

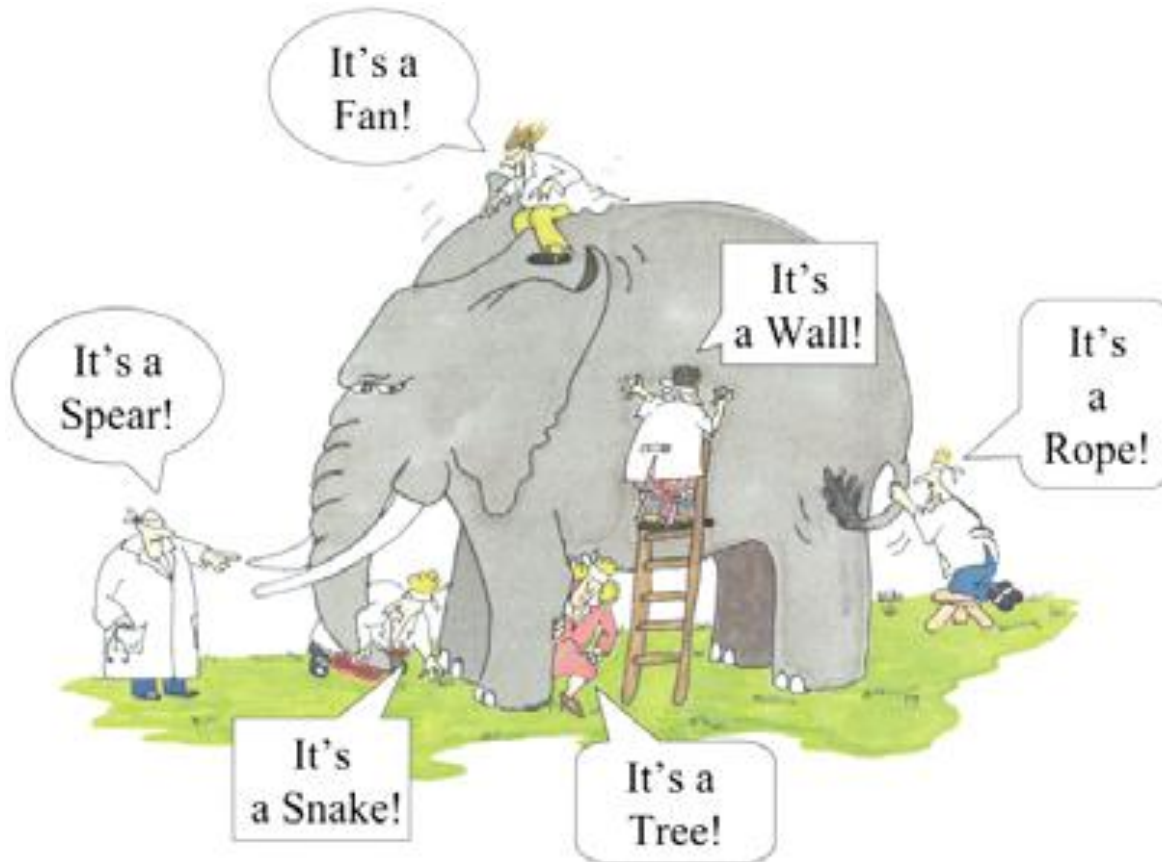
# Corporate Planning for NGOs

Marianne Carter,  
Director, Conservation Capacity Programme  
[Marianne.Carter@fauna-flora.org](mailto:Marianne.Carter@fauna-flora.org)

