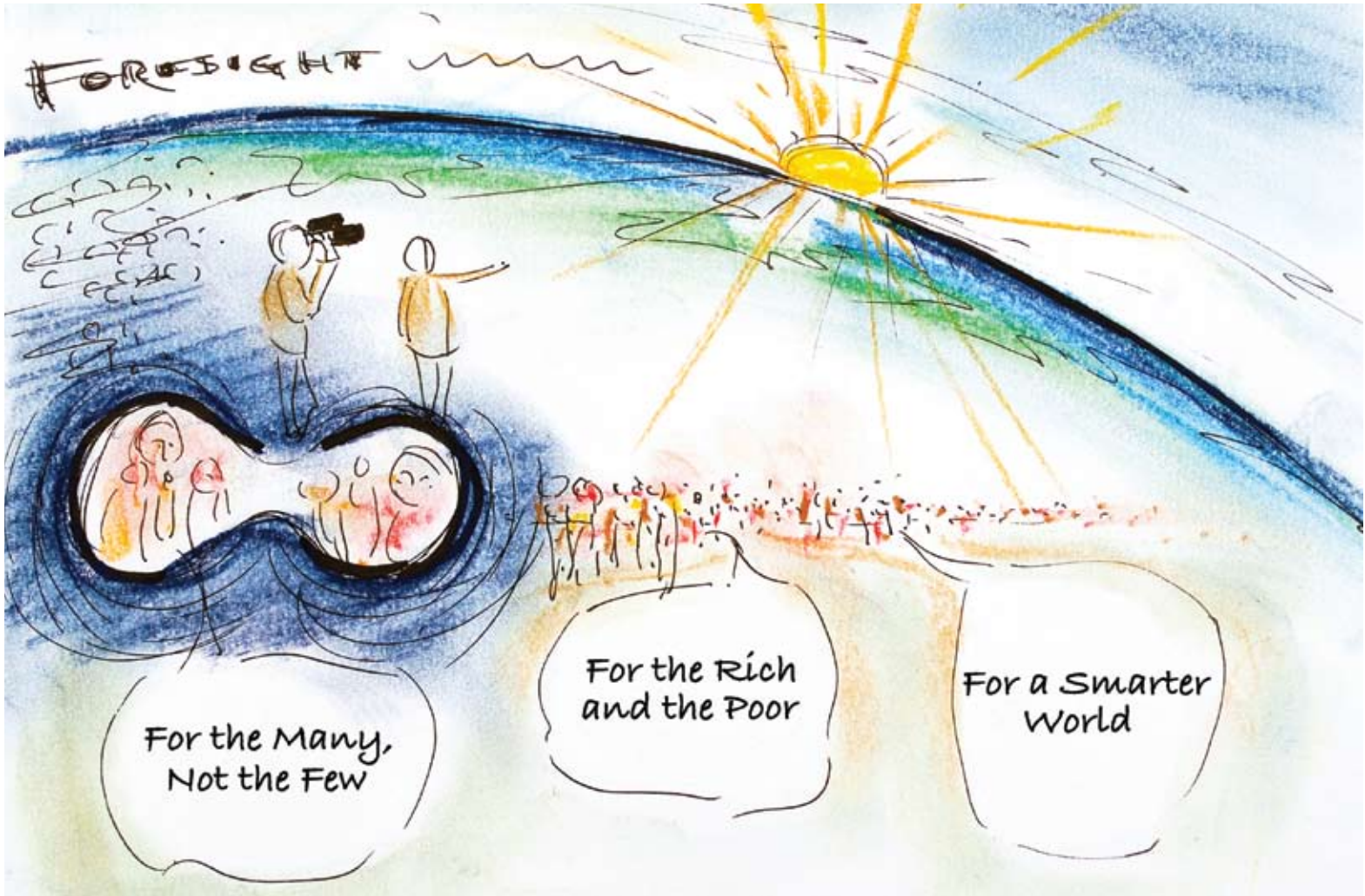


INSTITUTE FOR  
ALTERNATIVE FUTURES  
THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

