

# **Developing Scenarios for Partners to Work Together to Improve Women's and Children's Health:**

*A Planning Guide*



This report has been prepared by Maddalena Campioni and Patrick Noack at Scenario Development. They specialise in scenarios and structural approaches to complex problems in health, current affairs, social and international development issues, climate change and science.

[www.ScenarioDevelopment.com](http://www.ScenarioDevelopment.com)  
[info@ScenarioDevelopment.com](mailto:info@ScenarioDevelopment.com)  
+39 3292 418 148

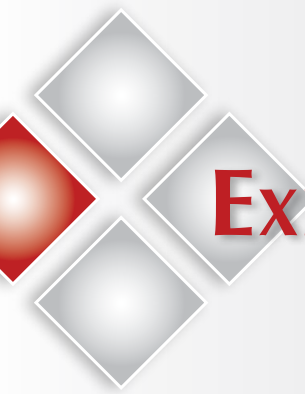
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**S**cenario building is a methodology that allows us to make sense of a complex issue and to understand how the actors involved prioritise forces that shape the future. It is widely used to develop a deeper understanding of how future events might unfold and affect present plans and strategies. Scenarios can be used to ask “what if” questions and consider uncertainties, but also to understand different partnership models, opportunities and challenges, to align and evaluate programmes, to improve strategic planning, dialogue, accountability and transparency.

For Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) processes, this Scenario Building Guide outlines how different constituencies can work together in different ways. The methodology identifies ways of aligning action in areas where there is potential to accelerate progress and achieve greater impact by working together than individual partners would achieve alone. This Guide and methodology is likely to benefit different stakeholders, including RMNCH+A programme implementers, governments and their partners, donor agencies and the PMNCH Secretariat. Both PMNCH and its members have expressed interest in developing an approach that helps to identify scenarios and options for collaborative work, and discuss future challenges and opportunities.

Scenario building methodologies have been used extensively in the Health sector, including in strategy formulation and evaluation, and prevention and management of infectious diseases. ‘The future of AIDS in Africa’ scenarios developed by UNAIDS and Shell (2005), DFID’s Scenarios for the Poorest (2004) and the Wanless Report on the future of the National Health Service in the UK (2002) are all relevant examples from which the RMNCH+A community can learn.

In particular, scenario building can:

- Support country-led health plans to identify future challenges and opportunities;
- Help facilitate an integrated delivery of health services and life-saving interventions through partnership building and stakeholders dialogues;
- Work to strengthen health systems,
- Assist in investigating innovative approaches to financing, product development and efficient delivery of health services;
- Can be used as a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure accountability, transparency and good governance.

## **PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE**

This Guide provides an understanding of the method for scenario building for RMNCH+A that can be adapted to specific contexts. Scenario building is a tool for all stakeholders; it aids policy and decision-makers at the country level, and internationally. The scenario development tool aims to improve efficiency and effectiveness of programme alignment, multi-stakeholder dialogues (MSDs) and partnership for RMNCH+A. Scenario building is a tool that can be adapted and is one aspect of complex decision-making processes.

## STAKEHOLDERS AND ACTORS

### *Conveners (Conv)*

Sponsors, partners, or governments can initiate and support the scenario development process. These conveners play an active role in planning, financing and decision-making. For an RMNCH+A scenario development process, the ideal conveners are Ministries of Health and key partner organisations. It is worth noting that neutral conveners enable broader participation of different types of stakeholders in the dialogue process.

### *Scenario Building Team (SBT)*

The Scenario Building Team is a group of seasoned professionals with specific expertise in building scenarios, workshop design and facilitation, futures research, conducting interviews, systems analysis, and operational research. The SBT is responsible for ensuring a smooth, grounded and insightful process and outcome. The SBT generally consists of a scenario director, project manager, researchers, specialist, and support staff.

### *Scenario Facilitators (SF)*

Scenario Facilitators are individuals with a strong scenario training background and experience, and can ensure that the scenario development process is smooth and flexible. This is especially important during multi-stakeholder dialogues, in order to ensure common aims are developed and clear language is used. The facilitators may be part of the SBT.

### *Participants (Part)*

The participants are individuals recognised as representatives of key stakeholders. They are a primary resource and should constitute a balanced and active share of the stakeholder group. Participants are involved in workshops and interviews as well as in the feedback and dissemination process. Participant numbers will vary depending on each project.

### *Experts (Exp)*

Experts are luminaires, leaders, or influential people in the field of interest. They are involved in the interview phase as well as during the workshops, usually as keynote speakers and/or participants.

## BUILDING SCENARIOS

The scenario building process requires significant coordination, persistence, effort, and resources:

- **Time:** although a scenario-building workshop may be limited to one or two days, the pre-workshop activities can take more than a month to plan and execute – depending largely on the number of participants.
- **Cost:** financial resources vary greatly, but the main cost items are the venue for the workshop, coordination of accommodation and travel for participants, and costs associated with the pre- and post-production of scenarios.

### OVERVIEW OF THE SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

#### Phase 1: Pre-workshop responsibilities and stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis; identification of main actors (SBT)	Identify process participants, experts (SBT, Conv)	Open-ended interviews & analysis (SBT, Exp, Part)	Research on background, future, key topics (SBT, Exp)	Identify venue and scenario facilitators (SBT, Conv)	Develop workshop agenda (STB, SF)	Workshop inputs to participants; interview analysis, background, etc. (SBT)	Project milestones; evaluation (SBT, Conv)
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#### Phase 2: Workshop

(Actors and stakeholders involved/responsible)

