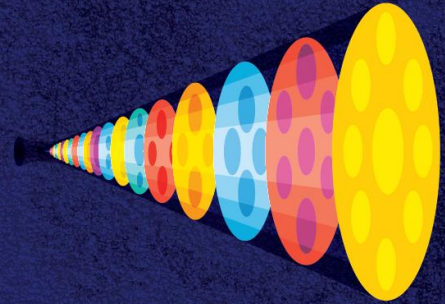


Youth4Foresight Toolkit

JANUARY 2024



Youth4Foresight Toolkit (JANUARY 2024) - INTPA FORESIGHT HUB NETWORKS BUILDER

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Visioning

Purpose: This exercise is designed to help participants visualize and internalize their preferred future. This will create a foundation for strategy and action.

Time taken: 120 minutes

Participants: Do this activity with the whole youth advisory group in one room. Parts of the session will be run in smaller groups based in thematic committees or randomly set up.

Difficulty level: Easy

What comes before: The three horizons exercise that helps to create a vision for a preferred future and identify ideas for actions.

What comes after: Laying out a series of further actionable steps for the way forward.

Videos: [Introduction to foresight](#), [Video Visioning](#)

Group sizes: This activity can be done with any number of participants.

Facilitation: The exercise can be facilitated by YFP and/or experts/technical assistants (in which case the “Why use this tool?” and “Instructions” parts can be shared with the participants beforehand). However, it’s a good exercise for members to start engaging the self-facilitation of an easy Foresight exercise by reading this whole document.

Why use this tool?

Visioning helps us to internalize our preferred futures and the steps we must take towards them. In this tool we want to go beyond a purely intellectual planning process and use all our senses to bring our preferred futures to life!

Taking time to richly imagine the future –so deeply that we can feel and taste it– helps us to build our motivation to actually make it happen. The better we imagine it, the more real it feels. The more possible it feels and the more inspired we are to actually try to make it a reality! We begin to build that future into how we live our lives, and eventually our day-to-day actions and decision-making re-orientate to work towards that preferred future.

This tool uses performance and creative visualization to bring preferred futures and the journey to get there into life. The tool will drive enthusiasm, and inspire actionable steps to make preferred futures happen.

Instructions

Step 1: Develop a preferred future scenario (30 minutes)

Groups, based on thematic committees or randomly set up, will explore what kind of future they want. Throughout the exercise, they will draw on learnings from previous exercises about their preferred future. Groups should start by discussing the following questions as a group. It is OK if there isn't time to get through all of them:

- Which year in the future are you referring to?
- What is different about your committee topic in your preferred future?
- Which place or places in the future are you thinking about?
- Whose preferred future are you thinking about?
- What will a day in this preferred future look like?
- How did we arrive at this future? What key events had to happen to make it possible?
- Reflect on all the senses in a day of this future.
- What do things look like? What are the colours?
- What are the sounds like in this future?
- What do things smell like?
- What do things taste like?
- How does it feel to touch things in this future?
- What could be the challenges/tensions that could emerge in this future?
- How would you name/title this particular future?

Step 2: Plan a skit of your preferred future (30 minutes)

Each group develops a plan for an improvised skit/performance of their preferred future from stage 1. It should last between three and five minutes. In each group, everyone should participate, and props or costumes can even be used to bring the skits to life! Everyone should use his or her imaginations!

A skit/performance can depict any part of a group's preferred future – e.g. a meeting of the youth advisory structure with the delegation colleagues or an Ambassador, a meeting between ministers, a scene from within the workplace, a moment from family life, a news report, etc. Get creative!

Any skit/performance should have a narrative structure, such as a hook, a hold and a payoff. The payoff might give the audience potentially an insight to reflect on actions that we can take in the present.

There is not much time for this step, so the groups need to plan the key roles and narrative for their skit/performance and then improvise!

Step 3: Act out and reflect on your performance (40 minutes)

Performance time! Each group performs their 3–5 minute skit/performance for the other groups. They can stand up at the front of the room or perform over a virtual platform.

After each performance, the groups confront themselves with a series of questions from the facilitator and the audience. Some of these questions could be:

- What elements did you have to bring to your performance that are different from the present?
- How does it feel to perform?
- As a performer, what will you remember or take away from this performance?
- If a policymaker was watching this, what message do you want them to take away from this performance?
- As a performer, what actions are you interested in doing now to reach that preferred future?

- What are the challenges or the tensions on this future? Are they somehow related to the present?

These questions might be addressed after each performance or after all performances. A general reflection can follow as a whole group.

Step 4: Creative visualization exercise (20 minutes)

In plenary, a visualization exercise takes place for everyone to deeply depict and connect with their personal images of the future.

Everyone sits still and the facilitator uses a script to guide the participants through a personal reflective exercise during which they will go on a journey, starting from the base of a mountain, climbing up to the hill, from the present to the preferred future.

Script - Step 4

We will now go on a journey, starting from the base of the mountain and we will climb to the peak, from the present to the preferred future.

Please sit in a comfortable position of your choice and close your eyes.

