



CONSORTIUM FOR
SCENARIO PLANNING



Exploratory Scenario Planning with Multi-Stakeholder Platforms in Food Systems: A Toolkit

November 2023

Food Systems Foresight

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Contents

- Workshop Facilitation Guide.....1**
- Note to Facilitators.....1
- Workshop Pre-Check & Preparation2
- Workshop Materials3
- XSP Workshop Run Sheet4

- Scenario Narrative Template & Examples7**
- Narrative Template7
- Example Scenario Template 18
- Example Scenario Template 29

- XSP Workshop: Reflection & Feedback Survey.....10**

- XSP Workshop Communications.....12**
- Invitation Email Template12
- Reminder Email Template13
- Thank You and Follow Up Email Template14

- Author Bios15**

- Annex A: Presentation Slides Separate File**

- Annex B: Printed Materials Separate File**

About

Hello Exploratory Scenario Planning Practitioner!

This toolkit is designed for those interested in holding a workshop for Exploratory Scenario Planning (XSP) with multi-stakeholder platforms working in food systems. It was developed by Food Systems Foresight in partnership with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the Consortium for Scenario Planning as part of the Consortium's annual request for proposals to conduct scenario planning research and workshops around the world.

XSP is an invaluable tool for collectively envisioning potential and uncertain futures. Food systems are dynamic, complex, and adaptive, thus rife with potential to deploy this tool to increase resilience. Multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) in particular are critical spaces where actors can break out of silos, share perspectives, and build shared understanding. We have custom built this toolkit for use by MSPs. We condensed the XSP process to make the time commitment feasible, recognizing participation in MSP is usually voluntary.

We tested this toolkit in three distinct contexts: the Western Cape in South Africa, the Hudson Valley in New York in the United States, and in the Black Sea region. Each group was distinct in their make-up and the governance structures at play ranging from a city to multiple counties/municipalities to multiple national governments. There are opportunities to customize this toolkit for your scale and context both prior to and during the workshop.

This document is a PDF version of the workshop materials including templates for a facilitator's guide, narrative worksheets, feedback surveys, and communication materials. The [presentation slides](#) and [printed materials](#) are separate files. Areas in square brackets [] indicate where you should fill in details specific to your workshop. In the presentation slides and printed materials, these areas are indicated with a red 'sticker.'

Happy exploring!

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Acknowledgments

Food Systems Foresight would like to thank South Africa's Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP), the Western Cape Food Forum convened by EDP, the Hudson Valley Food Systems Coalition in New York, USA, the Food Safety and Food Systems Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) in Türkiye for their partnership in piloting this toolkit. We also wish to extend our gratitude to the participants of the pilot workshops for their engagement, insights, and unyielding commitment to food systems transformation.

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Workshop Facilitation Guide

Note to Facilitators

Welcome to the facilitation guide for your Exploratory Scenario Planning (XSP) workshop. The following pages include details to prepare and run your XSP workshop. Areas in square brackets [] indicate where you should fill in details specific to your workshop. References are made to other materials used to run this workshop including:

- Presentation Slides
- Printed Materials
- Narrative Worksheet

We recommend you look at those in tandem with the guide to best familiarize yourself with the process.

In the main facilitation guide, which begins on page 5, there are several columns (see below). For each column, we have indicated what you should do to customize the guide.

Lead	Slide #	What	Facilitation Guide	Duration/T.stamp
Note the lead facilitator of the section	None needed	None needed	Customize as needed	C10 min 00:00-00:10 Edit to note the timing in your workshop

Workshop Pre-Check & Preparation

Attendees:

20-25 participants with representation from multiple sectors (private, government, civil society)

The number of participants can be as few as 12 but not ideal over 30

Pre-Workshop Preparation

Pre-assign participants to groups

Project slides and test audio and visuals

Set up the workshop space with areas for each of the four groups

Place two global trends slides in each envelope

Provide paper and pens for each group, mark group areas at tables

As participants enter, ask them to write their name on a blank name tag and help them find their “group”

Team Groupings

Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4
•	•	•	•

Workshop Materials:

Material	Quantity	For?
Printed 9 'global trends' slides	1 copy of each trend	2 trends/slides per team
Printed critical uncertainties slide	4 copies	1 copy per team
Manilla folders	4	1 folder per team
Voting dots	8	2 dots per team
Printed feedback surveys, if desired	25	1 per participant
Printer paper	25	1 per participant
Pens/pencils	25	1 per participant
Sticky name tags	25 + # of facilitators	1 per participant and facilitator
Laptops	4	1 per team
Post-its	1 pack	For facilitator use
Sticky tack or tape	1 pack	For facilitator use
Slide deck	Digital	For facilitator use

XSP Workshop Run Sheet

00:00 – 03:00 (Edit timing to match your session)