2.1 Icebreakers and opening (SF, Conv, Part)	2.3 Specific participatory exercises: actors, current reality, driving forces, impact and uncertainty matrix (SF, Part, Exp)	2.4 Use of predictable and unpredictable elements (SF, Part)	2.6 Draft scenarios, actor stories (SF, Part)	2.8 Finalised scenarios: stories, outcomes, indicator data, and a shared understanding for the language and concepts (SF, Part, Exp)	2.9 Project milestone evaluation (SBT, Conv)
2.2 Agree on critical question (SF, Part)		2.5 Identify turning points, impacts and time lines (SF, Part, Exp)	2.7 Indicators for modelling (SF, Part, Exp)		

#### Phase 3: Post-workshop

(Actors and stakeholders involved/responsible)

3.1 Complete scenarios report (SBT, SF)	3.3 If applicable: indicator data used in appropriate quantitative models (SBT, Exp)	3.4 Design stakeholder engagements and dialogues (i.e. MSD) to promote a decision-making processes (Conv, SBT, Part)	3.5 If applicable: Disseminate scenarios within participants' institutions and as widely as possible using traditional and social media (Conv, SBT, Part)	3.6 Plan for next scenario building process at most appropriate frequency to incorporate most recent knowledge and information (Conv, SBT)	3.7 Final project evaluation (SBT, Conv)
3.2 Refine report with core participant group (SBT, Part)					

The scenarios developed through this approach offer a range of possibilities that can help to:

- Better understand the present;
- Improve our ability to understand change as it occurs;
- Improve strategic collaborative working;
- Improve decision-making processes;
- Engage with other stakeholders to promote a dialogue around collaborative work practices.



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION





This Scenario Building Guide introduces a tool which can be used to facilitate three main aims: effective partnership to identify priorities and common goals; alignment of programmes, projects and activities to avoid duplication; and, in the context of the post-2015 Agenda, to identify and build cross-sectoral and cross-constituency partnerships to effectively plan and work towards MDGs 4 and 5.

The Guide is for decision-makers and partners interested in investigating important decisions. It can also be used to help strengthen partnerships, improve collaboration, increase opportunities and choices, and plan more effectively.

## ABOUT SCENARIO BUILDING

Scenario building is useful when decisions about future engagements and investments need to be taken today; it can help to make sense of large amounts of information and significant events. While information is generally available, understanding in a wider and future context is often limited. Scenario building is an alternative, innovative option to build consensus among different constituencies, and offers critical inputs into MSDs.

Scenario building is a planning tool that is often overlooked because it is based primarily on qualitative, rather than quantitative analyses. This is a missed opportunity for organisations or partners when considering their engagement in a new activity or project, or when assessing current strategies and the impact of present actions into the future.

### *Scenarios Are Used to Plan for an Uncertain Future*

Scenarios are plausible descriptions of possible futures in times of change, and offer a long-term view to understand the future impacts of decisions taken today. Therefore, Scenario Building is a method used to make long-term plans, today, which are flexible and strategic in nature. They provide insight into what plans might look like and consider if and how they can survive internal and external forces, trends and other influences. Within scenarios, decisions that need to be taken today about the future can be analysed, rationalised and expanded.

This methodology provides a useful glimpse into the future in imaginative ways. In a scenario exercise, a range of future stories are invented and considered in depth. These are carefully researched and detailed to offer a “real life” feel look at decisions that need to be taken. By doing so, it is possible to get a better idea of potentially unexpected outcomes and options that may not otherwise have been considered or foreseen.

#### BOX 1: CASE STUDY – MONT FLEUR SCENARIOS (SOUTH AFRICA)

The Mont Fleur scenarios were constructed to address the political transition from apartheid to an inclusive democracy in South Africa in the early 1990s to anticipate a range of plausible future post-apartheid developments. Briefly, the four scenarios are as follows:

- 1. Ostrich:** A negotiated settlement to the crisis in South Africa is not achieved, and the country's government continues to be non-representative.
- 2. Lame Duck:** A settlement is achieved but the transition to a new dispensation is slow and indecisive.
- 3. Icarus:** Transition is rapid but the new government unwisely pursues unsustainable, populist economic policies.
- 4. Flight of the Flamingos:** The government's policies are sustainable and the country takes a path of inclusive growth and democracy.

These scenarios were powerful because they were disseminated widely in local media and the general population was aware of the language and implications of it (for example, nobody wanted to be an “ostrich”). The then President F W DeClerk was quoted as saying, “I am not an ostrich.” This example illustrates that policy development, partnerships and complexity can be readily shaped when the scenario building methodology is used appropriately.

See Appendix A

Scenario building has been used historically as a military tool to plan for and anticipate challenges in unknown environments. Subsequently, Royal Dutch/Shell adapted the methodology in the early 1970s from a military intelligence tool to futures thinking. Shell has used scenarios internally to better navigate global uncertainties in the oil industry. Subsequently, scenarios have been used world wide by numerous institutions to make more informed political, economic and social choices for the future.

#### **Box 2: ROYAL DUTCH/SHELL SCENARIOS**

Scenarios are stories that explore the “what if” questions; they consider a range of plausible options that could emerge from what is known today. The “Shell methodology” revolves around an inductive rather than normative approach: scenarios are developed towards unknown futures, rather than working back from a predefined future in mind.

The latest “New Lens” scenarios investigate the impact of economic, political and social forces on the global energy system and environment in 2100. Even though Shell concentrates on energy scenarios, the lessons learned can be applied to a variety of fields. For example, as the global population reaches 9 Billion by 2050, and millions are lifted out of poverty, energy demand could increase by 80%.

### ***Strengths and Limitations of Scenario Planning***

The difference between scenarios and other methodologies is the use of perspective in the construction of different scenarios. Diverse perspectives make up the world as we know it. Understanding these perspectives allows us to understand today's diverse and future realities. Therefore, using only one perspective to develop scenarios and make decisions for the future would be limiting. A quote by the writer William Gibson provides a great insight into the need to interface with different people who hold different views: “The future is already here, it's just unevenly distributed”; meaning that everyone holds different pieces of the puzzle that forms the future.