PRO-POOR FORESIGHT FOR  
COMMUNITIES, COUNTRIES & REGIONS



# PRO-POOR SCENARIO TOOLKIT:

AGENDA, INSTRUCTIONS & WORKSHEETS

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## INTRODUCTION

In a meeting in March of 2009, The Institute for Alternative Futures (IAF) and the Rockefeller Foundation agreed to develop global foresight for the world's poor population, which we call pro-poor foresight. IAF and the Rockefeller Foundation specifically want to encourage people from the academic, civil society and policy communities to include people who have experience in poor communities to develop scenarios that explore the local future in the context of a changing world. With that end in mind, we designed this "Pro-poor Scenarios Toolkit" that places those poor populations at the center of concern for the future. This toolkit specifically invites policy-makers, researchers, students, professors and active citizens to explore the future as stakeholders who can identify actions to be taken today to avoid feared consequences and achieve desired societies. The resulting scenarios will be published and distributed by IAF, and those judged most worthy will be awarded a cash prize.

This guidebook should provide you with a low resource tool for creating these scenarios and exploring the future. A **one-day workshop** is sufficient for developing pro-poor scenarios, though more time can be taken to continue exploring implications, strategies and recommendations for change. The toolkit offers both input and templates for the scenarios in the form of global forecasts for the year 2039 that can prompt development for similar 20 year forecasts and can be developed for the community, region or nation that is the focus for the workshop.

The pro-poor scenarios from different parts of the world will be made available worldwide as examples of pro-poor foresight for smart globalization. IAF created the Pro Poor Scenario Toolkit with support from the Rockefeller Foundation. The toolkit includes:

- Scenario method description
- 11 global forecasts for 2039 that can serve as prompts or models for local forecasts
- Key sources of information for forecasts
- Sample agenda for a 1-day workshop
- Exercise guide for the workshop
- Templates for Scenario forecast matrices

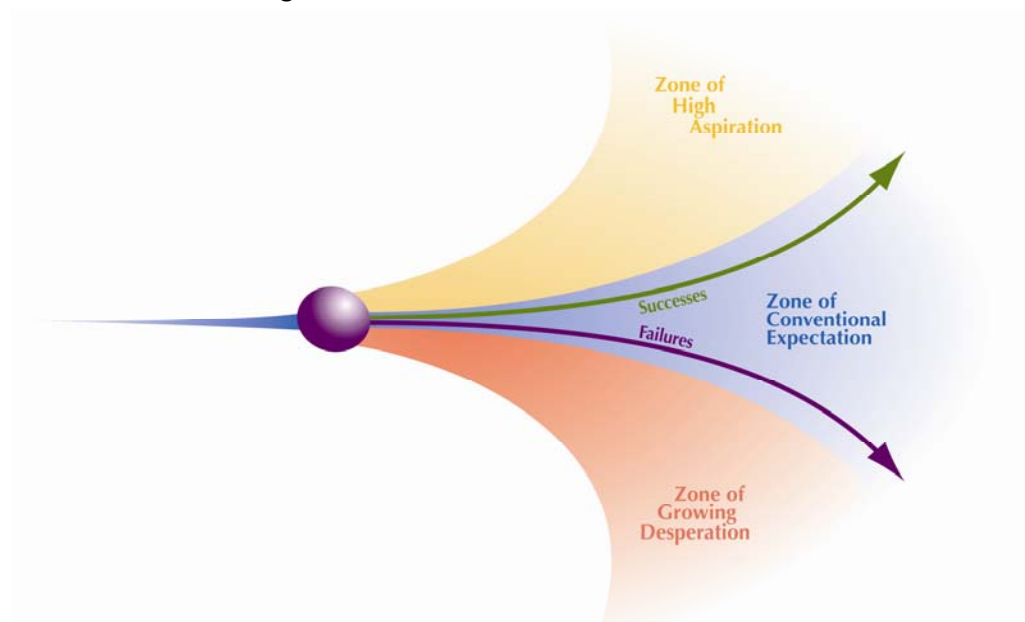
IAF will publish the resulting work online. Scenarios that meet the following criteria will be eligible to win special recognition and to compete for a cash prize of up to \$1,000. The criteria include:

- Scenarios are well developed with forecasts for factors that are important for the future of people who experience poverty as well as compelling narrative stories and drawings, pictures or graphics that convey images of the future.

- Poor people are engaged by or included in the scenario development.
- Meaningful recommendations for action are made based upon the scenarios.

