycle

<table>
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<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Key Dates</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
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<td>PMDS model</td>
<td>Review PMDS model</td>
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<td>The consultant’s perspective on potential problems with the current system and its implementation</td>
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<td>Focus group data</td>
<td>Review written reports</td>
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<td>A PMDS related survey report</td>
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<td>PSRU personnel</td>
<td>Develop survey instrument</td>
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<td>Strategies for improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written reports</td>
<td>Discuss review and survey instrument with PSRU</td>
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<td>An implementation plan</td>
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<td>Ministry of Health employees</td>
<td>Conduct survey</td>
<td>June 16-20, 2003</td>
<td>A change management plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venue for focus group sessions</td>
<td>Analyse responses to survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative support</td>
<td>Summarize findings and circulate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hold a focus group on findings to date</td>
<td>June 26, 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop solution strategies</td>
<td>June 26, 2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop an implementation and change management plan</td>
<td>June 27, 2003</td>
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2. A Brief Overview of Public Sector Reform in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

A brief review of public sector reform in the GSVG is necessary in order to situate strategic planning in its proper context as a reform tool. According to varying reports, Public Service Reform in St. Vincent and the Grenadines has varied from comprehensive in nature to incremental, and at times disjointed. Phase One of the Reform process commenced in 1984 with a focus on efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Service. Phase 1 recommendations for the reform process included, among others:

- Establishing and strengthening strategic and operational planning with a view of developing and implementing a National Plan.
- Institutional strengthening and performance imprint of the central agency and line Ministries.
- Financial Management Systems Development – that is, improving the financial management capability of public service.
- Human Resource Management System Development – since the skilful management and development of human resources within public service is critical to national development.

The reform process entered a Second (2) Phase in 1995, where the focus was narrowed to the financial sector. The Third Phase of the Reform Process commenced in May 2000, with the goal of developing a new and improved Performance Management System for the Public Service led by the Service Commissions Department.

Overall concentration remains on reviewing “the functions of the Public Service and Statutory Boards with a view to modernizing their operations and make them less costly, less corrupt, and more effective in their delivery of service.” The Prime Minister has further emphasised the key role that training and development must play in the reform process, and has established a special dispensation for “high-level quarterly seminars to be held on various aspects of public policy”. Training assessments conducted in 2001 through the Commonwealth Secretariat and CARICAD identified critical training needs for senior and middle level public managers, and has accordingly been very beneficial in fuelling the reform process.

Given that strategic and operational planning for ministries and departments were identified as important levers for performance improvement since Phase One, over a decade ago, to date all departments are required to develop strategic plans and submit annual operational plans as part of the annual budgeting process. It would appear that CARICAD and CAPAM have both played a significant role in facilitating the practice of strategic planning. Anecdotally, however, it has been said that there are Heads of Departments (HODs) who either do not understand the idea of strategic planning or are not completely in favour of the practice.

2.1 National Challenges and the Motivation for Strategic Planning

There are many forces that are responsible for driving the need for strategic planning in public service in the GSVG. Some of those forces include:

- Pressures for reform from international bodies such as the World Bank, DFID, and other aid agencies
- A drive towards greater public accountability - The government of the day has pledged its commitment to improve transparency and accountability in government.

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6 Unity Labour Party Government, as outlined in the “One Hundred (100) Days Programme”
• Delivering value for money - Tight fiscal constraints and dwindling national revenues have meant that the government can no longer afford waste. As such, maximizing value per dollar has become an overarching objective for the government.

• Public pressure for improved service (more with less) - The public is increasingly demanding that the government do more with less. People want less taxation, but more services. Reforming the public sector to obtain greater efficiency and productivity has become an imperative for the GSVG.

In the current context of this CARICAD technical assistance in the area of strategic planning, this assistance was mobilized on request from the GSVG and appears to have been driven by the recommendations from recent reports on both the YAD and the EHD. The CARICAD/CYP report on the Youth Affairs Department called for, among others: a greater programmatic focus, an improved organizational structure and the improved quality and capability of HR. Consequently it was felt that the YAD had to affirm its strategic direction and use that direction as the basis for restructuring the department. Strategic planning was accepted as the rational tool for facilitating organizational improvement and restructuring.

The case of the EHD is somewhat similar in that the OECS report identified several shortcomings with the current organizational design, and called for organizational strengthening and restructuring. Therefore, it was felt that reaffirming a strategic framework for the EHD was a necessary precursor to restructuring.

