

# Manage the City: From the Strategy to Urban Strategy

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## Abstract

All urban practices carried out on the city aim to improve its conditions, through changes in its mode of operation, the integration of new devices, or by the protection of its monumental character. Any action must therefore be designed and conducted according to well-adapted organizational and decision-making methods, and according to a well-defined strategy.

The success of these practices leads to the development of an urban strategy and requires management that focuses on its definition and implementation.

Every city is different, so every urban strategy is different, but management, with its openness and breadth, has an inexhaustible capacity to study, analyze, and explain; to answer the questions that determine the performance of a strategy, but also to test a model and develop a plan that responds to, and fits the conditions and constraints of each city.

Urban strategy is on the agendas of several organizations, such as UNOPS1, which supports the development and improvement of policy frameworks for strategic urbanization development, and OCED2, which provides direct support to countries for the development of urban strategies.

The objective of this paper is to formulate an urban strategy plan based on the analysis of strategy as a socio-managerial practice that shapes the city.

**Key words:** city, management, strategy, management strategy, urban strategy.

## INTRODUCTION

The very first meaning of strategy was military, the ancient military strategists are the first who founded the basis of today's strategy by their need to win wars, the general Sun Tzu the first strategist in the world, encourages to win at least cost, by making the enemy as much as possible fought without fighting, as for the general-major Clausewitz, he conceived the strategy as a political technology that allows to convince others. For Ansoff, the founder of business strategy, strategy is a rule for making decisions, it also consists in optimizing the position of the company on the market, while Drucker emphasizes that, strategy is above all an analysis not only of the current situation of the system but of all the changes made to this system, and for Mintzberg strategy is a plan of action to achieve a future situation.

Tactics, policy, plan, course of action, end result... the strategy seems to bring answers to the different challenges that individuals, groups, organizations and territories are facing, it should not be taken as a set of strict organizational norms, being born from the military art does not mean that it should be a rigid method, on the contrary, the strategy has been used in different areas such as games, sports, events, and especially in business, then it has taken a broader meaning, since now it also covers the definition of goals and objectives in the fields of sociology, urban, health, education, and psychology.

This article aims to develop a plan of the urban strategy from the norms and principles of the strategy, the transposition of these principles to the urban, will allow the implementation of strategic plans adapted to urban life according to managerial principles, and will also allow to build a system of objectives specific to the city.

The objectives drawn up for the city requires the development of action plans to achieve them, these plans must consider the charter and standards of the city, they must also ensure the success of any operation and intervention, respecting the functionality of the city.

To ensure the smooth running of this whole process, it is essential to develop an urban strategy, which will aim to analyze the different urban practices and also the conduct, direction and structuring of each operation.

The strategy offers a theoretical framework and a managerial practice that is able to respond to these concerns (Zukin, 2007), it will rely primarily on analysis and diagnosis to give answers and draw the lines of conduct to achieve the objectives.

The article explores the strategy in the space in which management coincides with urbanism and science, given that the urban strategy is based on the science of the city (Lefebvre, 1967).

The application of managerial principles on the city will help to optimize the characterization of the urban strategy, so it will allow to act with a managerial logic on the different urban practices.

In a first step we will formulate a plan of a strategy of a system by referring to the different elements and tools of management and strategy, (the word system here is to refer to a set of elements of the same function constituting a body or a group of doctrine).

Then we transpose the different levels and elements of the strategy plan to the urban by considering the city as an organizational system in permanent development, the definition of these levels and elements consists in making the projection between management and urbanism, these managerial and strategic reflexes favor the emergence of a utilitarian vision of the city. (Padioleau, 1991).

The main objective of this approach is to develop an urban strategy based on an epistemology of strategy, management and the city. This strategic-urban promotion favors urban development and serves as a reference model in strategic and political studies of city development.

## Strategy and Planning

The confusion has always persisted between strategy and planning, which comes first, which encompasses the other, which nourishes the other..., even if the objective of strategy and planning is part of the same managerial culture; having a future vision, anticipating and preventing risks to make changes, their field of action is not the same.

Planning is a rigorous method, intellectual approach and a practice that allows you to describe how to achieve a goal, to carry out a project<sup>3</sup>, it is a process of reflection and negotiation, it allows coordination by formalizing the actions, deadlines and expected results (Gibion, 2015), Fayol associated with foresight and Mintzberg in decision-making, it is therefore part of a time scale. If planning consists of thinking, preventing the future and formulating action, strategy is the application of these reflections, it is the action itself to accomplish and execute decisions related to the system, because it is not limited to forecasting and anticipation.

