

Workshop report

9 October 2024



Youth Futures Visioning Summit

DEVON VALLEY HOTEL, STELLENBOSCH

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Project Overview

The **IDRC Youth Futures for Systemic Justice: Anticipation and Innovation Praxis in East and Southern Africa (ESA)** project is a collaborative initiative spearheaded by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) [Futures](#) and [Youth](#) Programmes, the [Centre for Sustainability Transitions](#), and the [Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#), with support from the [International Development Research Centre \(IDRC\)](#).

Building on the successful conclusion of the first phase of the [Youth and Social Justice project](#) in November 2023, this second phase aims to explore the critical role of youth seed initiatives in enhancing their capacity to anticipate future challenges and act strategically. The project focuses on empowering these initiatives by developing competencies, fostering alternative innovations, and identifying strategic options that contribute to systemic justice, economic well-being, ecological resilience, and comprehensive skills development.

In this context, 'seed' initiatives refer to projects that introduce new ways of thinking and doing, challenge existing social, economic, or political systems, and operate on a small scale with the potential for broader impact.¹ These initiatives often exist at the periphery of current worldviews and mainstream practices, providing valuable alternative perspectives and solutions while demonstrating vulnerability and a higher potential for impactful support.

The project brings together twelve seed initiatives and a curated group of sixteen youth-focused changemakers to reimagine the transformative potential of youth initiatives in East and Southern African societies. Through action research, the project is focused on cultivating strategic foresight capabilities, systems thinking, and anticipatory competencies among youth innovators and stakeholders. This collaborative approach emphasises co-creation with key participants, including youth, government officials, civil society, industry associations, and the private sector.

As part of this initiative, a youth futures Visioning Summit was convened in Cape Town, South Africa, from 3-6 September 2024. This summit provided a platform for seeds and changemakers to collaboratively explore and envision bold and positive futures for youth competencies and anticipation in the Eastern and Southern Africa region. The workshop employed foresight methods such as the Futures Wheel, Three Horizons Framework, and Causal Layered Analysis to explore future possibilities and innovations.

Participants' contributions and co-creation during the summit were instrumental in shaping the strategic direction of the project and will inform subsequent activities leading up to the Anticipation Summit, scheduled for 12-15 November 2024. Through this project, we aim to not only empower participants but also inspire significant, long-term transformations within the broader context of youth initiatives in the ESA regions.

Disclaimer: This workshop report offers a basic overview of the three-day workshop proceedings. The report does not delve into detailed accounts of every conversation and discovery, as we are constrained by length and time. However, it does provide an overview of the strategic conversations that occurred and highlights the emerging insights from these discussions.

¹ Elena M. Bennett et al., "Bright Spots: Seeds of a Good Anthropocene," *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 14, no. 8 (2016): 441–48, <https://doi.org/10.1002/fee.1309>.

Workshop design and methodology

The workshop methodology employed a combination of action research² and participatory futures/foresight methods³ in the form of facilitated strategic conversations about the future. These conversations aimed to foster dialogues centred on deepening a shared understanding of alternative choices we can make today to act upon the emerging contexts related to systemic youth justice in the Eastern and Southern African regions. The diverse group of seeds and changemakers was intentionally divided into four groups, each comprising approximately eleven individuals, to maximise diversity and stimulate rich narratives.⁴ Each group consisted of three seeds, four changemakers, a youth researcher contracted as part of the research design, two youth facilitators, and one experienced facilitator as a go-to in the room if needed. Participants remained in the same small groups throughout the three-day duration to facilitate deep dialogue, encourage exploration of diverse perspectives, and develop a shared understanding.

The workshop process was purposefully structured to encourage active engagement, collaborative problem-solving, and critical thinking. Participants were prompted to question assumptions and evaluate the consequences of thinking differently about multiple alternative futures. This structured framework empowered participants to navigate uncertainties, identify emerging trends, and envisage innovative solutions. By leveraging the diversity of perspectives and providing a supportive environment for exploration, the workshop facilitated meaningful contributions from all participants, contributing to the development of futures thinking-informed strategies to make better and proactive decisions about diverse futures.

The workshop agenda at a glance

Day One: Tuesday 3 September

Overview and welcome	Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration and Welcome • Introduction to the project • Presencing exercises
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Day Two: Wednesday 4 September

The futures wheel, cross impact analysis and influence mapping	Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Allocation • Presencing exercises • Construct Futures Wheels with seeds stated as a mature condition
	Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeds cross impact exercise

² Bob Dick and Paul Wildman, "Critical Futures Praxis: Futures, Action Research and Change," (2005).

