Planning happens at all levels of a sport organization. Athletes plan what they are going to do today. Coaches think through training routines and strategies for the next competition. Officials review their performances and look at ways of improving their accuracy and interpretation of the rules. Administrators analyze what they are doing and look for a way forward to improve the capacity of the organization to support all of its activities. Planning may happen naturally as information is processed and decisions are made either consciously or unconsciously. The nature of planning, however, often means that it occurs within a specific context and more usually within a specific frame of activity or perspective.

Planned development in sport is something else altogether. The challenges that face sport administrators today revolve largely around making the best use of planning as a tool for achieving results on the field of play, while at the same time planning for the growth of the organization. The ultimate aim is to grow the organization so that its capacity to deliver effective sport programs improves steadily over time. Planned development is taking a proactive approach to growing the sport by assessing the available alternatives and taking the best possible strategic direction to achieve outcomes that are within the capacity of the organization to obtain.

A sport organization naturally grows in size and complexity, from “kitchen table” to boardroom (Kikulis, Slack and Hinings, 1995), from volunteer administration to professional management (Chelladurai and Madella, 2006), from a pastime to a serious endeavor. Sustained growth in a sport organization requires an understanding of what its core business is and what structures or pillars have been put in place to execute its core business. An example of one such pillar might be governance, or human resources. We then need to know what components make up each pillar and what relationship between these components exists, if any, as the organization grows. By taking this approach we can identify readily what impact changes in one pillar of the organization have on another and this in turn should lead to better planning outcomes. Effective planning for growing a sport organization needs to be fundamentally holistic, but leading to specialized planning as it focuses on the specific pillars of the organization.

This chapter will discuss the rationale for planned development in sport organizations and examine some of the assumptions that are accepted as the norm in the development of sport from an organizational perspective. Its intention is to offer some clarity and focus to planning...
the development of a sport organization and its capacity to deliver successful sport programs and activities. The focus of the chapter is on the planned development of National Governing Bodies (NGBs), also known as National Federations, National Sport Associations or National Sport Organizations. However, the principles and processes addressed in the chapter are applicable to all sport organizations. The chapter will address three main aspects of planning for sport. It will define planned development, set out the necessity to plan effectively and discuss the creation of plans that have practical, managerial value.

Readers of this chapter will hopefully gain a better understanding of the need to plan as well as the process of planning, learning to appreciate planning as a tool that will enhance how a sport organization does its work and, in particular, make the life of its human resource base, whether voluntary or professional, more effective and satisfying. The chapter ends with a case study of the internal analysis of Fiji Swimming.

**Planned development**

The measure of success for national sport organizations is often reflected in either medal-winning performances at multi-sport games such as the Olympic Games or Commonwealth Games or recorded success in leagues or championships. To achieve success on the field of play requires a great deal of effort and consistency and sport organizations not only need to compete with others with the same interests but also with organizations that encompass other disciplines or activities as well, as they attempt to lure members and support from the public and sponsors alike. As sport organizations grow to support successful “on-field” performances, they develop in a manner that enables the organization to be managed in a more efficient and effective way and this in turn leads to a need for planning for future growth and development.

Most national sport organizations have been formed according to guidelines that satisfy the recommendations of their respective International Sport Federation (IF). These guidelines provide an adequate platform on which to establish a functional organization that lends itself to a planned and proactive approach to development. Proponents of planning such as government departments and sport funding agencies urge the view that success in sport should be a result of the environment created by the organization rather than a goal in itself. The challenge then, for all sport organizations, is to get their infrastructure properly established so that the output from it is successful performance.

Single-outcome planning, such as supporting a national team, while ignoring other aspects of the organization’s activities might achieve this. However, if there are elements of development missing from the organization’s overall operational structure it is unlikely that such performance will be sustained. A simple example of this is investing all of the organization’s financial resources to support an athlete to win a medal at a major event. While this might be good for the athlete, the short-term gain that might be made will have meant that other areas of the organization have had to forgo their development through lack of finances. In the medium to long run this will further compromise the ability of the organization to support the effort of future athletes.

Success in sport requires multi-dimensional planning and, more importantly, the successful execution of plans. In particular, this means having an understanding of what influence the various managerial functions or pillars that make up the organization have on the overall performance of its administrators, coaches, officials and athletes.

