Scanning the Horizon: Annual Meeting(s) 2020

New split format: 18 - 20 May 2020 online (3 x 2-hour sessions) and September/October, dates TBC. online (2 x 2-hour sessions + 2 x 3-hour sessions – TBC.)

“Complex potential futures: Exploring the interconnectedness of global trends”

Final collaboration concept 14 May 2020

In 2020, the Annual Meeting of the international civil society futures platform Scanning the Horizon will take place in two split meeting formats between May (online) and September/October (online). The first May format will include setting up small working group collaborations to develop new trends analysis as inputs to the second September/October convening and to incorporate analysis of the emerging implications of post-pandemic futures following further developments over the next few critical months. The process has been reworked to incorporate new priorities and interest expressed from conversations with other sector networks/convenors and ICSO strategists in the Scanning community to jointly explore what a changed post-COVID-19 world might mean for civil society organisations, as part of the original theme of ‘interconnectedness’.

Throughout this process, we will explore how international civil society organisations (ICSOs) can strengthen their strategic capacity to analyse how the major global trends influencing their work – both the urgent and the important – might interact with each other to bring about different potential future states, which could drastically shift the relevance and impact of these organisations. The meetings will enable peer exchange between member organisation’s global strategists and foresighters and futures thinkers from diverse private, public, academic and philanthropy backgrounds.

Timings for the collaborative process throughout 2020

- **May 2020** – Three online sessions: insights on interconnected approaches from different sectors (Days 1 and 2), interactive workplanning for May-September (Day 3) on two initiatives:
  1. reading/discussion groups exploring up to 4 interconnected trends (climate change + civic space + post-COVID-19) in greater depth (ICSO-led) (see agenda below for more detail)
  2. a changed post-COVID-19 world ‘signals for the sector’ big picture mapping exercise (led by consultant Aarathi Krishnan, ICSOs and others contributing) to track and synthesise some of the emerging signals of change relating to major uncertainties our sector faces as a result of state and societal responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, and its second- and third-order effects.

For the design and synthesis of this mapping process, we will be working with Aarathi Krishnan, one of the most experienced third sector strategic foresight practitioners, who has worked for over 15 years at the intersection of humanitarian futures, strategic
foresight, and systems transformation, including as the global futures, foresight and strategy lead at IFRC. Aarathi is specifically interested in issues of planetary health, inclusive and equitable technology futures, and new forms of growth and power, with a lens on decolonised and feminist futures. A fuller recent bio for Aarathi is available here.

- **May-September 2020**: Joint working on the two collaborative initiatives (in parallel)
- **September/October 2020**: Presentation of outcomes from the collaborative initiatives, collective sense-making and analysis of potential implications for individual ICSOs and the wider sector.
- **October-December 2020**: Further development and documentation of outcomes as second Sector Guide (NB. Funding dependent).

**Why do we need to engage more with complex potential futures?**

Looking at how the future development of global trends will affect, or be affected by, other forces can both generate new insights and challenge assumptions held by organisations to keep them strategically and socially relevant. The urgency and relevance of integrated system-level thinking is greater than ever with the rapid onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, with its transformational but as yet unknowable knock-on impacts on political, economic and social order.

What kind of new options and opportunities can emerge when organisations better understand these potential interactions? Many ICSOs are already generating intersectional research and analysis (such as Oxfam and Transparency International) or internal management scenarios (such as Plan International) to influence their current cycle of strategy development. Other organisations are starting on a learning journey or are interested in engaging with more complex trends analysis as part of these strategy processes. Some organisations are already changing the process and timeframes for their current strategy cycles to better understand post-COVID 19 pandemic signals and scenarios for how the world may be different.

This format represents a unique opportunity for a diverse range of international CSOs to come together to share perspectives, collect relevant signals of change and combine analysis which can help make sense of the different complex yet uncertain futures which will soon be transforming our sector as a whole. Interconnected trends analysis is also an area with both significant opportunity and appetite for civil society strategists to share with experienced peers from other sectors.

**Climate change + civic space + a changed post-COVID-19 world**

The meetings will maintain a focus on both the acute and the chronic: How can organisations better prepare themselves to anticipate and adapt to ever-shifting series of “new non-normal” conditions, in an as yet unknowable but radically transformed post-COVID-19 world, where climate risks and impacts continuously evolve? We will focus on exploring key questions which would otherwise remain as fundamental gaps in any external analysis, by:

- Carrying out the [changed post-COVID-19 world](#) signals for the sector big picture mapping exercise (see above),
- Maintaining our original focus on how climate change may continue to interact with other global trends, as this is the main common critical trend which all organisations are focusing on in their strategic thinking.
- Exploring some of the key potential future intersections between climate change, changes in a post-COVID-19 world and civic space, another trend featuring significantly in the current strategic analysis of many ICSOs, but under-developed in analysis from other sectors.