³ Jose M Ramos et al., "Our Futures: By the People, for the People - How Mass Involvement in Shaping the Future Can Solve Complex Problems" (London: Nesta, November 2019), <https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/our-futures-people-people/>.

⁴ Laura M. Pereira et al., "Using Futures Methods to Create Transformative Spaces: Visions of a Good Anthropocene in Southern Africa," *Ecology and Society* 23, no. 1 (2018), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26799045>.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence mapping and scenario skeleton development exercise • End of day sharing and comments/insights/reflections
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Day Three: Thursday 5 September 5 September

The three horizons exercise: navigating the voices of the Power holders, innovators and visionaries	Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon 3: Identifying visions of viable/desired futures • Horizon 1: Identifying the underlying structures supporting 'Business as Usual.'
	Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon 2: Identifying innovations that could bridge the gap between H1 and H3. • Scenario preparation

Day Four: Friday 6 September

Co-creating systemic innovations and telling a collective bold story	Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting exercises • Scenario Presentations from the group • Scenario Comparisons
	Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary Conversation and goodbye

The workshop groupings

Table 1: The four groups of workshop participants

Group name	Facilitators	Youth researcher	Seeds	Changemakers
Group one: The Human Beams	Ben Carlyle – CST		Baobab superfoods – Represented by Atula Owade	Metsi Makheta (South Africa)
	Litha Mzinyati – SAIIA Futures		Integrated living - Represented by WanjikūJ.Kiarife	Nneile Nkholise (South Africa)
	Deon Cloete – SAIIA Futures			Thembi Joja (South Africa)

		Simamnkele Dingiswayo	Rural revive - Represented by Armanda Pieters	Mapumba Cilombo (South Africa)
Group two: GIG (The good intentions group)	Francois Pretorius – SAIIA Futures	Bonolo Moikanyane	Oribi – Represented by T-Anne Reddy	Nancy Barisoa (Madagascar)
	Landisiwe Binza – Bertha		Afrisos - Represented by Juvenal Deoscori Materu	Arsene Ngombe (South Africa)
	Njeri Mwangiru – SAIIA Futures		Centre for Suicide Research and Intervention (CSRI) - Dr. Mary Gitau	Tseghe Walker (South Africa) Mkhululi Ncube (Zimbabwe)
Group Three: Sprouts	Karabo Mangena -SAIIA Futures	Mmapitsi. Semenya	Medikea – Represented by Dr Peter Lema	Sidney Muhangi (South Africa)
	Reinhold Mangundu - CST		WAGA technologies – Represented by Gibson Kawago	Raymond Ochieng (Kenya)
	Letitia Jentel – SAIIA Futures		Youth4CAN - Represented by Toini Thomas Dhiginina Amutenya	Tshegofatso Thulare (South Africa) Calvin Jodisi (Kenya)
Group four: Life Long Social Solutions (L2S2)	Alwande Khumalo	Felicity Zintle Magazi	Grate - Represented by Candice Chirwa	Katlego KG Letsoalo (South Africa)
	Jurgen Wolfenden - CST		Push Local Ventures – Represented by Lauren Daniels	Noku Katom (South Africa)
	Rika Preiser - CST		Radio Domus – Represented by Bonface Opany	Jade Gibson (South Africa) John Youhanes Magok (Ethiopia)

Source: Compiled by authors

Seed descriptions

Table 2: Groupings and seed descriptions

<p>Group One</p>	<p>Baobab superfoods – Represented by Atula Owade (Rwanda)</p> <p>Baobab Superfoods is an agro-processing company that utilizes millets to manufacture various food products, which we market to our customers. We promote good nutrition by providing people with tasty and healthy products. At the same time, we enhance food system resilience by using millets, an underutilized yet incredibly resilient and sustainable crop resource.</p> <hr/> <p>Integrated living - Represented by WanjikūJ.Kiarie (Kenya)</p> <p>Integrated Living is an organisation that seeks to provide Holistic Personal Development Training and Spiritual Journey Companionship to Individuals, Groups and Organisations in different phases of life.</p> <hr/> <p>Rural revive - Represented by Armanda Pieters (Namibia)</p> <p>RuralRevive initiative is focused on building a resilient, sustainable, and equitable economy in the Namib Desert. It operates on five pillars: Commerce, Community, Conservation, Culture, and Consciousness. The initiative aims to revitalize Maltahöhe by creating a diversified local economy that provides sustainable entrepreneurial and employment opportunities, addressing supply chain gaps and the needs of the community.</p>
<p>Group Two</p>	<p>Oribi – Represented by T-Anne Reddy (South Africa)</p> <p>Oribi supports innovators aiming at establishing solutions that increase economic participation as well as achieve socio-economic and ecological goals within localised contexts. We focus on solutions unlocking the full potential of untapped markets.</p> <hr/> <p>Afrisos - Represented by Juvenal Deoscori Materu (Tanzania)</p> <p>Afrisos (African School of Storytelling) is a non-governmental organisation registered in 2020, dedicated to providing fully funded training opportunities for aspiring filmmakers and photographers across Africa. Through immersive mentorship programmes, Afrisos empowers indigenous voices, revitalises cultural heritage, and inspires environmental action. By partnering with African communities, Afrisos ensures that authentic stories are told from the grassroots, fostering a deeper connection to the continent's rich and diverse narratives.</p> <hr/> <p>Centre for Suicide Research and Intervention (CSRI) - Dr. Mary Gitau (Kenya)</p> <p>The Centre for Suicide Research and Intervention (CSRI) is a dedicated initiative focused on addressing the critical issue of suicide through a range of integrated strategies. The organisation aims to transform how suicide is managed within various sectors, including</p>