Lead	Slide #	What	Facilitation Guide	Duration/T.stamp
	1	Meeting each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and thank everyone for joining Open with icebreaker “2030” and invite them to answer three questions, writing the answers for themselves on a piece of paper: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How old will you be in 2030? How do you want your life to be in 2030? How do you want food systems to be in 2030? Invite a few participants to share their answers (as time allows) Introduce the ways of working: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have one conversation at a time Stay focused on the topic Use time as a positive constraint 	12 min 00:00-00:12
	2	Introducing the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefly introduce the project and your organization, set the scene for why we are meeting today 	3 min 00:12-00:15
	3	Introduce XSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the concept/definition of exploratory scenario planning Play XSP video (3 min), linked on the slide 	5 min 00:15-00:20
	4-5	XSP Process & Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the XSP process and focus for today Walk through agenda 	5 min 00:20-00:25
	6-7	Exploring global trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce ‘global trends’ and sources they’re pulled from Explain ‘instant expert’ exercise: we will share 2 trends for each group to read and become familiar with. Once familiar, think about how each trend connects to the local context. What is an example of this in [PLACE]? Then one person from your group report back in plenary Facilitator demonstrates the exercise using the trend ‘Conflict.’ Example: [EXAMPLE] Remind them to nominate a speaker to share back with the group Pass out folders with two global trends to each group Give people 5 minutes to read their trend Then invite each group 1 by 1 to report out on their two global trends 	15 min 00:25-00:40

8-11	Introduce critical uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the “focal question” - “How might we build a more resilient local food system?” Timeframe: [YEAR] • Introduce the concept of critical uncertainties and the definition of them • Show the pre-drafted list of critical uncertainties (on a slide) • Talk through each critical uncertainty and demonstrate how they can form a 2x2 for the “worlds” • Take questions/comments in plenary, <i>including comments on whether anything is missing from the list</i> 	15 min 00:40-00:55
12	Rank critical uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give each table a printed copy of critical uncertainties & 2 voting dots • Remind participants that we are hoping to use 2 uncertainties to create our 2x2 • In table groups, ask groups to discuss: which of these is most important to answer our question today? • Tables discuss uncertainties and which 2 they would like to prioritize for the day • Instruct individuals to vote for their top two by marking them with a dot <p style="color: red;">Give participants a 10 min break while the team collects handouts with votes. In the event a tie break is needed, ask the room to raise their hands to vote for the tied responses when they come back from the break.</p>	20 min 00:55-01:15
	Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator edits slide 12 to reflect the two factors created by the group 	10 min 01:15-01:25
13	Crafting narratives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Reveal” the top 2 uncertainties and 2x2 that has been created by participants choices (on a slide) and briefly note the “worlds” that this creates • Note which world each group is assigned to • Introduce activity that they will each create a narrative to describe the world they’re working with • Show participants the template that they will be working with • In table groups ask them to consider the following prompts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What global trends impact this world the most? 2. What does life in 2030 look like in this world? 3. What does that mean for the food system? 4. What role would (government/ private sector/nonprofits) need to play in this world? 5. What “title” would you give to your world? How would you describe what’s happening in it? • Ask them to type responses on to their slide so that responses can be captured and saved • Hand out laptops to groups prepped with slide <p>All Facilitators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Float between groups as they discuss and fill out the digital worksheet • Ask each group to nominate someone to read their narrative 	45 min 01:25-02:10

	14	Sharing narratives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome group back to plenary • Ask groups to listen for commonalities across all 4 narratives • Invite each group to read out their narrative 	20 min 02:10-2:30
	15	Discussing similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite people to share what things, if any, were common across all 4 groups? 	20 min 02:30-02:50
	16-17	Closing out and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce three questions for participants to take back to their organization to discuss <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would your current strategy perform in these four 'worlds'? 2. What would need to change in your strategy to increase your resilience in potential futures? 3. What role can a multi-stakeholder platform play in building that resilience? • Indicate date for groups share responses by • Thank people for participation • Ask participants to fill out feedback survey 	10 min 02:50-03:00

Scenario Narrative Template & Examples

Note to facilitators:

When building this template, start by drafting a paragraph describing the local food system including national context, production, retail, and pertinent economic, social, and political issues which impact the system. The participants will read the first paragraph and use it for fodder in the fill in the blanks section. Portions in [] are for facilitators to populate while _____ are for participants.

Narrative Template

Group

[PLACE] is [RELATIVE SIZE] and [RELATES TO NATION/REGION BY]. Agricultural production [IS CHARACTERIZED BY]. It is impacted by [FACTOR] and [FACTOR] in [THESE WAYS]. The food system is largely characterized by [MAJOR CHARACTERISTIC] but the exception is [EXCEPTIONAL CHARACTERISTIC].