3. Strategic Planning Process used with GSVG

Given the constraints of time, there was insufficient opportunity for full-scale stakeholder consultations. However, as both departments confirmed that they had met extensively with stakeholders in the recent past, it was felt that the issues identified for both departments were still very current. As such, there was no loss of integrity from not having further stakeholder meetings.

Given that the short-term focus of the intervention was the enhancement of the strategic direction for both departments, it was agreed that emphasis would be placed on removing the shortcomings of the current strategic plans. The project did not allow for observing or evaluating long-term developments. However, for the long-term, it was hoped that the strategic framework would be deployed throughout both departments.

The steps of the planning process used are summarized as follows:

Step 1: The consultant provides an overview of the strategic planning model to be used. This provided an opportunity for the respective planning committees to ask questions and seek clarification where necessary. Once the members understood the model and agreed with its logic; it made it easier to accept any critique of the current plan since the model was going to be used as the basis for critiquing the existing plan.

Step 2: The consultant reviews the current strategic plan and prepares a report of the findings to the Committee - The review findings are discussed and an attempt is made to reach a consensus on the issues with the current plan. This exercise provides a great learning opportunity for the committee.

Step 3: The shortcomings are addressed using the strategic planning model and its accompanying templates.
Step 4: The committee commits to rewriting the strategic plan with the new information. The plan is communicated widely and the operational plan for the next fiscal year is subsequently developed.

In the next several paragraphs, the details of the approach used to improve the strategic plans for each department are outlined. A similar process was used for both departments. The strategic planning model used is shown in Appendix A

4. An Improved Strategic Framework for the Youth Affairs Department

4.1 Overview of the Youth Affairs Department

The Youth Affairs Department, established in 1985, is a “little office” with a big mandate. In March 2001, the YAD became a department of the Ministry of Education. Formerly, the department was housed within the Ministry of Housing. Some members of the Department expressed the sentiment that the department is like a nomad. To a large extent, members feel the department is being given inadequate attention and resources to meet its mandate, even though its focus on youth issues appears to be of great importance to the political directorate. The mandate of the YAD is to meet the growing developmental needs of youth (social, cultural, health, and skills needs), in order to:

- Improve the quality of life for Youth through the provision of education, training and employment opportunities.
- Promote the general welfare of all Youths in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
- Ensure the complete integration of Youth and Youth Organizations into the National Development Program.

With over 60% of the population under the age of 30, the six-member department finds itself stretched to the limit. Mission and vision statements were already established for the YAD under an existing corporate/strategic plan.

.1 Critical Issues Facing the Department:
Several critical issues were listed as creating significant challenges for the YAD. Primarily, the YAD recognized that its role needed to be adapted from one of a primary implementing agency to one of a coordinating agency. This change in focus was motivated by the following:

1. The pending restructuring of the YAD
2. The decrease in programming activities of NGO’s such as NYC, Red Cross, JEMS, and NCW and Projects Promotion
3. The folding up of NGO’s such as NAME, Jaycees, ORD, NADO
4. The HIV/AIDS epidemic affecting mainly our youth
5. The development in communication technology
6. The ever-increasing unemployment situation
7. Insufficient local investment to utilize local produce and create employment opportunities
8. The global trend that creates a change in lifestyles for youth and encourages a “fast cash” – “get rich quick” syndrome, along with crime and drug use and abuse among youth
9. The difficulties being experienced in the agriculture sector with respect to:

7 See Appendix B
.2 Broad Response Strategies

The YAD articulated a number of possible responses to address the issues identified above.

1. Continue the development of community-based integrated education training programs through workshops and the Youth on the Move program.
2. Support and encourage initiatives by all youth related Ministries, Inter-Governmental Agencies, NGO’s and the Private Sector, to promote training, education, vocational skills and the strengthening of social, cultural and humanistic values.
3. Continue the strengthening of the National Youth Council and other umbrella youth organizations, ensuring the representation of all groups of young men and women and their effectiveness in influencing government policies and programs for young people and critical issues affecting youth.
4. Support on-going training for staff in areas that would enhance their abilities to effectively deliver training to youths, especially the task of HIV/AIDS intervention techniques and strategic planning.
5. Establishment of a resource centre to enable young people to access information more readily through a reference library and internet services.
7. Support the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative/Micro Credit Management System as part of a National Youth Program.
8. Draw up a National Plan of action on the basis of the National Youth Policy and source financial and other resources for its implementation.
9. Secure private and public sector financing for program and projects through a Youth Development Foundation.
10. Identifying Youth Exchange Programs and encourage and facilitate the participation of Vincentian youth so as to deepen regional integration.
11. Review of Youth Policy every two (2) years.
12. Promote projects that have links to the agriculture sector and provide access to scarce resources for target groups like young men/women, street children and other at risk youth.
13. Continue to support and expand National Youth Awards to recognize and encourage excellence among youth in the broad range of social, cultural and economic activities.

