



INTEGRATED POLICY PRACTITIONERS' NETWORK

(IPPN)

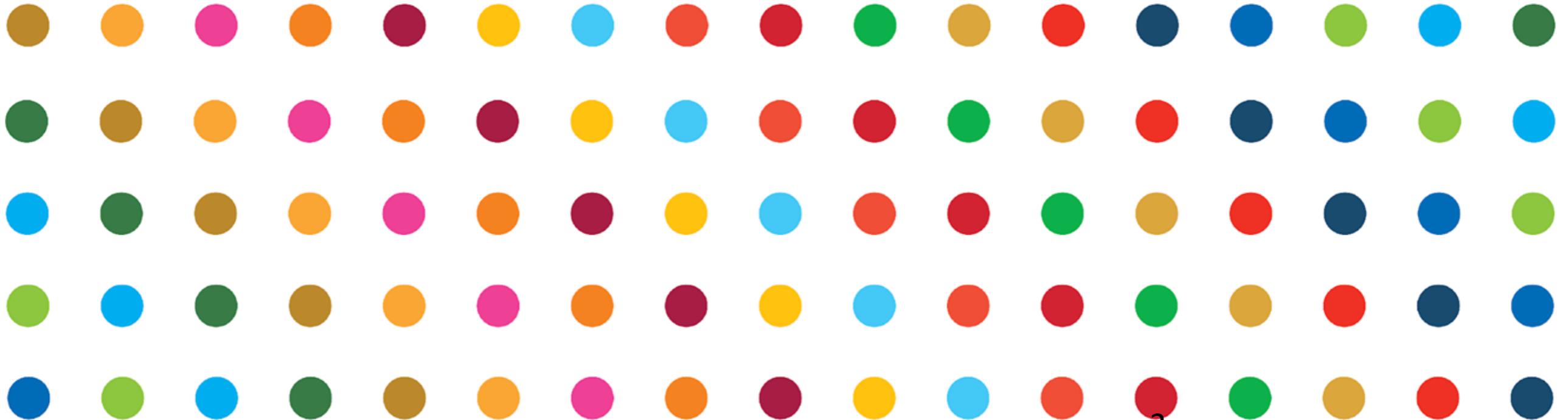
Connecting knowledge and practitioners to lead integrated approaches to the SDGs

**Knowledge Café: Foresight and Scenarios Planning for Policy
Prioritization of the UNSDCF in Kyrgyzstan**

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Kyrgyzstan Scenarios Exercise

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Rationale and purpose

a) Important political changes in the aftermath of the October 2020 parliamentary elections

New President (elections in January); New Parliament (November 2021);
New Government (4 PMs in October 2020 – October 2021)

New Constitution – Presidential system established; new electoral law

New Development Plan (2021-2026)

b) Signs of crisis in service delivery (electricity, fuel prices growth)

c) The launch of consultations on the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023- 2027.

- The primary goal of the Kyrgyzstan Scenarios Exercise (KSE) was for the UN Country Team to appraise the current trends and dynamics in the country and develop a shared vision on the future of the United Nations role in Kyrgyzstan.



Key prerequisites



Increasing awareness about what the scenario planning is, and what it is not (including learning by RCO):

- Foresight, not forecasting
(Plausible scenarios)
 - Proactive, not reactive
 - Process, not product (foremost learning exercise)
 - Inclusive, not exclusive
 - Primarily a learning exercise

PROCESS: KEY PRACTICES



External expertise

While the KSE was an exercise for the UN Country Team, the organizers decided to involve a number of external participants in the workshop. The purpose was to take advantage of the expertise of external participants in specific issue areas relevant to the UN's work and expose the workshop participants to views from outside of the UN.

