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Foresight Methods: A Guide to Easily Accessible Toolkits

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June 2016

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FORESIGHT METHODS: A GUIDE TO EASILY ACCESSIBLE TOOLKITS

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1 Introduction

This Evidence Report provides an introduction to a number of easily accessible toolkits relating to the use of Foresight and Futures approaches and methods in development-oriented research and planning.

Section 2 of this report provides a selection of introductory readings on Foresight. Following this, Section 3 briefly introduces 21 easily accessible Foresight and Futures toolkits. Together, these toolkits cover a wide variety of approaches and methods, although scenarios are central to many of them.

2 Introductory reading

2.1 Articles

Godet, M. (2008) *Strategic Foresight; La Prospective: Use and Misuse of Scenario Building*, LIPSOR Working Paper 10, Paris: Laboratoire d'Innovation de Prospective Stratégique et d'Organisation, <http://en.lapropective.fr/dyn/anglais/ouvrages/sr10veng.pdf> (accessed 6 April 2016)

Godet, M. (2000) 'The Art of Scenarios and Strategic Planning: Tools and Pitfalls', *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 65: 3–22, http://en.lapropective.fr/dyn/anglais/articles/art_of_scenarios.pdf (accessed 6 April 2016)

Hines, A. and Bishop, P. (2013) 'Framework Foresight: Exploring Futures the Houston Way', *Futures* 51: 31–49, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016328713000773 (accessed 6 April 2016)

Slaughter, R. (2002) *Developing and Applying Strategic Foresight*, www.forschungsnetzwerk.at/downloadpub/2002slaughter_Strategic_Foresight.pdf (accessed 6 April 2016)

Wehrmeyer, W.; Clayton, A. and Lum, K. (2002) 'Foresighting for Development', *GMI 37*, Spring, Greenleaf Publishing

2.2 Books

Bishop, P. and Hines, A. (2012) *Teaching about the Future: The Basics of Foresight Education*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan

Hines, A. and Bishop, P. (2015) *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight*, 2nd edition, Houston TX: Hinesight

Schwartz, P. (1991) *The Art of the Long View*, New York: Doubleday

van der Heijden, K. (2005) *Scenarios: The Art of Strategic Conversation*, 2nd edition, Chichester: Wiley

2.3 IDS publications

Bingley, K. (2014) *A Review of Strategic Foresight in International Development*, IDS Evidence Report 94, Brighton: IDS

Bingley, K. (2014) 'Using Foresight to Cope with Uncertainty', *IDS Policy Briefing 75*, Brighton: IDS

MacGregor, H.; Lally, S.; Bloom, G.; Davies, M.; Henson, S.; Mejía Acosta, A.; Roelen, K. and Ulrichs, M. (2014) *Non-Communicable Disease and Development: Future Pathways*, IDS Evidence Report 100, Brighton: IDS

Knezovich, J. and MacGregor, H. (2014) 'Responding to the Threat of Nutrition-Related Non-Communicable Disease', *IDS Policy Briefing 65*, Brighton: IDS

Devereux, S.; Roelen, K. and Ulrichs, M. (2015) *Where Next for Social Protection?*, IDS Evidence Report 124, Brighton: IDS

Chaturvedi, A.K.; Vijayalakshmi, K. and Nijhawan, S. (2015) *Scenarios of Waste and Resource Management: For Cities in India and Elsewhere*, IDS Evidence Report 114, Brighton: IDS

Wilson, E. (2015) 'Managing the Emerging Waste Crisis in Developing Countries' Large Cities', *IDS Policy Briefing 86*, Brighton: IDS

Gregson, J.; Brownlee, J.M.; Playforth, R. and Bimbe, N. (2015) *The Future of Knowledge Sharing in a Digital Age: Exploring Impacts and Policy Implications for Development*, IDS Evidence Report 125, Brighton: IDS