# Session Outline

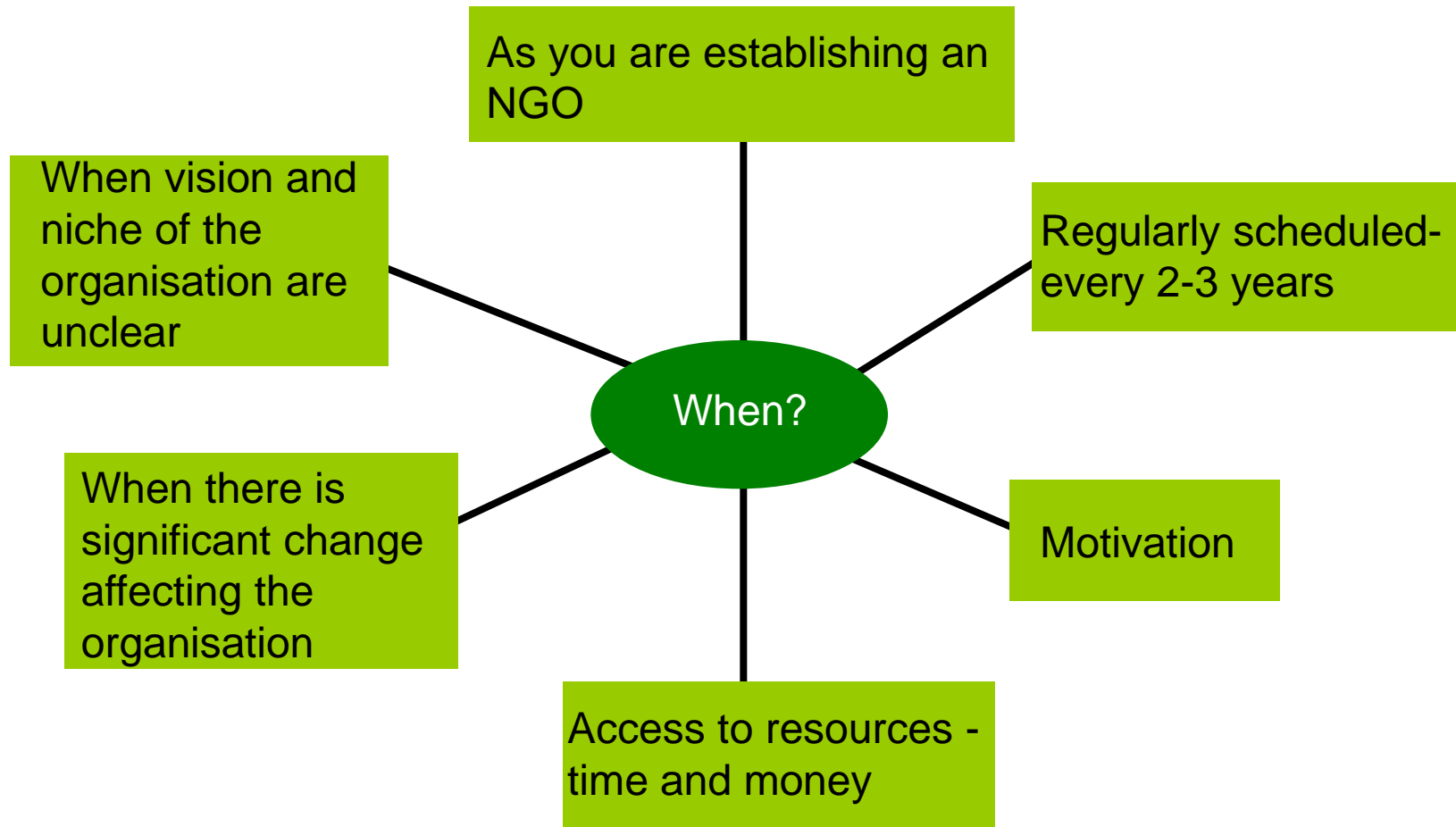
- What is corporate planning?
- The strategic planning process
- Lessons Learnt/Discussion

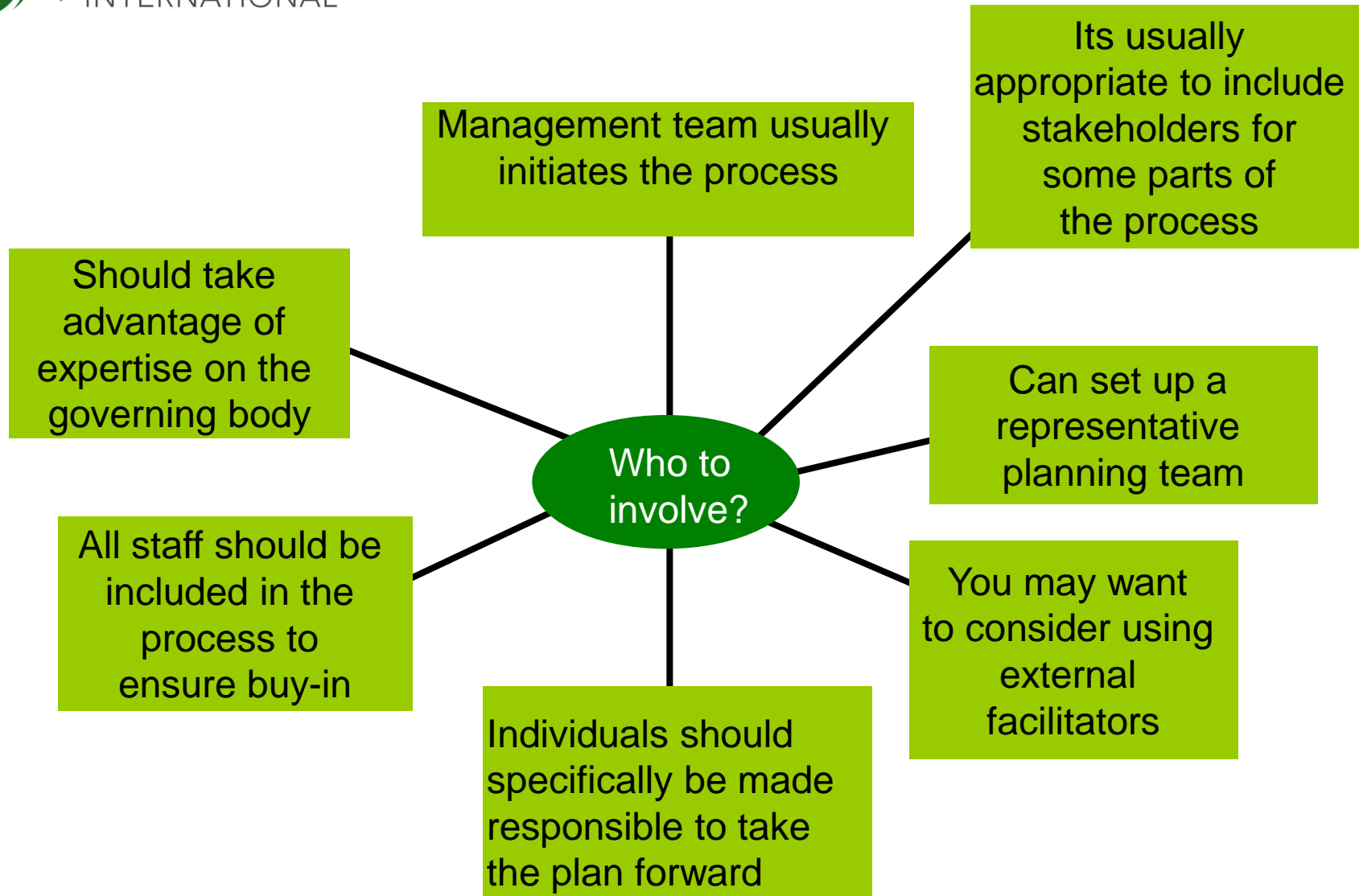
# What is Corporate Planning?