"Imagine that we are at the base of a huge mountain. The year is 2023 and we are about to climb the mountain into the future. With every breath, we will climb up by 3 years. Take a deep breath in and out again. As we breathe we will imagine the journey up the mountain, the journey from the present to the future - and all the things that are happening to bring our preferred future into reality. Imagine what is happening in your local community. How the smells and people change and how their lives will be different.

As they continue to breathe in and then breathe out and then say, 2023, 2024, 2025. Breathe in, breathe out - and say 2026, 27, 28. Repeat this until you reach the peak of the mountain and the year of the preferred future, which could be 2041 or 50 or 60 (really up to the group).

"You reach the peak of the mountain, the year of your preferred future. Look around - what do you see? What are the sights, the sounds, the smells that you can appreciate?"

"You see a house and you decide to go in and look around. What do you see inside? How is it different to today?"

"A child runs up to you and hands you a piece of paper. You open up the paper and you see a word. Remember that word and keep that piece of paper with you. The child runs away to another part of the house. "

"You look around the house one more time and exit. You look at your environment around you and you smile a huge smile as you see the most inspiring aspect of your preferred future being acted out in your community. What is it that you see?"

"Now, as you take deep breaths we will start to come down the mountain again. Imagine going back again in time and all the things that had to happen to bring this vision into being"

Again, start counting while breathing in and breathing out, but this time in reverse. For example, say breathe in, breathe out, 41, 40, 39 - breathe in, breathe out, 38, 37, 36. Repeat this until you reach the present.

Once you reach the present, ask participants to quietly open their eyes and quietly write down the word that they saw on that piece of paper.

Participants share back their experiences during the personal reflective exercise with the whole group based on the following questions:

- How was it up there? What did you see? How did it feel?
- What colours and sounds did you observe?
- What word did you see on that piece of paper?
- How does this visualization enrich or change your image of your preferred future?

If there is time, reflect on what can be done now, at the base of the mountain, to reach the peak, the preferred future. If not, the reflection can take place with the next and final tool.

What next ?

- The outcomes from both the performance and the creative visualization are meant to give the youth advisory structure an embodied experience of the future. The reflection on what needs to be done in the present to work towards the preferred future has been enriched by experiencing it with different senses.
- Documenting these narratives of both the performance and the visualization, so others can see and experience as well, can be useful and impactful
- New messages for policymakers can emerge based on these narratives.

Preparing for the workshop

For an in person workshop:

- Prepare a physical space big enough to allow participants to perform their skit/performance
- The skit/performance preparation can be done simply through discussion, or by taking notes on large flip charts with marker pens.
- You may want to collect Props/Costumes for Performance (Optional)

For a virtual workshop:

- In virtual space, you may want to use a virtual whiteboard to help each group to create their future scenario. See the template [here](#).
- The performances will need to take place over your video meeting software. You may want to use virtual backgrounds, or get participants to dress up or rename themselves to make the performances even more fun!

Facilitator tips

- During the performances, make sure that everyone is paying attention, since other groups may continue to be busy in preparing their skits. The performance is for both the audience, as well as those performing.
- The performances should be a really exciting and energizing moment, so make sure as facilitator that you are bringing lots of energy to the space.
- During the performances, try to stick to the time limit that has been set. Groups will often try to run over when improvising so you need to be strict to stay on time.
- To motivate youth advisory structures members, you can include an awards ceremony with awards for best performance, most ridiculous future, most inspiring future, best actress, best actor, best use of props etc. If you do have an awards ceremony, get creative to ensure every group wins some kind of award!

- When groups are preparing, encourage them to both plan and rehearse as well. Remember that the main point of this exercise is for them to imagine and embody themselves in the preferred future and have fun while they are at it.

Suggested exercise timings

Please note that you can expand the timings but always try to keep your session shorter than 3 hrs.

Step 1: Develop a preferred future scenario	30 minutes
Step 2: Plan a skit of your preferred future	30 minutes
Step 3: Act out and reflect on your performance	40 minutes
Step 4: Creative visualization exercise	20 minutes

Case studies

Mauritius/Seychelles

Two Youth Ambassadors from the YSB of the EU Delegation to Mauritius and Seychelles took the initiative to organize a visioning online workshop for their fellows. The workshop featured a total of ten participants, who were divided into two groups. The entire event was self-facilitated by the youth ambassadors, who followed the set of instructions and scripts from this document.

The participants decided to envision their preferred future for youth engagement at the grassroots community level and in interactions with various authorities, including the EU Delegation and government ministries. The participants engaged in interactive discussions, skits, and creative activities.

"I loved the experience of facilitating the workshop. I think it would yield better if done in person and it can also function as a great team building tool, especially for new teams just starting up, and also for those who do monthly/quarterly or so checks/appraisals." – Youth Ambassador Mauritius (facilitator)

"Putting ourselves in the shoes of another person, or being in a specific position, in our imaginary, did help us to think out of the box. So if I'm the Minister, this is how I would do things, while if I'm a young girl, I'm on the other side, this is how I perceive stuff. This was a really good exercise as sometimes, as members of the YSB, we tend to see things from only one angle, but being in another issues, we tend to open up new perspectives, new things."
– Youth Ambassador Mauritius (participant)