Gregson, J.; Brownlee, J.M.; Playforth, R. and Bimbe, N. (2015) 'The Future of Knowledge Sharing in a Digital Age: Exploring Impacts and Policy Implications for Development', *IDS Policy Briefing 87*, Brighton: IDS

Glover, D. and Sexton, A. (2015) *Edible Insects and the Future of Food: A Foresight Scenario Exercise on Entomophagy and Global Food Security*, IDS Evidence Report 149, Brighton: IDS

Spratt, S. and Baker, J. (2015) *Big Data and International Development: Impacts, Scenarios and Policy Options*, IDS Evidence Report 163, Brighton: IDS

Spratt, S. (2014) *What Drives Wind and Solar Energy Investment in India and China?*, IDS Evidence Report 87, Brighton: IDS

Krishna, C.; Sagar, A.D. and Spratt, S. (2015) *The Political Economy of Low-carbon Investments: Insights from the Wind and Solar Power Sectors in India*, IDS Evidence Report 104, Brighton: IDS

Spratt, S. (2014) 'Creating Alliances for Renewable Energy Investment: Lessons from China and India', *IDS Policy Briefing 67*, Brighton: IDS

Béné, C.; Cannon, T.; Gupte, J.; Mehta, L. and Tanner, T. (2014) *Exploring the Potential and Limits of the Resilience Agenda in Rapidly Urbanising Contexts*, IDS Evidence Report 63, Brighton: IDS

Béné, C.; Cannon, T.; Gupte, J.; Mehta, L. and Tanner, T. (2014) 'The Potential and Limits of the "Resilience Agenda" in Peri-urban Contexts', *IDS Policy Briefing 63*, Brighton: IDS

3 Easily accessible toolkits

1. The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Strategic Futures for Policy-makers and Analysts

Published by: The Horizon Scanning Programme team, United Kingdom Government

Year of publication: 2014

Link:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/328069/Futures_Toolkit_beta.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: The publication presents a set of tools to help embed long-term strategic thinking within the policy process. It provides a brief overview of the following tools: Delphi, horizon scanning, horizons, drivers analysis, 7 questions, visioning, roadmapping, windtunnelling and scenario. In addition, it includes tips on organising Foresight workshops.

2. Futures Research Methodology (Version 3.0)

Edited by: Glen, J.C. and Gordon, T.J.

Published by: The Millennium Project

Year of publication: 2009

Link: Available for purchase (US\$49.50) at: www.millennium-project.org/millennium/FRM-V3.html (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This toolkit consists of 37 chapters and is perhaps the largest and most comprehensive handbook of Foresight methods and tools. For each method the toolkit provides an executive overview, description, primary and alternative usages, strengths and weaknesses, suggestions for use in combination with other methods, and speculation about the method's future evolution.

3. Scenario Archetypes

Author: Schultz, W.L.

Published by: Infinite Futures

Year of publication: 2001

Link: www.infinitefutures.com/essays/prez/scenarch/index.htm (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This toolkit provides guidance on using 'incasting', a tool designed by Jim Dator at the Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies. Through this scenario-building tool, participants explore scenarios that are deliberately written very generally. In the process, participants add details, using their creative imaginations and the rule of logical consistency, to the described characteristics of each scenario. Utilising organisations as case studies, participants may be asked to consider how they would redefine, reinvent, or otherwise transform their mission, activities, services, or products to succeed in the conditions of each scenario. This Futures tool is designed to increase the flexibility with which people plan for the future, and to increase their creativity in making use of both opportunities and challenges emerging from change.

4. Practical Foresight Guide

Author: Jackson, M.

Published by: Shaping Tomorrow

Year of publication: 2014

Link: www.shapingtomorrow.com/media-centre/pf-ch04.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This is a toolkit on scanning, the art of systematically exploring the external environment to: (1) better understand the nature and pace of change in that environment, and (2) identify potential opportunities, challenges, and likely future developments relevant to your organisation. Environmental scanning explores both new, strange, and weird ideas, as well as persistent challenges and trends.