The logic that underlies the planning method described in this chapter accepts the need for organizations to:
• establish a firm base or a foundation from which to build or grow;
• expand gradually within the limits of their human and physical resources;
• take advantage of opportunities as they arise and evolve from current and past achievement;
• strive for perfection and ensure that what is achieved is of the highest quality;
• ensure every step taken leaves a viable legacy that can be expanded upon at a later date.

In essence, organizations need to develop their existing resources and work with what is available before new opportunities present themselves. This is the purpose of planned development.

The temptation for many sport organizations is to aim straight for the top, to “shoot for the stars” without establishing a proper base. The end result is usually disappointing and it will either have cost a lot of money and left very little to show for it, or achieve success without having the capacity to be able to capitalize on it. Some symptoms of this might include:

• establishing a national squad before establishing a national competition framework in the sport;
• spending vital development funds on sending athletes to where they can access facilities for training and competition because they are not available at home;
• employing foreign coaches or human resources at rates well beyond the economic viability of the organization in a bid to gain early success.

Taking short cuts to achieve aspirations that the organization is not ready to take on may retard the growth of the organization and ultimately compromise the overall development of the sport itself. Many sport managers are in favor of gambling on a results-based outcome, in the hope that the outcome will stimulate the development required. The problem with this approach, however, is that if the organization does achieve a successful outcome, it might not be in a position to take advantage of the opportunities for development that arise from it.

For example, if a basketball club invests heavily in a team to win promotion to a higher league it might be unable to accommodate the extra demands placed by the higher level of competition if it hasn’t accounted for factors such as the standard of coaching, recruitment of new players, the court the club uses and the competence of those who run the club. By attracting more interest in the team, the club will need access to a court that can hold more spectators and also has a playing surface that meets the expectations of the next level of competition. Without this in place, the opportunities gained by investing in a successful team in isolation from the rest of the club will very likely be lost. This scenario can be avoided with effective planning. Effective planning must ensure that the key components of the organization do not work independently of each other but develop in coordination with the rest of the organization. It is this tenet that should form the basic rationale for planned development.

**The need for planned development**

Sport organizations operate in an environment that is constantly growing and changing. There is increasing pressure on sport organizations to run their sport professionally in order
Planned development of sport organizations

to maintain or improve their position in the community. National Federations (NFs), associations and clubs face multiple challenges such as increasing costs, rising demand for volunteers/personnel, public liability and a preference for non-sport or activity-based lifestyles among younger people. In addition to competing with other sport disciplines to attract participants and spectator interest, sport organizations also face increasing competition from the entertainment industry and a booming recreation industry that includes electronic games, as well as non-competitive activities and adventure sport.

Consequently sport organizations need to plan strategically if they are to survive and thrive in the modern environment. Boyd (2005) provides the following examples of a strategic thinking approach to specific problems:

- A national federation faces financial difficulties and needs to develop strategies that generate new long-term income sources and minimize costs. Potential strategies could focus on sponsorship from the public and private sector, increasing revenue through membership fees, government grant applications, fundraising events and activities, more accountable financial control and ultimately, commercializing their activities so that they earn revenue and add to the overall asset value of the organization.

- A football club had 39,545 members in 2011. However, the club estimated that it had 1.1 million supporters throughout the country – making the club’s nationwide supporter base a major strength. Club management identified that in order to capitalize on this strength, they need to convert these supporters to members by identifying as many of these supporters as possible and developing a greater sense of involvement between them and the club.

The benefits of planning

There are a number of benefits to planning (Chappelet and Bayle, 2005; Gollwitzer, 1996) and some of these include:

- Increasing the awareness of the operating environment both within the organization and outside of it. By understanding the forces that are working within and around the organization, volunteers have a better chance of becoming more efficient and more productive with the limited but valuable time that they are contributing.

- Coping with change in the environment. As an organization undertakes projects that develop areas of its operating environment, it is likely that these changes will impact other areas of the organization. For example, running a new competition may require the addition of new personnel and access to new facilities. This in turn may impact on the financial procedures and the skills required of volunteers, which will in turn require additional training and preparation and a better communications strategy. Effective planning will assist the organization with these rolling changes.

- Exerting more control over the organization’s destiny. This means members can decide where they want the organization to be in the future and how to get there. This will provide members with a clear picture of their own roles and responsibilities and enable more effective contribution to the common goal by the members as a whole.