Scenarios, while providing insights into the current context, also identify the role of actors and the forces that will shape the future. Scenarios describe future possibilities based on varying perspectives and available evidence. The future outcomes, or different scenarios, include turning points, which characterise change, opportunities and challenges; they describe a path to a range of possible futures.

Describing the future through scenario building requires one to understand that perhaps none of the scenarios may prevail. This allows for exploratory planning while retaining flexibility in times of change. The development and the building of the scenarios helps prepare the participants in a workshop for the future. They explore the implications of specific events and learn to accept how an event might develop differently according to the specific context. This guides them towards a more informed decision-making process.

On the downside, some might find scenarios difficult to work with because they are not certain. Unlike forecasting methods, which offer a single future path or outcome, the scenario methodology does not ascribe probabilities to futures and hence is dismissed by individuals or institutions wishing to obtain a definitive, quantifiable answer.

Strong partnerships have resulted as a consequence of successful scenario development, even in complex and difficult post-conflict contexts. The creation of a common language, with common aims, and a basic understanding the desired goal, create a strong and fruitful bond between all the constituencies. When considering future possibilities, partnerships need to experiment and consider opportunity and crises by experimenting through scenarios. Scenarios provide a risk-free opportunity to explore uncertainties and possibilities.

The UNAIDS Scenarios on the future of AIDS in Africa published in 2005 show how an integrated approach can lead to a comprehensive and global response. As a result of following these scenarios, the focus of the response to the epidemic has changed from a medical focus to a global and integrated response. This may serve as an important example for the RMNCH+A community because of the possible frameworks set by emerging partnerships.

**BOX 3: CASE STUDY – UNAIDS SCENARIOS ON THE FUTURE OF AIDS (AFRICA)**

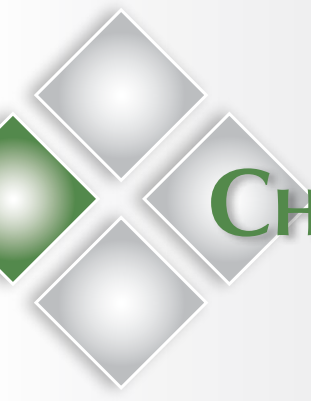
The UNAIDS Scenarios on the future of AIDS in Africa were published in 2005. These scenarios led to a deeper understanding that the positioning of AIDS in the global agenda would be a determining factor in the development of the epidemic. AIDS was not just a medical or a social issue, but far more complex, and thus could only be targeted properly through multifaceted action.

The UNAIDS scenarios led to a change in the global perception of the epidemic from merely medical, to more of a social, economic and medical issue. In addition, this work expressed ambitious futures in terms of treatment, global collaboration, and stakeholder engagements, all of which have materialised in important, albeit varied, ways.

*See Appendix B*

An important limitation of the scenario development methodology is its overarching nature: addressing the entire context and not focusing on specific data. Quantifiable data and evidence needs to be associated with a scenario building exercise if we intend to use the evidence in specific environments.

A review of the literature on child and maternal health reveals that there is currently no use of the scenario building methodology. Instead, there is a large amount of studies on specific contexts, such as describing the drivers of mortality, the efficacy of interventions, or best-case and worst-case scenarios. A decision-maker and a policy-maker will have great difficulty in understanding and making sense of such a large amount of information. Research should be guided by an initial understanding of possible future developments, and data used to inform different scenarios.



## CHAPTER 2: BUILDING SCENARIOS



A scenario building process is very logical and structured; it is also aimed at creating a dialogue among partners, leading to a shared understanding of common targets for the future. By its nature, building scenarios is an interactive, hands-on and practical process.

## THE SCENARIO BUILDING PROCESS

**Step 1:** Articulate the key decisions to be taken, the key questions to be asked, and the time frame to be used to look into the future.

**Step 2:** Conduct in-depth research from a range of sources, including those that may be unconventional or unusual: the Internet, people with particular insight, formal and informal reports.

**Step 3:** Conducting workshops where key stakeholders are convened to articulate, discuss and mediate the current understanding of the issues. It is at this stage scenarios are developed.

The scenario building process involves a significant number of stakeholders who contribute in various ways and at different times. A broad stakeholder group, with a comprehensive range of views, will ensure that the scenarios will be more insightful and ultimately useful. In this way, all stakeholders become an integral part and, thus, will promote the process and its outcomes.

**Figure:** *The Scenario Building Process*



## STAKEHOLDERS

### *Conveners or Sponsors (Conv) – provide funding*

*Who are they?* For a scenario development process in RMNCH+A, the ideal conveners include Ministries of Health and key partner organisations.

*Their role:* The conveners play an active role in planning, financing and decision-making. Sponsors, partners or indeed the government would initiate the scenario development process and may provide some of the critical resources, including funding. The conveners and sponsors should ideally be neutral in that the outcome of the scenarios should not be pre-determined or driven by them.

*Their qualities:* A genuine interest in exploring the future, broad participation in the process and an open attitude towards the scenario outcomes will be key ingredients to building successful scenarios. The conveners and sponsors will also form one of the main groups for whom the scenarios are developed.

*How they are selected:* conveners generally self-select in that they initiate a scenario building process. Funders should be selected carefully by the conveners and the scenario building team to ensure a degree of neutrality and balance. This means that the priorities of the funding source should reflect, where possible, those of the participants in the scenario building process.

### *Scenario Building Team (SBT) – build and disseminate scenarios*

*Who are they?* The SBT could include a scenario director, project manager, research leaders, experts, scribes, actors, writers, editors, and support staff. The list of participants will be adapted based on the exercise being undertaken.

*Their role:* A group of seasoned professionals with specific expertise in the following areas: building scenarios; workshop design and facilitation, forecasting, visioning, conducting interviews, systems analysis,<sup>1</sup> operational research, and skills exploring future possibilities. This team's responsibility is to ensure a smooth, grounded and insightful scenario building process and outcome; this team is also tasked with the dissemination of the work.

