

INNOVATION FOR RESILIENCE



50
YEARS

Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

The world is changing at an unprecedented pace. Volatility is the new normal. Linear multi-year plans are not suited to our uncertain times. Building resilience into national plans requires building flexibility into these plans. Resilience is a transformative process that involves *strengthening the capacity of people, communities and countries to anticipate, manage, recover and transform from shocks.*

Countries that are more vulnerable to shocks, due to limited resources or institutional capacities, are often also constrained in their ability to build resilience into development plans to cushion the impacts. One approach to uncertain futures is **foresight**: *exploring multiple future scenarios to design more adaptable and resilient plans.*

Traditional planning methods are often linear and designed for one desired future scenario. Foresight encourages policy planners and/or civil society partners to imagine various futures and contemplate their uncertainties. This shift in thinking enables plans to be more flexible and resilient in the face of changing realities, having identified potential risks and opportunities under different scenarios. UNDP has contributed to building strategic foresight capabilities of government institutions, civil society, and the private sector. Here are a few examples:

PACIFIC ISLANDS | How can small islands better anticipate and plan for future risks, despite limited resources?

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are particularly vulnerable to climate change and this is compounded by limited local resources and the increasing frequency of natural disasters. In November 2015, policy planners from 7 Pacific SIDS met in Fiji to explore possible, probable and preferred alternative futures. Participants designed and tested policies for national development strategies across various scenarios, and adjusted those plans to make them more resilient. This ForesightXchange exercise was the second in a series

jointly planned with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. The session coincided with a time when many of the islands were revising their development strategies to localize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Together with government counterparts, UNDP introduced foresight methodologies in the visioning, localization and planning of National Development Strategies and the SDGs in the Maldives and Fiji.

RWANDA & MAURITIUS | How can governments better anticipate and prepare for future risks?

UNDP's Global Center for Public Service Excellence, with seed capital from the Innovation Facility, has hosted ForesightXchanges in several countries. In 2014, Rwanda's Ministry of Planning explored foresight to plan the future of urbanization, rural sector development, and large scale public investment projects. Since then, Rwanda has worked with UNDP to make foresight an integral part of public service planning. In 2015, Mauritius used foresight to develop

future-oriented plans for a proactive public service to better respond to shifting citizen demands. Government planners developed alternative scenarios and prototyped realistic and transformative programs within the civil service.

In November 2015, government officials and practitioners from 12 African countries discussed foresight opportunities, highlighting the need for inclusive and resilient planning, and public innovation.



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KOSOVO* | How can we engage young men and women to reduce unemployment?

Kosovo* has been struggling with a staggering unemployment rate of 35%; 8 in 10 Kosovars under the age of 25 cannot find jobs. Despite efforts, there has been no significant improvement in school attendance access to training or internship opportunities and, by extension, jobs. However, these efforts all lacked the critical perspectives of young Kosovars, who are experts on youth unemployment. We asked young Kosovar men and women to re-imagine different versions of the type of employment future they see for themselves, thus putting those affected at the heart of the process. With Futurescaper, an emerging tendency to analyze the drivers, trends and forces that will shape the future, we combined crowdsourcing with analytics. By achieving deeper engagement and accelerated

understanding, we were better able to see the challenges and consequences that people identified. The tool also mapped the constellations of interrelated causes and effect to visualize these trends and show the connections between various factors. It helps the Government in investing in removing the bottlenecks for youth employment.

*Under SCR 1244

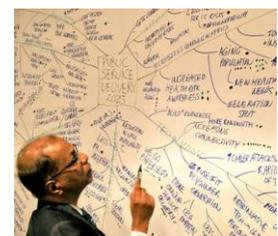


FYR MACEDONIA | How can the public help monitor and manage critical water issues?

In FYR Macedonia, the Strumica River Basin is especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change. By 2020, major water crises are likely due to the increase in water demand by 40% and the frequency of extreme weather events in the region – such as floods and droughts. However, this provided the opportunity to test, and ideally benefit from foresight-based tools, like the foresight eXplorer game.

Foresight eXplorer is designed as an enhanced survey tool that uses collaborative, face-to-face gaming dynamics to generate novel discussions and new learning opportunities. As gambling is very popular in this community, tokens were incorporated into the foresight eXplorer game to gain insights into decision-

making. Voting was used among gamers, who balanced present-day payoffs with resources for future generations. By opening up spaces for unrestrained dialogue, foresight eXplorer is collapsing the boundaries between the possible and probable and helping locals to imagine more creative and effective solutions for the future.



SUDAN | How can we support civil society design a future beyond conflict?

To tackle low citizen participation and lack of ownership of the national planning process in Sudan, UNDP engaged with a range of stakeholders to imagine alternative futures for a resilient Sudan in 2030. Foresight was applied as a dialogue methodology for the 2015 Sudan Peace Symposium with over 400 peacebuilding stakeholders from conflict-affected

areas in Sudan. The Symposium was organized with the Institute for the Future and the Peace Research Institute of the University of Khartoum.



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The UNDP Innovation Facility supports our partners – governments, civil society organizations as well as UNDP Country Offices – in finding more effective solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. We provide support on Foresight; setting up Government Innovation Labs to design the next generation of public services; Challenge Prizes to stimulate open innovation and to find the best solutions for development challenges; leveraging new and emerging data for improved decision-making; Behavioural Insights to improve policy testing and formulation; new finance mechanisms for the SDGs such as impact investment; and more.