A recent CARICAD report highlighted several critical issues facing the department, any of which were consistent with those identified above. The report made several recommendations for improving the performance of the YAD. It recommended, among other things, the need for stronger programmatic focus away from an activity focus, and the need for an organizational structure aligned to the work of the department. The members of the department concurred with the recommendation for a change in the organizational structure.
4.2 A Description of the Planning Approach used with YAD

Given the existence of YAD’s corporate plan, it was agreed that it was not necessary to go through all stages of the strategic planning process. Rather the idea was to focus on enhancing the current plan by gently re-working it into the quality of document of plan that would normally emerge from the full-scale process.

The process accordingly used with the YAD was as follows:

.1 Review the existing plan for quality and to determine what areas of the plan needs enhancement.
.2 Present a review of the strategic plan to the group and explain the shortcomings.
.3 Assemble the necessary materials/templates to accommodate the enhancement of the current plan.

The YAD activity began with a review of the plan to determine if the key elements of the plan were sound. There was unanimous agreement that the primary issues for YAD were the following:

- The level of importance attached to the department by the administrative body within the Ministry (Minister, PS, APS, etc.)
- There is the perception that the YAD is viewed as an appendage and not a core component of the ministry’s services
- There is increasing demand on the YAD for its services, but capacity to deliver services is severely constrained
- The primary need, therefore, is to identify what the strategic focus should be and ascertain the operational priorities to allow the YAD to better deliver the performance consistent with its mission.

The following enhancements were deemed necessary.

.1 The plan should indicate clearly the key result areas (KRAs)

These KRAs are mission related, and represent the broad categories or areas of activity where the agency must achieve success in the eyes of its customers and stakeholders.

.2 For each KRA, the prioritised results to be delivered must be delineated –

For each KRA, we asked, what specific results do core customers and stakeholders want delivered? This question was also asked in the context of the mandate of the agency. What results were implied by the legal statutes that were created and/or govern the agency? Once identified, the desired results were prioritised based on several factors that include, among others: the relative importance of stakeholders, current performance gaps, future trends and interest of the political directorate. These prioritised results help to shape the strategic focus of the agency.

.3 For each result, one or more key performance indicators (KPIs) was identified to allow the organization to determine whether it is achieving those results.

For each prioritised result, there was a need to establish performance measures or indicators.
.4 Setting performance targets for all KPIs

Each KPI required the establishment of targets and timeframes.

.5 Develop strategic initiatives to achieve performance goals

For each performance goal, one or more strategic initiatives was identified. These initiatives are prioritised for implementation purposes.

.6 Internal/operational priorities that directly impact the capacity to achieve results must be identified through a KRA-based SWOT analysis –

For each mission related KRA, a performance cause and effect analysis was conducted to establish the internal capacity issues that led to inadequate performance. Internal capacity building issues were identified and prioritised. Performance (input/output) measures that serve as diagnostic measures were established. Those measures tend to span business processes, human resource management, knowledge management, etc. They are in keeping with the business process and the learning and growth perspectives of the balanced scorecard model by Kaplan and Norton.8

.7 Short-term and long-term performance priorities.

Performance priorities were categorized as short-term (1-2 years) versus long-term (3-5 years). This was necessary in order to facilitate the development of annual performance and operating plans.

.8 Linking the strategic plan with the annual operational plan (AOP).

Finally the strategic plan was linked to the budgeting process. Currently all departments are required to prepare an annual operational plan. Once the performance goals were prioritised over a time grid, the strategic and operational initiatives for the next fiscal year were identified. These initiatives were then used to drive the program budget for the department.

4.3 Critique of the Current Strategic (Corporate) Plan 2003

In the 2000-2001 activity review section, there is a lack of specific data on the activity outputs, the number of beneficiaries impacted by several of the programmes, the cost allocations to the various programmes, a lack of efficiency measures indicating how resources were consumed to produce output, or any performance data showing the difference between actual accomplishments and performance targets.

While several critical issues are identified for YAD, from the plan, it is not clear how those issues were identified. For integrity, the issues would have to be identified through 1) a thorough external environmental scan, and 2) thorough stakeholder consultations focused on identifying key stakeholder and customer expectations of (or desired results from) the YAD.