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1 According to CIVICUS definition: ‘Civic space is the place, physical, virtual, and legal, where people exercise their rights to freedom of association, expression, and peaceful assembly. By forming associations, by speaking out on issues of public concern, by gathering together in online and offline fora, and by participating in public decision-making, individuals use civic space to solve problems and improve lives’.
Insights for a new sector guide

Bringing ICSO colleagues and key experts together will enable pooled knowledge of different insights and collective sense-making of what it might mean for the future work of individual organisations and the civil society sector as a whole. As in 2019 with our ‘deep dive into the rise of global China’, we will capitalise on this unique ‘gathering of minds’ to collectively generate new analysis and insights which can be further developed after the meeting, and documented as a strategic reference guide for other stakeholders beyond the Scanning the Horizon platform. Our ambition is to use the outcomes of the meeting as content for a wider ‘sector guide’ (with analysis, recommendations and resources) document to support future strategic planning and engagement, including the potential future intersections between climate change, civic space and a changed post-COVID 19 world, and what it might mean for the international civil society sector.

Aims of the process

1. Mutual learning between ICSOs and other sectors – private, public, academia, philanthropy – on supporting and strengthening intersectional analysis for better organisational strategic decision-making (May meeting sessions).
2. Develop potential future ‘snapshots’ and collectively analyse emerging implications for ICSOs of some of the key emerging intersections between climate change, civic space and post-COVID-19 responses and developments (September/October convening sessions). This will be developed into a ‘sector guide’ strategic reference document after the meetings.
3. Sharing of tools and facilitation techniques/tips successfully used by organisations to engage internal decision-makers with more complex intersectional trends analysis (September/October convening sessions).
4. Agree on an overall future ambition for what this community can best deliver for the sector, and identify and agree themes of interest for 2021 (September/October convening sessions).

If you need any further information, please email Vicky Tongue, Programme Manager – Futures and Innovation, at vtongue@icscentre.org.
# Agenda: May online sessions

## Monday, 18 May – Session 1: Cross-sector exchange 1 on organisational intersectional analysis

*All online sessions from 15:00-17:00 CEST, also recorded. Please adjust timings according to your time zone.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<th>Presenters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00-05’</td>
<td>Welcome / Introductions</td>
<td>Vicky Tongue and Wolfgang Jamann&lt;br&gt;International Civil Society Centre</td>
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<td>05-30’</td>
<td>Scene-setting: Why do we need to engage more with complex potential futures? Short inputs/Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Danny Vannucchi, Deputy Director, Global Strategy &amp; Impact, Amnesty International&lt;br&gt;Doris Bäsler, Director, Confederation Development and Strategy, Oxfam International&lt;br&gt;Samantha Albery, Senior Strategy and Learning Adviser, Mercy Corps</td>
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<td>30-60’</td>
<td>Business sector insights from foresight: Arup’s scenarios for 2050 Fireside chat &amp; audience Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Dr Gereon Uerz, Leader of Foresight Europe, Arup (Germany), with Vicky</td>
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<td>60-90’</td>
<td>Future Worlds: Daring to explore the unknown Plan International’s leadership scenarios on climate change and nationalism Presentation &amp; audience Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Quirine van Voorst, Head of Strategy Development, Plan International</td>
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<td>90-120’</td>
<td>Reflections: ‘Necessary but messy’: How do we make this manageable and bring others with us? Zoom breakout group discussions + rapid final plenary feedback</td>
<td>Multiple facilitators</td>
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Tuesday, 19 May – Session 2: Cross-sector exchange 2 on organisational intersectional analysis

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<tr>
<td>00-05'</td>
<td>Welcome / Introductions</td>
<td>Vicky</td>
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<td>05-10'</td>
<td>Reflections after Day 1</td>
<td>Paula Mendez Keil, Project Manager, Strategy Review, SightSavers</td>
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<td>10-30'</td>
<td>Scene-setting Day 2: What are opportunities and challenges to engage</td>
<td>William Garrood, Head of Global Strategic Planning and Performance, WaterAid</td>
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<td>more with complex potential futures?</td>
<td>Aarathi Krishnan, independent strategic foresight advisor</td>
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<td>30-60'</td>
<td>Academic sector insights from foresight:</td>
<td>Dr. Elna Schirrmeister, Deputy Head, Competence Center</td>
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<td>Reflections from Fraunhofer’s work with intersectional scenarios</td>
<td>Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research, with Vicky</td>
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<td>Fireside chat &amp; audience Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>60-90'</td>
<td>Public sector insights from foresight:</td>
<td>Duncan Cass-Beggs, Counsellor for Strategic Foresight, OECD</td>
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<td>Reflections from OECD’s current COVID-19 foresighting approach</td>
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<td>Presentation &amp; audience Q&amp;A</td>
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Wednesday, 20 May – Session 3: Climate change + civic space + post-COVID-19: Preparing for potential futures