Planning comes first, as a method of reflection, and strategy second as a method of acting and acting by executing planning plans.

Planning helps formulate the strategy, it is a strategic decision-making process by predicting the future state of the system and considering changes in the internal and external environment of the system, planning is therefore a tool of the strategy. In addition, if planning will be subject to constraints at its level, in the strategy phase an intervention is always possible to find solutions, since a good strategy consists in overcoming the constraints of planning (Huble, 1991).

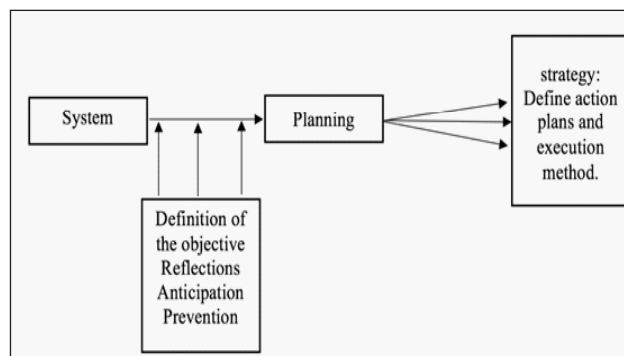


Figure 1. sequence (system, planning and strategy)

## Strategy and Management

Unlike the relationship between strategy and planning, the relationship between management and strategy is a relationship of operation and complementarity, management defines benchmarks and manages strategic decisions and actions, and strategy is an affiliation and a management discipline, it has established itself as one of the noblest disciplines of management (Atame, Calori 2003, p9).

If management manages the strategy, the strategy also serves to guide management activities, this relationship between the two is also reinforced by their vocations, it is both advantageous for strategy and for management. Management is the art of managing activities, work and resources; it is a response to changes and internal and external constraints of the system and its environment.

Moreover, the strategy is also a response to the constraints of the system, except that it acts over a specific period of time, while management is a global and permanent activity that is based on a mission, regardless of its position over time.

Apart from the fact that the time scale in management is a dimension on which we rely to accomplish the work, and also a measure to be taken to set the objectives, the strategy remains one of the controllers that ensure the registration of management activities over time.

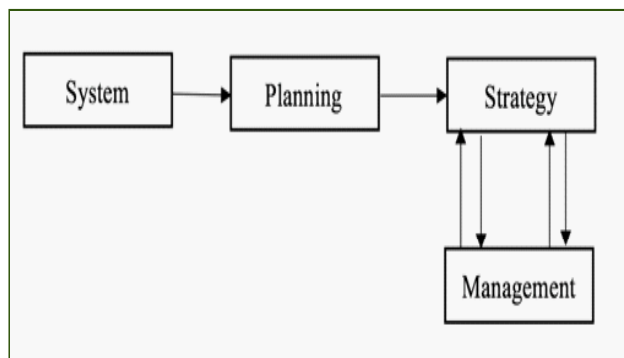


Figure 2. sequence (system, planning, strategy and management)

## Strategy, Management and Planning

It is known that planning is one of the four major functions of management, (Planning, organizing, directing and controlling) commonly known as POCDS, this group of functions that describes the process of managerial activity, introduced by Fayol, and which has defined the functions of management into five roles: plan, organize, command, coordinate and control.

Being a function of management, planning is a fundamental tool in managerial activity, it is the essential element in terms of forecasting future conditions, and objectives, by determining the time intervals to establish schedules, so planning is a step and a role of management,

The relationship therefore between planning and management and a relationship of both relativity (planning is a condition for management to function), and also complementarity (the results of planning are used for management and its other functions, such as organization and control that help in the development of planning).

Strategy, management and planning synergy is a coherent process, on the one hand we have a relationship of complementarity between strategy and management, and on the other hand a relativity relationship between strategy and planning, this correlation logically refers to say that planning is also an axis of management since it serves as a tool of strategy.