- Improving the financial performance of the organization. This engenders confidence by assuring staff and volunteers that monies are being handled responsibly and spent effectively. An organization in a healthy financial position is more likely to provide for the needs of its members.
• Improving organizational control and coordination of activities. This will reduce duplication of effort and create an environment that members are happy to operate in. A sign that governance is not achieving this is when a “them and us” mentality develops within the organization, resulting in a lack of respect for decision-makers and the administrative processes that exist within the organization.

• Providing a sound platform for decision-making and forming other plans. This should be based on an effective monitoring and evaluation process that provides information accurately and in a timely fashion to the decision-makers.

In more simple terms, Boyd (2005) suggests that strategic planning will assist a sport organization by:

• identifying and building a broad framework that allows an organization to achieve its mission and vision;
• matching the strengths of an organization to available opportunities that arise within the internal and external environment of the organization;
• providing a set of guidelines that guides an organization in the pursuit of its mission and objectives.

These outcomes are usually only achieved with effective planning. The larger and more diverse the organization becomes, the more critical the level of planning needs to become to support it and maintain beneficial outcomes. Many sport organizations prefer not to spend the time planning and still manage to achieve results that are satisfactory to members. However, it is likely that there will come a time when this is no longer the case as the volume of challenges generated by reactive activity becomes unmanageable and difficult to direct effectively. The planning process, however, needs to be as simple as possible so that volunteers are not put off the thought of undertaking this vital activity. The first step in the process of planning often starts with the establishment of a vision and a mission. This will now be discussed.

The benefit of establishing a vision and mission statement

An NGB will have a constitution or administrative rulebook to guide its governance. Furthermore, the majority of sport clubs and associations have a well-established product: the sport itself, which comes with an established set of rules and code of conduct that has been formed and promulgated by its peak body, the International Federation. Armed with these fundamental processes, the organization can quickly establish its mission and vision, around which the actual planning process is driven.

Unfortunately, many sport organizations often become bogged down in trying to develop these and occupy more time working out their vision and mission than actually deciding what it is they are trying to do and how best to achieve it. Some organizations avoid this by keeping to a very simple vision and mission to get the planning process started and then revise these statements with the benefit of hindsight once the planning process is under way.

The vision statement is generally written as an ideal and ultimate long-term outcome or goal for the organization and may be so general that it is never actually achieved. However, a good vision statement establishes the “big picture” for the organization and if properly derived will provide the basis for the branding and market positioning of the organization as it grows and becomes more influential within the community.
Developing the vision can be very difficult, simply because it attempts to bring together the ideas of many and encapsulate them into a simple statement that appeals to everyone. For the majority of sport organizations, a simple concise statement is all that is needed. For example, the Vision for the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) is “A world that values and fosters doping-free sport.” This was adapted by the Oceania Regional Anti Doping Agency, a subset of WADA, to read, “An environment in which doping-free sport is valued and fostered in the Oceania Region.” By taking its vision from WADA, the Oceania agency was able to commence its planning process quickly and easily and over time has been able to modify its vision and mission to suit the evolution of its core business specifically for its own operating environment.

Having stated what the organization stands for in its vision, it can then establish its mission. The mission statement is a clear, brief statement of the organization’s long-term purpose, core business and values. It is an action statement rather than an outcome statement and should be geared toward attaining the vision of the organization. An example of this might be a mission statement that reads something like this:

To provide opportunities for the young people of our community to take part in regular competition and training programs, run by well-trained and caring sport leaders.

Once the organization has a clear vision and mission in place it is ready to undertake the planning process.

**The planning process – a staged approach**

The nature of planning has been well described in planning handbooks and guidelines (Chappelet and Bayle, 2005; Boyd, 2005; SPARC, 2004). However, the planning process in itself can be a long and arduous one, especially for national governing bodies that are volunteer governed and managed (see Chapters 2 and 3). The primary aim of the planning process for a sport organization is to produce a strategic plan that will guide its development and provide a framework for the day-to-day operations of the organization.

A strategic plan is a document that presents a strategic direction, lists objectives, and records the actions that will be taken to meet these objectives. In theory, a strategic plan helps an organization to identify its desired future direction and goals, and then map out a way to achieve them within the constraints of its internal and external environment. For sport organizations these generally cover a three- to five-year period. In the case of Olympic sport organizations, planning tends to occur around the four-year Olympic cycle from one summer Olympic Games to the next. Planning processes for sport organizations are well established (Chappelet and Bayle, 2005). However it is very tempting to make the process a complex and difficult one to manage and implement. The challenge is to keep the process as straightforward as possible.