The issues identified in the current corporate plan reflect a number of environmental factors. The issues are allocated to Political, Economic, Social, and technological (PEST) categories to determine

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8 For example, see 'The Balanced Scorecard', Kaplan and Norton, Harvard Business School Press, 1996; still the definitive book on the subject.
the extent of the coverage of those issues. Table 2 shows that the external scan was not sufficiently thorough and needed to be enhanced. Further, the impact of each of the factors on YAD should be very explicit, and possible response strategies should be identified for each issue. Ultimately, the YAD will need to determine which of the issues it will respond to.

Table 2: Environmental forces impacting YAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental factors</th>
<th>Economic:</th>
<th>Social:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political:</td>
<td>• Decreasing in the programming activities of several NGO's</td>
<td>• HIV/AIDS epidemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Folding up of NGOs such as NAME, Jaycees, ORD, NADO</td>
<td>• Globalisation its impact on life-style changes (get fast cash attitudes, increased crime and drug abuse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increasing unemployment</td>
<td>• Movement away from an agrarian society to an urban society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insufficient local investment…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limited markets for agricultural produce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological:</td>
<td>Environmental:</td>
<td>Other:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The development of communication technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greater use of arable land for housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some 13 response-strategies were articulated in the YAD corporate plan. These strategies appear to have been inspired by the environmental forces identified above. By identifying response strategies based on environmental factors, the YAD is making several assumptions about the results that stakeholders, including direct customers, want the YAD to deliver as part of its service portfolio.

Prior to establishing broad strategies, the YAD needed to specifically ask its stakeholders, “what are the key results the YAD must deliver over the next 3-5 years in order to make itself a useful and relevant organization?”

Stakeholders were asked to list their desired results in order of priority. Pooling all the key results together and using a valid prioritisation process, the YAD produced an ordered list of result priorities. That list was used to define key result areas (KRAs), and key performance indicators (KPIs). After assessing the performance on the KPIs, the YAD determined priority areas over the next 3-5 years. As it stands, key results have not been articulated. There are no performance indicators and subsequently, no performance targets.

4.4 Improving Strategic Direction

Because the YAD seemed to be attempting to respond to all of the issues identified from the external scan, there was the sense that “everything is a priority”. This might explain why the YAD felt that its current resources were being stressed beyond limits. The YAD had two choices: 1) define a focus that matched its current capacity, or 2) find ways to increase its current capacity to meet the needs of its focus. In either case, the YAD had to establish an ordered set of priorities within its portfolio of services.

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9 See Appendix B.
.1 Key Result Areas for the YAD

Based on the strategic plan, four KRAs were deduced:

.1 Education and skills development of Youth
.2 Youth employment
.3 Youth wellness
.4 Integration of Youth in national development

As previously mentioned, the YAD established key results to be delivered under each of these KRAs, and identified performance indicators for each of the results. A review of the current strategic plan was presented to the YAD showing the existence of some key gaps including:

.1 The inadequacy of the vision and mission statements
.2 The lack of explicit desired results/outcomes for each key result area
.3 The lack of performance indicators for desired results
.4 The need for operational priorities to be directly aligned to the strategic priorities

For each KRA, the group brainstormed a set of corresponding desired results from the perspective of key stakeholders identified as:

- Youth;
- Government/Cabinet;
- Opposition;
- Community Groups;
- NGOs;
- the Youth Minister;
- Churches;
- the Judiciary;
- Other Governmental Agencies;
- Employers Federation

In producing the desired results/benefits, the question in view was “what results/accomplishments does each stakeholder want from YAD?” YAD prioritised the desired results/accomplishments\(^ {\text{10}} \) based on several factors:

.1 Mandate
.2 Ability to impact the result
.3 The perceived value of the accomplishment among key stakeholders

.2 Outcomes

In addition to identifying desired outcomes, performance measures for each outcome was brainstormed. Each measure was subjected to the SMART\(^ {\text{11}} \) measure test. For each measure a scale from 0-10 was used to subjectively assess baseline performance. Most of the data for the measures were not available as the YAD had never before developed specific performance measures. Consequently, the subjective assessment was used as a proxy for the real value. The goal was to identify areas of weakness. The YAD will now need to put in place data collection systems so that at the end of year one, baseline data will become available to be used for setting better performance targets.

At the end of the Technical Assistance activity with the YAD, seven of the eight steps were completed. The biggest drawback was lack of readily available performance data. This made it very difficult to set performance targets or to properly conduct a cause and effect analysis. Because of this, in a number of cases the targets were simply guessed and would need to be revisited and improved.

