

# SCANNING THE HORIZON

Making megatrends more manageable since 2015!

## Analysing trends, spotting disruption and amplifying impact

Anticipating change, assessing implications and preparing responses are integral to strategic decision-making. **Horizon scanning and foresight** approaches do this systematically. They can support organisational learning and agility, help drive innovation and embrace new opportunities, and shape preferred outcomes.

Foresight and future intelligence-gathering is most powerful when action-oriented, open, participatory and multi-disciplinary. This is where the **Scanning the Horizon initiative** comes in, to **think, debate and shape the future of the civil society sector**.

### A dynamic cross-sector scanning community

Scanning the Horizon is a **collaborative multi-stakeholder platform for horizon scanning** and strategic thinking, helping civil society organisations (CSOs) to **better prepare for disruption and benefit from change**.

With members including leading international ICSOs, national CSO umbrella organisations and private sector colleagues, this cross-sector community addresses the need for **collaborative trend analysis and peer exchange** on strategic positioning and organisational adaptiveness.

Futurists, strategists, trend analysts and organisational learning specialists meet both virtually and in person to **share insights, explore key trends and develop strategies together**. The platform also enables mutual learning and the pooling of resources.

***“Put simply, the Scanning the Horizon group acts as a centre of excellence for strategists and trend spotters for the not-for-profit sector, equipping us to help each other out effectively and efficiently.”*** A member of the *Scanning the Horizon* community

### What we do

The community helps members build capacity in spotting and prepare for trends and potential disruption. New insights are introduced both through peer discussion and networking, and by engaging with a variety of external experts from diverse sectors. Collaboration takes place through various formats and is driven by members' priorities:



**Annual meeting:** An annual in-person meeting allows the opportunity to collaboratively explore one particularly 'hot' futures topic in depth.

### **2020: Scanning the Interconnectedness of Global Trends**

In 2020, our annual meeting (May, Europe) will focus on how global trends influencing the work of ICSSOs are interconnected. The meeting will explore how this interaction may bring about different potential futures, and integrate this analysis into organisational strategic planning. We will have a collective check-up on the trends we're all watching, explore tools for intersectional approaches, and the detailed scenarios ICSSOs are seeing with a special emphasis on climate change + (one or several trends). We will invite input from beyond the sector, with private, public and academic sector insights, and ultimately aim to document our findings in a new Sector Guide.

### **What we did in 2019: Scanning China**

Throughout 2019, we explored the **implications of China's growing global influence on the future work of ICSSOs**, one of the top trends influencing the development of other major global trends. Following a [well-attended cross-sector meeting in Hong Kong in June](#), we published our first [Sector Guide](#) of practical entry points for senior ICSSO leaders to summarise the key themes and implications, providing clear strategic guidance to think through current capacities and further develop future engagement and adaptation approaches to be better prepared for this major trend.

***"The choice of participants in the meeting was extraordinary. The facilitation and the size of it made everyone very honest and open."*** A participant in the June 2019 annual meeting

**Webinars:** Monthly webinars enable the members to learn from each other on topics such as how to engage youth in organisational strategy processes, and receive thought-provoking content from external contributors on future scenarios and foresight. Catch our past events on [youtube](#).

**Networking:** Members use the community to gather peer feedback and to engage with experienced colleagues in informal ways around trends or strategic processes.

**News:** A monthly community newsletter is carefully curated, with support from the Direct Impact Group, sharing new insights on trends and information on information on planned collaborations, partner updates, events and latest futures-related tools and resources.

***"The Scanning the Horizon newsletter has been an invaluable source of information and knowledge... it has provided us with interesting and insightful articles and blogs that we used as sources in our own Horizon Scanning work. ... Alongside the community, the newsletter provides a great overview of how the sector is changing and how our peers are responding to these changes."***

[Rebecca Sorusch](#) – Senior Strategy Manager, Plan International

## Active and open membership

The community was started in 2015 with seed funding by The Rockefeller Foundation but is currently self-sustained by its members. Membership is open at any time to any individuals and organisations working in this space and interested in these topics.

Current members include: Accenture Development Partnerships, Amnesty International, Care International, Development Initiatives, Direct Impact Group, Habitat for Humanity International, InterAction, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Mercy Corps, Oxfam International, Partos, Plan International, Save the Children International, Sightsavers International, SOS Children's Villages International, WaterAid and World Vision International.

### Find out more

Contact [Vicky Tongue](#), Programme Manager, or visit our [website](#).