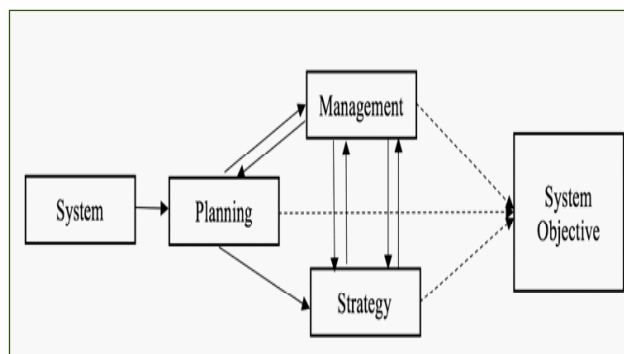


Figure 3. sequence of (planning, strategy and management) in relation to the system and its objective

## **Elements and Tools of the Strategy**

Strategist, the leader, is the follower of the development of the strategy, which often represents the hierarchical top of the system, he can be a head of government, a head of a company, a manager, a head of department..., The strategist's criteria were never a subject of confusion, because it is always clear and obvious that the strategist must have the character and foundations necessary to analyze situations, make decisions, manage and control, criteria that serve to develop a strategy and lead it to success.

Then we have the system, a set of elements of the same function, constituting a body or group of doctrine that has a distinct culture and a well-defined orientation, company, city, social group, organization..., this system is located in the environment, the framework and the context where it feeds and evolves.

Then we have the elements constituting the strategy, the strategic intention: it is the intuition of the strategist in the first place, it generally concerns strategic decision-making, this intention is based on the "reason for being" of the system, (Atamer, Calori 2011, p10), it defines the operating framework and culture of this system. By definition, strategic intention is a collective of pending tasks characterized by a mental state that directs the leader's attention to the research and implementation of particular means in order to carry out a specific strategic project, (Gourmat, 2011) it is characterized by a state of spirit framed by the criteria of the objectives of the system. Strategic intent is an important factor in the development of the strategy.

Strategic monitoring: It is the collection of information related to the system and its environment, it is a permanent operation in a given system that consists of providing the necessary data and updating the strategy.

Strategic decision: In the literature of the company's strategy, decision is the main engine of company policy (Giboin 2015, p 124), it usually leads to Strategic Action, which is the putting into practice the strategic decisions taken by the strategist, this does not mean that it is the strategist who did it but he must participate in its execution (Huble 1991, p51). It is characterized by its irreversibility, its intensity, its innovative character. (Bensebaa, 2000), and it is inscribed in time.

Strategic action must implement the redefinition of objectives according to results in the different phases of the strategy, (Huble 1991, p 46). Strategic action is the resolution of system problems; its studied implementation forces the benefits to achieve the objectives.

Strategic tactics: a typically strategic term comes from the military vocabulary; this element essentially represents a set of choices that intervenes for each action envisaged. Tactics examine actions and their consequences; they also make it possible to choose alternatives.

Strategic capacity: these are the resources, experiences and skills of the system, it represents the assets and benefits that the strategy uses to achieve its objectives, strategic capacity brings together unique resources and fundamental skills (Gibion 2015, p 42).

Strategic plans: these are strategic visions and scenarios that define the policy and state of the system over a given time (in the long term), the word term refers to a limited date and time frame, therefore a limited time interval associated with horizons in the system's strategic visions. The duration of these terms is defined by strategists who are familiar with the organization of their system and its objectives. Each source of information defines these terms in a rather variable number of years. There are three strategic plans; long-term plan, concerns an overall vision of the system, it is not detailed, and it is based on the main orientations, its duration varies according to the activity, culture and orientation of the system, generally it is 5 years and more. Medium-term plan: more precise than the long-term plan, it is also more detailed, it generally aims at the hierarchical organization of the system and the methodological provisions to be adopted in the next 3 to 5 years.

Short-term plan, it generally focuses on financial issues and varies between 0 and 3 years.

Each time the strategic plan is large and slender it will have a more global aspect, and each time it is restricted and narrowed it is more and more precise and detailed.

## **Strategy Plan**

In the company's strategy, the justification of the strategy gives an essential place to the creation of value, this value is the reason for making and developing a strategy, the value varies according to the system, according to its main activity, culture and orientation; in finance it refers to the financial objectives, in the company, the rate of profitability, in advertising, consumer satisfaction... (Giboin 2015, p8) underlines that the objective of creating the strategy is to obtain benefits by sustainably creating value for the system's customers. The process of creating this value is the answer to the need of the system, its objectives and the creation of satisfaction.