	<p>education, social services, and healthcare, with the goal of changing societal attitudes and improving support systems</p>
<p>Group Three</p>	<p>Medikea – Represented by Dr Peter Lema (Tanzania)</p> <p>Medikea Health is a startup company that integrates an innovative hybrid model of healthcare delivery, through our patient centered telemedicine mobile application and our physical specialized polyclinic.</p> <p>As an emerging business from Tanzania, we are involved in the development of a diverse team of experts in medical, finance and technology to design and implement a healthcare delivery system that adapts to technological advancement and socio-economic changes.</p> <p>Through strategic planning in sales and marketing, focused on transforming healthcare access and delivery norms in Tanzania, we are building a digital health business framework that is sustainable and scalable. Medikea aims to transform the African healthcare industry by making services more affordable, accessible and aligned with the evolving needs of the community.</p> <hr/> <p>WAGA technologies – Represented by Gibson Kawago (Tanzania)</p> <p>Waga Tanzania is a pioneering company focused on providing sustainable and reliable lithium-ion battery solutions in Tanzania. The organization specializes in recycling and reusing discarded lithium-ion batteries, transforming them into affordable and durable battery packs for various applications, particularly in underserved rural areas lacking reliable electricity.</p> <hr/> <p>Youth4CAN - Represented by Toini Thomas Dhiginina Amutenya (Namibia)</p> <p>The organisation engages and builds the capacity of local youth at the regional level, empowering them to become solution-oriented and drive climate action innovation within their communities and societies. Additionally, it connects youth with their leaders to foster effective and inclusive decision-making processes. This includes amplifying young people's voices by facilitating the design of youth statements addressing pressing issues and connecting them with regional councillors to drive meaningful impact and form collaborations for evidence-based climate action projects.</p> <p>The organisation has established its presence across Namibia's 14 regions, focusing on solutions designed to address the unique challenges faced by communities due to climate change. Current interventions target marginalised youth in the Kunene, Omaheke, and Kavango-East regions, equipping them to become champions of change in tackling local climate challenges. These efforts are carried out through a knowledge-brokering system, which explores local examples to transfer and empower knowledge and innovation.</p>

<p>Group Four</p>	<p>Qrate - Represented by Candice Chirwa (South Africa)</p> <p>Qrate is dedicated to creating informative content through multimedia platforms and advocacy workshops, covering a wide range of diverse social topics. The organisation engages its audience by producing content aimed at young children, parents, guardians, guidance staff, and teachers. Qrate strives to promote education and foster an equal, non-discriminatory environment for children.</p>
	<p>Push Local Ventures – Represented by Lauren Daniels (South Africa)</p> <p>Youth-led impact investor and collective of social innovators targeting high youth at-risk rates in the Western Cape. Business activities are centered on indigenous Khoi/San practices (e.g. traditional herb industries, barter-based ventures) as a restorative justice tool.</p>
	<p>Radio Domus – Represented by Bonface Opany (Kenya)</p> <p>Radio Domus FM is an independent community-based radio station operating in Kajjado North and West Sub-Counties, as well as parts of Langata Sub-County in Nairobi. With a focus on communication for development and social change, Radio Domus FM serves vulnerable communities by providing vital information to enhance their participation in societal matters and hold duty bearers accountable.</p> <p>The station empowers youth by giving them control over program development and management, fostering a youth-centric approach. Programs are designed to cater to diverse, underserved audiences, including children, adolescents, women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The station also supports marginalized groups like pastoralists, refugees, and those in informal settlements.</p> <p>Through its multiplatform engagement model, Radio Domus FM operates on-air, online, and on-ground, promoting community dialogue, offering expert opinions, and addressing critical social issues. The station's innovative programming and localized content position it as a transformative initiative with the potential to achieve broader societal impact.</p>

Source: Compiled by authors

Day One

Welcome and overview

The workshop began with a welcoming session where participants were introduced to the structure of the four-day workshop and provided with their welcome packs. These packs included literal 'seeds' to signify the nurturing of ideas that would take place throughout the event. Participants were also given clear instructions on workshop logistics and ground rules, creating a safe and open environment for collaboration.