In 2030, national and international pressures are pushing [PLACE] into an uncertain future.

The demand for energy continues to rise as international conflicts and fuel shortages continue. Climate change, meanwhile, is threatening many things bringing [CLIMATE IMPACTS].

[Create a title for your world at the end]

In 2030, *[critical uncertainty 1]* increases/decreases and *[critical uncertainty 2]* increases/decreases.

The *rise/collapse* of the _____ could not have come at a *better/worse* time for [PLACE]. Town. Residents feel impacts in _____.

The impact on the local food systems is _____. Access to food is now _____.

New government policy is introduced to _____. Major policy *wins/failures* have been _____. The effect on residents is _____.

Civil society and NGOs are directing their attention and efforts to address _____. They *are/are not* able to _____.

Large food businesses *continue to/have changed to* _____, while informal traders *continue to/have changed to* _____. The impact on consumers is _____.

Example Scenario Template 1

Group

Cape Town is South Africa's second largest city and plays a critical role in the national economy. Agriculture--a central industry nationally and in the Western Cape province--is highly mechanized and high-risk due to insufficient rainfall. The climate crisis further threatens industry viability. The South African agro-food systems are largely corporate led and economically centralized, however the informal sector incorporates a broad spectrum of economic activities including business-to-consumer sales throughout the city of Cape Town and other urban centers. Cape Town is an important node for import and export, including food, with some of the most advanced infrastructure in the country.

In 2030, national and international pressures are pushing Cape Town and the Western Cape into an uncertain future.

The demand for energy continues to rise as international conflicts and fuel shortages continue. Climate change, meanwhile, is threatening many things that attract people to Cape Town, bringing drought, extreme heat, and water scarcity.

[Create a title for your world at the end]

In 2030, [critical uncertainty 1] increases/decreases and [critical uncertainty 2] increases/decreases.

The rise/collapse of the _____ could not have come at a better/worse time for Cape Town. Residents of Cape Town feel impacts in _____.

The impact on the local food systems is _____. Access to food is now _____.

New government policy is introduced to _____. Major policy wins/failures have been _____. The effect on residents is _____.

Civil society and NGOs are directing their attention and efforts to address _____. They are/are not able to _____.

Large food businesses continue to/have changed to _____, while informal traders continue to/have changed to _____. The impact on consumers is _____.

Example Scenario Template 2

Group

The Hudson Valley region in New York State is home to just over 2 million people, borders the Hudson River and is directly north of New York City to which it is a foodshed. The Hudson Valley has a long history of Western agriculture which began around the 1700s. Following a decline in the 19th and 20th centuries, there has been a resurgence since the 1970s driven in part by the culinary revolution, farm-to-table, and local food movements. While farming in the United States is highly industrialized and consolidated, the Hudson Valley is notable for its large number of small farms and CSAs. Key agricultural industries in the area include dairy farms and apple orchards.

The agricultural industry in the Hudson Valley is impacted by the climate crisis which impacts weather patterns and by increased in-migration and rising land prices from NYC. The food system is largely divided and unequal. Affluent residents have access to high-quality, organic produce while many of the region's poorer residents live in food deserts, are food insecure, and reliant on SNAP benefits.

In 2030, national and international pressures are pushing the Hudson Valley into an uncertain future. The demand for energy continues to rise as international conflicts and fuel shortages continue. Climate change, meanwhile, is threatening many things bringing extreme heat and season creep.

[Create a title for your world at the end]

In 2030, *[critical uncertainty 1]* increases/decreases and *[critical uncertainty 2]* increases/decreases.

The *rise/collapse* of the _____ could not have come at a *better/worse* time for the Hudson Valley. Residents feel impacts in _____.

The impact on the local food systems is _____. Access to food is now _____.

New government policy is introduced to _____. Major policy *wins/failures* have been _____. The effect on residents is _____.

Civil society and NGOs are directing their attention and efforts to address _____. They *are/are not* able to _____.

Large food businesses *continue to/have changed to* _____, while informal traders *continue to/have changed to* _____. The impact on consumers is _____.

XSP Workshop: Reflection & Feedback Survey

On behalf of [ORGANIZERS], thank you for your participation in this Exploratory Scenario Planning Workshop. We would appreciate any feedback on this workshop to improve its design and delivery in future iterations.

1. Please mark the appropriate box with an 'X'. How engaged did you feel during...

	Not engaged	Not very engaged	Somewhat engaged	Engaged	Very engaged
The entire workshop					
Exploring global trends					
Critical uncertainties (voting)					
Creating narratives in small groups					
Sharing narratives in plenary					
Discussing takeaways & next steps					

2. What kind of 'report-out' or follow-up would you find most useful after an exercise like this?

3. Please mark the appropriate box with an 'X'. How did you find the duration of...

	Very short	Somewhat short	Well-suited	Somewhat long	Very long
The entire workshop					
Exploring global trends					
Critical uncertainties (voting)					
Creating narratives in small groups					
Sharing narratives in plenary					
Discussing takeaways & next steps					

4. Do you have any additional thoughts or reflections on the structure of the workshop? (i.e., timing, format, use of small groups, rooms, duration, facilitation)

5. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding the workshop?