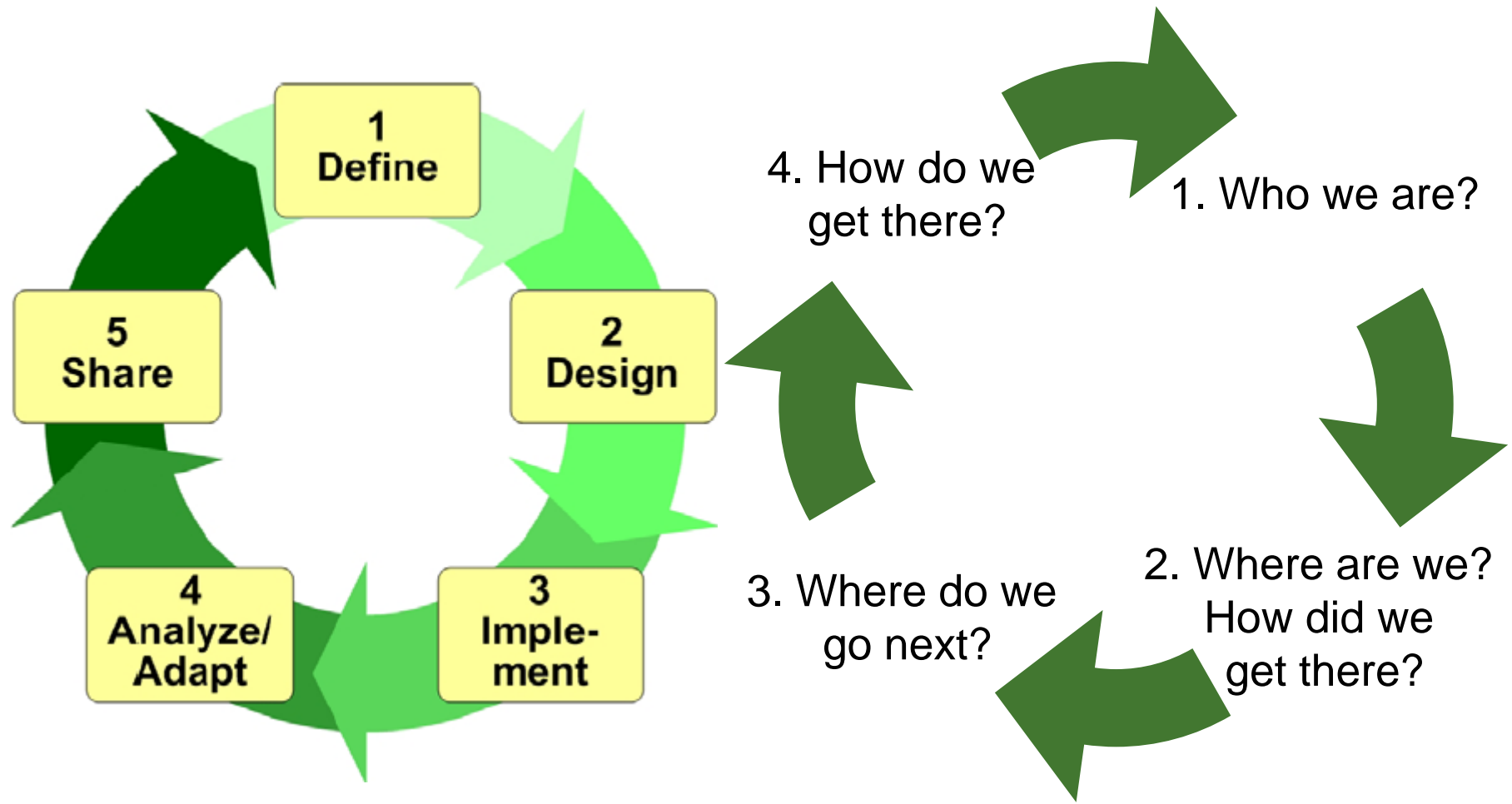
Who here has had some involvement in strategic planning for an organisation?







