**Workshop: Re.imagining our Future**

1.5 – 2 hours

minimum 5 participants

**AIMS OF THE INTRODUCTORY MODULES**

Explore what kind of vision and values will help guide us to bring about a sustainable world.

**SESSION SUMMARY**

After a short introduction, the group will reflect on their reactions to The Numbers film and on the values that would help guide us towards a sustainable world. Building on the root causes of current global challenges, you will then facilitate a discussion around what a vision for such a world could be. This session should ideally be delivered after the Workshop module, Exploring the Root Causes.

**SESSION SUMMARY**

*Introduce the session* by explaining that you will discuss values and visions around sustainability. Start with a *small group discussion* about the role of values in people’s work – the intention is to determine whether participants feel that values play an important role in guiding their work, and if so, how. You may want to kick off with these types of questions:

- Do you know what your organisational values are? What do they mean to you?
- Can you recall any examples when you or your colleagues have invoked your organisational values to help guide your strategic thinking or your actions?
- Have there been instances when you have been uncomfortable with the decisions of your organisation or team? Were there values underlying these decisions which were different from your own?

You may want to now provide some time for *personal reflection*. Invite participants to think about the values which are most important to them. You can invite them to doodle and meditate on these; or you could give them a more directive task, such as:

*Draw a picture of a garden which represents the values you cherish. You can include anything and anyone in your garden; you can include colours, shapes and contrast. Think about how the different elements in the garden are placed and how they interact to best represent your values.*

You can invite those who want to, to *share their drawing and reflections*.

Now *introduce the Numbers Movie*. Explain that this movie was developed to help us become aware of and visualise the values underlying our market system. »[Show the movie]«
Discuss the group’s reactions to the movie. These guiding questions may help:

What were the powerful images or moments of the movie?

How did it make you feel?

Did the movie make you want to take action? If so, what?

What was missing?

What does this phrase mean to you: “A system that sees everything as money will never bring us to a humane and sustainable world”

If the group is familiar with notions of root causes from the Introductory Modules or Root causes workshop, remind them about the discussion and of the importance of focusing on deeper, root causes of problems rather than focusing on surface issues.

If the group is not very familiar with these concepts, you may want to describe the concept of root causes (see Key Concepts). You could also refer to the Workshop module for more information.

Building on the notion of root causes and on the discussions around the values which are important to the group, invite participants to get into groups of 3-5 people.

Ask each group to draw a picture of the kind of just and sustainable world they would like to see in 50 years’ time.

You can choose to focus on either a global or national perspective. It may be easier to work at a national perspective, but a global perspective will be more helpful in considering larger system issues like market dynamics, resource use, climate, global power balances around production and trade, etc.

Encourage the groups to think about the underlying values and principles which should guide relationships between people, professions, institutions and countries (eg. equality, cooperation, etc).

Invite groups to share their pictures and learnings with the wider group. Draw out on a flipchart the key principles which have emerged from the discussions.

What kind of vision has emerged from these discussions about what a humane and sustainable world could look like?

Finally, discuss with the group why having such a vision can help in the next steps of their work. (This may include reasons like: helping reach consensus about goals and objectives; working with stakeholders and networks to highlight alternative ways of thinking; guiding strategic thinking and decision-making to ensure it is in line with the vision and values).
Root causes and desynchronization (p22-25)

A root cause is the deepest cause in a »causal chain« that can be resolved.

A logic of acceleration in modern societies lies at the root of the multiple crises we are facing. Technological progress accelerates the production of goods, contacts and choices, but the time we have available for these doesn’t change. Even though technological acceleration was intended to create more available time for the individual, we suffer from a constant time shortage by trying to do more things in the same amount of time. (p22)

There is a desynchronisation between different systems within society:

- Resources are used at an accelerating pace to feed an economy obsessed with growth, and nature cannot keep up.
- Digital globalisation and the fast paced consumer society lead to an alienation from space, from work and even from oneself. Burnout is a frequent consequence.
- Ever-faster wealth accumulation by some and the impoverishment of others who can’t keep up.
- Democratic decision-making processes that can’t keep up with the accelerating global economy and digital era. Politics becomes reactive. It leads to alienation of its citizens. (p23)

Ultimately what drives acceleration and therefore dysynchronisation is capitalism’s core element capital accumulation (interest and profit). These are the fundamental root causes underlying our global crises like climate change, poverty and inequality. Capitalism in its current form cannot live without growth and the pace of technological innovation is accelerating further and further. (p24)

The logic of growth can also be found deeply embedded in our mental and cultural conditioning. We are living in a culture of more. (p24)

From a feminist perspective it may also be argued that a fundamental root cause of all this is patriarchy (the capitalist system created by male dominance). (p24)