

UN Strategic Foresight Newsletter

January 2025



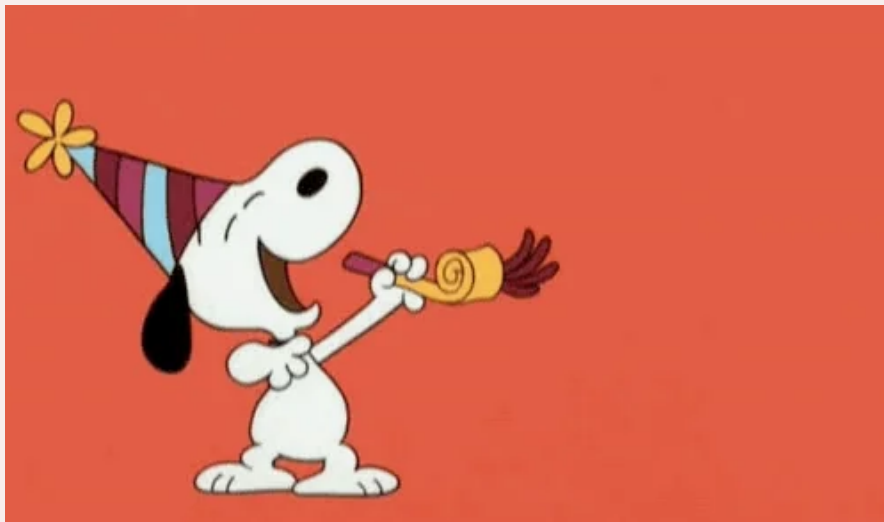
United Nations
Futures Lab
N E T W O R K



Dear Foresight Community,

Happy New Year! As we step into 2025, we are excited to continue growing our Foresight Community and strengthening futures thinking across the UN system. January has kicked off to a dynamic start, with [insightful discussions on horizon scanning](#) and the launch of UNICEF's Primer on "[Foresight for Children's Futures](#)". These conversations reinforce the importance of integrating foresight into decision-making processes to navigate global uncertainties.

This month, we're also spotlighting several new foresight-driven reports on the "[World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025](#)", "[A Digital Transformation to Secure Social inclusion for All](#)", and "[Prospects for Children in 2025: Building Resilient Systems for Children's Futures](#)". Be sure to check out upcoming opportunities as well, such as the [LDC Future Forum](#). Let's continue shaping the future together. Happy New Year! 🎉



Subscribe to join the UN Strategic Foresight Community of Practice

Colleagues from Agencies, Funds and Programmes may need to subscribe to be able to access all the links in this newsletter. Allow a couple of hours to be added. Should you still have access issues, please email foresight.community@un.org.

Some links in this newsletter may lead to platforms or resources that are only accessible to UN colleagues. If you are not part of the UN system, these links may not work for you.

🌟 IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Community of Practice Webinar #21

🎤 Your Peers, Your Stories: Spring Webinar Featuring Our Open Mic Winners!



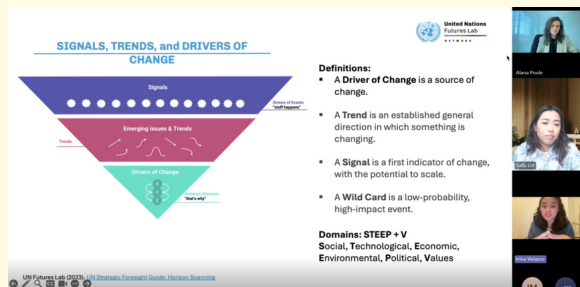
Following last year's [Open Mic session of the Foresight Community Webinar Series](#), where colleagues shared their most impactful foresight experiences, we are thrilled to announce that the winning storytellers, **Jargalan Bat-Orgil**, **Sebastien Vauzelle**, **Debora Ley**, and **Stormy Seohyun Kim**, will be taking center stage in a special joint webinar session this spring!

Over the past year, our Foresight Community has hosted engaging discussions, featuring presentations from [UNIDIR](#), [UNICEF](#), [ILO](#), [UNDP](#), [FAO](#), [UNFPA](#), [UNDSS](#), [UN Global Pulse](#), [UNEP](#), [UNESCO](#), the UN Strategic Workforce Planning Community, and the [UN Futures Lab/Global Hub](#) - as well as 6-month and 12-month "look back" sessions to hear your thoughts on what we're doing right, and what you would like to see more of. The conversations covered everything from anticipatory governance to scenario planning, to the (proposed draft at the time) [Declaration on Future Generations](#) and what the implications might be for the UN system. This year, not only are we focusing more on practical tools and its applications, we are excited to explore ways to better engage with you and showcase the talents in our community. Stay tuned for details on this exciting upcoming session, and keep following our webinar series for more opportunities to learn, share, and co-create the future! 💡🧠