Essentially it requires four simple stages that refer to the established vision and mission for the organization, which are diagnosis, setting the direction, putting into action and monitoring and evaluation. These are set out below.

**Stage one: Diagnosis**

This stage focuses on generating an understanding of where the organization is positioned with respect to its internal and external environment and should determine what it can and
cannot undertake in order to develop further and achieve results. An important part of any analysis is to review the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) facing the organization (Morrison, 2008). The SWOT has also been expanded to SCORE (Graves, 2006), an acronym for determining the strengths, challenges, options, responses and effectiveness of an organization. In sport planning the SCORE acronym has been applied to reflect the strengths, constraints, opportunities, risks and expectations surrounding a sport organization. The SCORE approach to organizational analysis has the added benefit of understanding the expectations that lie within the organization.

While a traditional SWOT analysis can be applied to almost any component of an organization, a SWOT or SCORE analysis by itself is not of much use. A good environmental analysis should provide knowledge from which to develop an organization's strategic direction, by identifying what the organization does well, the challenges it faces, and by providing background on the factors that influence the organization's functions and performance. A solid understanding of environmental circumstances will help the organization to think strategically and ultimately survive and prosper.

One good example of a tool that assists with this is the Readiness Assessment Tool (RAT) established by Minikin (2009). This tool attempts to identify and recognize the current level of development of a sport organization across eight pillars and compare this to the level of internal development required for that organization to undertake the activity in question. The tool, in essence, assesses what a sport organization has in place already and what an organization needs to have in place in order to undertake a particular activity. An example of its use in Fiji Swimming is set out at the end of this chapter.

**Stage two: Setting the direction**

This stage focuses on establishing goals and objectives that take the organization to where it wants to go. Determining the direction that the organization wants to take is based on the establishment of objectives that reflect the current capacity and level of development of an organization and provide a framework for a staged development process that will advance the development of the organization in a systematic and manageable way. It is therefore essential that the first stage of the planning process is completed thoroughly.

When confronted with lists of issues that might need to be addressed the planning process can easily become chaotic. For this reason, planners tend to group issues that cover similar areas affecting the organization into Key Result Areas (KRA) (Minikin, 2009). By categorizing the many issues that are to be considered in planning under a set of pillars it is possible for a sport organization to effectively identify a primary objective for each pillar and then list a set of objectives that will direct the achievement of the mission.

The term “SMART objectives” is used widely in the planning process, and is an acronym used to describe objectives constructed as follows:

- **Specific** objectives detail a specific outcome to be achieved within a pillar. They are characterized by a clearly defined scope and time frame.
- **Measurable** objectives are those that can be quantified in some way so as to gauge whether or not it has been achieved.
- **Achievable** objectives are those that the organization has the necessary resources in place to meet.
- **Realistic** objectives are those that are set within the capabilities of the organization to deal with them.
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- Time bound objectives clearly set out a time frame by which an expected outcome is to be achieved.

An example of a SMART objective might be:

To enhance the performance of the national team and improve international ranking by taking part in six official ranking tournaments by 2013.

In order for objectives to be considered as SMART, each one will need to be evaluated to determine whether or not it is specific enough, has measurable outcomes, is achievable given the current capacity of the organization, is realistic given the current capabilities of the organization and meets a defined time period or deadline.

If this part of the planning process is done in haste and fails to refer to the analysis carried out earlier in the process, objectives are then set that sound appropriate but are no longer SMART as they become unrealistic or out of touch with the realities of the organization itself. It is essential that once the objectives have been agreed they are referred back to earlier assessments to determine if the organization is ready to pursue these objectives and that the right environmental conditions exist that make it possible to pursue them.

Stage three: Putting into action

This stage focuses on taking the objectives that have been determined and implementing them in a way that will achieve the defined strategies within the limits of the resources available. The aim of stage three is to develop an action plan. The action plan will consist of a number of specific actions that will contribute towards the achievement of the stated objectives within a functional pillar of the organization. This is the ‘How To’ part of the strategic plan and addresses all the key tasks/actions, including:

- What is to be achieved?
- How will it be achieved?
- How much will it cost?
- When will it be achieved?
- Who will achieve it?
- Why has it to be achieved?
- What will be measured to indicate that it has been achieved?

For each objective listed, planners should consider their options and agree on a strategy that will enable the organization to achieve the objective within the constraints it has identified and the time frame that has been established.