**Table 1: Description and responsibilities of Scenario Building Team members**

Category	Responsibilities
Scenario Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the overall process</li> <li>• Shape new and emerging thinking on topic of concern</li> <li>• Manage all stakeholders and team members</li> </ul>
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management tasks, including funding</li> <li>• Design scenario workshops</li> <li>• Organize meetings</li> </ul>
Research Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage research from diverse fields</li> <li>• Integrate new ideas and ensure the exchange of ideas</li> </ul>
Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop ideas based on research within their field of expertise</li> </ul>
Scribes and actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document and provide visual representation of deliberations and scenarios</li> </ul>
Writers and editors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take responsibility for the final written product</li> </ul>
Support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support to the scenario building team</li> </ul>

### *Scenario Facilitators (SF) – enable the building process*

Scenario Facilitators bring a strong scenario-training background and experience to the table and are responsible for ensuring a smooth and flexible process, especially in MSDs. They facilitate the development of common aims and language. Scenario facilitators may be external or internal to the Scenario Building Team.

The SF role is often covered by the project director, the project manager and the specialists/research leaders. In addition, external facilitators may be brought into the activities to aid in participant dynamics or because the number of participants is too great for the number of SBT facilitators.

1. Systems analysis is the discipline, which assesses the logics and connections between key structural components. That is, an analysis of how elements of a large and complex issue fit together and influence one another. For example, systems analysis may be helpful to understand the ways in which interventions impact target populations, how the populations' needs are modified and how this, in turn, impacts on the supply of services.

### *Participants (Part) – bring a practical perspective*

Participants are individuals recognised as representatives of key stakeholders. They should constitute a balanced and active sample of the stakeholder group. Participants are involved in workshops and interviews as well as in the feedback and dissemination parts of the process. Participants also originate from groups and organisations that make up the main recipients of the scenario building process insights. Participant numbers will vary depending on each project; they can be as few as 15 and as many as 100 or more. The number of participants will be determined by the topic at hand, the available resources, and the size of the SBT.

### *Technical Experts (Exp) – provide a specific perspective*

Experts are opinion formers, leaders or influential people in the field of interest. They are involved in the interview phase as well as during the workshops as keynote speakers and/or participants. Experts are engaged to provide their views and expertise either because their views are unique, or because their inputs are required to fill specific gaps in knowledge.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Embarking on a scenario building process entails significant coordination, management skill, persistence and effort. The results become apparent during the building of the scenarios and in the shared objectives that result from such an undertaking. Building scenarios creates a context for strategy, planning and other activities that require decision-making.

Some of the major resources necessary to carry out a scenario building process include human and financial resources and time. For example, in a small scenario project there may be a minimum of 15 participants, 10 interviewees, a SBT of 3, plus conveners and other stakeholders. Additionally, there may be several additional personnel involved in supporting the organization of the scenario development meetings. Thus, it is important to plan and budget for all the resources required.

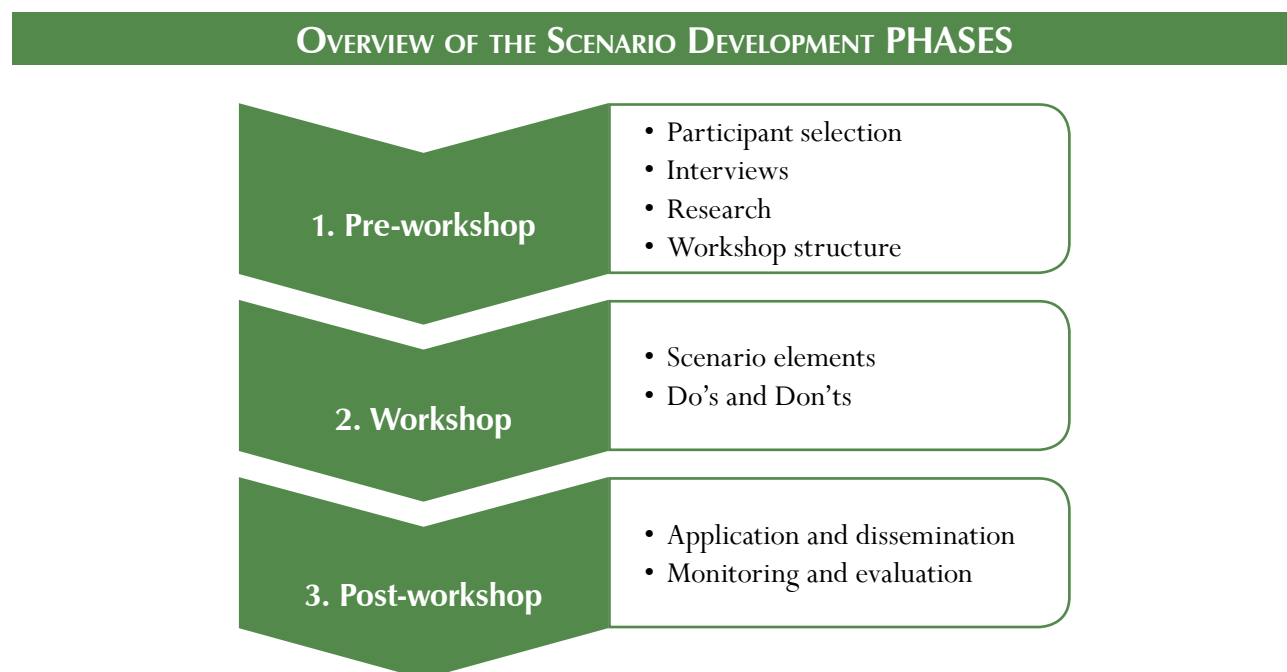
**Table 2: Resource Planning**

Type of Resources	Key areas for planning
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Venue</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Pre-and Post-production</li> </ul>
Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning (meetings, interviews and workshops)</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Production of background documents and final reports</li> <li>• Administrative support</li> <li>• Advocacy and communications</li> </ul>
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of interviewees and arranging interviews</li> <li>• Identification of participants</li> <li>• Invitations and planning meetings</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Conducting and documenting various workshops</li> </ul>

## SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT PHASES

For the purpose of simplicity, outlined below is a “how-to” for scenario building which includes a single workshop. Options for additional work or activities/workshops will be highlighted..

