Global Perspectives 2018

Engaging a #NewGeneration

Outcome from Future Scenario Sessions:
A CSO effectively engaging youth in 2030

31 Oct - 2 Nov 2018 | Berlin

Summary of process

- 12-18 conference participants involved across two sessions
- Rapid generation of ideas, inspiring **thinking <u>from</u> the future**: 2030, an imaginable time horizon

- Stage/session 1: Predicting the **most likely megatrends** and major forces in the global environment in 2030 likely to have the greatest impact and influence on young people; categorised by:
social, technological, economic, environmental, political (STEEP)

- Stage/session 2: Defining the **attributes of a successful CSO** engaging youth people in this context in 2030, in terms of: values and mindsets, governance and leadership, skills and knowledge, technology and infrastructure, programmes and partnerships, and resources.

Live illustrations by Raphaela Buder

Limitations

- Ideally **more young people should be involved** in generating future scenarios for richer and more diverse insights (limited by audience here)

- The process was **highly compressed**, normally much more time is taken and multiple scenarios developed.

- A third session would have been ideal to identify **more specific ideas** for the attributes of the CO.

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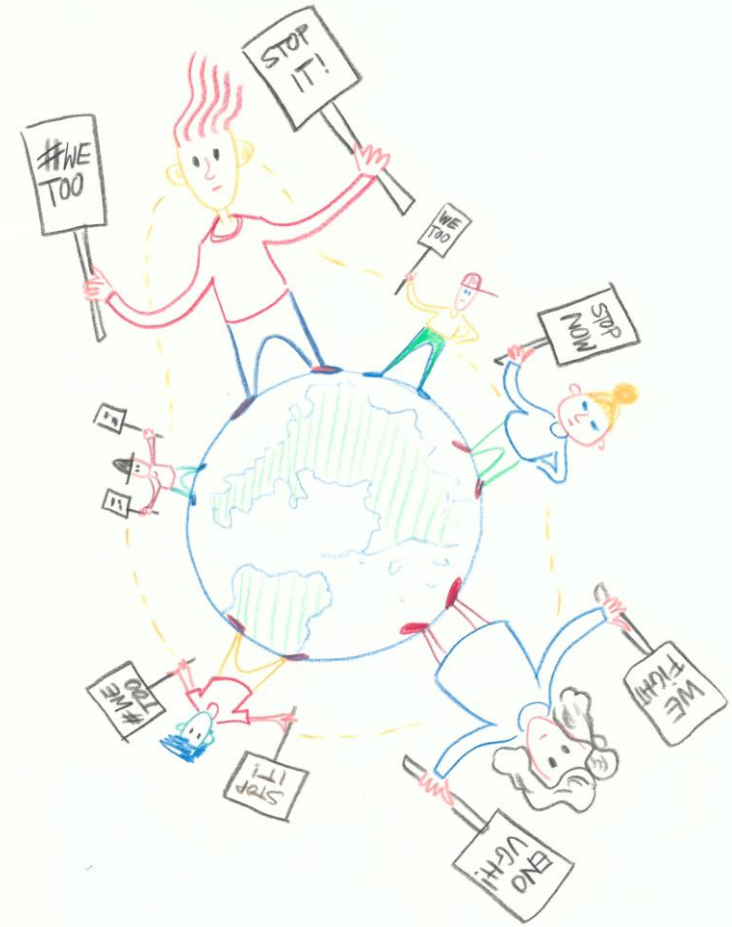Engaging a #NewGeneration

Future Scenario Sessions:
The most likely global context imaginable for 2030

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Key social characteristics

- Numerous ´**world springs**` emerging of self-confident spontaneous self-organising movements
- Mobilisation around **common major social and environmental issues and principles** (rather than political interests): inequality, migration, humanitarian; intersectionality is understood
- More **spiritual and less consumerist values** and young people seeking more **authentic and experiential interactions**
- An `**inequality of understanding**` between young people from the traditional Global North and South, the latter better equipped with **skills, knowledge and resilience to adapt** to modern life
- The **Internet has actually rewired** the way people think
- **Gender identities are increasingly fluid** and young people have multiple identities they consider important and may organise/mobilise around
- **Groups increasingly `left behind`** include:
  - **lost generations** of young people e.g. in Syria and Yemen grown up only knowing conflict
  - **young girls forced to marry early** and increasingly isolated, including from diasporas, in a more conservative world