The development of the strategy is therefore part of the process that summarizes the steps to be taken to formulate a plan that meets the need and creates value for the system, in addition the strategist must have the information and analysis necessary to develop the strategy, such as the definition of the system and its objective, its environment and the known constraints.

## **Strategic Process**

The development of the strategy was always a process of understanding and evaluating the organizational and environmental context in which it occurs, rather than adopting the position of theorists (Pettigrew 1977), it does not require returning to already excited plans. Prior analysis is the important starting point of all strategies, the environment, and all information related to systems, are the variables selected according to their usefulness in the research and literature of the development of the strategy (Miller, Friesen 1978), the various analyses lead to establishing necessary diagnoses of the current situation as well as the past and future situation, in turn these diagnoses are used to make the necessary decisions by referring to and based on the appropriate standards, laws and feasts.

The strategic process is not an established plan that defines the guidelines to have a strategy, it is rather a common process between strategists and the various stakeholders who are committed to building a strategic approach project (Atamer, Calori 2011, p30). This approach therefore begins with an analysis that requires the answer on the QQQCCP<sup>4</sup> questions 'Who? What? Where? When? How? How much? Why?', they help identify the different issues related to the system and its objective, as well as to have the necessary information for strategic diagnosis.

## **Strategic Diagnosis**

A diagnosis is a process that analyses, evaluates and finds the solution to a well-headed problem, it is a conclusion of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses and the situation of a system and its environment, analysis is its main tool, with observation and judgment, it consists of observing, understanding and interpreting phenomena through a decomposition into essential elements, it is part of a "prospective" approach (Desreumaux, Lecocq 2006, p 9), and it anticipates strategic issues through an internal analysis of the system and another external analysis of the environment.

First, internal analysis consists of determining the strengths and weaknesses of the system, it is carried out with the SWOT model for example, this internal analysis will then help to make the internal strategic decisions of the system. Except that external analysis includes opportunities and threats related to the environment and which will have an impact on the system and its operation. These external analyses will help, on the one hand, to seize opportunities and avoid risks by also monitoring the evolution of the environment and its change, and on the other hand, to define the future orientations of the system based on its strategic capacity. (Gibion 2015, p 18, 19).

Then comes planning, if the analysis consists of data collection, evaluation, judgment and classification of information according to their uses and groups of activities, planning enters its data over time, has staggered them into strategic plans, assigning the necessary resources, and respecting standards and laws, to be able to subsequently make decisions and apply these plans, it also transforms analyses into documents, schedules, and plans to better view the objectives according to time.

The diagnostic phase is therefore based on the different information related to the system, the environment, and analysis and planning, it represents two-thirds of the work of the strategic process (Atamer and Calori 2011, p 36) it is based on a rational and analytical way of reflection and consists of a synthetic and operational presentation of the data, it can be presented as: summary tables, grids, analysis matrices...etc.

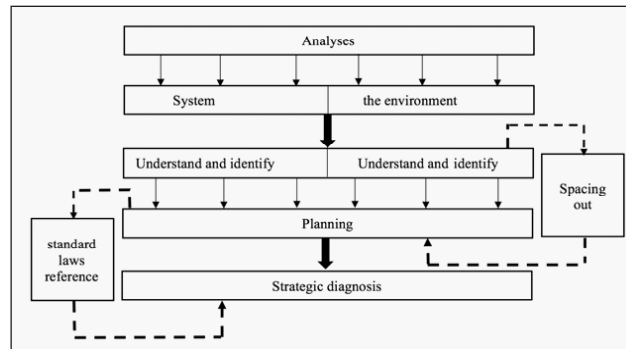


Figure 4. Strategic diagnosis process

### Implementation of the Strategy

The implementation of the strategy is the second stage of the strategic process and strategy development, it begins where planning has ended and the diagnosis has taken stock. After having all the data in the system, the implementation of the strategy consists of making the right decisions and applying them.

**Decision-Making:** Generally born from the evaluation of strategic solutions, which are taken on the basis of the main objective pursued by the system, as well as the strategic diagnosis assessment. Strategic decision-making is the search for solutions to the problems distinguished in the diagnostic assessment, it must be logical to the extent that it should consider and at the same time respond to the different needs of the system, as well as the requirements of the external environment without forgetting that it must be framed by appropriate standards, and it must consider the following points:

- Unexpected constraints
- Environmental data (threats and opportunities)
- Resources (strategic capacity)
- The culture required of the system (customs, orientations, references...)