# Planning Cycles



# What is a Strategic Plan?

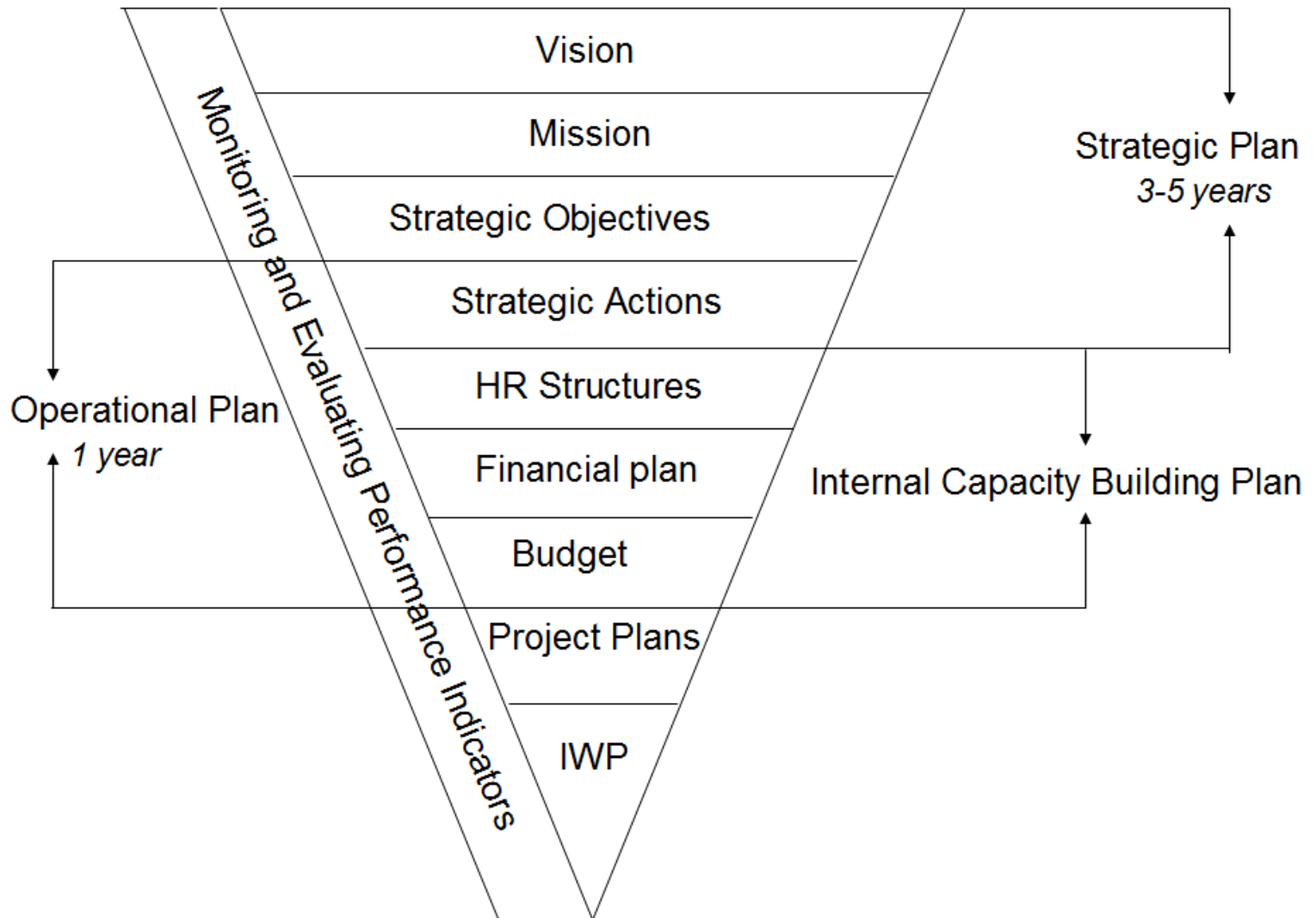
- A framework that guides the work of an organisation
- It is based on the broader context in which the organisation functions, its strengths and weaknesses and the problem it is working to address
- It helps maintain a focused long-term vision of the organisation's mission and purpose
- It aids decisions about the allocation of human and financial resources
- It articulates specific objectives and strategic actions