Additionally, this Guide assumes that financial resources, time and expertise are sourced through the networks and capability of the convening organisation. For ease of reference, the scenario development exercise can be conceived as being divided into the following phases:



### 1a. Pre-workshop Phase: *Participant Selection*

Participants are central to the process of building scenarios. Participants are the key to providing necessary information and disseminating outcomes. Ideally, they should be knowledgeable about the full scope of the topic (i.e. past, present and the future) upon which the scenarios will be focused.

Participants should ideally be participatory. While this may seem implicit, often times it is not. For this reason, it is best to select participants on an individual rather than institutional basis. In addition, because scenarios are about identifying and working with divergent views, the participant body needs to also be diverse. This means there should be a balance in terms of gender, age, geography and other attributes that are important to the project.

#### **BOX 4: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS TO SELECT PARTICIPANTS**

Participant selection can be done using brainstorming which would involve a smaller group mainly comprising of the convenors and the SBT. Such an approach would involve all concerned stakeholders who have influence or power over the issue at hand, or have a stake in the success or failure of the issue.

How are the right participants identified? It is vital to reach out to networks to inform them about the intent of conducting a scenario building process. Soliciting these networks to nominate well-respected, well-informed and participatory individuals is essential. These individuals should be able to take part in the process and represent a specific stakeholder group. To this end, it is helpful to develop Terms of Reference that describe the desired profiles and requirements of prospective participants.



## SAMPLE ATTRIBUTES OF SCENARIO BUILDING PARTICIPANTS

## Scenario Interviewee

- Thoughtful leader, recognised activist or person holding strong views in relation to RMNCH+A or relevant determinants (political and socio-economic) of RMNCH+A outcomes;
- Able to contribute 1 or 2 hours to give an interview about the current state of the health issue of concern in the area, and speculate about the future.

## Scenario Workshop Participants

- Thoughtful leaders, activists and individuals who represent the broadest possible spectrum of the topic at hand;
- Bring knowledge/experience on topics related to RMNCH+A or relevant determinants (political and socio-economic) of RMNCH+A outcomes;
- Willingness to participate interactively and share knowledge and experience proactively;
- Participants should ideally be available for the entire duration of the workshop.

If possible, it is useful to match the profiles of proposed participants (names collected through the informal stakeholder analysis and outreach) to the sample attributes described above. This can be done through CVs or short bios (if available). The latter can also be used to develop a table (see Table 3), which will reveal whether the prospective participant group reflects the desired balance, or whether more participants of a specific profile are needed. In order to identify the best possible participants, only individuals who have received two or more nominations from the network ought to be invited.

**Table 3: Matching participants with desired profiles**

	Stakeholder group 1 - partner	Stakeholder group 2 – adolescent	Stakeholder group 3 - policymaker	Stakeholder group 4 – doctor	Stakeholder group 5- village elder	Stakeholder group 6 - donor	Age	Gender
Nominee 1	✓						>35	F
Nominee 2		✓					<35	F
Nominee 3			✓	✓			>35	M
Nominee 4	✓						>35	F
Nominee 5					✓		>35	M
Nominee 6						✓	>35	M
Nominee 7			✓				>35	M
Nominee 8						✓	>35	M
....								

This table is a useful tool to gauge the overall balance of the likely participant body. When inviting participants, they should be given all relevant information. The information should include the objectives of the workshop, why they have been selected as participants, and how their contribution is important. They should also know details about the venue, travel and a draft agenda. If participants come from countries outside where the workshop is being held, it is important to inform them about the visa modalities and time involved.

## 1b. Pre-workshop Phase: Interviews

Interviews are conducted in the early stages of the process and are important for several reasons. Firstly, they inform the SBT of the key underlying issues. Analysing these interviews is critical for the researchers to begin identifying priority areas. Second, they are an ideal way to ensure the workshop deals with real and tangible information. Third, they are a good way to involve individuals who are important stakeholders – generally leaders – but who may be unable to participate in the full workshop.

The interviews for a scenario building process are future-oriented. Most, if not all, research conducted is about the past. However, for the purposes of scenario development we are primarily interested in the future. Interviews are the first step to getting stakeholders to speculate about their perceptions of the future and their first step to develop an interest for the future and what it means in terms of decisions taken today.

The number of interviews is a function of the time and financial resources at the disposal of the convenor – it can be expected that each interview process will take approximately ½ day to be completed. Each interview includes four steps: identifying the interviewees, setting a suitable time for an interview, conducting the interview – which takes about one hour with two interviewers present (one who conducts the interview, the other takes notes)—and then transcribing and analysing the interview.

The basic interview questions should be open ended to ensure that the interviewer's biases and assumptions do not affect the results. Some examples are included below.

### BOX 5: EXAMPLES OF OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What do you see as the current state of RMNCH+A in country X?
  - What are the specific elements that have led to this state?
- What would be a good outcome for the future?
  - What event or indicator could signal this outcome?
  - What are the events that could promote/hinder the achievement of this outcome?
- What would be a bad outcome for the future?
  - What event or indicator could signal this outcome?
  - What are the events that could promote/hinder the achievement of this outcome?
- What are the trends that would likely affect the issue at hand?

