RBAP REGIONAL HORIZON SCANNING INITIATIVE 2.0

Key Risks, Uncertainties, and Trade-Offs in Asia Pacific

2022

UNDP

HORIZON SCANNING INITIATIVE 2.0
Signal Scanning (Phase 1): Frequently Asked Questions

What is a signal?

A signal is the first indicator of an event, local trend or organization that has innovative, disruptive, and or strategically discontinuous potential to grow in scale and geographic distribution.

How do signals differ from risks?

A signal of change could point to an emerging risk, but a signal is not necessarily a risk - it could also be an opportunity.

Do the signals need to be high frequency (as we are monitoring them weekly?

Not necessarily - as long as you can provide a reference and rate (qualitatively) their impact, the HS Analysis Team will be able to produce more insights on frequency, especially as we compare it amongst other signals received, how many people spot that signal in question, and how its clustered. However, if you do have information on the frequency, we welcome you to indicate that as such in the comments (i.e., that you are seeing a signal pop up X amount of time).

Do signals have to have certain time benchmark (e.g., no longer than a year or so)?

No – all signals, across all timeframes (short, medium, and long) are welcome.

How broad should we scan?

Signals across varying geographies are all welcome (local/city, national, regional, etc.). While the report will make sense of risks, opportunities, and trade-offs for the region, if you have a localized signal that could have larger or wider implications, please do share it.

How do we use STEEP+V to scan for more signals?

The STEEP+V categories (social, technological, economic, environmental, political, values) intend to be a comprehensive and wide-ranging set of categories to study dependencies and interdependencies amongst sectors. We welcome you to scan across all six categories, as well as the interactions between them.

How do we estimate the likelihood and impact ranking? is there a guide for each value?

For both likelihood and impact, we ask for a qualitative estimate – the rankings are between 1-5 (low to high). For the purpose of this exercise, we are asking you to make a best estimate of what you think (or what the whole team thinks).

At the beginning of each year, COs are supposed to identify and submit office/programme risks via IWP. Can we somehow draw on programme risks while mapping out the signals?

Yes, absolutely! Drawing on strategic risks as identified in the IWPs is very helpful for this Initiative, especially as we consider the impact that signals will have for UNDP.

How do we report signals from conversations with colleagues or other informal sources (e.g., we often get informal information on displacement from UNHCR, shifts in host government attitudes on protection space, etc.)?

If a signal is rooted in informal conversations, please mention that under references/ sources. If sensitive, there is no need to specify the source, just state: 'conversations with stakeholders/ partners'. As mentioned, if there is any reference from a news source (or even tweet) in support of the signal, any additional (hyper)link would be most welcome!

Should we be actively looking to include signals on things not in our specialist area?

We welcome you to scan for signals across sectors (regardless of your degree of expertise on the subject), though understand that obviously your attention might be skewed to your expertise/ work responsibilities. The STEEP+V approach is suggested to provide a lens/angle to account for possible related signals and encourage you to look beyond your thematic portfolio.

Should multiple participants from the same CO input their signals individually or collectively?

While we prefer when scanners agree as a team on signals, we are leaving it up to each team to determine whether they want to upload their scans collectively or individually. We have found that when done as a team, COs get a lot more out of the process.