# Other Planning Tools

A Strategic plan overarches and informs the following:

- **Operational Plan:** spells out time frames and the roles of individual staff and board members
- **Internal Capacity Plan:** details the HR and financial structures needed to achieve the objectives
- **Project Plan:** guides specific projects
- **Individual Plan:** outlines what individuals hope to achieve in a given time frame



# Strategic Planning Process

1. Prepare to Plan
2. Vision, Values & Mission
3. Internal & External Situational Analysis
4. Strategic Issues & Objectives
5. Strategic Actions
6. Resource needs & costing
7. Implementation
8. Monitoring Evaluation & Learning

# 1. Prepare to Plan

- List who might be involved in the process (governing body, staff, partners, beneficiaries etc)
- Create a work plan and timetable, allocating specific tasks to individuals.
- Consider holding a workshop at the start of the process to present proposals for developing the strategic plan
- Be clear about how much involvement is being offered to stakeholders in the process
- Agree what external inputs you might need for different parts of the process.
- Decide whether or not to use one person (external and internal) as a facilitator for the process- and write a detailed brief for the kind of person you want and what is needed.
- Assign responsibility for documenting the process, writing up the plan and providing administrative support.

## 2a. Vision

A vision is the starting point for any strategic framework, and shapes it. Objectives and activities should all help contribute to the vision.

e.g. FFI's Vision:

A sustainable future for the planet, where biodiversity is effectively conserved by the people who live closest to it, supported by the global community.

## 2a. Vision

### Exercise:

- Write 2 key problems you are trying to address on separate cards.
- Imagine a world in 10 years time when all your dreams have come true and you are doing what you have always wanted, draw a picture representing this.



As a group, collectively come up with an overall vision statement using these statements and drawings. You could start the sentence in the following ways:

We strive for....

We believe that....

We are committed to.....

## 2b. Values

Clarifying and reaching consensus on organisational values provides a basis for the organisation to make difficult decisions. Its important not to forget the culture of the organisation when planning for the future.

Develop a set of principles (do's and don'ts) for:

- how the organisation functions
- how staff behave when they approach their work
- who you will work with (partners etc.)

## 2c. Mission

An organisational mission should contain:

- What do you aim to do/achieve?
- Who is it aimed at and done with?
- How do you work/methods?

i.e.

We are.....

We aim to.....

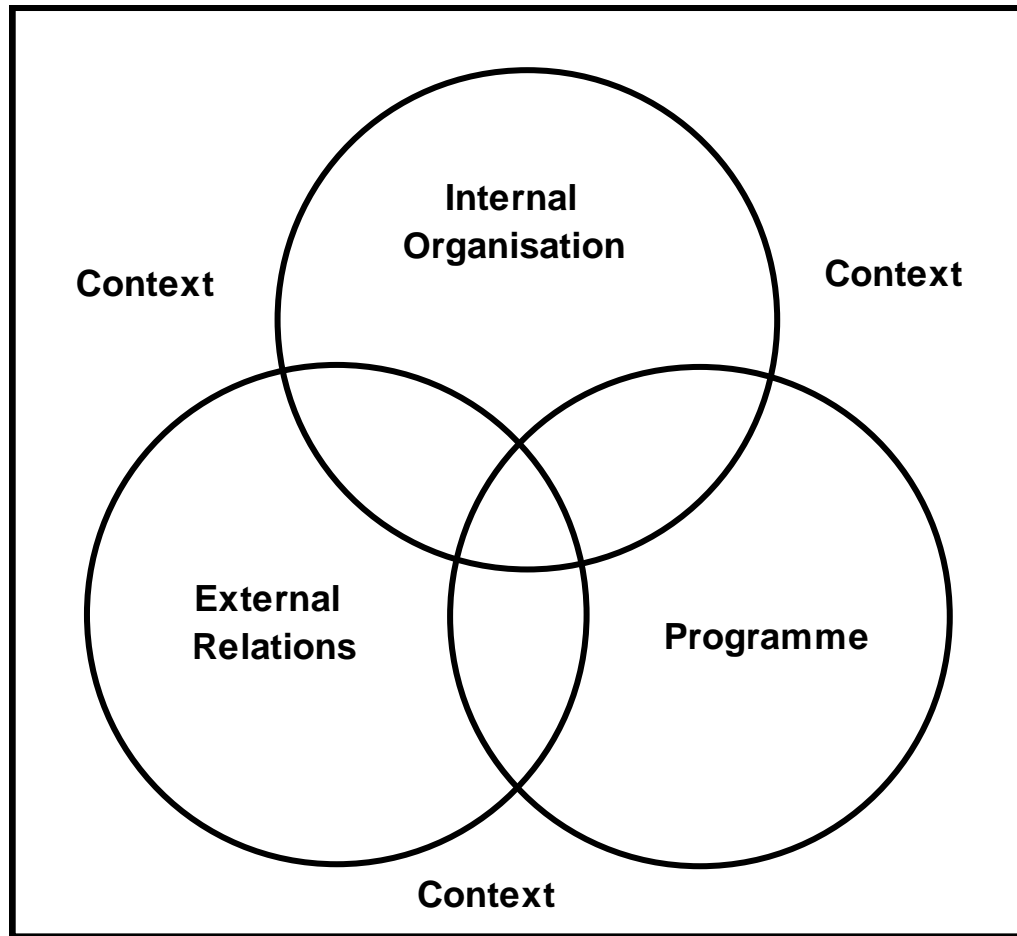
We do this by.....