Actions need to be detailed in their construction, be costed, have appropriate resources identified and assigned and the required human resources to complete them. Usually there will be someone from within the organization who is responsible for supervising the completion of each action. In a well-established sport organization this is likely to be done by professional managers or, at the very least, specialized volunteers. For more simple organizations, it is more likely to be a member of the elected board or executive committee.

It is necessary to use verbs when developing a strategy and this language continues through all of the action statements that are to be included. For example, when setting objectives and actions for governance:
Minikin

- Objective 1: Review the structure of the board of management to reflect changes in the scope of activities being undertaken by the organization, by April 2013.
- Action 1: Complete an internal audit of the organization by November 2012.
- Action 2: Complete an assessment of activity across all aspects of the organization by December 2012.
- Action 3: Conduct a workshop involving board members and other key stakeholders to review the audit and current activity level to determine if the current functions of the board match activities, by January 2013.
- Action 4: Complete a proposal that recommends changes to the structure of the board of management and have this circulated to members by 1 March 2013.
- Action 5: Present any changes proposed to the 2013 Annual General Meeting, along with necessary amendments to the Constitution, if required.

For each of the actions prescribed there needs to be an assessment to ensure that the order and timelines will achieve the objective. This requires the establishment of measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Generally there are two or three KPIs assigned to any action, but there is no limit provided that the measure being undertaken is specific to the action and relevant to the overall objective being addressed. The KPIs need to:

- reflect the desired end results and outcomes of the action to be measured and the overall objective that the action is working towards;
- target what the organization wants to achieve in quantifiable terms;
- be measurable and quantifiable and must relate directly to the stated outcomes.

Once this is done then the plan should go back to the board and ultimately the Annual General Meeting for approval, be signed off formally and approval given to those responsible to proceed.

Examples of KPIs for an objective that relates to improving the performance of the National Team might be:

The national senior and junior squads to have completed, at minimum:

- twelve sessions with top-level international coaches during the period 2012–2014;
- four sport science sessions (one video analysis and three fitness testing) by qualified sport/exercise science professionals throughout the same period of time;
- one international tour by the end of 2013.

The process of developing action plans for each stated objective under each key result area is complex and needs to follow a logical sequence. However, once in place the reporting and function of the organization should proceed in a clear and efficient way.

It is worthy of note that action plans are established based on the objectives provided but often within the framework of an organizational pillar. This provides a means of developing job descriptions or work plans, but runs the risk of targeting individual organizational pillars so that they are developed in isolation from the rest of the organization. A simple example of this might be the classification of an organization’s performance on the basis of its team’s competitive performance, as reflected by medal-winning performances or standings on a premiership ladder. Such an approach might ignore or disregard important advances that have been made in other areas of their operations, such as human resource development, facilities.
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and equipment, sponsorship and marketing, all of which were stimulated by a successful strategic delivery of a medal-winning team. Furthermore, for sport organizations with limited resources, the temptation to concentrate on one or two organizational pillars while ignoring the rest can lead to an imbalance in the organization's development. Minikin (2009) proposes that such imbalances may eventually compromise the achievements made by the organization, because they become unsustainable.

Consequently, balanced planning across all of the organizational pillars is necessary. This is best achieved by planning the progress in each pillar in accordance with an understanding of the influence of elements within one pillar on the elements that exist across the rest of the pillars. For example, in planning to establish a national league competition, it is important to understand how the establishment of this sport activity will impact on the demand for human resources, physical resources, finance and communications and ensure that these pillars have or will have what is needed to be able to support the establishment and maintenance of a national league. Planning for a national league without taking into account the pressures on the organization as a whole may well lead to failure of both the establishment of the national league and the effective development of the organization itself. It is for this reason that the final stage in the planning process becomes essential.

Stage four: Monitoring and evaluation

This stage focuses on determining if the established objectives are being achieved and if the strategies chosen are effective in achieving them. The overall effectiveness of the planning process for sport is often difficult to determine if only quantitative evaluation frameworks are applied. These tend to measure the implementation of programs such as coaching courses for sport organizations and the parameters measured usually include quantitative measures such as:

- Number of courses held
- Number of coaches achieving certification
- Funds distributed.