The scenario interviews, once transcribed, are ready for analysis. This is a relatively subjective exercise; generally, after reading the content of all interviews it is possible to understand the full extent of the issue being considered. Some of the information gathered from such interviews includes: the structure partnerships may take to address areas of concern; role of specific partners / stakeholders; expectations from particular stakeholders; possible consequences; factors that are driving the formation of partnership models; and, users' expectations from partnership models. There may also be areas of agreement or contention around each area; it is important to identify these as they highlight the range of future possibilities. Specialist researchers are responsible for the interview analysis as they are generally the ones carrying out the interviews.

One very important and final consideration on conducting interviews: the Chatham House rule should be applied during the interviewing process and no specific statement attributed to any person. This protects the interviewees and ensures they share ideas freely.

### 1c. Pre-workshop Phase: *Research*

Research is extremely important in setting the context for discussion during the workshop. RMNCH+A situational analysis, for example, can offer relevant information about a region, the gaps in knowledge, and important partners and stakeholders. This information needs to be analysed, synthesised and presented to the participants. It is important this is done in a way that is understandable and of importance to all participants.

### 1d. Pre-workshop Phase: *Workshop Structure*

The workshop structure should be developed alongside the interviews and identifying participants. The workshop structure would include the number of workshops, workshop length and location, and workshop contributors and their roles. While developing the workshop structure, it is helpful to keep in mind that these workshops are helpful in developing draft scenarios that illustrate the range of plausible collaborative working methods; they also help in establishing specific terminology and a new / shared language among workshop participants and identifying a critical mass of stakeholders who will be champions of the knowledge gained from the scenarios.

#### BOX 6: BUILDING SCENARIOS THROUGH WORKSHOPS

**Orientation workshop:** this workshop would focus on understanding “what matters” to the participant group. This would help in the identification of the current RMNCH+A reality and set a future-oriented, prioritised research agenda around emerging themes.

**Scenario building workshop:** during this workshop, research is presented, draft scenarios are developed and selected, and a work programme for finalisation is agreed.

**Affirmation workshop:** The third and final workshop would provide feedback on the stories and any disagreements or novel ideas. This workshop also sets the post-scenario agenda in terms of dissemination of the work.

### Number of Workshops

As is clear from the Guide so far, a lot of information can emerge from the work associated with the scenario building process. Knowing at the start of the process how much information is required (to be exhaustive) is helpful in deciding how much research is needed. This in turn determines the number of workshops required. The availability of time and human and financial resources are important constraints that need to be factored in. In ideal conditions, three workshops are recommended. While an orientation workshop would set the objective, the scenario building workshop will see participants coming together to discuss draft scenarios. Finally, the affirmation workshop can be used to validate the final findings and help in their dissemination.

### Length of Workshops

Workshops can impose a significant time burden on participants. However, it is advisable that a minimum of 2 to 3 full days are allocated for a scenario development workshop. This provides enough time for participants to get to know one another and trust each other enough to share their thoughts and ideas. This timeframe gets participants thinking about the present and the future. It also gives them the opportunity to be sufficiently creative and provide their own input, while also having the opportunity of hearing the opinions of the other participants.

In practice, a three-day workshop translates into the equivalent of four or five days of time for participants, with additional time required on part of the SBT. The planning teams will need to arrange for appropriate venues (main and breakout rooms), and participants’ needs (accommodation, travel, meals). This contributes to the smooth execution of the workshop. It’s important to remember that an unhappy participant can easily derail the entire workshop.

## **2a. Workshop Phase: *Venue***

The location of the venue is critical. If participants need to travel long distances to reach the venue from where they are being accommodated, it can be both expensive and inconvenient. This will have a negative impact on the attendance of many participants, and may significantly increase the total cost of organizing the workshop. Also, it is recommended that neutral locations are selected: a venue offered or arranged by a specific participant may send the wrong message to other participants.

One important element is the main workshop room and the breakout rooms. These need to be sufficiently large to host all participants, facilitators, materials, etc. The venue should have natural light where possible. If participants are being asked to dedicate 8 hours a day for three days, a “bad” venue will undermine the process, but a “good” one could pay huge dividends. The same goes for food and refreshments.

## **2b. Workshop Phase: *Contributors and Specific Roles***

In addition to the individuals identified above, a significant number of people are involved in a scenario building workshop and it is therefore important to assign roles and be clear about expectations.

### **Oracles**

These are experts with particular knowledge in the area of interest and are usually invited for a short section of the workshop. The selection of an oracle is based on the identified need for special expertise.

### **Systems Analysts**

They are individuals who listen to the workshop conversations and identify the structural relationships between the topics and the driving forces. This is an important skill and contributes to an understanding of cause-and-effect, as well as similarities and differences between scenarios.

### **Local Musicians and Artists**

Involving local musicians and artists may be a useful way to signal a break or the end of a session. The feeling and implementation of a scenario building workshop must be different and more engaging, as well as fun. Musicians and local artist add an important dimension to a workshop.

## **2c. Workshop Phase: *Scenario Building Elements***

The workshop represents the central component of the scenario building process. There are specific elements to be addressed throughout the workshop in order to develop scenarios.

### **Critical questions and time horizon**

Once the workshop has started and participants have become familiar with one another, a conversation should be started to agree on the critical questions. The group of participants needs to collectively identify questions about the future that can be answered in different ways. In other words, since we are building scenarios, we are interested in developing multiple options. Therefore, the critical questions should be sufficiently open-ended, yet specific, to be answerable under different realities.

It is also important to identify a time frame for the scenarios: this could be 10, 20, 30 or more years? While a shorter time frame ensures more information is available, it also limits the ability of the exercise to capture long-term possibilities.