In the next session, participants were introduced to the core project concepts. Here, facilitators provided a contextual background on the role of youth in addressing Africa's complex challenges through innovation. The project's phases were outlined, with an emphasis on building capacities for youth-driven solutions in Southern and Eastern Africa. Presentations covered key themes such as strategic foresight, systems thinking, and systemic justice, highlighting the complexity of the crises the continent faces and the importance of new approaches.

Each speaker contributed to a systemic understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the project. This session aimed to help participants familiarise themselves with the concept of 'seeds' of the future. These 'seeds' represent current practices, concepts, or elements with limited significance but potential scalability, indicating unconventional problem-solving approaches.⁵ Visuals and examples were used to bring these abstract concepts to life, ensuring that the content was accessible for all participants.

"This process brings humanity to academia"
- participant insight

Presencing session and container agreement

The second part of the evening's activities focused on presencing exercises. These exercises began with an icebreaker, where participants shared stories from their personal journeys. Through embodiment exercises and journaling, participants reflected on their expectations and needs, setting the stage for collaborative work over the following days.

Participants then engaged in deeper discussions in smaller triads, where they explored the challenges they hoped to address through the workshop. A plenary session followed, during which the group co-created 'Container Agreements'—shared ground rules for the workshop. The goal of these exercises was to co-create a collective understanding and shared purpose, ensuring that participants were prepared to engage fully in the upcoming workshop activities while building a sense of community.

Day Two

Participants were allocated into four working groups, each assigned to a breakout room for the duration of the summit. This structure facilitated continuity in discussions and collaboration, with facilitators guiding the groups through the day's activities to ensure a supportive environment for meaningful conversations.

The day continued with a presencing session aimed at fostering group identity. Participants engaged in reflective exercises, forming triads to share insights and revise their team charters. This process established ground rules for constructive dialogue, particularly during disagreements, thereby promoting a culture of collaboration and trust.

⁵ Tanja Hichert, Reinet Biggs, and Rika Preiser, "Generating Visions of Good Anthropocenes: The Mānoa Mash-up Scenarios Methodology," CST Policy Briefing, CST Toolkit (Stellenbosch: Centre for Sustainability Transitions, Stellenbosch University, 2019), <https://www0.sun.ac.za/cst/publication/generating-visions-of-good-anthropocenes-the-manoa-mash-up-scenarios-methodology/>.

The Futures Wheel

Participants were introduced to the Futures Wheel, a strategic foresight method which serves as a visual tool to explore and analyse the potential direct and indirect consequences of a specific event, trend, or decision.⁶ This method is particularly useful for participants looking to understand the broader implications of the seeds and the impacts and possible changes within their operational environment.

Figure 1: Team four - Life Long Social Solutions (L2S2) working on their three horizons method