## Scenario Method Description

Scenarios are stories about the future that explore alternative possibilities. They give us warning of what's ahead and they help us explore inspiring possibilities. The Institute for Alternative Futures has developed the "aspirational futures" approach for scenarios that is particularly appropriate for considering the futures of poverty. The "aspirational futures" approach is used to develop scenarios in three "zones" which assures that different types of futures are considered. This method seeks to help people think about the futures in terms of different possibilities, including familiar images that make life seem similar to what people have experienced and changing images that may make life seem worse or better than it has been to date. By thinking far into the future to 2039, it becomes easier to consider the possibility that very large changes can occur. Because there have been times of great change in the past it is reasonable to think about a great deal of change in the future as well. The three zones characterize different kinds of change:



- A “zone of conventional expectation” reflects an extrapolation of current trends. This is the future that many people expect to happen. This zone is very important methodologically because it allows people who focus primarily on data and facts to engage in the process. While there are no "facts" about the future, this zone is related to the present closely enough to give fact-focused people a comfortable starting point for their exploration of the future.
- The “zone of growing desperation” proposes a problem-plagued future embodying the group’s greatest fears and concerns. This zone is very important strategically, in part because in any scenario, somebody always does well. Exploring a community’s or organization's fears

about the future often helps them identify hidden opportunities in an otherwise undesirable future.

- The “zone of high aspiration” describes a future characterized by surprising successes. Surprisingly, it is often more difficult to imagine a good future than a bad one, since our brains are hard-wired to give precedence to threats over aspirations. However, in more than 30 years of working with communities and organizations, IAF has found that envisioning an aspirational future motivates people to see the best they can be, and that vision can become a powerful force for change.

Scenarios include many different factors that can be forecast into the alternative scenario zones so that the uncertainty of the future is recognized and considered. The uncertainty of the future is important because we make choices that can influence what comes about. By recognizing the uncertainty we can identify what seems likely as well as what is desirable and what is not. So we can then think about what we can do to influence the future towards what we prefer.

## **AGENDA FOR 1-DAY PRO-POOR SCENARIO WORKSHOP**

This agenda describes a one-day workshop intended to create scenarios using broad global forecasts provided by IAF. The workshop can be conducted with groups ranging from 10 to 40 people, though 12 to 16 are optimal numbers. The agenda offers a guide that can be modified to optimally achieve the workshop objectives.

### **Workshop Objectives**

- Create a set of pro-poor scenarios representing views of the future from and for a specific community, country or region to inform key local stakeholders and expand their planning horizons
- Develop foresight with the active participation of poor people and their allies all over the world
- Form networks of people who can use foresight on a continuous basis for the benefit of the people in specific communities, countries or regions, and which may also want to connect to a global network that shares views of the future

### **Workshop Roles**

#### **Organizer**

This person leads the process of creating and using the scenarios, develops and recruits participants for the workshop, and is the lead for implementing the follow on from the workshop. The organizer invites workshop participants and takes care of the logistics for the workshop, enlisting other people to take

the roles described below, as needed. Most importantly, the organizer should consider the range of stakeholders, including poor individuals, who should take part. Participants should include those committed to the poor and policy makers who can make a difference in the lives of the poor.

### **Facilitator**

The facilitator is responsible for the process and the success of the workshop in meeting the objectives. This person uses the agenda and templates, modified as necessary, to conduct a workshop that all participants contribute to and benefit from. The facilitator assures that each participant enters into the discussions and contributes to the scenarios.

### **Participants**

These people are responsible for offering thoughts and images about the future while keeping the poor at the center of concern. Participants are to follow the instructions of the facilitator. They will be asked to commit to achieving the recommendations developed by the workshop. There will be opportunities for participants to stay connected to others from the workshop as well as people from other regions who will have created pro-poor scenarios.

### **Reporter(s)**

The organizer and facilitator may want to pre-assign either someone or a team to take notes and draft the scenarios based on the work of participants during the workshop. Alternatively, the role can be filled by volunteers among the participants. Reporters should be responsible for collecting and organizing written materials that are used to describe the alternative scenarios created in the workshop.

## Workshop Agenda

9 AM Orientation – Organizer or senior person welcomes participants. Facilitator goes over objectives to make sure all agree, and to check for additional objectives for the workshop. Then the facilitator reviews the agenda. Next the facilitator should explain the roles people are playing and establish any rules that will help participants work effectively. Then the facilitator should have people quickly introduce themselves.

9:30 Discuss Forecasts – The facilitator explains the process of using Alpha forecasts for describing the expectable future, Beta forecasts for the feared future, and Delta forecasts for a surprisingly successful future. (See Pro-Poor 2039 Global Forecasts below on page 13, which can be used as prompts or templates for community, national or regional forecasts.)