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Key technological characteristics

- Complex future in which access to and ownership of technology and (big) data is **driving increasing inequality**
- The **pace of innovation has been exponential**, including for citizens directly doing this, rapidly trying/testing solutions and discarding those which do not work
- Technology is increasing opportunities for **peer-to-peer civic engagement** for some who are **constantly connected**...
- ...but **decreasing free will and freedom of choice** for others through greater control by state/commercial interests
- In fact, young people are **survivors of the `Internet wars´ in the 2020s,** the old version broke into 2+ systems - one open and public, the other(s) closed and controlled by powerful states – which **targeted civil society**, leaving a lasting impact
- Blurring between **reality and virtual reality**
- Technology has produced even more `**communities of privilege**`
- Some are still offline: not just those still left behind **unconnected,** but also some young people **deliberately `opting out`** as a response to constant and complex barrage of (mis)information

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Key economic characteristics

- **More precarious work** and economic situation for young people

- **Competition from artificial intelligence** and automation

- Opportunities for **local-level entrepreneurship** are both necessary and possible

- New clean, cheap and safe **transportation options** have emerged which in turn enable new flexible market and work options

- Ageing populations are driving a **demand for migration** linked to economic opportunities, and care for the elderly

- **Cryptocurrency** is commonplace

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COMPETING WITH AI

Key environmental characteristics

- Increasing **conflict over natural resources** – pressure on food/water
- Climate change has proceeded at a **speed and intensity far greater than imagined** in the 2010s, but common experiences of natural disaster has led to a **convergence in perspectives** and understanding between populations/countries
- **Megacities and city states** have become as/more important than nations and are perceived as borderless and progressive
- Major fall-out and `survivors` of mass genetically modified food **systems** from the 2010/20s are increasingly apparent, this was the only viable option for sustaining world population growth
- **Antibiotic resistance** has led to a regression in previous health gains – negatively affecting the global outlook of/for younger generations (religion, fatalism?)

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Key political characteristics

- **Global governance has been challenged** and the UN and other multilateral institutions are precarious
- **Old structures have fallen over**: US global leadership is history, representative post-World War II **democracy is no longer working**
- Established/organised civil society organisations are **no longer seen as a public good** in an increasingly contested political space
- **Informal links between city states** and ´local actors` have grown significantly
- **New experiments in democracy** and different models of decision-making create new opportunities for collective political engagement
- **Renewal of the young voting masses**
- **Contested/blurred space** in which people's civic agency and engagement is increasingly through business/their workplace
- **Fluidity of relationships** between institutions and people

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OLD STRUCTURES ARE FALLING ON

CSO attributes: Values and mindsets

- The CSO is strongly **cause driven** and has a narrow focus on this (not `trying to be everything to everyone')

- It **enables multiple actions** (by others) at the `local` level, giving it legitimacy at the global level

- It is **radical** and makes **big propositions**

- It **supports work/life integration interests** of its staff and recognises the multiple interests and identities of young people

- It allows young people within and beyond it to ´**connect experientially**´ to its work and to a community of like-minded peers

- Genuine **learning organisation**, with an impact (not income) ´growth` mindset

CSO attributes: Governance and leadership

- The CSO is an effective **intergenerational** organisation, and has a `youth wing`

- **Young people are in the governance structure**, albeit the relatively privileged

  with more time to spare

- New **decentralised consensus communities** in new accountability models based

  on peer-to-peer feedback, for both staff and supporters (airbnb-like)

- In these models, there is full **360-degree anonymous feedback** on performance,