5. Schooling for Tomorrow Knowledge Base

Published by: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Link: www.oecd.org/site/schoolingfortomorrowknowledgebase/ (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This platform supports informed explorations of possible futures through research, analysis, tools, methods and experiences. Scenarios help to focus thinking on the most important factors driving change in any particular field. By considering the complex interactions between these factors, users can improve their understanding of how change works and what can be done to guide it. With a particular focus on education the electronic toolkit is organised around four sections: What are scenarios?; Why use scenarios?; How are scenarios made?; The schooling for tomorrow scenarios, and lessons learnt.

6. Guidance to Incorporating Ecosystems Services into Futures/Scenario Tools

Authors: Carter, C.; Kass, G.; Everard, M. and Scott, A.

Published by: ecosystemsknowledge.net

Year of publication: 2013

Link: <http://neat.ecosystemsknowledge.net/pdfs/futures-tools-toolkit.pdf> (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This is a guidance note for practitioners, consultants, researchers and decision-makers who are carrying out Futures work. It provides practical advice on how to apply visioning or scenarios effectively. This guidance was produced as part of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment Follow-On (UKNEA-FO) programme. The guidance combines insights and experience from several practitioners and researchers on how to integrate the ecosystem services framework into Futures tools and how Futures tools are part of or draw on other tools, including those which are specifically tailored towards ecosystem services or those which can be enhanced through meaningful adaptation.

7. Pro-Poor Scenario Toolkit: Workshop Materials and Global Forecasts for 2039

Published by: Institute for Alternative Futures, The Rockefeller Foundation

Year of publication: 2011

Link: www.altfutures.org/pubs/propoor/Pro-Poor_Toolkit_3-1-11.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: Pro-Poor Foresight considers a variety of plausible future scenarios while placing poor and marginalised populations at the centre of concern. This toolkit is meant to help communities, countries, and regions develop scenarios that place those poor populations at centre stage. This toolkit specifically invites policymakers, researchers, students, professors and active citizens to explore the future as stakeholders who can identify actions to be taken today to avoid feared consequences and achieve desired societies. A detailed breakdown on facilitating Foresight workshops is provided.

8. Concurrent Design Foresight: Report to the European Commission of the Expert Group on Foresight Modelling

Expert group members: Köhler, J. (Chair); Wendling, C. (Rapporteur); Addarii, F.; Grandjean, M.; Lindgren, K.; Stahel, W.; Tuomi, I.; Weber, M. and Wilkinson, A.

Published by: European Commission

Year of publication: 2015

Link: http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_governance/concurrent_design_foresight_report.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This report provides an overview of the European Union approach to Foresight. Specifically, it discusses Concurrent Design Foresight, a tool to support agile and adaptive Foresight processes as a part of policy development. The report also considers the more operational side of Foresight, including both numerical and non-numerical Foresight models.

9. The Futures Toolkit

Published by: FUTURREG: Futures for Regional Development

Year of publication: 2007

Link: www.urenio.org/futurreg/files/The_FUTURREG_Futures_Toolkit_v3.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This is a practical guide on utilising Futures methods. It is structured through the following sections: How can we best prepare for using Futures?; Launching a Futures exercise; Selection of tools; Individual tools: descriptions, uses and implementation. The tools presented include: scenario building, Delphi, visionary management, horizon scanning, trend analysis, and Futures workshops. The guide also provides a frequently asked questions section and several case studies.

10. Six Pillars: Futures Thinking for Transforming

Author: Inayatullah, S.

Published by: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Year of publication: 2008

Link: www.benlandau.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Inayatullah-2008-Six-Pillars.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This paper presents a new approach to the study of the future. The paper describes six foundational concepts (the used future, the disowned future, alternative futures, alignment, models of social change, and uses of the future); six questions (Will? Fear? Missing? Alternatives? Wish? and Next steps?); and six pillars (mapping, anticipating, timing, deepening, creating alternatives, and transforming). Examples and case studies are provided where appropriate. The paper stresses that in an increasingly complex and heterogeneous world, Futures studies can help people to recover their agency, and help them to create the world in which they wish to live.