\(^ {\text{10}} \) Tables A1-A8 in Appendix C, present a summary of the desired results from the various stakeholder perspectives

\(^ {\text{11}} \) SMART Measure Test: S – specific, M – measurable, A – achievable, R – reliable, T – timely)
The final step - Step 8, (Linking the strategic plan with the annual operational plan -AOP) could not be completed because of lack of time. This step required that careful thought be given to

1. performance goals for the next fiscal year including the implied strategic initiatives; and
2. the capacity building (operational) initiatives that would be necessary to support strategic initiatives, and activity-based costing for all of the initiatives.

Additionally, as part of the process initiatives would have to be vetted and debated before being accepted for implementation. The members of the YAD were made fully aware that Step 8 would have to be done as part of their own initiative.

5. Towards and Improved Strategic Framework for the Environmental Health Department

5.1 An Overview of the Environmental Health Department

The Environmental Health Division of the Ministry of Health and the Environment is committed to the delivery of preventative medicine in its primary health care programs for individuals, families and communities in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Their mission is to monitor, regulate, improve, maintain and safeguard the public's health and environmental health of the state. The delivery of services provided is divided into three (3) sub-programs or activities namely:

1. The District Environmental Health Services
2. The Sanitation Services
3. The Vector Control Services

Additionally, the Division has been preparing and has engaged in more monitoring and regulatory functions than before, which is consistent with its mandate outlined by the Cabinet in 1996.

During the fiscal year 2001, the EHD actively engaged in the following activities:

1. The inspection of dwelling premises
2. The inspection of sanitary arrangements
3. The inspection of food handling establishments
4. The inspection of meat and other foods.
5. Portable water and recreational water monitoring
6. Liquid waste monitoring
7. The delivery of port health services
8. The delivery of health education programs
9. The delivery of institutional hygiene programs (Prisons, Schools, and Hospitals)
10. Reviewing and inspection of development plans and development sites
11. Solid waste management and monitoring.
12. Sanitation services – street cleaning in the urban and suburban areas, including the burial of dead animals and clearing blocked drains
13. Occupational health and safety
14. Public sanitary conveniences management
15. Epidemiology
16. Cemeteries management.
17. The investigation of complaints
18. Other activities
The EHD had identified the several challenges and issues it needed to address, namely:

1. Disposal of septage.
2. The rapid increase in food handling establishments, food handling vendors and itinerant vending, particularly in Kingstown and its environs
3. Registration of food establishments
4. Pollution of streams, rivers, recreational waters
5. Liquid and solid wastes originating from domestic residences, agricultural pursuits and industrial businesses
6. Insufficient computers
7. The resignation of four (4) Environmental Health Officers to the Solid Waste Management Unit Central Water and Sewerage Authority
8. The suspension of two senior officers
9. The absence of a computerized data storage and retrieval system
10. An inadequate secretarial service system
11. Absence of laboratory services and access to respond to needs
12. Inadequate funds affecting the procurement of materials needed to work effectively; Inability to prosecute offenders with the necessary promptness

To address the issues raised above, the Division committed itself to:

1. Strengthen, streamline and train its staff
2. Develop and execute a monitoring program
3. Address the regulatory problems
4. Upgrade the secretarial system
5. Implement a data storage and retrieval system.
6. Initiate programs to bring the division into more focus
7. Sensitising and creating awareness regarding the public health and environmental health problem facing the people and the State.

A recent study of the EHD by OECS in 2002 led to several recommendations for improving the capacity of the department. These recommendations include:

1. Establishment of an Environmental Health Board
2. Revise the Legislative and Regulatory Framework
3. Institute a Technical Institutional Development Program for the Environmental Heath Department
4. Improve Training of Environmental Health Officers

In addition to these recommendations, there was much discussion on the possible restructuring of the department in order for it to meet the requirements for the changing role in the management of environmental health.

5.2 Critique of the Current Strategic (Corporate) Plan 2003-5

The steps and processes identified at 4.2 above for the YAD were applied with the EHD. As already stated, the EHD as with all other Ministies and Departments was required to have a Corporate Plan/ Strategic Plan in place. In addition, departments were required to submit a one-year operational plan to feed into the budgeting process. Theoretically, the operational plan emerged from the corporate plan. It was observed that some departments, in addition to a corporate / strategic plan, also have a document
entitled “Advanced Proposals 2003-2005”. In the case of the EHD, there was no evidence of a Corporate / Strategic Plan as distinct from the Advanced Proposals document (APD). The APD document likely suffices as a 3-year strategic plan. The intent of the APD is to be forward looking with respect to the resource requirement to achieving a department’s short-term and long-term priorities.