XSP Workshop Communications

Invitation Email Template

Hello all,

We would like to invite you to participate in an upcoming [Exploratory Scenario Planning](#) workshop organized by the [ORGANIZATIONS] to explore what a more resilient local food system could look like in the future.

What will our food system look like if our water supplies are vastly restricted in coming years? Or if urbanization rates continue to climb? Or if we face extreme political instability that disrupts our food supply? How can we plan and be better prepared for these scenarios? These are just some of the questions we will address using Exploratory Scenario Planning in this workshop.

This in-person workshop is designed to be interactive, bringing together diverse people from across government, civil society, and academia to explore potential futures for our local food system. The goal of the workshop is for everyone to gain hands-on experience with Exploratory Scenario Planning and learn how to apply it moving forward. You will also receive takeaway materials to help you facilitate these types of conversations with your own organizations. You do not need to have any prior experience with scenario planning to participate in the workshop - we are looking for you to bring your own real-life experiences and knowledge to this session!

The workshop will take place on [DATE], from [START TIME - STOP TIME] at [LOCATION] (directions below). Over the course of three hours, we will focus on:

A quick overview of [Exploratory Scenario Planning](#)

Global trends and "critical uncertainties"

Potential futures for our local food system

Please RSVP using [FORM LINK] by EoD [DATE]. If you cannot attend, please let us know if you would like to send someone from your organization in your place.

Kindest regards,

[NAME]

Directions to [LOCATION]:

Reminder Email Template

Dear Colleagues,

This is a gentle reminder of the upcoming [Exploratory Scenario Planning](#) workshop organized by the [ORGANIZATIONS] on [DATE], from [START TIME - STOP TIME] at [LOCATION] (directions below). Over the course of three hours, we will focus on:

A quick overview of [Exploratory Scenario Planning](#)

Global trends and "critical uncertainties"

Possible futures for our local food system

This in-person workshop will bring together diverse people from across government, civil society, and academia to explore potential futures for our local food system. The goal of the interactive workshop is to equip everyone with hands-on experience in Exploratory Scenario Planning and how to apply it moving forward. You will also receive takeaway materials to help you facilitate these types of conversations with your own organizations. Note that prior experience with scenario planning is not requisite to participate in the workshop. We are looking forward to approaching the session with your perspective in mind.

In the meantime, kindly let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

See you then!

Kindest regards,

[NAME]

Thank You and Follow Up Email Template

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your participation in yesterday's Exploratory Scenario Planning (XSP) workshop! We found our exploration of potential futures enriching and hope you did too.

We invite you to take the conversation further in your individual organizations and share the results of your conversation with this group. Consider the following:

1. How would your current strategy perform in these four 'worlds'?
2. What would need to change in your strategy to increase your resilience in potential futures?
3. What role can a multi-stakeholder platform (like WCFF) play in building that resilience?

If you would like to flip back through our slides and the scenario narratives, please see the attached files. If you have any questions or reflections you would like to share with us, please do not hesitate!

Thank you for your collaboration,

[ORGANIZATIONS]

Author Bios

Angela R. Hansen, Founder and Project Director, Food Systems Foresight

Angela founded Food Systems Foresight in 2019 to help food system decision-makers to illuminate systems dynamics, spur social innovation, and ensure sustainable development. In her 20+ year advisory career, Angela has advised Heads of State, UN Executive Directors, Civil Society leaders and two World Food Prize Laureates.

Angela previously served as the CEO of GKI, a social enterprise advancing systems thinking, and as Partner and Director of Agriculture & Food Security at Dalberg, a global strategy firm.

Angela is completing her Ph.D. and lecturing at the Graduate School of Business at the University of Cape Town and is a contributing author to two books: *Corporate Citizenship in Africa* and *Financial Inclusion in Africa*.

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Eilif Ronning, Consultant, Food Systems Foresight

Eilif is a consultant for Food Systems Foresight and brings five years of experience working in food systems, four of which in international development. Most recently, he collaborated with Angela and other Food Systems Foresight team members to develop a scoping toolkit for Canada's International Development Research Center (IDRC) including foresight and systems tools.

Prior to Food Systems Foresight, Eilif led a non-profit organization working towards socially and environmentally sustainable development in northern Haiti and worked with the International Bamboo and Rattan Organization in Beijing. He is an experienced and published researcher with both desktop and field research experience. Eilif's work experience spans three continents, and he speaks four languages.

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