### Current reality, stakeholders, and driving forces

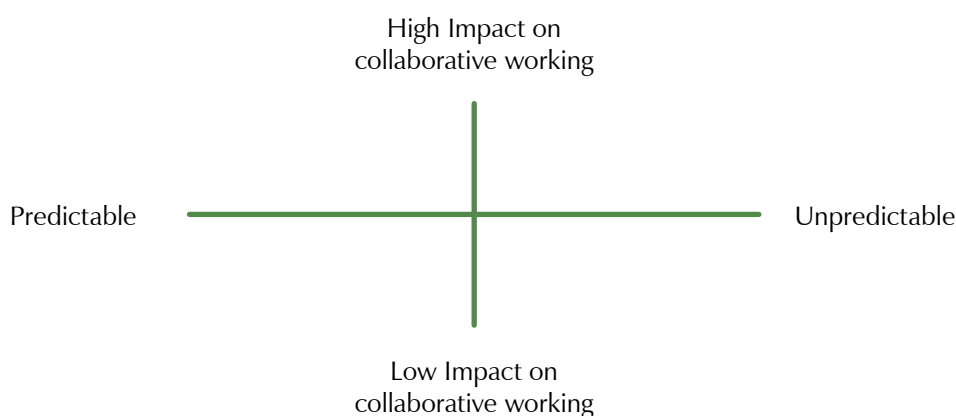
An important starting point in developing the scenarios is the present. This phase involves reviewing and discussing the information from the research and the interviews. Clustering the main areas of importance will illustrate the findings that the participants have identified as most critical. Equally, the participants will need to identify the main stakeholders that impact and are impacted by the topic at hand.

Driving forces are structural forces that have led to the current reality. Driving forces can be identified in many different ways, but one may be to simply ask “why” multiple times for each of the current reality clusters. Visual maps and representations may also be of assistance to ensure participants understand how drivers shape reality.

### Prioritising driving forces

Once a set of drivers has been identified, we need to understand whether we can predict what they will generate in the future. The driving forces have shaped the current reality, but may have led to another reality, leading to different impacts. Here we want to identify whether we can anticipate what the driving forces will generate and what the magnitude of the impact will be on collective action (or the topic at hand). This can be done using the uncertainty X impact matrix as indicated in the graphic below.

#### UNCERTAINTY X IMPACT MATRIX



Driving forces that are predictable will need to be represented in each scenario: if the participants view them to be predictable, then they can play out in no other way. However, the unpredictable driving forces can play out in several different ways; these are the structural elements that will make up the different scenarios

### Draft scenarios

With the current realities, the actors, and the prioritised driving forces, we can now begin to develop draft scenarios. Divide the time line into a first and second half, or into five-year intervals. Use each driving force to describe the impact it will generate with respect to collaborative working. Discuss turning points – moments in your scenario history when a new trajectory is formed or when a linear progression from the current reality is not observed. Develop a narrative for each scenario. Develop stakeholder stories. Using the list of stakeholders identified at the onset of the workshop helps to make the scenarios as realistic as possible.

Building scenarios is a creative activity and is most useful when deviated from a “best”, “worst” and “middle” scenario. Scenarios have to be relevant, plausible and challenging: relevant because they need to relate to the topic at hand; plausible because the scenarios need to be realistic and not science fiction; and, challenging because the scenarios must stretch our conventional thinking by highlighting alternative options and environments that can plausibly materialise.

Each scenario should be articulated as clearly as possible, providing rich descriptions, detail, stakeholder stories, impacts, and more. Each scenario should have a compelling title, which describes the overall intent of the story. Each scenario is to be reviewed by all participants and needs to withstand scrutiny and the test of internal logic, i.e. does the story make logical sense? It's not about convincing others that each scenario will materialise, but it's imperative that the logic behind each story is sound.

### Indicators for modelling

To compare scenarios, it is useful to identify indicators or metrics that describe each scenario. This is particularly useful if modelling is to be carried out. From a scenario story perspective, it can be helpful to use such indicators because they help in explaining different scenario outcomes. In the case of collaborative working, such indicators may already have been identified in the situational analysis; conversely, they may have surfaced during the workshop as a result of participant deliberations – it is most insightful if a set of “new” indicators is identified during the scenario building process.

### Finalised scenarios

If desired, the scenarios can be finalised offline following the workshop. This allows for supplementing the scenarios with additional information, and thus richness and texture. It is also important to compare scenarios and understand if and how they are related. Scenarios may overlap or there may be strong similarities between scenarios; often times the only difference is a critical decision that characterises a turning point.

## 2d. Workshop Phase: *Do's and Don'ts*

Workshops are both a delicate and fundamental component of the scenario building process. This phase is critical and the following Do's and Don'ts may be kept in mind while designing the workshops.

### BOX 7: DO'S AND DON'TS FOR WORKSHOPS

#### Do's

Have a *clear objective* for conducting the scenario building approach and agreed goals for the exercise.

It is recommended that an *experienced facilitator* who can conduct the workshop in a productive and an unbiased manner be used.

Allocate the *appropriate length of time* for the workshop – people will always push for shorter workshops, but a minimum of time is needed.

#### Don'ts

Make the *format too formal*. The purpose is to make participants feel comfortable and confident to share their thoughts, knowledge, ideas and perspectives.

*Engage as institutions* as this leads to conventional thinking (reflecting institutional perspectives). In contrast, individuals engage more when they know that their knowledge and expertise as individuals is valued.

Invite several *participants with a similar background*. Achieving a balance without over-representing any particular group is very important.

### 3. Post-workshop Phase

Building scenarios is a time- and resource-intensive exercise that consists of a range of activities, inputs and exercises. Considering this as an investment will ensure that the scenario reports do not remain the final product, but constitute a stepping-stone to a much larger, rewarding and useful process.

#### Application and Dissemination

Building scenarios is one outcome from the larger process. In addition there is the “application” and “dissemination” phases that should be viable and useful for at least a year from the scenario development date. Application and dissemination run concurrently once the scenarios are finalised.