Before embarking on the strategic planning facilitation, it was necessary to review previous strategic planning efforts with a view to incorporating valuable information into the new process. This is critical as a lack of continuity between the previous process and the current process can drive scepticism about the outcomes of the new process. Employees often wonder whether new decisions will be similarly discarded by the next effort/ exercise. Also, it is important to establish what the employees like and dislike about the current plan. Any new or resumed planning process should therefore attempt to retain what the employees like and to improve what they do not.

5.3 Improving Strategic Direction

This section of the report documents the activities, outputs, and outcomes from the assignment with the overarching goal being to improve the planning framework for EHD. The review of the current strategic plan highlighted the existence of some key gaps including:

.1 Inadequacy of the vision and mission statements
.2 Lack of explicit desired results/outcomes for each key result area
.3 Lack of performance indicators for desired results
.4 Need for operational priorities to be directly aligned to the strategic priorities

The participants all agreed that the current strategic plan/ APD was not developed through a coordinated consultative process and that many aspects needed strengthening. As part of the new strategic planning exercise, a stakeholder perspective assessment of critical issues was also conducted. However, participants recognized that the current plan contained information that was salvageable and could be used as part of the improved planning framework.

.1 Establishing Key Result Areas

After much discussion with members of the EHD, and a close examination of the APD, five KRAs were deduced:

.1 Public health education and awareness
.2 Environmental policy formulation, regulation, and enforcement
.3 Environmental health quality control (monitoring and control)
.4 Food safety/hygiene; and
.5 Disease prevention and control

The EHD needed to establish key results to be delivered under each of these KRAs and identify performance indicators for each of the results.

For each KRA the group brainstormed a set of corresponding desired results from the perspective of key stakeholders. The stakeholder groups considered included:

.1 Direct customers/general public
.2 Political directorate
.3 NGOs
In producing the desired results/benefits, the process previously described with the YAD at 6.5 was repeated for the EHD. The desired accomplishments/results arrived at for each KRA are summarized in the tables below. Time did not permit a full prioritisation of the desired accomplishments for each KRA.

For each accomplishment/result, participants were asked to identify key performance indicators that would allow the EHD to measure its attainment of each desired result/outcome. While the measures were initially brainstormed, a subsequent activity took a closer look at each measure. SMART criteria was applied to each measure. The summary of the measures are provided at Appendix C.

For each Key Result Area, the desired outcomes were first identified. Then for each desired outcome, one or more performance indicators were identified. The scale of 0-10 was used to assess current performance (qualitatively). Areas with low scores were identified as potential priorities for planning. It was discovered that in many cases, the data for the measures was not currently available; hence the need for a qualitative assessment.

As in the case of the YAD, seven of the eight steps were completed. The time allocated for the TA did not permit the development of logic models for programmes, or the development of the operating plan for the 2004 fiscal year.

The EHD must now find the time to write the plan and complete the process of generating an operational plan from the strategic plan.

6. Finalising the strategic plans

The TA did not envisage that the consultant would write strategic plans for the GSVG. Rather the TA involved a process and methodology that would facilitate the development of a comprehensive and responsive plan. This having been said, much of the data necessary to finalise the strategic plan is available. However, both the YAD and EHD must first find time to review and validate the information produced. Once validated, the final set of strategic priorities and strategies need to be determined and the final plan can be written. Appendices B and C highlight the current plan and the enhanced planning data for YAD. Appendices D and E similarly highlight the original strategic plan and the enhanced strategic planning data for the EHD. The reports produced as part of the TA for the GSVG provide a significant amount of data and given a sufficient level of commitment from the leadership, the YAD and EHD are both poised to transform themselves into performance-driven organizations, provided that the data is used and the recommendations are adhered to.

The following activities must be accomplished in order for the strategic planning process to be successfully completed:

1. The planning teams will need to review their respective reports to 1) ensure common understanding of the suggestions and ideas to date and 2) to validate key elements of the planning process. Given that much of the work was accomplished in small breakout groups, there is a need for members to review and critique or support decisions they were not part of.
2. The planning teams must complete the assessment of each program initiative suggested using appropriate decision criteria. Further, the teams must complete the program planning activity so that each program can be properly scrutinized for integrity and merit.