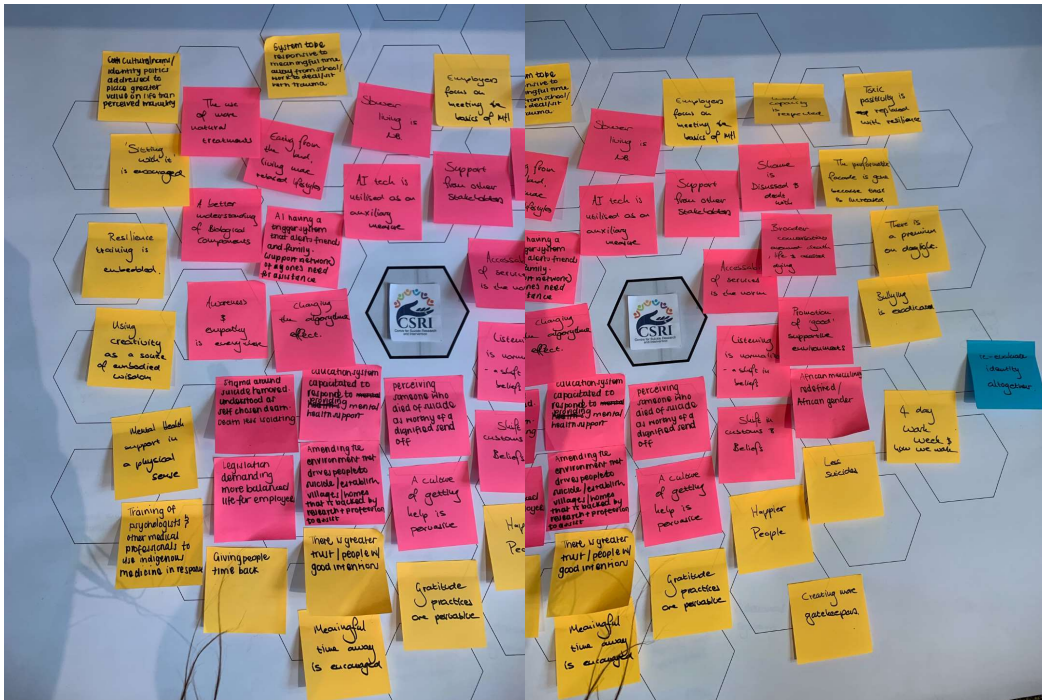


Source: Gys Loubser

Each group was tasked with building three Futures Wheels based on the seeds assigned to each group, represented as 'mature' conditions that reimagine marginal or experimental initiatives as integral components of a future reality.

⁶ Jerome C Glenn, "The Futures Wheel," in *Futures Research Methodology*, ed. Theodore J Gordon and Jerome C Glenn (Washington D.C., USA.: Millennium Project, 2009).

Figure 2: Team 2 (The GIG) First, second, and third-order impacts from Futures Wheel Exercise



Source: Bonolo Moikanyane

During the exercise, participants placed a description of their seed in its mature state on a large sticky note at the centre of a flipchart sheet and brainstormed the immediate impacts using the STEEP+V framework as a guide. They then captured the first-order impacts of transitioning the seed from the fringes to the mainstream, using coloured stickers arranged in a circle around the central seed.

As participants identified the primary impacts, they explored second and third-order consequences represented by additional concentric circles, deepening the exploration of cascading effects. Facilitators emphasised the importance of aligning with the envisioned future shaped by the mature seed, fostering a focus on plausible and interconnected outcomes. The final outputs from each group's Futures Wheels were arranged side by side, visually illustrating the interactions and shared impacts among the various seeds.

Key youth researcher takeaway: "I was surprised by how straightforward the ideas were, yet they had a significant impact on communities, and how young the innovators were."

"Africa needs to return to herself "

- participant insight

Cross impact matrix and influence mapping

The afternoon session transitioned into the Seeds Cross-Impact Matrix exercise, where participants examined the interactions between the seeds using a matrix template. Each group recorded their findings on large post-its. Facilitators encouraged creative dialogues, prompting participants to explore unexpected effects and guiding discussions on critical themes such as family structures, community cohesion, governance, and cultural changes.

The final session of the day focused on influence mapping. Participants visualised the connections between their seeds' impacts, using green, red and blue markers to depict complementary and contrasting links. This exercise allowed them to identify virtuous and vicious circles of change, clarifying how the seeds interacted in their mature state and providing a foundation for future scenario development.

Once influence mapping was complete, the session transitioned into developing scenario skeletons. Facilitators guided participants in integrating their Futures Wheels and insights into draft future scenarios, encompassing key themes such as governance, economic systems, education, and relationships with nature. Each group proposed a short-term future scenario, complete with a draft name, a headline or tweet, an artistic representation, and a key statistic to summarise their vision.

The day concluded with reflections and insights from participants. Throughout the day's exercises, participants engaged in a collaborative exploration of future scenarios, enriched by diverse perspectives and a deepened understanding of foresight methodologies. Key insights included the importance of compassion in envisioning a sustainable future, the critical role of technology, and the need for context-specific strategies in governance that reflect local needs rather than adopting Western or global models. The presentations highlighted a strong desire for unity and showcased creative interpretations of the current state and potential futures.

Key youth researcher takeaway: "This exercise revealed that, while we strive to be pioneers of change, it's essential to examine our own perspectives and biases. Just as psychologists undergo their own counselling before helping others, we too need to reflect on our positions and ensure our solutions are grounded in the realities of those we aim to help."

Figure 3: Team 3 Cross-seed impact exercise



Source: Simamkele Dingiswayo

Figure 4: Team 2 Seeds Cross Impact Exercise



Source: Bonolo Moikanyane

Day Three

The day again commenced with presencing exercises designed to encourage participants to reflect on their insights from the previous day. By visualising the process and engaging in dialogue triads, attendees shared their experiences and deepened their understanding of their roles within the group at large and their individual groupings that they were assigned to.