15 January 2025 | 9AM NY, 3PM GVA

Community of Practice Webinar #21

[Recap] Deep Dive on Foresight Tools: Horizon Scanning



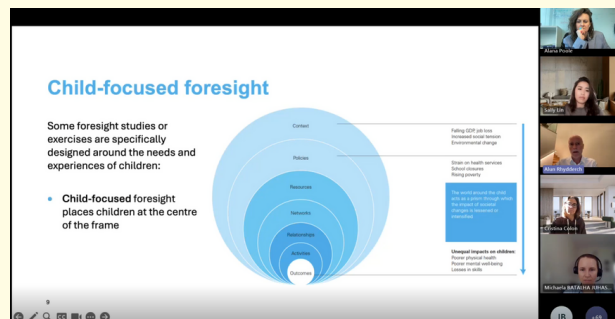
On 15 January 2025, the Foresight Community kicked off the new year with a deep dive into Horizon Scanning. Colleagues from the [UN Futures Lab/Global Hub](#) provided an overview of the methodology and its applications. Often positioned at the start of a foresight process, horizon scanning helps identify drivers of change, trends, signals, and wildcards. The rich discussion that followed saw colleagues sharing how their teams and entities have applied horizon scanning in practice. Participants also reflected on the value of complementing horizon scanning with other foresight approaches or validation methods in order to enhance robustness of the findings, which includes - but is not limited to - scenario exercises, expert interviews, or using tools like risk matrices.

[Check out the recap](#)

30 January 2025 | 10AM NY, 4PM GVA

Community of Practice Webinar #22

[Recap] Foresight for Children's Futures: Launching UNICEF's Primer



[UNICEF](#) colleagues presented to the Foresight Community on 30 January 2025 to mark the launch of "[Foresight for Children's Futures](#)", a Primer designed as a reference framework to help UNICEF and organizations working on children's issues integrate foresight approaches more effectively. Colleagues shared three key ways foresight is applied in relation to children: child-related foresight, child-focused foresight, and the importance of involving children in foresight processes to shape decision-making. Several case studies from the Primer were also shared, showcasing applications of foresight methodologies. The session concluded with questions and discussions on youth foresight, time horizons, and the design implications of centering children in foresight.

[Check out the recap](#)

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

UN Department of Economic and
Social Affairs | UN Economist
Network

“A Digital Transformation to Secure Social Inclusion for All”



Discover how digital transformation is reshaping our world and unlocking new opportunities for social inclusion in the latest [UN Economist Network's](#) (UNEN) thematic Policy Brief on "[Futures and Foresight](#)". The latest report explores how AI and digital connectivity can bridge global gaps in education, healthcare, and governance while addressing critical challenges such as climate resilience, gender inequality, and socio-economic disparities. With thought-provoking foresight scenarios, actionable policy recommendations, and inspiring success stories from across the globe, it serves as a guide to understanding how we can shape a more inclusive and sustainable digital future for everyone.

[Read the brief](#)

UN-OHRLLS | LDC Future Forum

LDC Future Forum focuses on “Enhancing Resilience”



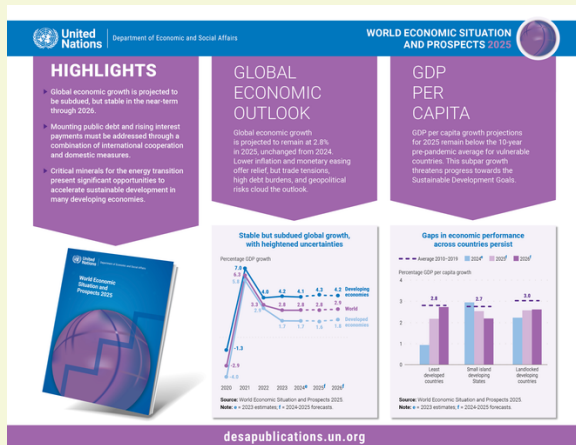
The third [LDC Future Forum](#), set for 1-3 April 2025, in Lusaka, Zambia, will bring together policymakers, researchers, the private sector, and other stakeholders to explore innovative solutions for enhancing the resilience of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) against systemic shocks. Through high-level dialogues and thematic sessions, the forum will focus on key areas such as climate-smart agriculture, sustainable water and energy solutions, circular economy and green industrialization, and social protection programmes. Gender equality and the active participation of women and girls will be central to discussions, ensuring that solutions are inclusive. The forum aims to foster collaboration and share practical policy recommendations to help LDCs better manage and adapt to current and future challenges.