FFI's is:

We strive to act to conserve threatened species and ecosystems worldwide, choosing solutions that are sustainable, based on sound science and take into account human needs.



# 3. Internal & External Situational Analysis



# 3. Internal & External Situational Analysis

Can be achieved through workshops and interviews.

## **External:**

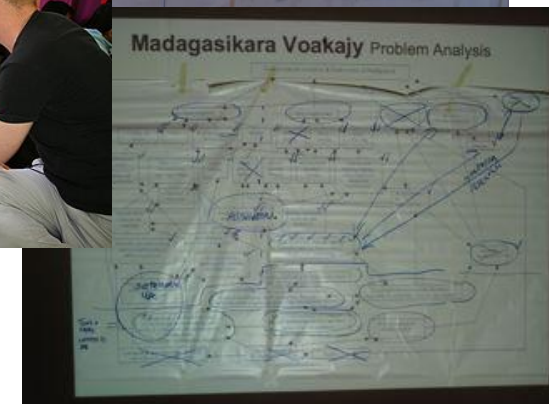
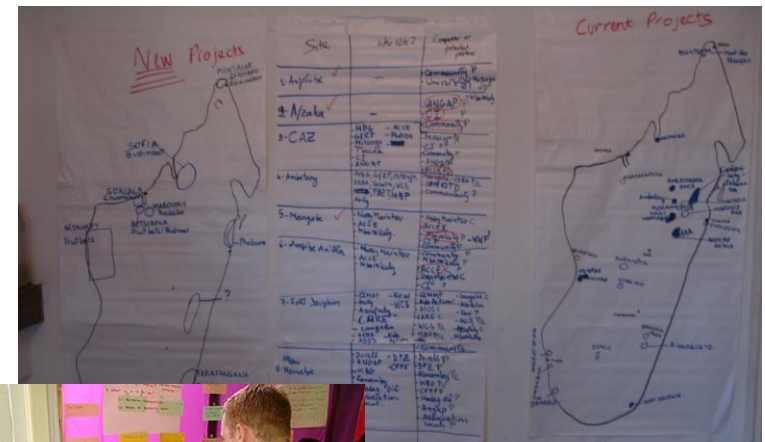
Identifies key trends, target groups, and underlying causes.

- Stakeholder Analysis
- Presentation on bigger picture from an 'outside' person
- Problem tree analysis
- Partner interviews

## **Internal:**

Identification of distinctive strengths and competencies, as well as challenges.

- Organisational Timeline
- Organisational Capacity Assessment
- SWOC (or SWOT/ SOAR) analysis



## 3. Stakeholder Analysis

Aims to identify key stakeholders and how they influence the organisation. A stakeholder is any person/group/institution/structure that has any kind of stake in your organisation

Exercise:

Brainstorm stakeholders, and make a stakeholder map to show:

1. their interest in the organisation
2. their expectations from the relationship
3. the contribution could they make to the organisation

## 3. SWOC

- **Strengths:** *internal attributes that help you achieve your mission*
- **Weaknesses:** *internal attributes that constrain you meeting your mission*
- **Opportunities:** *external conditions that help you achieve your mission*
- **Constraints:** *external conditions that could prevent you achieving your mission*

## 3. SWOC

Questions to ask when completing a SWOC include:

### **Strengths**

- What is the organisation particularly good at?
- What makes the organisation special?

### **Weaknesses**

- What could be improved upon?
- What stops the organisation performing at its best?
- What necessary skills are missing that you might need for delivering the organisations objectives?

### **Opportunities**

- Are there some existing suitable gaps the organisation could step into?
- Where do you see the best forthcoming opportunities for the organisation?
- What is changing in the outside world that might create new opportunities for the organisation in the near future?

### **Constraints**

- What obstacles does the organisation face?
- What are others doing that might create problems for the organisation?
- What high risk things are you doing that might make you vulnerable to external impacts?

## 3. SWOC

In discussion answer the following questions:

- What can we do to maximise our strengths?
- What must we build to overcome weaknesses?
- What do we need to do to make use of the opportunities?
- What can we do to minimise or neutralise threats?
- What is really important for our current and future work?
- What is too serious to ignore?

## 4. Strategies

Strategies are the paths that the organisation will follow as it works toward achieving the identified mission.