Following a brief recap of the agenda and objectives, participants transitioned into creating vivid future scenarios by utilising the insights gained from the previous day's exercises. In their groups, they concentrated on identifying the core values and norms that would underpin their envisioned futures. Some shared values communicated included the importance of support, collaboration, a slower pace of living as well as inspired inspiration. This exploration included discussions about various potential futures, enriching the group's understanding of the complexities they faced ahead.

The Three Horizons Framework

As the day progressed, participants were introduced to the Three Horizons Framework. The Three Horizons Framework, developed by Bill Sharpe, is a strategic foresight method designed to help organisations navigate complex changes and uncertainties. It categorizes future possibilities into three distinct "horizons," each representing different timeframes and mindsets regarding change.⁷ As a strategic foresight method that structures individual and collective perspectives on the future while inspiring innovation.⁸ This framework delineates three distinct patterns or approaches to envisioning the future, highlighting the continuous interplay among the horizons and illustrating how present intentions and actions shape future possibilities.

Overview of the Three Horizons

Horizon 1 (H1): This horizon represents the current dominant system or "business as usual." It focuses on optimising existing operations and addressing immediate challenges. However, as external conditions evolve, aspects of H1 may become inadequate or obsolete.

Horizon 2 (H2): This horizon captures the transitional phase where emerging trends and innovations begin to disrupt H1. It encompasses new practices and ideas that challenge existing assumptions, creating opportunities for adaptation and growth.

Horizon 3 (H3): The third horizon embodies long-term visions and radical innovations that may not yet be mainstream but are crucial for future success. It encourages exploration beyond current limitations, fostering transformative ideas that could redefine practices in the future.

⁷ Bill Sharpe, "Three Horizons," *University for the Third Horizon* (blog), November 2019, <https://www.h3uni.org/tutorial/three-horizons/>.

⁸ Bill Sharpe et al., "Three Horizons: A Pathways Practice for Transformation," *Ecology and Society* 21, no. 2 (2016), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26270405>.

Discussions commenced surrounding Horizon 3 (H3), where participants articulated their visions of a 'preferred world.' While uncertainty surrounds the specifics of this future, insights drawn from various exercises allowed participants to intuit fundamental transformations.

Examples of H3 visions that emerged included:

- the migration of expertise as needed
- fair wealth distribution
- the establishment of an economy centred on the common good.
- Rewarding the breaking of systemic barriers
- The creation of new indicators of success
- A slower pace of living where indigenous knowledge is valued over Western paradigms

Participants then moved on to Horizon 1. The first horizon (H1) embodies the current system, often characterised by 'business as usual,' and marked by signs of decline and cycles of crisis. During discussions surrounding this horizon, participants expressed their views on the effective and ineffective aspects of the existing system. The conversations focused on identifying elements to phase out or eliminate while retaining the effective facets that contribute to the current operational framework. This critical analysis of H1 laid the groundwork for collaborative action and transformative innovation.

Examples of H1 insights that emerged included:

- All the -isms
- All the phobias in general
- The fast pace of living
- The focus on productivity rather than enjoyment
- An overt focus on economic growth at all costs
- The schooling curriculums struggling to stay abreast of changes in the world
- A reliance on Tick box exercises and their outputs
- The rule of the patriarchy

The transition into Horizon 2 (H2) invited participants to explore innovations that could bridge the gap between the current system and their envisioned future. This workshop phase was structured into two sections. In the first section, labelled H2-, participants focused on innovations designed to address and rectify issues inherent in Horizon 1. These incremental changes aimed to improve the current system while fostering a culture of sustained innovation, although they also risked perpetuating the dominant system without fostering alternative paradigms.

Examples of H2- innovations included:

- Renewed investment into a resilient and adaptable skilled labour force
- A return to dignified and sustainable jobs
- Embrace the Just transition in Africa but with indigenous knowledge based solutions as a key component
- Ruralisation being focused on as a government incentive
- Monetise social media apps in least developed countries to scale up employment
- Comprehensive education on sexuality
- Looking for and promoting true examples of local excellence

Conversely, the second section, labelled H2+, centred on transformative innovations intended to instigate significant shifts towards new paradigms. Participants engaged in collaborative discussions to map out actionable strategies and solutions to address the challenges and opportunities presented by both

horizons. This forward-thinking approach inspired participants to envision innovations that could reshape their realities and pave the way for the futures they aspire to create.