11. The Future is a Project to Recolor the World: Systems Mythology Toolkit

Published by: Institute for the Future

Year of publication: 2014

Link: www.iff.org/systemsmythology/ (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This toolkit presents 'Systems Mythology'. It shows how the nature of systems (everything from our infrastructure and institutions to our products and platforms) influences the mythologies of society (the stories we tell ourselves about how the world works and who we are in relationship to it). Systems Mythology uses a palette of four colours – blue, red, green and purple – to describe four fundamental archetypes of meaning. An organisation or process with blue assumptions will naturally produce blue structures and blue interfaces. Green design invites green activities, and the symbols of red let you know that the goals of your immediate environment are red. The toolkit can provide insights into how your system will be perceived and used, whether it is an organisation, a product, an experience, or a platform. It offers a human-centred feedback process that will help you intuit when a system is balanced, translate ideas between different teams, and understand the limits of your own perspective.

12. Doing Foresight

Created by: Klüver, L.; Hoff, A.; Andersen, I-E. and Larsen, G.

Published by: The Danish Board of Technology

Year of publication: 2007

Link: www.doingforesight.org/ (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: *Doing Foresight* is a support instrument for future-oriented policy analysis activities and projects. It can be used to: examine a problem and choose aims; screen for relevant methods; and examine performance compared to aims/ambitions. It also provides support in evaluating Foresight work. There is a downloadable manual for the web-based tool.

13. **Building the Future: A Workbook to Accompany Futuring: The Exploration of the Future**

Authors: Loukides, J. and Gardner, L.

Published by: World Future Society

Year of publication: 2006

Link: www.kriso.ee/building-future-workbook-accompany-futuring-exploration-db-9780930242626.html (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: Authored by two futurist educators, this workbook accompanies the book by Edward Cornish entitled *Futuring: The Exploration of the Future*.¹ The text comprises 16 chapters that cover supertrends, the nature of change, futuring methods, uses of scenarios, the origins and rise of futurism, and much more. The workbook queries students on their prior knowledge and learning objectives; provides an outline, summary, and key terms; and prompts learners to evaluate their new knowledge about the future through critical thinking questions, activities, and self-study questions.

14. **Drivers of Change**

Published by: Arup Foresight

Year of publication: 2016

Link: www.driversofchange.com/tools/doc/ (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: The Drivers of Change programme is an online tool launched by Arup Foresight to communicate research, trends, and questions about the future. Launched in the early 2000s, the *Drivers of Change* publication series consists of sets of knowledge cards designed to facilitate conversation about the trends and issues that are likely to have a significant impact on the built environment and the world at large. Topics have been organised into five categories, or lenses, based on their main area of impact: Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental and Political, collectively referred to as STEEP. This is a great tool to draw inspiration and insight to discuss drivers of change as part of broader Foresight processes.

15. **Future Risks and Opportunities Toolkit: Building Strategies for the Future**

Published by: Glasgow: Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services

Year of publication: 2016

Link: www.iriss.org.uk/resources/future-risks-and-opportunities-toolkit (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: A toolkit designed for Futures analysts, policymakers, strategists and people managing a Futures process. It summarises techniques and methods for strategically identifying and analysing future risks and opportunities. The toolkit is designed to help think about the future using Futures thinking and analysis to make better decisions today. Summarising 19 Foresight tools, each 'card' includes an overview of the tool, a description, time horizons, expertise required, time needed to implement it, appropriate number of participants, steps, and hints.

¹ Cornish, E. (2004) *Futuring: The Exploration of the Future*, Bethesda MA: World Future Society

16. Introduction to Scenario Planning

Published by: Monitor Company Group

Year of publication: 2008

Link: www.mwcog.org/uploads/committee-documents/aV5eWFtX20080731094534.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This is a set of PowerPoint slides that summarises the scenario-planning process. The presentation illustrates the usefulness of scenarios as business strategy tools. It describes scenarios as rich, data-driven stories about tomorrow that can help make better decisions today. Scenarios are described as useful to overcome the tendency of oversimplifying the future by planning for multiple futures.