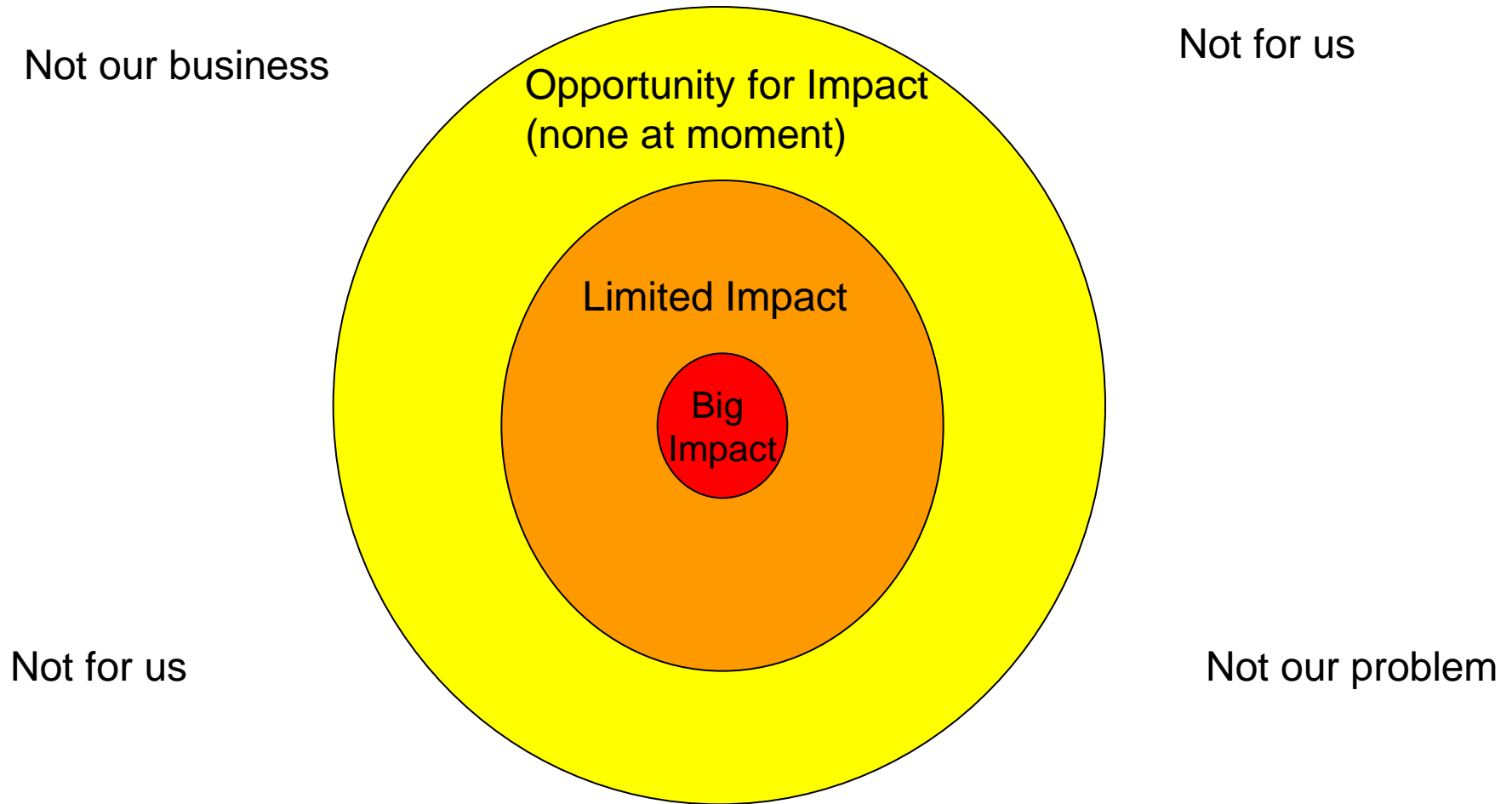
Using the work on visioning, defining the mission, and the situation analysis, identify the key strategic issues for the organisation.

## 4. Strategic Issues

- Can the organisation do anything about the issue?
- Will the impact of addressing the issue be significant?
- Are there significant human/financial resource impacts?
- Will this issue still be significant in 2 years time?
- Will there be important consequences if the issue is not addressed?



# 4. Prioritising Strategic Issues



## 4. Strategic Objectives

- Strategic objectives are statements of how you want the world to look when you have fixed a particular problem. They state clearly and precisely *what* the organisation wants to have achieved during a given period.
- These statements should be realistic and be compatible with what was stated in the mission.
- There should be no more than 5 or 6 Strategic Objectives. Each of these should be linked with appropriate performance indicators.

## 4. Performance Indicators

An indicator is a quantifiable and explicit measure of achievement of an objective. They can be used to monitor and evaluate the plan. They should ideally measure changes of state rather than process.

They should be SMART:

- **Specific** what, where, when
- **Measurable** quantity rather than quality
- **Achievable** realistic
- **Relevant** necessary
- **Time-bound** to be completed by a named time.