According to economist Herbert Simon<sup>5</sup>, decision-making begins with a perception of the need for a decision, then an analysis of possible choices, then the selection of the possibilities evaluated and implementation, this process involves the strategic intention, intuition and judgment of the strategist, in addition, decision-making is a choice to be made between several strategic choices, which occurred throughout the strategic process.

**Strategic Action:** it is the application of strategic decisions to achieve objectives and meet the needs of the system. Strategic decision-making defines future actions and gives them meaning, thus facilitating their application through strategic tactics.

Strategic action calls for strategic change within the system (Atamer and Calori 2011, p 462), this change is a form of response to the distinguished strategic problems throughout the strategic process.

Strategic action consists of changing and modifying old strategic practices and thoughts to resolve inconsistencies and disruptions that destabilize the system and weaken its performance. The conduct of this change leads to the development of action plans.

From strategic diagnosis to strategic action, the strategic process exploits all the information for the development and formulation of a system strategy by changing the circumstances that delay development, which defeat the system.

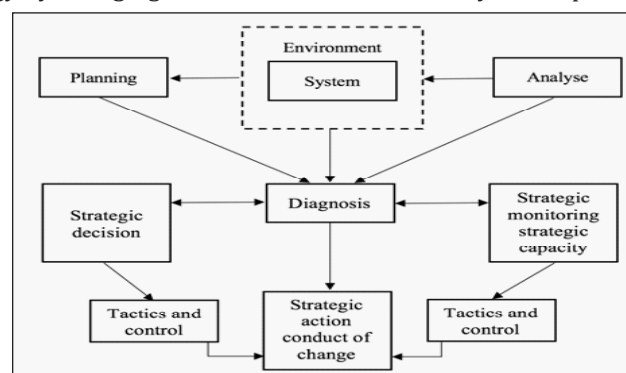


Figure 5: strategy development plan

## From Strategy to Urban Strategy

After the failure of urban planning, the urban strategy has evolved as a new way to govern the city (Kornberger, 2012), the urban strategy is a body of knowledge that offers a methodology for solving urban problems, it is a platform for making strategic decisions for a territory, executing actions, whose goal is the construction and development of the city.

The urban strategy cannot be a plan adaptable to all cases and situations, it is not a device to be applied to all cities in the world, because what is obvious for one city is not necessarily for others, so in the first place, its development depends on the city in question.

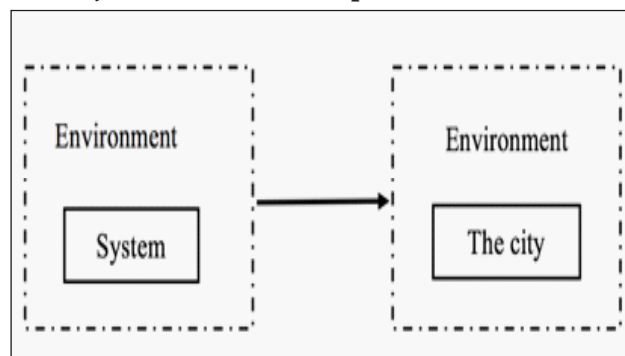
An urban strategy elaborated for the city of Paris, for example, cannot be applied to the city of Palermo, because the citizens of these two cities are so different in terms of urbanity and social and cultural requirements that the application of the same strategic plan will lead to a social failure, the urban strategy is not only summarized in the urban phenomenon, it is wider and more divergent, it intervenes on all the levels and all the components of the urban fabric, it draws the future of the society, it guides the political will, it prophesies the economy, and draws the cultural aspirations. The urban strategy evokes the desired future for the city, with the appropriate process; it creates the future of the city in its present.

Moreover, an urban strategy is a process that evolves over time; it progresses, changes, develops and improves just like the city.

(Savitch and Kantor, 2003), define urban strategy as a 'development policy' of cities, their studies of thirty cities in Western Europe and North America over a thirty-year period allowed them to conduct detailed case studies of urban strategies.

A 'development policy' requires a good timing of elements, and a number of parameters that must merge in the development process for the city. On the one hand the urban strategy defines the process and genesis of the construction of the city, and on the other hand it has to respond simultaneously on the different needs, shortages, and necessities of urbanity and development.