[Learn more](#)

👁️ RECENTLY LAUNCHED

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs | January 2025

"World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025"



The *"World Economic Situation and Prospects"* is a flagship report by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) that provides an analysis of global economic trajectories, identifying structural vulnerabilities and offering policy solutions for a sustainable and inclusive future. This year's edition, released on 9 January, focuses on the pivotal role of critical minerals in the energy transition, highlighting their potential to accelerate climate action while offering developing countries opportunities to create jobs, increase public revenue, and reduce poverty and inequality. It also underscores the importance of global cooperation, innovative financing mechanisms, and policy reforms to address disparities, foster resilience, and ensure that economic recovery benefits all nations equitably.

Check out the report

UNICEF | January 2025

"Prospects for Children in 2025: Building Resilient Systems for Children's Futures"



With crises such as climate change, conflict, and economic instability becoming more interconnected, UNICEF's *"Prospects for Children 2025"* examines urgent challenges facing children and underscores the need for stronger, more adaptive systems to uphold children's rights around the world, especially for the 473 million children living in conflict zones. The report calls for systemic reforms, including prioritizing investments in education and healthcare within global financial systems, integrating child-focused policies into climate action, and leveraging digital public infrastructure for equitable service access. By strengthening resilience and embedding foresight into decision-making, the report offers a roadmap for safeguarding children's well-being amid growing global uncertainties.

Check out the report

★ PEOPLE HIGHLIGHTS

Meet **Jargalan Bat-Orgil**,
Accelerator Lab, UNDP
Mongolia



As part of the [UNDP Mongolia Accelerator Lab](#) team, **Jargalan Bat-Orgil** has been working to apply futures and foresight methodologies to shape Mongolia's sustainable development. In the "Exploring Mongolia's Green Transition Futures" exercise, she collaborated with futurist Dr. John Sweeney and youth climate activists from the GreenDot Climate NGO to develop scenarios for a just green economic transition. Building on this work, in 2025, the UNDP Mongolia Accelerator Lab team is engaging with the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Communications of Mongolia to leverage futures and foresight methodologies in driving the development of a National AI strategy.

[Read more about Jargalan](#)

Meet **Arijana Drinić**, Head of
Exploration, Accelerator Lab,
UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina



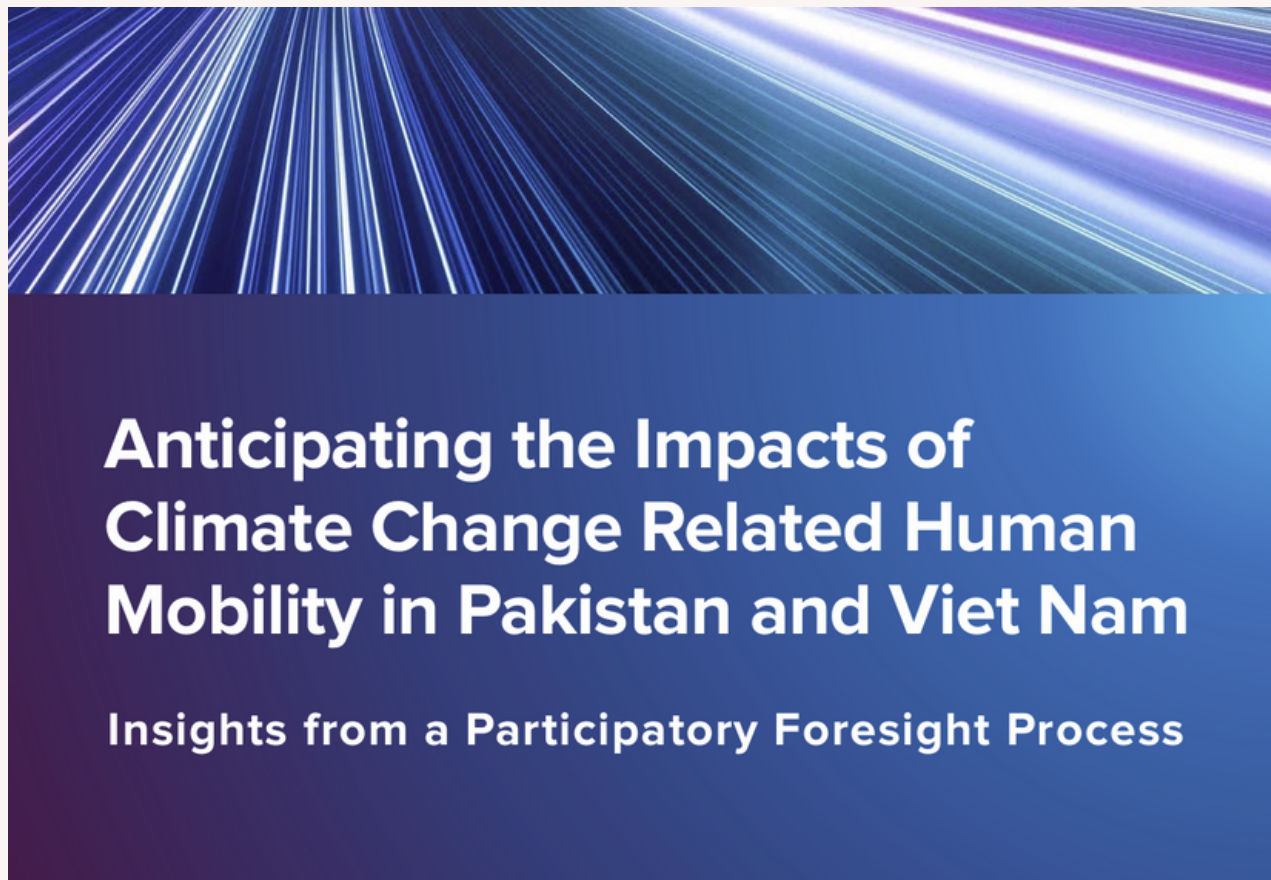
Arijana Drinić is the Head of Exploration at the [Accelerator Lab, UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), passionate about foresight and systems thinking as approaches to enhance development impact and ensure inclusive, sustainable, and future-proof programming. She co-authored The Changing Nature of Work – 30 Signals to Consider for a Sustainable Future, a horizon-scanning report produced by six UNDP Accelerator Labs located in Europe and Central Asia, exploring trends shaping the future of work. Arijana was the driving force behind UNDP BiH's "FutureTalks", a virtual conversation series tackling pressing challenges such as air pollution, urban transformation, and the future of work.