3. Given the brainstormed list of programmes, the planning teams must prioritise programs under each KRA. Given that some programs address the same issue or have an overlap in their impact on desired outcomes, a prioritised list of programs is necessary in the event of budget insufficiency.

4. To support program-based budgeting and annual performance planning, first year performance priorities need greater scrutiny. The objective is to develop a shared set of priorities for year-one.

5. Use the annual performance plan to develop the program budget. Develop three budget contingencies: 1) a worse case budget; 2) a best-case budget; and 3) a most likely budget. The EHD must develop a shared understanding of the performance implications for each scenario.

6. Finalize the strategic plan. Write a communicable version of the plan highlighting pertinent information

7. Develop a communication and monitoring strategy for the strategic plans

7. Lesson Learnt

While we have no data on whether the plan has been finalised to date or whether the implementation recommendations were effected, a useful exercise would now be to track this progress and measure and advise on implementation bugbears. Nonetheless, several useful extrapolations were drawn from the approach to the strategic planning process. At the end of the sessions in the wrap up stage, participants were asked to comment on the project, process, short-term outcomes, and long-term expectations. Virtually all participants felt that the exercise was necessary. The positive feedback could be summarized as follows:

- people felt good about the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions.
- the process forced them to think about the work they do and the value they attempt to create for customers and stakeholders.
- the process provided a new experience for them, in that they were simply not used to thinking about their departments in such a profound way
- they learnt a lot about the logical relationships between mission, vision, results, performance measures, targets, strategies and budgeting.

Of a fundamental nature, many of the participants recognized that their normal approach to work was not results focused, but rather task focused. They saw their work as a collection of tasks that needs to be completed, in some cases, without specific deadlines. Few were able to see the relationship between their work and the big picture (the organization’s mission and value proposition) until now.
7.1 Challenges to propagating a strategic planning culture

Many of the participants articulated that in order for the propagation of strategic planning culture to take place, there was a need for more meetings, improved communication, and stronger teamwork. Many fear that the lack of an appropriate leadership style (currently seen as autocratic) will lead to the premature failure of strategic planning. In the case of the Environmental Health Department, many expressed concern about the lack of participation of three senior officers including the Chief Environmental Health Officer. The members of the YAD were very concerned about the willingness of the leadership within the Ministry of Education to give proper currency to their priorities and decisions.

While there is much support for strategic planning among the members, and many feel that much benefit can be derived from its proper implementation, there is a strong reservation about the likelihood of successful implementation. Many simply feel that senior administration 1) does not understand the process, 2) does not fully support the process; perhaps, because they don’t understand it, and 3) may not be ready for the changes implied by a strategic management culture. Based on these concerns, it would appear that senior leadership commitment to implementing the results of the strategic plan is deemed of greatest priority.

8. Next Steps

8.1 Barriers to strategic planning and management

There are a number of issues that must be addressed if a strategic management culture is to take root in the public service in SVG.

.1 Lack of commitment: There is a need for greater leadership commitment to strategic planning and strategic management. Strategic planning must not be seen as a one-time process producing one-outputs, but rather the starting point of a new management culture – managing for results.

.2 Lack of a results focus: Currently public servants are activity driven and have a cursory sense of how their work contributes to creating value for customers and stakeholders. As such, there are no performance measures and indicators. Accomplishments are viewed in terms of completing tasks. The corporate plans for YAD and EHD in Appendices B and D respectively attest to that fact.

.3 Lack of data: Because of a lack of a results focus and a lack of performance measures and indicators, data for planning and decision-making is not readily available. There is no annual performance report generated by either department. The lack of data made it extremely difficult to set performance targets or to prioritise performance objectives, since information about performance gaps was not available.

.4 Lack of an understanding of the concept of value: There is a need to for public servants to understand their department or ministry’s value proposition. Few seem to have a grasp of the value that customers and stakeholders expect to derive from the activities of the organization. It is necessary to have public servants become familiar with the concept of their agency’s value proposition and how the organization produces value from its operations.

.5 Low level of leadership maturity: By low levels of leadership maturity we are referring to the readiness of the agency’s leadership to manage in a complex environment
based on principles of: participative democracy; meritocracy; employee involvement and empowerment; value propagation; partnerships; strategic alliances; fact-based decision making; strategic thinking; and an emphasis on results. Both senior and middle public sector managers require leadership skills development to function in a reformed public sector. We must ensure that positions are not held based on technical knowledge or relationships, but rather on the basis of leadership capabilities.

.6 Lack of a consistent framework across ministries: The strategic management approach used across the various agencies needs to conform to a set of principles and practices. At present, there is no formalization of the strategic management process.

