**PARTICIPATORY STRATEGIC PLANNING IN BOSNIA:**

**AN EXAMPLE OF THE TECHNOLOGY OF PARTICIPATION**

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A report on a demonstration in a graduate class at the Faculty of Economics

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**INTRODUCTION**

On May 28, 2004, Stuart Umpleby conducted a demonstration of the Participatory Strategic Planning procedure developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs.  The participants were graduate students in Prof. Aziz Sunje's decision-making class in the Faculty of Economics of the University of Sarajevo in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Participatory Strategic Planning (PSP) process involves five steps:

1. Operating Vision
2. Underlying Contradictions
3. Strategic Directions
4. Systematic Actions
5. Implementation Timeline

Each step of the PSP process uses the Consensus Workshop method. This method entails five steps:

1. Context
2. Brainstorm
3. Cluster
4. Name
5. Resolve

About 35 students participated in the exercise.  The exercise was conducted in English.  The purpose of the exercise was both to demonstrate group facilitation methods, to learn what Bosnian students are thinking about the future of their country and to encourage the students to use such methods for improving the performance of organizations in Bosnia.

Five focus questions, all related to the future of Bosnia, were suggested.

1. How can we promote social, political, and economic integration in Bosnia?
2. How can we promote the economic development of Bosnia?
3. Sarajevo as an international city
4. How to create a common urban-rural culture?
5. How can Bosnian expatriates help Bosnia?

The students chose as a focus question, **How can we promote the economic development of Bosnia?**

Due to limited time only the first three steps in the Participatory Strategic Planning process were conducted in this class.  When a planning exercise is conducted with a business or government agency, usually it is conducted during a weekend, often in a "retreat" setting, when there is more time.  Ideally people from outside the organization are also involved particularly during the final parts of the planning activity.  These people can relate their experiences with similar problems, suggest alternative actions, and provide sources of needed materials or skills.  In addition outside observers may be impressed with the planning exercise and decide to conduct one in their organizations.

**RESULTS OF THE TOP EXERCISE, UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO, 5/28/2004**

**VISION**

**Low unemployment**

Increase of employment

More chances for employment of young people

More jobs

Unemployment rate 10-15%

New Jobs

More employment

Many new jobs

Chance for everyone to get FIRST job

**More investment**

Increase of foreign investment

Self-sustainable producion

Growth of family businesses

Need for a few big companies in different parts of the country

More domestic investments

On-going development

More “green-field” investment

More technology investment

**Higher living standard**

Bigger salaries

$15,000 GNP per capita

Better standard of living

No poor people

**Political stability**

Lower political party power

No bureaucracy

Political stability

**Opportunities for innovators**

Understanding creative minds

More independent people

**Improved infrastructure**

Longer motorway

Highways expanded

**Improvements in education system**

Investment in young people/ education

**Independent macroeconomic policy**

No currency board

**Political engagement**

More young people must decide the future

**No corruption**

Efficient legal system

**Tourism paradise**

Demining

**EU our future**

War criminals in jail

**Revision of privatization process (state companies)**

**Improvements in health system**

**Beautiful nation**

More beautiful girls

More smart men

BiH – Brazil 3:0 World Cup 2006 in Germany

**CONTRADICTIONS**

**Nationalism still strong**

Too many people do not know what their native country is

Higher education law was not approved by parliament

Rule of nationalist parties

Old national dreams

Nationalists in government

Gap between nations

“Where do we belong?” mentality

This is Balkans

**Wrong people in some positions**

Decision-makers are politicians not experts

Too many chiefs, too few Indians

Lack of political willingness

Lack of assertive young people

Lack of skilled people in place

Lack of experts in government

Positions assigned by favors not skills

**Too many outside interests**

OHR

Bosnians must make decisions, not foreigners

IMF and World Bank

Too many foreigners

Interests of international community

Incompetent EU politicians hold power

Prejudices of foreigners

**Lack of money for investment**

Not enough support from the banks

High interest rates for investments

High price for financial capital

Currency board (2)

Not enough investments in infrastructure

**Constraining legal environment**

Lack of motivation for businesses

Government system which does not function

Political situation

Discouraging legal regulations

**Corruption (3)**

Criminals

Corrupt legal system

**Lack of assertiveness**

Old, bad habits of Bosnian people

Lack of interest in change in general

**Post-war obstacles to future development**

Mines (2)

**Lack of vision**

No true leader

**No country branding policy / campaign**

Not enough will to define Bosnian identity

**Lack of legislation in many fields**

Monopolists

**Not enough participatory decision-making**

Lack of such kind of practice (e.g., this workshop)

**Insufficient luck**

Bagic injured

Visas

Moon

horoscope

**STRATEGIES**

**Better educated young people**

In case of lack of local (domestic) experts, bring specialists from abroad

New education system

Investing in education

Give young, clever, educated men a chance to create

Give young, clever, educated women a chance to create

Find capable leaders

More involvement of young people in decision-making processes

**Fiscal and monetary sovereignty**

Free currency flow

Currency board down

CB of BiH must bring money home

Decrease interest rate

Decrease interest rate to stimulate private business

Positive inflation rate

**New concept for BiH**

Experts in government

Change the government system

BiH without entities

No entities

Single economic space

**Positive country branding**

Make a Bosnian nation as one great nation

Promote ecotourism

Put BiH and its citizens into first place

State interests prior to national interests

Public opinions to be counted

**Social development**

Publicize good examples

Motivate local people for decision-making

Public assessment of achieved results

Anti-nationalism campaign

Increase responsibility

**Support small and medium-sized businesses**

Business incubators

Positive business legislation

Reduce imports, buy domestic products

Open new work places

**Anticorruption agency**

More controlling bodies

Increase transparency

The truth

**Improved government administration**

Smart governing tactics

Supportive state

Smaller administration

**Orientation toward the future**

Total recall (a new beginning)

Investments in infrastructure

**Improve the legal system**

Improve the system of laws

**Hard work**

Will to succeed

**Fulfillment of conditions to enter the EU**

**Many brain surgeries**

Marry a Japanese

Send Bagic to Reumal

Chicks for free

Buy new passport

Demonstrations, demonstrations, demonstrations

In this class there was a group of students who liked to make jokes.  As a result the last cluster of ideas under Vision, Contradictions, and Strategies includes some whimsical suggestions.  The conversation was lively, serious, and jovial.

**REFERENCES**

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