

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING CCBI PASTORAL PLAN FOR A VIBRANT YOUTH APOSTOLATE IN INDIA

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A. Introduction

We live in a world far too complex not to plan and strategize. In fact, one of the major failures of the Church's engagement with the world has been her lack of planning and other management skills. While the secular world has progressed much in this dimension and even the Church engagement in the secular mission has also adopted much of the new knowledge and skills, in the mission proper of the Church we still seem to prefer personalized and charismatic ways. While we do not deny the power of personal and the charismatic, the key question is whether we can learn from the secular sciences, particularly management science on how to make our mission work more scientific and goal oriented.

B. The Pastoral Cycle

It is customary to visualize the Church's mission as a pastoral cycle. (See the diagram below). As is shown in the diagram, all genuine missionary effort begins with a reflection on one's own experience. The reflection on the experience should be within the context of a socio-cultural analysis which will reveal the wider implications of this experience. This is followed by the use of Biblical and theological insights to deepen the understanding of the experienced reality. We find deeper meanings and challenges as the analyzed reality is seen through the lenses of the Scriptures and theological insights. Based on these insights we move into an action planning phase. It is here that we use the insights of modern management science and strategic planning. And as we implement the action plan newer experiences are generated which again force us to newer reflection and newer action. Thus the mission work becomes a cyclical process of 'Experience-Reflection-Action-Experience'.



C. Strategic planning

One of the concepts gaining ground in planning the future is 'strategic planning'. It is a systematic process of envisioning a desired future, and translating the vision into broadly defined goals and objectives and sequences of steps to achieve them.

The basic products of a strategic planning are:

1. **Environmental issues and trends**
2. **Needs Survey**
3. **Mission Statement**
4. **General Objectives:**
5. **Strategies**

The overall goal of strategic planning is to produce a workable plan. Along the way, we will develop, evaluate, and refine these five products:

1. **Environmental issues and trends:** Factors that may impact the organization and the way it conducts business. Internal issues include staff, services, skills, resources, and needs. External factors include such things as threats of outsourcing. A strategic planning committee compiles an environmental scan, a body of information about the environment. Broad issues, singled out as potentially having significant effect on the facilities planning and management industry, are referred to as mega issues.
2. **Needs Survey:** Provides information from clients and peer institutions. The prioritized needs and expectations resulting from the survey are crucial as a basis for setting objectives.