9:45 Exercise 1: Forecast Groups (See Exercise Guide on next page.)

10:30 Break

10:45 Forecast Group Presentations

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Discuss Scenarios – The facilitator explains the process of developing scenarios from the Alpha, Beta and Delta Forecasts.

1:45 Exercise 2: Scenario Teams create 3 scenarios

3:15 Break

3:30 Scenario Discussion – Each Scenario Team presents their scenarios for discussion.

5:00 Exercise 3: Individual Recommendations

5:30 Next Steps

6:00 Adjourn

## EXERCISE GUIDE

### Exercise 1: Forecast Groups

The facilitator will divide the participants into (4) small Forecast Groups. Each group will be initially using the included Global Forecasts to explore their implications for the targeted community. These Global forecasts on eleven (11) key factors for 2039 should be distributed and be read by all participant before the workshop. Forecast Groups are to develop similar, community-specific, forecasts for key factors that pertain to the particular conditions of the targeted community. . All forecasts come in one of the following categories:

- Alpha forecasts – This is the likely extension of current conditions.
- Beta forecasts – consider some of the many things that could “go wrong.”
- Delta forecasts – consider potential paradigm shifts that would lead to more visionary, “successful” outcomes.

Each group will select two of the eleven factors they most want to work on — and two others in case the other Forecast Groups want to work on the same factors. After 5 minutes the facilitator checks with all the groups to make sure that each Forecast Group has selected two unique factors so that a total of eight out of the eleven factors are discussed. (For fairness the facilitator should try to assure each group gets at least one of its “first choice” factors. In any case, the assignment of factors should not take more than 5 minutes.) Each group discusses how the global alpha, beta and delta forecasts would appear in the local community, country or region in 2039. This discussion thus creates three local forecasts for each factor.

### Forecast Group Presentations

Each Forecast Group’s reporter uses her or his notes to provide the highlights of the Forecast Group discussion of what the Alpha, Beta and Gamma global forecasts mean locally for the targeted community. These highlights should be presented in 5 minutes or less for each factor. Each of the Forecast Groups will present one of their factors at a time followed by a next forecast from another group.

After each “factor report” the facilitator will ask all participants to comment on the highlights and suggest local forecasts for the targeted community in 2039. During that discussion, the reporter for the Forecast Group should take notes on the comments while other members of the Forecast Group may answer questions or join the discussion. After 10 minutes, the facilitator should conclude the discussion of the first Forecast Group’s factor and invite a presentation from another group following the same format.

The agenda provides 2 hours which allows for 15 minutes for presentation and discussion of each factor.

By having each Forecast Group take a turn with one of their factors and then moving to another Forecast Group, the center of the discussion shifts from group to group so all are involved. Each Forecast Group has two separated presentations during this part of the agenda.

## **Exercise 2: Scenario Teams**

Exercise two changes the focus from specific forecasts to the general picture that shows different futures for people in poverty through alternative scenarios. There will be three groups for this exercise, each taking members who worked on different forecasts and each assigned to create an Alpha, Beta or Delta Scenario. The facilitator forms three (3) Scenario Groups of people from each of the different Forecast Teams. The Alpha Scenario Team is to describe the expectable future for the targeted community, country or region in 2039. The Beta Scenario Team describes the feared or “bad news” local scenario for 2039. The Delta Scenario Team describes the “surprisingly successful” scenario. Specific instructions follow for each group to develop their scenario.

## **Alpha Scenario Team**

*This page and the following matrix should be given to the selected Alpha Scenario Team*

Before starting, the team must first select a reporter who will draft the scenario based on the team discussion. The team then begins by selecting the most important changes from among the 8 factors for which they have Alpha Forecasts (from Exercise 1). Criteria for the selection should be based on how vital these changes will be to the life of the poor over the coming three decades. After that, the team will develop a story of how those changes took place between 2009 and 2039. Based on the factor selected, the team will have to come up with a single, imaginary news headline that describes the state of that factor in 2035. This headline should explicitly portray the condition of the targeted community at that future date. Including the main event in 2035 will allow the team to describe the important effects of that event in the ensuing four years.

