



Step 4 Writing strategic aims and targets

The final 5 or 6 options you have chosen should then be written up as strategic aims or goals. They need to be:

- Clear and provide direction for the organisation
- Be focused on the outcomes you want to achieve
- Be realistic and attainable
- Be relevant over the life of the plan

For example, one of Women's Resource Centre's strategic aims is: *To improve our national reach*

For each strategic aim, you then need to agree on key objectives or ways that the organisation will implement these aims. The actions need to be SMART:

- Specific
- Measureable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Timebound

For example, some of WRC's key actions are:

1. *To increase our membership outside London by 50% (by Year 2 of the plan)*
2. *To develop an online women's network (by the end of Year 1)*
3. *To provide 4 training sessions per year on sustainable funding for the Rape Crisis Network*

Examples of objectives that are **not** SMART are:

To ensure that the Local Borough meets the needs of homeless women

To provide up to date information on DV to every woman in X community

To provide 54 training sessions per month (when you have resources for 10)

Step 5 Writing the Plan

Once decisions have been made about your organisation's future direction, then you are ready to write up your plan. Strategic plans also usually contain information on timeframes and who has responsibility for overall leadership of each strategic aim.

Staff then develop work plans or operational plans that identify tasks and actions to meet those strategic aims/goals and strategies - these are internal documents for the organisation.

There is no standard format for a strategic plan; how you decide to present your strategic plan is up to your organisation and how you decide to use it. It may be an internal working document, or put on the organisation's website and/or sent to funders and contractors.

It is probably most efficient if one person writes the plan.

A strategic plan usually includes the following:

- Mission, and vision (and sometimes, values) statements
- Organisation background, lists and brief information about trustees, staff, volunteers and service users, brief description of current services and key achievements
- A summary of the SWOT analysis
- An analysis of needs of service users, trends and changes in the external environment
- Overall strategic direction
- Strategic aims and objectives
- Key Actions
- Finance/resource information (summary of how you plan to find the resources to achieve you strategic aims)

Many organisations will also include fundraising strategies, budget information, marketing and publicity strategies, plan for implementation (including staff responsible and timescales).

Once a draft has been completed, those people who have been directly involved in the strategic planning process need to approve the draft. The strategic plan is then ready to be formally approved by the Trustees (or whoever decides the final content of the plan) and distributed throughout the organisation.