Scenario “Application” is an internal process that shapes and informs collaborative working. This happens firstly for the team that has been pivotal in making these scenarios happen, and then more widely for the users and other partners. Implicitly and unwittingly this has already been happening in an informal manner: team members who have contributed to shaping the process components have also brought scenario-based ideas back to their own conversations and thinking. Formally, scenarios can be presented and used as part of forward planning sessions and processes. It is also possible to explore more focussed scenarios for specific projects or regions. A specific section detailing application activities will follow.

Scenario “Dissemination” involves engaging external stakeholders. The diversity of contributing stakeholders is such that they are potentially “vital” entry points to the relevant groups who represent important targets in the conceptualisation and programming of stabilisation activities. A dissemination plan should be actively designed to make the most of the scenario investment – again, some informal dissemination will have already taken place.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessing progress, quality and consistency of the work is vital and challenging. There are some obvious entry points for evaluation.

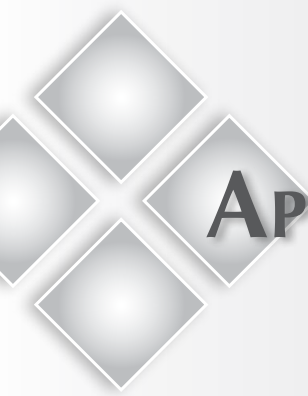
1. The conveners also act as an advisory board. This group of people ought to be seen as a resource that can provide advice on, for example, the participant selection, the costs, the timing and the substantive matters.
2. Throughout the workshop(s) it is important to gauge progress and the methodology. This can be achieved by convening a group of volunteers from among the participant body and the scenarios team at the end of each day to review the day’s proceedings.
3. At the end of each workshop, engage with participants, conveners as well as external experts to assess the quality of the outcome.

There are plenty of other opportunities to review the work, specific to each scenario building exercise, and these will become apparent as the project unfolds.

### CONCLUSION

Building scenarios can offer unique insight into complex issues by engaging with diverse stakeholders. The resulting scenarios provide pictures of possible future contexts which assist in developing plans, strategies and actions.

This Guide has provided information on the key steps and key groups required to engage in a scenario building process. It should be used to inform potential users about the implications, needs and benefits of embarking on such a process.



# APPENDICES





## APPENDIX A: MONT FLEUR SCENARIOS (SOUTH AFRICA)

The Mont Fleur scenarios were constructed to address the political transition from apartheid to an inclusive democracy in South Africa in the early 1990s. Briefly, the four scenarios are as follows:

1. **Ostrich:** A negotiated settlement to the crisis in South Africa is not achieved, and the country's government continues to be non-representative.
2. **Lame Duck:** A settlement is achieved but the transition to a new dispensation is slow and indecisive.
3. **Icarus:** Transition is rapid but the new government unwisely pursues unsustainable, populist economic policies.
4. **Flight of the Flamingos:** The government's policies are sustainable and the country takes a path of inclusive growth and democracy.

The message of *Ostrich* was that a non-negotiated resolution of the crisis would not be sustainable. This was important because elements of the National Party (NP) government and the business community wished to believe that a deal with their allies, instead of a negotiation with their opponents, could be sufficient. After hearing about the team's scenarios, F.W. de Klerk, leader of the NP, was quoted as saying, "I am not an Ostrich." This demonstrates a successful dissemination of the scenarios; communication of the thematic was immediate and widely understood.

During the development of the scenarios, participants did not agree upon a concrete solution to solve the country's problem. Following the logical methodology, the participants reached a consensus, and having exposed the prevailing circumstances, it was generally understood that certain strongly advocated solutions could not work.

Participation and negotiation focused on 'finding and enlarging the common ground'. The team analysed 30 possible stories, which were scrutinized in terms of plausibility and internal consistency; nine of these stories survived and were subsequently pared down to four. The Ostrich showed a failure to recognise the importance of a negotiated settlement and representative government. The Lame Duck illustrates that muddling through is dangerous. Icarus described as a decisive democratic settlement is imperative. The Flight of the Flamingos shows how policies have to be sustainable and support socio-economic growth and development.

## **APPENDIX B: UNAIDS SCENARIOS ON THE FUTURE OF AIDS (AFRICA)**

The UNAIDS Scenarios on the future of AIDS in Africa were published in 2005. The AIDS scenarios lead to a deepening in the understanding that the positioning of AIDS in the Global Agenda was a determining factor in the development of the pandemic. AIDS was not just a medical or a social issue but a complex issue, which could be properly targeted only by a multifaceted action.

The dissemination of these scenarios was hindered by the premature dissolution of the core team, so their impact was not as effective as it could have been. This reminds us that the scenario dissemination needs to be planned for at the early stages of the scenario-building exercise.

The three scenarios are as follows:

- 1. Tough Choices:** There is an African development crisis where AIDS is one of many challenges. National efforts to re-build capacity leads to a long-term decline in AIDS.
- 2. Traps and Legacies:** AIDS is seen as a medical crisis, perceived and understood at several levels. Initially there is significant commitment and allocation of resources, but uncoordinated efforts results in little impact on the ground.
- 3. Times of Transition:** AIDS is seen as a global governance crisis. There is major mobilisation of national and international resources leading to a decline in AIDS.

These scenarios were supposed to be repeated every 2 to 5 years to sustain the advantages of developing scenarios. A repetition of the scenario building process provides good continuity in programmes through a better adaptation and understanding of the changing environment, reinforcing of partnerships, a proper foundation for strategy planning in a changing environment and a better understanding of the uncertainties and the possible developments. Governments need to better understand possible uncertainties, crises and opportunities if they want to be prepared when events unfold.





**The Partnership**  
for Maternal, Newborn  
& Child Health

**The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health**

c/o World Health Organization

20 Avenue Appia, CH-1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland

Telephone: +41 22 791 2595

Fax: +41 22 791 5854

[pmnch@who.int](mailto:pmnch@who.int)

[www.pmnch.org](http://www.pmnch.org)