.7 No framework for promoting accountability: For strategic management to thrive, a system of performance accountability must be in place. While the GSVG has attempted to implement a Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), the accountability framework must be comprehensive in that it must include all of the necessary supports for accountability (training, grievance procedures, data collection, performance measurement, rewards and recognition, sanctions for poor performance of senior leadership, etc.)

.8 Current organizational culture not suited to the discipline of strategic planning: Strategic management culture requires among others: discipline; consistency; use of shared processes; consensus building; professionalism; innovation and creativity; good leadership and “follower ship” skills; teamwork; cooperation vs. competition; and belief in a meritocracy. It is widely held that the current culture within the public service is based on autocratic leadership, mediocrity, seniority, and nepotism. There are no easy answers with respect to how to bring about the appropriate cultural shift in the public service.

.9 Inadequate levels of innovation and use of technology: It is believed that there is great difficulty to innovate the public service because of the heavy procedural nature of how work is done. Further, while there is talk of e-government, many of the systems within government are carried out manually. There is inadequate devolution of the use of technology throughout the service, and in cases where computer technology is available; much of the use is centered on text processing. There is a need to improve the use of technology in facilitating service delivery, in analysing data, in optimising the allocation of resources, and in creating and disseminating knowledge.

8.2 Overcoming the barriers

Leadership buy-in and commitment to the strategic planning process are sacrosanct. The members of the YAD were very committed to the process, and the Department Head, Mr. Carlos Williams showed great commitment to the process. He participated in every session. There was general disappointment however, that the hectic schedule of the Head of the EHD allowed him minimal participation. This has serious implications for the successful implementation of the EHD’s planning process, as it is well known that the success of strategic planning hinges on the commitment of the leadership. In fact, leadership responses to the process tend to be contagious: there were several other senior members of this department who were absent on a number of occasions.

Given the level of participation, this consultant is confident that members of both the YAD and EHD will take ownership for the results in this document. By starting the process with the existing plan, it became quite clear to the members that their input was contributing to an enhanced strategic framework.
Given that all departments in the public service in SVG have at the very least an annual operational plan (most, if not all have a strategic plan), it is recommended that the strategic planning process not begin from scratch. However, if there are cases where either the strategic plan or the operational plan was developed in isolation by the head of the department, then one may want to start the strategic planning process from scratch. With that in mind, to encourage buy-in from the head of department, it might be prudent to start from the current plan, ensuring that the planning team has a chance to critique the document, and that the HOD will be willing to engage equally in the debate in order to work towards a shared plan.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

The primary objective of the Technical Assistance was to enhance the strategic plans for the YAD and the EHD with the goal of defining a clearer long-term (strategic) direction for each. At the end of the TA exercise, important data was captured to provide the basis for affirming the future directions of the two organizations. Using the data captured, it was left up to the two departments to finalize their strategic plans. We are uncertain whether or not that task has been accomplished.

We are confident that the strategic planning is a valuable management tool for improving public sector performance. However, we are not fully convinced that the merits of strategic planning and strategic management have been fully communicated and/or understood by leaders within the public service. What is interesting is that it is not uncommon to find verbal support for strategic planning, however, the commitment in terms of time, seems wanting.

The following are a few recommendations that may help improve the likelihood of entrenching a strategic management culture within the public service.

1. The GSVG should establish a written public policy sanctioned by Cabinet requiring all Ministries to develop five-year strategic plans, and two-year operational plans. That policy may be used to inform the eventual enactment of a “public sector performance law”.
2. There is a need to link the annual budgeting process to strategic plans. In particular, there is a need to develop a practice of allocating resources to reflect performance of Ministries and agencies. Ministries that perform well are rewarded.
3. All Ministries must develop, in alignment with their strategic plans, a performance measurement and analysis framework. That framework should be used to drive a managing-for-results-culture.
4. The GSVG must set in place a timeframe for implementing program-based budgeting and performance reporting. Currently, the practice is primarily line item budgeting.
5. The GSVG needs to ensure that strategic and operational plans are highly results oriented with clearly articulated systems for propagating a results culture.
6. As part of the strategic management framework, the GSVG should establish mechanisms for vetting the strategic plans of the various Ministries, and for conducting performance audits. Further, there should be an internal mechanism (capability) to conduct program evaluations. This independent body will provide information that can be used to validate or invalidate performance reports from Ministries.
7. The GSVG must seek to establish performance agreements with senior public sector managers, and establish a proper system of accountability.

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