### Identification of Elements, Projection and Transposition



**Figure 6.** Projection of elements (Environment and system)

First we define the system, in urban strategy the system under study is: the city, the space for which the strategist develops an urban strategy, We do not lack definitions of the city, it was always a rich field in research, it has been explained, characterized and defined by urban planners, geographers, philosophers, architects, politicians, economists, sociologists, writers, poets... journalists and even artists.

Everyone defined it according to their academic and professional orientations, but also as citizens.

Every citizen can give a definition of the city, these definitions will not be similar because the citizen's vision, idea, criticism and judgment relate to his citizenship and practices within his city. A citizen who apparently lives in a collective residence and who runs in the covered market of his neighborhood and who uses means of transport for his travel will not have the same vision of the city, as a citizen who lives in a detached house and who uses his personal vehicle for his travel and does his classes during the weekly market, nor the vision of the citizen who lives in the historic center of the city or the old city, each of them will have his own relationship and his own vision.

The main objective of having an urban strategy is to respond to the perceptions of these three types of citizens, to make them feel honorable in their city.

The city is an organ where its components function and merge together, it is rhythmic in the sense that it catapults all its elements together so that it is functional.

The environment: where the system is born and evolves, the changing element that can serve as a support for the system. In projection, the environment is everything that surrounds the city, nature, the atmosphere, the country in the city is located, the continent..., it can also be the political, social, economic contexts that surround the city and the country... it's all that leads to changes and causes reactions to the city.

Analyses: In the urban context, the analyses practiced on the city are urban analyses, it is the methods that study the morphology of the city (natural framework and physical framework), as well as the phenomena that cause changes and changes in the city: economic, social, cultural, political, technological phenomena...

Planning: Regarding planning in the urban field, we refer to urban planning, it is land planning, a discipline of urban planning.

In the strategic context, urban planning is used to predict and anticipate by inscribing these plans over time. The different urban plans are often the result of urban planning.

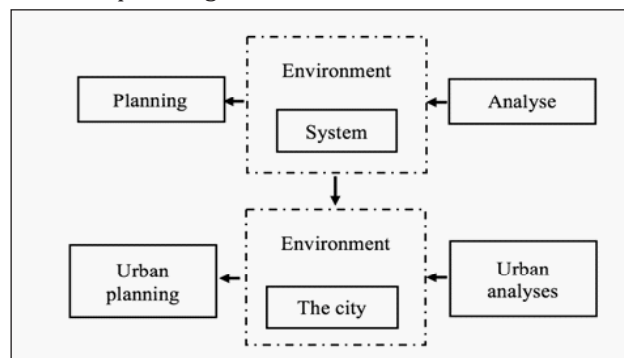


Figure 7. Projection of elements (Analysis and Planning)

Diagnosis: Whatever the field, a diagnosis acts in the same way and plays the same role, it is the input and exit elements that differ depending on the context.

The elements of urban diagnosis are the different urban analyses of the city and its environment, as well as urban planning.

Strategic intelligence: If strategic intelligence consists of the collection of information related to the system in the strategic and managerial field, by projecting this definition on the urban context, Urban monitoring therefore consists of collecting information related to the city and its environment by updating the urban strategy.

According to CERTU<sup>6</sup> (1999), urban monitoring responds to two concerns.

- To follow permanently all the issues and objectives that are displayed through the broad orientations of the urban planning plan.
- To give local decision-makers, whether elected officials or the main public and private actors, the measurement of the evolution of the agglomeration with regard to these objectives and the impact of their decisions.

Strategic capacity: strategic capacity includes the resources, experiences and skills that the strategist uses to develop the strategy. In the urban context, this capacity also includes all resources (natural, human, budgetary...) as well as the skills and experiences of the stakeholder.

In addition, in the urban field we have urban resilience, a theoretical concept derived from material physics and which means the recovery capacity of a system after experiencing complications and difficulties, it is defined as the ability of the system to withstand a major disturbance, and to be able to recover in an acceptable timeframe (Haimes, 2009), in this perspective (Toubinand al, 2012), have defined urban resilience as the city's ability to absorb a disturbance and



then recover its functions as a result of it. This concept allows the urban strategist to restore and catch up with the difficulties that have arisen on the city and which dissolve its urban strategy.

Strategic decision: In the urban context, strategic decision is more complex, it does not depend on a single person (physical or moral) but on an entire hierarchy and structure, from the country's first decision-maker to the citizen.