While these measures might tell us whether or not programs have been implemented, they do not address the more important indicators of how much improvement in the quality of coaching has occurred, or whether or not the funds could have been spent more effectively. It is reasonable to suggest that as part of the planning process, a more comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework will be constructed that will enable the sport organization to not only measure its performance against specific KPIs but also determine whether, as a result of the action completed, there has been a measurable improvement in the overall performance of the sport organization. (See Chapter 6 for more information on performance management and measurement.)

Implementation of the plan

For many organizations, the planning process is an end in itself. It is one thing to develop a plan and quite another to implement it. Before embarking on the planning process, sport organizations must commit themselves to follow it and work to it, otherwise the document will become no more than window dressing. The following six points are essential to the effective implementation of a strategic plan.
First, all decision-making and reporting should link to the strategic plan. Progress reports for actions occurring in each of the organizational pillars must be included on the agenda for board meetings and reported to the Annual General Meeting. The plan itself should be readily available to all members and stakeholders, and reports need to refer to the relevant section of the plan at all times. In doing so, the plan will become a “living document” and achieve its purpose of bringing together the members for a common cause. It also means that if projects are being entered into that have not been addressed in the plan, appropriate questions can be asked and the accountability of board members is guaranteed.

Second, the allocation of financial, human and physical resources to the strategies outlined in the plan needs to be a formal process that is reported during the monitoring and evaluation phase. This should be agreed to at the Annual General Meeting when budgets are passed. A well-functioning organization will find this process very easy to do once the plan is in place and being implemented.

Third, key stakeholders must all agree and sign off on the relevant sections of the strategic plan that relate to them. This is particularly important for sponsors, who need to know exactly how their contributions are to be used in the organization and what outcomes they will achieve.

Fourth, it is important that all strategies chosen are in line with the ethics and values being promoted within the organization. For example, the organization may promote healthy living as part of its values and this would be compromised if funds were accepted from a tobacco company to support their activities.

Fifth, risk management strategies should be incorporated into the management of the organization and these need to consider the risks involved with implementing and managing the strategies. By undertaking this additional level of thinking, sport organizations become aware of the potential consequences of actions they undertake and can anticipate problems if and when they arise.

Finally, policies and procedures will change as a consequence of development and managers must be ready to address these and ensure that changes are made to the organization’s constitution or statutes, in line with the strategies outlined in the plan.

Case study

Fiji Swimming Association and the use of a Readiness Assessment Tool (RAT)

The Fiji Swimming Association has made major strides in its development over the past ten years, lifting its membership by many hundreds of active swimmers, educating its coaches and officials and improving its overall performances at regional competitions. After reviewing the current plan, it was agreed that a fresh approach was needed to assessing the planning needs of the association.

The RAT is a tool that has emerged from a program of mixed methods research carried out with those within the Olympic Movement familiar with the key activities undertaken by NGBs (Robinson and Minikin, 2011). The research, carried out between 2008 and 2009, comprised focus groups, workshops and scenario testing with senior sport administrators and managers from the Oceania region. The RAT is based on eight functional pillars of performance that contain a number of organizational elements that become increasingly complex as an organization develops. The pillars identified were:
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- Governance: including rules and regulations, policies and strategic planning.
- Management: including organizational structure and role development.
- Physical resources: including equipment (sport and administrative), facilities access and availability.
- Human resources: including type and diversity as well as planning and management practices.
- Finance: including record keeping, marketing and planning.
- Communication: including methods used, responsiveness and technology available.
- Sport activity: including competition or preparing for competition, development programs and training.
- Values: cultural, attitudinal and behavioral values that are most essential at any given point of development.

In the case of Fiji Swimming, the RAT was employed to identify the current level of development of the association and what areas needed to be prioritized in terms of organizational development in order for the association to achieve its stated ambition of being successful at regional competition. The application of the RAT to Fiji Swimming is set out in Figure 4.1, which summarizes the scores on the NF Assessment. This averages the stage of development on a scale of 1–4 within each of the above eight pillars. Fiji Swimming shows an average of 2.29, which indicates a moderately well-developed organization overall with its sport activity more developed than its remaining pillars. The results of the assessment indicated balanced development, and specific weaknesses were identified within the pillars of finance, human resources and physical resources.

A readiness assessment of the organization indicates that there are programs being undertaken by Fiji Swimming that it does not appear to be ready to undertake. These include advanced coach training, attendance at world championships and even successful attendance at regional championships.