Examples of H2+ innovations included:

- New social development criteria
- Developing new metrics of economic wellbeing that are context specific
- Tax breaks for innovative/disruptive interventions
- Build local capacities for the use of Africa's raw materials
- Develop a common African currency
- Create a United states of Africa
- Refocusing all attention on meritocracies that look at the individual as a whole rather than only on qualifications
- Expansionary fiscal policy

A notable "aha" moment emerged during this step when a participant shared their profound insight sparked by a critique from a white Spanish friend regarding the term "innovation." This critique resonated deeply, linking the concept of innovation to a form of destructive materialism that primarily serves specific interests. In the context of Africa, this reflection arose from discussions about building a new future for the continent, prompting the participant to critically assess who truly benefits from innovation, particularly within the African context.

The participants articulated a growing awareness that African communities often learn to solve complex problems through their lived experiences rather than through externally imposed frameworks. The group discussed the implications of white structural violence, noting that there is a persistent push for "innovation" that frequently stifles authentic solutions. This critique was informed by the group's own experiences, where they grappled with the struggle against such diversions. It served as a reminder to the participants to resist pressures that dilute authenticity in favour of a superficial, Westernised notion of progress.

The participants recognised that much of the academic jargon, especially from Western scholars, can be misleading or irrelevant to the unique contexts within Africa. They emphasised the importance of detaching from this noise to focus on the real issues at hand. The term "innovation," in many cases, reflects a misguided understanding of creativity that often complicates rather than resolves challenges.

In conclusion, this participant welcomed further discussions to explore these critical ideas, aiming to deepen their understanding of innovation and its implications for authentic progress in Africa. This moment of realisation not only highlighted the complexities surrounding the concept of innovation but also underscored the necessity of aligning it with the genuine needs and experiences of African communities.

After a short refreshment break, participants continued exploring the Three Horizons Framework, diving deeper into the complexities of their discussions. They acknowledged the varying perspectives on current systems that emerged across different countries, with some topics eliciting discomfort among delegates from more conservative backgrounds. This dynamic raised critical questions about the meaning of inclusion and the pursuit of unity amidst fundamentally differing values.

Figure 5: Team 2 showcasing the findings of their three horizons exercise



Source: Gys Loubser

As the formal activities came to a close, participants shared their reflections on the day's insights, encapsulating the key learnings from the exercises. The atmosphere was lively and collaborative, with attendees enjoying drinks together, fostering informal discussions and networking opportunities. The day concluded with a communal dinner, offering further chances for connection and relaxation among all participants.

Key youth researcher takeaway: "I was surprised by how easy it is to reimagine the ideal world we want. How independent our thinking can be, that we understand that our needs and growth cannot be prescribed by the West."

Day Four

Scenario sharing

The final day of the workshop began with a series of presencing exercises, encouraging participants to reflect on their learnings from the previous day. Following these exercises, the participants transitioned into scenario presentations. Each group was encouraged to creatively share their envisioned futures through mediums such as drawing, song, dance, acting, or other artistic expressions. The involvement of artists and the encouragement of creativity added vibrant energy to the discussions, easing any tensions and creating a joyful atmosphere for sharing the scenarios developed over the past two days. This infusion of art and creativity illuminated the possibilities for the future, reinforcing the importance of joy and inspiration on the journey ahead.

Each presentation was followed by a 10-minute reflection session, providing participants with the opportunity to express how the presentations resonated with them emotionally and intellectually. The diversity of themes showcased ranged from young leadership advocating for “a united Africa that has returned to herself” to innovative applications of ancient wisdom through poetry and storytelling, highlighting the preservation of history as a means of connecting past generations with a vibrant future. The scenarios are discussed in more detail below.

Group 1 presented a sports team led by a furious coach, symbolising tough conversations around accountability and unrealised potential. Though difficult to watch, this scenario illustrated that sometimes progress and excellence emerge through challenging moments and strict leadership.

Group 2 presented a vision of a United States of Africa, where success indicators in key ministerial departments such as Finance and Mineral Resources were redefined to meet Africa's unique needs and aspirations.

Group 3 invoked the custom of indigenous councils, reimagining regional collaboration and engagements, and suggested what African Union meetings could look like if they embraced traditional African meeting styles, such as the Imbizo. This presentation highlighted how regional governance could be transformed through indigenous knowledge systems. Accompanying this scenario was a powerful poem titled “Welcome to Ubuntu Nation”, which echoed themes of unity, resilience, and the integration of nature and technology. It reflected on the journey of three organisations—Youth4CAN, Medikea, and WAGA Technologies—whose collaboration shaped a just, vibrant, and sustainable future. The imagery evoked the idea of Africa rising, reclaiming its heritage and identity, and fostering a future where communities thrived in harmony with nature and one another.