The Scenario Group next describes how the other 7 Alpha Forecasts may contribute to allow for the change that resulted in the 2035 headline. The reporter takes notes from this discussion as each of the 8 forecasts is used to describe the year 2035. The team then outlines all of the consequences of such a major event in the remaining period between 2035 and 2039. After 1 hour, the team finishes the Alpha Scenario Team discussion.

During the last 45 minutes before the Scenario Discussion with the other groups, the reporter writes the scenario narrative based on notes from the Alpha Scenario Team discussion. This should be a 2 to 4 page description of the expectable future in 2039 for the targeted community. While the reporter is writing the scenario narrative, other members of the Alpha Scenario Team convert the Alpha Forecasts into shortened (4 to 12 words) descriptions of each factor on the Alpha Forecast Matrix handout. Team members are also encouraged to draw pictures or diagrams to describe the scenario as these visual representations can be powerful tools for communicating their proposed messages.

At 3:30 the Alpha Scenario Team joins the full group prepared to make a 10-minute presentation of their scenario followed by a 20-minute discussion of the Alpha Scenario that may include suggestions for additions or revisions.

### **Characteristics of a Good Alpha Scenario**

A good Alpha Scenario is believable and sufficiently familiar that people who read it recognize it while the description of 2039 includes changes that follow from what they've seen over the past 20 years. Readers should feel the depiction of the future is more expectable than surprising and conforms to the current trends they see in their environment.

## ALPHA SCENARIO MATRIX

Scenario Name \_\_\_\_\_

Factors	Brief Forecasts
Climate Change	
Development Paradigm	
Education	
Global Governance	
Global Economy	
Mobility	
Jobs	
Security	
Social Identities	
Technology That Makes a Difference	
Health	

## **Beta Scenario Team**

*This page and the following matrix should be given to the selected Beta Scenario Team*

Before starting, the team must first select a reporter who will draft the scenario based on the team discussion. The team then begins by selecting the most important changes from among the 8 factors for which they have Beta Forecasts (from Exercise 1). Criteria for the selection should be based on how vital these changes will be to the life of the poor over the coming three decades. After that, the team will develop a story of how those changes took place between 2009 and 2039. Based on the factor selected, the team will have to come up with a single, imaginary news headline that describes the state of that factor in 2035. This headline should explicitly portray the condition of the targeted community at that future date. Including the main event in 2035 will allow the team to describe the important effects of that event in the ensuing four years.

The Scenario Group next describes how the other 7 Beta Forecasts may contribute to allow for the change that resulted in the 2035 headline. The reporter takes notes from this discussion as each of the 8 forecasts is used to describe the year 2035. The team then outlines all of the consequences of such a major event in the remaining period between 2035 and 2039. After 1 hour, the team finishes the Beta Scenario Team discussion.

During the last 45 minutes before the Scenario Discussion, the reporter writes the scenario narrative based on notes from the Beta Scenario Team discussion. This should be a 2 to 4 page description of the “bad news” future in 2039 for the community, country or region for which the workshop is conducted. While the reporter is writing the scenario narrative the other members of the Beta Scenario Team convert the Beta Forecasts into shortened (4 to 12 words) descriptions of the factor in 2039 on the Beta Forecast Matrix handout. Should any team members want to draw pictures to describe the scenario they can do this while the others work on the matrix.

At 3:30 the Beta Scenario Team joins the full group prepared to make a 10-minute presentation of their scenario followed by a 20-minute discussion of the Beta Scenario that may include suggestions for additions or revisions.

### **Characteristics of a Good Beta Scenario**

A good Beta Scenario describes a future that is believably worse than the present without being so overwhelmingly bad that this depiction of the future can be dismissed as unlikely. Readers should feel uncomfortable about the real potential of problems getting worse without feeling despair that nothing can be done.

## BETA SCENARIO MATRIX

Scenario Name \_\_\_\_\_

Factors	Brief Forecasts
Climate Change	
Development Paradigm	
Education	
Global Governance	
Global Economy	
Mobility	
Jobs	
Security	
Social Identities	
Technology That Makes a Difference	
Health	

## **Delta Scenario Team**

*This page and the following matrix should be given to the selected Delta Scenario Team*

Before starting, the team must first select a reporter who will draft the scenario based on the team discussion. The team then begins by selecting the most important changes from among the 8 factors for which they have Delta Forecasts (from Exercise 1). Criteria for the selection should be based on how vital these changes will be to the life of the poor over the coming three decades. After that, the team will develop a story of how those changes took place between 2009 and 2039. Based on the factor selected, the team will have to come up with a single, imaginary news headline that describes the state of that factor in 2035. This headline should explicitly portray the condition of the targeted community at that future date. Including the main event in 2035 will allow the team to describe the important effects of that event in the ensuing four years.