This structure includes policies, communities, elected officials, expert consultants, trade unions, civil society, citizens..., the decision is managed according to its level, either by law (executive decrees), or by votes (elected officials), by consultation (citizens), and even by refusal and disavowal of high-level decisions. Urban governance is an example of a process that responds to the decision-making structure of the various urban actors, according to UN-Habitat it is the software that allows the city to function, it is democratic and inclusive and integrates several territorial levels, it is competent and aware of the digital age. Urban governance can designate the decision-making procedures as well as the procedure, path and quality of communication between urban actors.

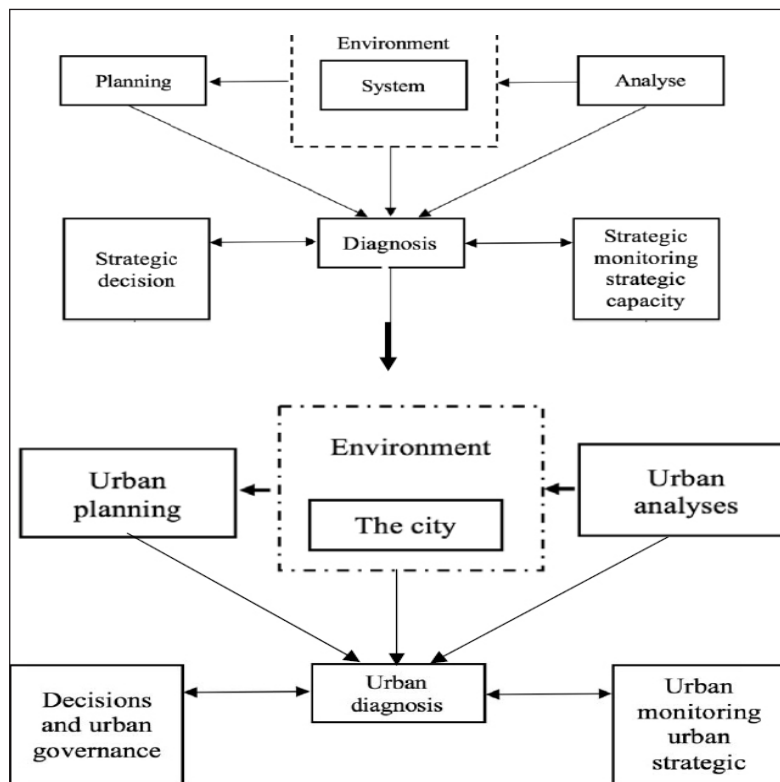


Figure 8. Projection of elements (Monitoring, capacity and strategic decision)

## Tactics and Control

Whether in the urban or other field, tactics are there to give multiple choices by exposing the advantages and inconveniences of each possibility, as well as choosing alternatives. The urban strategist must face several strategic scenarios before choosing the most appropriate ones by controlling agreement and compliance with the objectives traced at each level of strategy.

Strategic action:

Regarding urban strategic action, it is summarized in the implementation of strategic action plans developed throughout the process of developing the urban strategy, with the aim of implementing the urban strategy. It is also known as urban public action, which translates the strategic decisions of the various actors into concrete action. Urban public action forms the urban project (Idit 2012), it is therefore a manufacturing process of the urban project. For (Biau and Tapie 2009, p 167) the assembly of teams, management, negotiation, communication, are the instruments for the manufacture of urban projects, this series of operations represents part of urban public action, which consists of the implementation of the urban strategy, since the strategy comes before the urban project (Chapuis, 2015)<sup>7</sup>.



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## Notes

(Endnotes)

- 1 United Nations Office for Project Services
- 2 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
- 3 Dictionary of project management AFNOR 2010
- 4 Five W's (« cinq W », pour « Who, What, Where, When, why? », ou « who did what, where and when, and why » i.e. «who did what, where, when and why? discovered by Edward Deming in 1945 (American engineer, statistician and management consultant (1990, 1993)).
- 5 American economist and sociologist (1916, 2001) who received the «Nobel Prize» in economics in 1978.
- 6 Center for Studies on Networks, Transport and Public Construction in France.
- 7 Consultant in urban strategy and teacher at the École nationale supérieure d'architecture Val-de-Seine in France. Author of «Profession urbaniste» published by Éditions de l'Aube.
- 8 National Spatial Planning Scheme Algeria SNAT 2030 National Spatial Planning Scheme Algeria SNAT 2030
- 9 Regional development plans.

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