Group 4 offered a rap performance and a cartoon animation, depicting a utopian vision. Drawing inspiration from Kendrick Lamar's popular song “They're not like us”, the presentation creatively combined music, animation, rap, and spoken word to portray a future where African unity, resilience, and innovation prevail.

Across all the scenarios, compassion was emphasised as crucial to shaping the desired future. Diversity and inclusion were central themes, and every group envisioned a future where technology was accessible to all.

Key youth researcher takeaway: “What truly surprised me during this presentation was the remarkable creativity of our team members. We took to the stage with just a basic idea and assigned roles, without extensive planning or scripting. When it came time for each person to speak, we improvised on the spot.”

This spontaneity demonstrated that our discussions in the breakout room were so deeply engaging and insightful that we were able to present seamlessly without rehearsal. **It also suggested that the change we envision for the future is already taking root within us**, as our collective creativity and adaptability shone through in the moment.”

Scenario comparison

The workshop then shifted its focus to scenario comparison, where participants engaged in a rich dialogue, comparing and contrasting the various scenarios presented. Key questions guided their discussions: What common themes emerged? Were there contrasting themes, and what underlying values and assumptions could be identified? Many participants emphasized the theme of sovereignty, with Indigenous knowledge

providing critical guidance towards more sustainable and inclusive practices. They explored how technology could serve as a powerful tool in advocating for a just future, ensuring that the needs of all people were represented.

Figure 6: Team 3 sharing their scenario in plenary



Source: Gys Loubser

I was surprised by how much fun I was having at this point! - Youth researcher

Discussions also revolved around identifying innovative ideas, pathways, leverage points, and critical issues arising from the scenarios. Participants critically assessed the risks, opportunities, and challenges associated with these futures, considering how their organisations or communities would need to evolve or transform to thrive within each proposed scenario.

After lunch, the group reconvened for a summary conversation and farewell session, which provided an overview of the entire process and allowed participants to reflect on their thoughts surrounding the implementation of the knowledge gained throughout the workshop. Key topics included strategies for communication and dissemination of their findings, as well as identifying actionable next steps for their communities and organisations.

Discussing the anticipation summit

As the workshop concluded, participants looked forward to the upcoming Anticipation Summit, scheduled for 12-15 November 2024 at the Blouberg Beach Hotel in Cape Town. At the summit, skilled facilitators will lead interactive, policy-focused discussions, creating an environment conducive to systemic innovations and the identification of roles essential for building emergent systems. The emphasis will be on developing an anticipation praxis, combining collaboration, innovation, and foresight to address the pressing challenges and opportunities facing youth in the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) region.

Through these dynamic discussions, participants will work together to shape a more inclusive and sustainable future, ensuring the voices of youth are heard and integrated into policy frameworks. The Anticipation Summit promises to be a significant step forward in collective efforts to create impactful and transformative change for the next generation. Exact times for the summit will be confirmed closer to the date, ensuring a well-structured and focused agenda that meets the needs of all attendees.

Post-Summit Survey insights

Key strengths noted include the summit's comprehensive approach, which fostered in-depth discussions about multifaceted challenges through firsthand insights from participants. The diverse backgrounds of delegates enriched the dialogue, enabling a thorough understanding of current and future issues. However, participants emphasised the need for more targeted actions to translate discussions into tangible outcomes.

There were calls for structured discussions on systemic governance, gender roles, and the implementation of strategies to sustain insights from the summit. Participants expressed concerns over the disconnect between ambitious visions and practical application, suggesting that future summits could benefit from focused exploration of specific challenges facing youth-led initiatives.

Participants highlighted the importance of inclusivity, particularly in creating a safe and welcoming environment for all and improving engagement strategies for introverted participants. Suggestions included utilising anonymous platforms for idea sharing and enhancing group moderation to ensure all voices are heard. The need for logistical improvements, such as the provision of a comprehensive agenda, was identified to enhance participant experience.

While the summit effectively facilitated important and impactful discussions, the feedback also indicates a desire for more detail on actionable strategies, improved inclusivity, and enhanced insights into the programme agenda and travel logistics arrangements in future iterations to ensure sustained impact and engagement.

Jan Smuts House, East Campus, University of the Witwatersrand
PO Box 31596, Braamfontein 2017, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel +27 (0)11 339 2021 • Fax +27 (0)11 339 2154
saiia.org.za • info@saiia.org.za

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