The Scenario Group next describes how the other 7 Delta Forecasts may contribute to allow for the change that resulted in the 2035 headline. The reporter takes notes from this discussion as each of the 8 forecasts is used to describe the year 2035. The team then outlines all of the consequences of such a major event in the remaining period between 2035 and 2039. After 1 hour, the team finishes the Delta Scenario Team discussion.

During the last 45 minutes before the Scenario Discussion, the reporter writes the scenario narrative based on notes from the Delta Scenario Team discussion. This should be a 2 to 4 page description of the “surprisingly successful” future in 2039 for the community, country or region that the workshop is conducted for. While the reporter is writing the scenario narrative the other members of the Delta Scenario Team convert the Delta Forecasts into shortened (4 to 12 words) descriptions of the factor in 2039 on the Beta Forecast Matrix handout. Should any team members want to draw pictures to describe the scenario they can do this while the others work on the matrix.

At 3:30 the Delta Scenario Team joins the full group prepared to make a 10-minute presentation of their scenario followed by a 20-minute discussion of the scenario that may include suggestions for additions or revisions.

### **Characteristics of a Good Delta Scenario**

A good Delta scenario should be surprisingly, yet believably, successful in addressing the problems that presently appear most difficult without offering fantastic solutions that are hard to believe. Readers should feel challenged by the possibility of great success and sobered by the recognition that it can only come from great effort and some luck.

## DELTA SCENARIO MATRIX

Scenario Name \_\_\_\_\_

Factors	Brief Forecasts
Climate Change	
Development Paradigm	
Education	
Global Governance	
Global Economy	
Mobility	
Jobs	
Security	
Social Identities	
Technology That Makes a Difference	
Health	

### Exercise 3: Individual Recommendations

Each member should be invited on an individual basis to write two recommendations for strategies or actions that should be taken *in the present* based on what he or she has learned during the workshop. The participants should be given 5 minutes to write their recommendations.

After five minutes the facilitator asks any of the participants to share one of their recommendations. This can be written down in summary form on a flip chart, a large sheet of paper or a blackboard. The facilitator next asks if any other people had recommended a similar strategy or action and counts hands, placing the number next to the summary statement.

Next the facilitator asks for someone to offer another recommendation. This too is written in summary form so the facilitator can ask for a show of hands from people who made a similar recommendation.

The facilitator continues to add to the list and count the number of people who had similar recommendations until time runs out (a half hour), the group has run out of recommendations, or the group has produced 10 recommendations.

The facilitator then asks people to vote for the three top recommendations. Each member will only have 3 votes and the three highest scoring will be the key recommendations of this workshop.

## NEXT STEPS

The facilitator can announce what the next steps are that the facilitator plans to take, such as organizing the scenarios and sending them to IAF. Should the facilitator want to also volunteer to take next steps suggested by the recommendations, such as publishing them, it would help provide a role model for others to volunteer. After the facilitator announces any plans for next steps, she or he may ask if other participants want to volunteer to help or to take other steps suggested by the recommendations. All of the next steps should be written down on a flip chart, large sheet of paper or blackboard with the names of people who volunteered to help.

The role of the facilitator and the other workshop organizer is extremely vital in this step. In sum, the facilitator and any of his or her aids shall attempt their best to:

- Engage the participant in a lively discussion about how to practically implement the final recommendations and how to utilize each of the participants position and network for that aim
- Use the participant's input to write a plan with explicit steps on how to achieve the key recommendations
- Make a copy of this plan for each participant and you may use the back of the paper as a sheet that contains all of the participants preferred contact method for further engagement
- Create social channels and mediums for members who want to get more involved in the implementation process and encourage other participants to join this medium
- Use all the available communication channels to publish the final draft of the scenarios along with the recommendations so it can be used as a role model for other volunteers around the world
- Keep the chosen social mediums updated with any progress in the plan or any news that is relevant to the issues of your recommendations

A copy of the final scenarios should be also sent to IAF for further reviewing and assessment of the results of the workshop. After all, this workshop is not the end; it is only the beginning of a long route that will lead to better future for us, our children, our societies and our planet.

Congratulations, you are all now futurists!