In order to bring the association up to a level where it could theoretically be able to undertake the activities it aspires towards, the elements set out in Table 4.1 were identified as needing attention.
Table 4.1 Recommendations for Fiji Swimming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pillar</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Revise the constitution in order to better cope with the increasing demands being placed on Fiji Swimming. Improve the structure of the board by assigning specific portfolios to board members that address the established key result areas of the organization. Revise the membership criteria for the national body and determine if it is feasible to move from club affiliation to Association or Regional affiliation (groups of clubs). Establish a written strategic plan that specifically addresses the aspirations of the organization based on the needs identified in the RAT analysis. Revise the “code of conduct” to include all areas of the Association’s operation and ensure that it is fully understood by the members of the Federation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Establish formal subcommittees that oversee activities of the Association conducted under each of the organization’s pillars. Construct an operations manual that reflects the current structure of the Board (urgent). Put in place a specialized competition management team that separates coaches from officials. Establish a coordinated Risk Management Plan that addresses areas of potential litigation against the Association. Improve the reporting structure for all meetings held and ensure that all Executive Board decisions are verified by the AGM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Apply significant attention to fundraising strategies. Need to generate significant and reliable income that can provide a platform for meeting the costs of the Association’s aspirations. Establish consistent income from competitions and at least aim to break even. Improve the merchandising program and target people from outside Fiji Swimming. Establish income streams from investments and/or term deposits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport activity</td>
<td>Establish regular high-level training programs for athletes under the supervision of specialized coaches. Establish a competition program that schedules events to be held all year round and that are appropriately graded by age and standard. Ensure that Fiji Swimming is positioned so that it can take part in “sport for development” initiatives, such as HIV awareness, drowning awareness and prevention, and boating safety programs. Introduce a more sophisticated incentive system for members including recognition, awards, scholarships, career development opportunities and cash prizes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical resources</td>
<td>Acquire sufficient equipment that is fully compliant with IF standards that will support the competition framework required to meet the Association’s aspirations. Acquire IF standard competition and training uniforms. Own or lease simple club facilities for the Association. Acquire a dedicated and reasonably well-equipped office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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With the information gained from the RAT, Fiji Swimming are now in a better position to review their current objectives and plan towards the implementation of programs that would assist the organization to further develop. The RAT assessment and its recommendations are intended only to be a guide to the overall development planning for Fiji Swimming. By establishing objectives that systematically put into place within the organization the criteria considered necessary for it to achieve its mission, Fiji Swimming could now plan with confidence, knowing that the actions it was taking would ultimately lead it to be in a state of readiness to achieve its stated mission.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the way that sport managers can go about the planned development of their organizations. In summary, the planning process should be simple and easy to follow and the following elements contribute towards the construction of a plan that will lead to a better organization:

- Make the plan achievable: Develop a realistic planning document that defines achievable objectives for the sport.
- Carry out a thorough analysis: Develop a plan based on a thorough analysis of the sport’s current situation, its internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats.
- Get stakeholder buy-in: Make sure that planning processes are inclusive of, and agreed to by, key stakeholders such as associations, clubs and other members.
- Develop a professional document: The strategic plan should be comprehensive, relevant, manageable, logically presented and easy to follow.
- Plan for implementation: The roles and responsibilities of who, how, when and where the plan will be implemented are clearly defined and agreed to by all involved.

If these principles are followed, managers will be able to carefully plan the development of their organizations and achieve strategic success.

Acquire secure access to dedicated training facilities that meet national standards.

Human resources
Group Clubs into associations or regions that conduct their own regular competitions and training programs.
Implement a graded education program for developing Technical Officials that are specialized with some formal training in place.
Review gender equity policies and ensure that equal opportunities for competition and training are provided.
Review the gender demographics in administration and coaching to see if they reflect athlete ratios of male and female swimmers.

Communication
Produce regular media releases by dedicated public relations volunteers.
Establish a high-quality periodical membership publication.
Establish an email and text messaging contact network among members.
Initiate regular features in all forms of media.

With the information gained from the RAT, Fiji Swimming are now in a better position to review their current objectives and plan towards the implementation of programs that would assist the organization to further develop. The RAT assessment and its recommendations are intended only to be a guide to the overall development planning for Fiji Swimming. By establishing objectives that systematically put into place within the organization the criteria considered necessary for it to achieve its mission, Fiji Swimming could now plan with confidence, knowing that the actions it was taking would ultimately lead it to be in a state of readiness to achieve its stated mission.
References