[Read more about Arijana](#)

USE CASES AND RESOURCES

UN Development Programme | Case Study

“Anticipating the Impacts of Climate Change Related Human Mobility in Pakistan and Viet Nam”



This research brief from the [UN Development Programme](#) (UNDP) explores how climate change will shape migration trends in these two climate-vulnerable countries by 2050. Produced through a participatory foresight process involving diverse stakeholders, the report deals with issues like water scarcity, loss of agricultural livelihoods, and rapid urbanization. It emphasizes that human mobility can be an adaptive response to climate change, while reverse migration, informal settlements, and inadequate urban planning remain prevalent and require urgent action. Policymakers are called to invest in climate-resilient infrastructure, rural development, and labor mobility policies to foster inclusive and sustainable outcomes. With fresh insights and innovative approaches, the report offers critical guidance for navigating the complexities of climate-driven human mobility.

[Check out the brief](#)

UNICEF | Publication

“Foresight for Children’s Futures”



Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland

unicef 
for every child

A PRIMER

Foresight for Children’s Futures



Released in January 2025, this Primer brings together UNICEF’s research team, global policy experts, and young participants to explore the future of children’s well-being through innovative foresight methods. This initiative emphasizes a child-focused approach to understanding and addressing global changes that could impact children, such as technological advancements, climate challenges, and shifting socio-economic dynamics. A key highlight of the report is the inclusion of children and youth in foresight processes, empowering them to shape discussions about their futures, and demonstrating that when they are active participants, strategies become more robust and equitable.

[Read the primer](#)

"Foresight in Action: a Strategic Lens for Serbia's Future"



The [UN Resident Coordinator Office](#) (RCO) and [UN Development Programme](#) (UNDP) in Serbia undertook an innovative foresight exercise to address key development challenges and align efforts with national objectives and the SDGs by 2030. Through scenario-building and back-casting, UN colleagues and experts explored resilience to climate change, population dynamics, and social cohesion, envisioning Serbia's potential futures. The best-case scenarios imagined Serbia as a sustainability leader, with renewable energy, inclusive policies, and a pluralistic society fostering regional peace. Key insights included balancing structure with flexibility, leveraging collaboration, and integrating emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and virtual reality to enhance strategic planning.

[Learn more](#)

Anticipatory Action Finance for Disaster Risk Reduction



This introductory guide from [UN Disaster Risk Reduction](#) (UNDRR) explores anticipatory action in finance, including funding strategies designed to support proactive disaster risk management by releasing financial resources ahead of predicted shocks. The guide emphasizes the crucial role and cost-effectiveness of anticipatory finance in disaster risk management, and covers a variety of financing instruments, such as donor-financed contingency funds, government budgets, and parametric insurance. The publication underscores the importance of innovative financing instruments, integration with government systems, and collaboration between humanitarian, development, and climate actors to scale up anticipatory actions.

[Check out the guide](#)

JOBS

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Education Sector,
UNESCO

Paris, France

31 January deadline

[Apply now](#)

Technical Officer

Research for Health,
World Health
Organization (WHO)

Geneva, Switzerland

3 February deadline

[Apply now](#)

Strategic Planning & Knowledge Management Specialist

UN Development
Programme (UNDP)

Juba, South Sudan

7 February deadline

[Apply now](#)

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