17. Scenario Development: A Typology of Approaches

Author: van Notten, P.

Published by: Think Scenarios, Rethink Education

Year of publication: 2006

Link: www.oecd.org/site/schoolingfortomorrowknowledgebase/futurestinking/scenarios/scenariodevelopmentatypologyofapproaches.htm (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This is a classification of scenario methods based on contemporary scenario practice. The author draws on some 100 studies of scenario applications carried out since the mid-1980s by institutions and private businesses in a wide cross-section of sectors including environment, energy, transport and technology. He illustrates the variety of scenario development approaches, and seeks to identify common characteristics and prerequisites for successful scenario work. The study draws attention to the importance of including a cross-section of participants and fostering 'cultures of curiosity' as prerequisites for creating environments of imaginative thinking and thus meaningful scenario exercises that venture beyond the boundaries of what is already known and assumed.

18. Strategy Development: Scenario Testing and Visioning

Published by: Overseas Development Institute

Year of publication: 2009

Link: www.odi.org/publications/5213-scenario-planning-learning-visioning (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: A toolkit of how to use scenario testing and visioning. Scenario testing is described as a group learning activity, a tool for a group to develop alternative futures based on different combinations of assumptions, facts and trends, and areas. Collective visioning exercises are used to define and help achieve a desirable future by creating images that can help to guide change in an organisation. The toolkit includes a detailed description of the process, practical tips and few examples.

19. What If? The Art of Scenario Thinking for Nonprofits

Authors: Scarce, D. and Fulton, K. and the Global Business Network community

Published by: Global Business Network

Year of publication: 2004

Link: http://monitorinstitute.com/downloads/what-we-think/what-if/What_If.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This is an extensive and detailed overview of scenario thinking customised for a non-profit audience. This guide is divided in four chapters. Chapter 1 defines scenario thinking, illustrates some guiding principles and when and how it can be useful. Chapter 2 describes the practice of scenario thinking, including how to utilise scenarios to complement other tools. Chapter 3 provides stories from the field on scenario thinking, and Chapter 4 includes important resources.

20. The Trend Management Toolkit: A Practical Guide to the Future

Author: Kjaer, A.L.

Published by: Palgrave Macmillan

Year of publication: 2014

Link: www.palgrave.com/us/book/9781137370082 (accessed 11 April 2016); sample downloadable at www.academia-superior.at/uploads/tx_news/Sample.pdf (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: This book presents a unique methodology for global trend-spotting along with practical tools and approaches to help companies and organisations analyse market changes and determine the way ahead. The book is divided into seven chapters: From facts to feelings; Sense making in a fast-forward society; Trend mapping: past, present and future; Your essential trend toolkit; Major trends to 2030+; Practical trend mapping: focusing on people; and Practical trend mapping: organisations.

21. Scenario Planning Toolkit

Author: Murphy, O.

Published by: Belfast City Council

Year of publication: 2014

Link: www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tourism-venues/culture/strengtheningculturalsector.aspx (accessed 11 April 2016)

Short description: The purpose of this toolkit is to provide policymakers and other stakeholders with the resources they need to explore scenarios and use them to support their own decision-making. The toolkit is in four parts: Part 1 offers a brief introduction to scenarios and the scenario process; Part 2 provides an overview of the Intelligent Infrastructure Systems scenarios; Part 3 provides a suite of techniques that can be used to facilitate discussions – ranging from 75-minute meetings to day-long workshops – on the scenarios; Part 4 provides a suite of scenario and futures processes ranging from 75-minute meetings to day-long workshops – that may help general strategic discussions. The toolkit also includes technique sheets designed to be accessible to those with little experience of facilitation.



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