## 4. Performance Indicators

e.g. For FFI's strategic objective to 'safeguard haven's of biodiversity', some of indicators include:

1. Terrain under conservation management through intervention by FFI and its partners increased by an additional 50% against 2008 baseline.
2. Capacity for robust conservation management improves against 2008 baseline, measured by effectiveness of local stewards and local governance.
3. The key species and processes on the areas we conserve are shown to persist at initial or enhanced levels, as appropriate.
4. Funding for endangered and flagship species within our portfolio increased by 200%.

## 5. Strategic Actions

Strategic actions state *how* each strategic objective will be achieved. It is important not to make too many of these or they will become impossible to achieve (e.g. up to 5 per objective).



They form the basis for the more detailed operational plan which contains specific actions for specific people over a shorter time frame (e.g. 1 year).

## 5. Strategic Actions

Factors to consider when developing strategic actions:

- What are the most appropriate actions/activities to pursue in working towards the identified strategic objectives?
- What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of methods such as research, project funding, networking, advocacy and capacity building for realising each of the strategic objectives?
- What methods will be used?
- Whom will the organisation collaborate with: government departments, international agencies, other local NGOs?

## 6. Identify Resource Needs and Costing

This information makes up your internal capacity plan.

Questions to ask include:

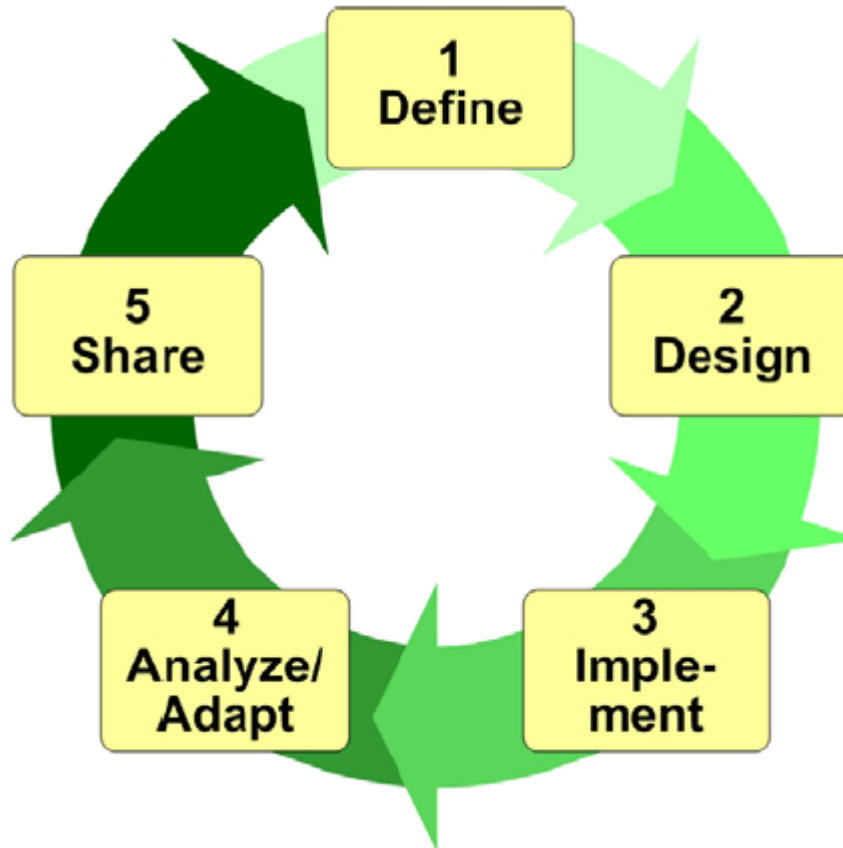
- How should we group ourselves (units, departments, teams) in order to achieve our objectives in the next 3 years?
- What administrative, financial and legal support will be needed?
- What policies do we need to have in place?
- Does it make sense to change any existing structures?
- Do we have the competencies for what needs to be done? What additional skills/knowledge/experience do we need?
- What information systems will we need?
- How much will it cost?
- Where will we get the money?

# 7. Implementation & 8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

- Your plan will not probably play out as you expect, you will need to adaptively manage changes.
- Its important to regularly revisit the plan and assess against the indicators, so that you can learn and adapt appropriately.
- A monitoring framework and data collection practices may need to be established, so appropriate information is collected and shared (there are computer programmes out there to help do this).
- It may be necessary to develop methods of effectively sharing and learning from the evaluation process, for example through meetings, workshops, web, publications etc.



# Takes us back to....



# Lessons

- Not a rigid process
- People don't like change
- Takes time and money to do well, but worth the investment
- Can't plan in the middle of a crisis
- Only useful if people are committed to implement- buy-in increases with participation
- Plan with monitoring and evaluation in mind
- External facilitator can help, or hinder, understanding of the culture, relationships and values of the organisation is essential
- Following up from the planning process is important, since expectations will be raised.