  `screw ups` are more visible, and decisions are made ´closer to the ground`

- The CSO is as **flat**/non-hierarchical/decentralised as possible

- Strategy cycles are 3 years` max. but **continually reassessed/reshaped**, with

  one overarching (´cause´) strategy and many supplemental ones
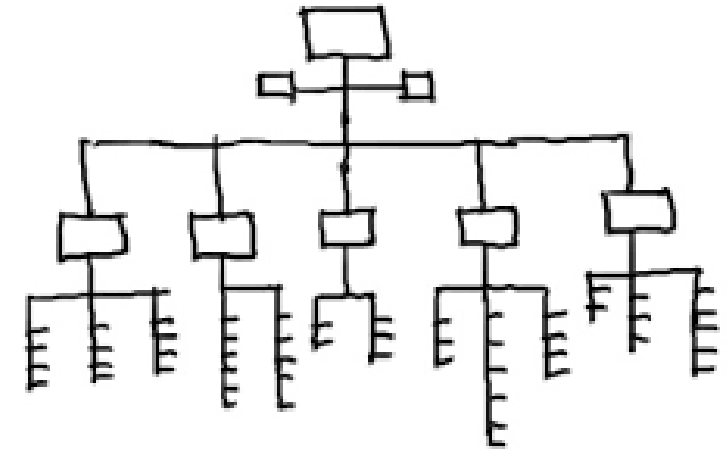
CSO attributes: Skills and knowledge

- Flexible, agile, **project-based working methods** are the norm

- <u>Everyone</u> in the organisation gets **leadership training**

- All staff need to know how to **catalyse change, engage the public, and mentor** others

- Staff are genuine **flexible thinkers**, problem-solvers and innovators

- Staff are both **highly collaborative** and demonstrate significant **grit/resilience**

- Volunteering opportunities should have a **much clearer link to employability** for young people and serve to identify and grow future talent for the sector

CSO attributes: Technology and infrastructure

- There is still a **physical office** in (a) key strategic location(s)

- **Remote flexible working** combined with **routine gathering** and face-to-face exchange

- Intercultural, **virtual teams are fully enabled by ongoing investment in technology**, including secure communications and robust knowledge management/M&E systems

- Data is timely and quality and used for **instant community feedback**

- For instance, an **organisational app** with key information has been developed to maximise transparency and social accountability, and keep supporters and stakeholders constantly updated

- Staff are both **using and designing new technology** in the workplace

CSO attributes: Programmes and partnerships

- The CSO is **not doing service delivery** unless very technical, risky or the only option

- Focus on campaigns, advocacy and policy work, but **amplifying what others are doing**

- The CSO´s professional and technical staff expertise is available through a `**draw down´ service to partners and others**

- The CSO still plays a role in **holding corporations accountable**

- **Flexible programmes** rapidly `dialled up/down` according to need and opportunism

- Creating **enabling opportunities for disavantaged youth** is core to programming

- Partnerships are **built around diversity**, chosen based on the cause

- The CSO has **multiple partners**, both formal and informal. These include local (social) businesses, donors and citizen-led CSOs/movements

CSO attributes: Resources

- The leaner organisational structure means **less money is spend on administration/overheads**, so a greater proportion goes towards programmes
- There is also **far less spend aimed at maintaining brand distinctiveness**, as this is less important to the operating model
- **Fast mobilisation of reactive flexible funding** is crucial – to respond to both spontaneous social actions/movements which arise, but also 30+ simultaneous climate-changed induced disasters
- **Social entrepreneurship and CSO ´for profit´ arms** which reinvest back ino the core mission will feature as an independent resourcing mechanism

Challenges to the sector: Bold statements out of the group

- Civil society movements which have evolved into established institutional bureaucracies should **re-evolve back to these roots**

- The concept of organised civil society as **the `third sector´ is outdated and unhelpful in a ´blurred world`** of work/life integration and civic action/integration through business

- **Stop talking/thinking about supporters and ´beneficiaries´** as separate groups - communities of common interest will organise around major causes, across geographical boundaries, with a convergence of lived experience, and drive to shape shared response

- **International CSOs are not equipped for some of major shifts** highlighted – megacities and city states, mass genetic modification of food systems, and regression in health outcomes from antibiotic resistance – let alone the speed/intensity of climate change

Conclusion

The CSO of 2030 needs to **look and behave radically differently** - in only 12 years' time – To remain relevant and necessary, influential and impactful, in responding to the **major global challenges and complexities ahead**.

Being a CSO which young people trust, want to work for professionally in a competitive market, and support with time and volunteerism - rather than initiate their own speedy and spontaneous responses – Demands **fundamental transformative change from organisations today**.

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Thank you

Session facilitators:
Vicky Tongue, International Civil Society Centre
Hanno Burmester, Unlearn

Illustrations (live):
Raphaela Buder

https://icscentre.org/our-work/scanning-the-horizon/