00-05’ Welcome / Introductions Vicky

05-50’ ‘Signals of change’ presentations/provocations:

05-20’ • Signals of change for civic space Mandeep Tiwana, Chief Programmes Officer, CIVICUS

20-35’ • Signals of change for climate action Michael Silberman, Global Director, MobLab

35-50’ • Brief discussion/Q&A Facilitated by Vicky

50-60’ Overview of the process to collaboratively map post-COVID 19 ‘signals for the sector’ Aarathi

Key Day 3 advance action: Please complete this survey by Friday 15 May.

Closing remarks Wolfgang Jamann, ICS Centre

60-120’ Action planning for autumn meeting Vicky Tongue, ICS Centre

Interactive whiteboarding and group discussion session (please see below):

• What new analytical inputs can we produce collaboratively to present in September/October?
• Who can help develop these between May and September/October (see roles below)?
• What kind of scheduling/spacing should we aim for in September/October?

This will be an interactive session – using Miro virtual whiteboard technology - to identify 2-4 interconnected topics which organisations can cluster around to form small reading/discussion groups of 2-4 organisations, to work together on a ‘deep dive’ between May and September.

These will probably be a sub-set of the ‘lines of enquiry’ included in the overall ‘signals for the sector’ exercise, informed by advance survey findings (and not covered by other identified parallel thematic initiatives analysing relevant signals of change). Participants will get to both propose new and indicate preference on different topics.

For each, we would like organisations – based on staffing capacity and strategic priority – to commit to any of the following roles per topic of interest:
1. **Leader**: One organisation to co-ordinate the reading/discussion group of up to 3 other organisations (‘readers’), convening regular (ideally monthly) remote discussion meetings to talk through emerging interesting issues/signals, and prepare a summary PowerPoint presentation for the autumn Annual Meeting.

2. **Reader**: Up to 3 other organisations to commit time to reading thematic resources (self-identified and from the ‘feeders’) and meeting on a regular (ideally monthly) remote basis with the leader and other readers to discuss and analyse the emerging interesting issues/signals, and what should be summarised for wider presentation at the autumn Annual Meeting.

3. **Feeder**: As many other organisations which can commit to flagging, forwarding and/or filtering potential interesting-looking and relevant thematic resources and ‘funnel’ these via the Centre (Vicky) to the reading/discussion groups. This does not have to be a significant time commitment, but will be an active information sharing and forwarding role.

The output for each reading/discussion group will be a max. 20 minute PowerPoint presentation to share with the wider Scanning community at the September/October convening (see below).

### Outline agenda: September/October convening

The agenda and scheduling for the September/October convening will be further developed based on the discussions and agreed outcomes from the May Session 3 online discussions. This will be planned as a series of online sessions staggered over four days (which may not be consecutive), with interactive facilitation and discussion. The main aim of this second convening will be to use the diversity of experience in this community to generate collective sector strategic insights on potential future intersections between climate change and civic space, and more clearly emerging post-COVID-19 implications. This community is uniquely positioned to fill some of these analytical gaps with new, co-created outputs. Key sessions will include:

**Day 1 (2 hours): Input**
- Presentations from the overall ‘signals for the sector’ COVID-19 mapping exercise (led by Aarathi)
- Presentations from the discussion/reading groups of new collaborative trends analysis (climate change + civic space + COVID-19 topics, since May)
- Invited presentations from other parallel thematic initiatives analysing relevant signals of change
- Reflection and discussion session

**Days 2- and 3 (both 3 hours): Sense-making**
- Extended facilitated sessions to develop future snapshots of what climate change + civic space + COVID-19 intersections and complexities might look like
- Extended facilitated sessions to explore implications of future snapshots for our sector/organisations – what are our blind spots, future levers and tension points? What does our emerging systems map look like?

**Day 4 (2 hours): Future strategising**
- Extended session to review current organisational strategy cycles/timeframes and key common trends being monitored, and agree future ambition for this community and key themes of interest for 2021 (for collaborative analysis or sense-making)
- Final reflection and next steps session