THE APPROACH TO SCENARIOS EXERCISE

"The future cannot be predicted because
the future does not exist."
- Jim Dator

How the Strategic Analysis and Planning Works

-  1 First, by transforming actors' understandings. The scenario stories articulate collective synthesis of what is happening or would happen in and around the system of which the participants are a part – seeing the situation and their own roles in their situation with fresh eyes
 -  2 Second, the actors transform their relationships. Through working together, they enlarge their empathy and trust in other actors on the team and across the system, and their ability and willingness to work together
 -  3 Third, the actors transform their intentions. Their transformed understandings and relationships shift how they see what they can and must do to deal with what is happening in their system. They transform their fundamental will.
 -  4 Fourth, the actors' transformation of their understandings, relationships, and intentions enable them to transform their actions and thereby to transform their situation. Requires ability to work with the tension and ambiguity of being both directed and open

expertise, including
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workshop, an online survey, consisting of 13 questions designed to understand better the risks in Kyrgyzstan. Open-ended and closed issues beyond the

each dedicated to regional trends on key drivers of risk, and so on. In addition, selected non-UNIV from those of the

the central element of the UN Country Team from Bishkek. The team includes the heads of UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, and five external partners.

develop a common
he discussion of key
led various types of
group discussions.

Elements of the scenarios exercise

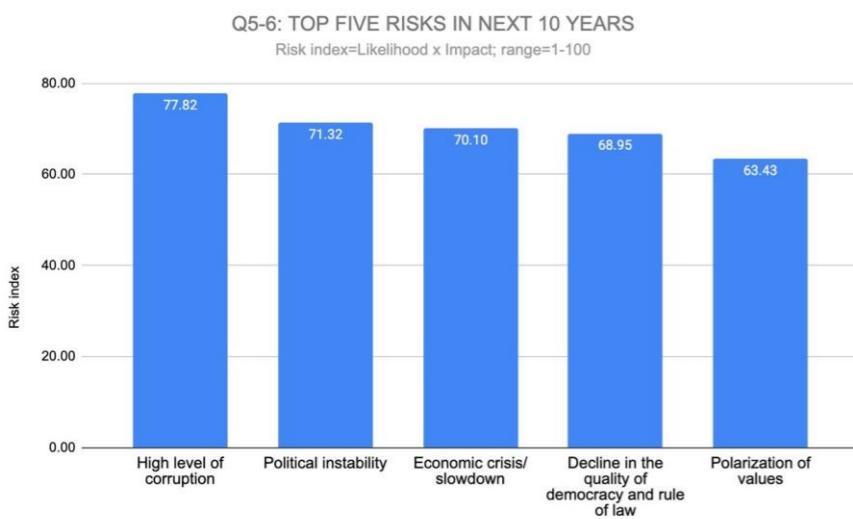
Phase 0. Regional Monthly Review

Phase 1. Online survey (28 respondents; 17 UN staff, 11 non-UN; 22 citizens of Kyrgyzstan, 6 internationals; 11 women, 13 men, 4 preferred not to say) – identified top 5 risks

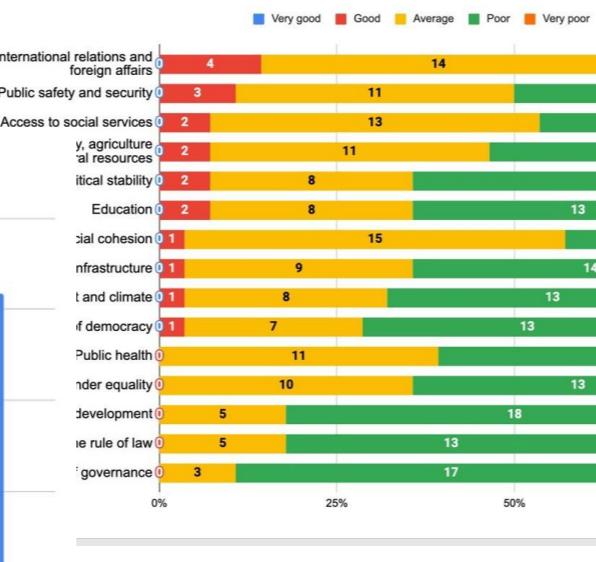
Phase 2. Scenarios exercise workshop

Phase 3. Strategic Prioritization Retreat

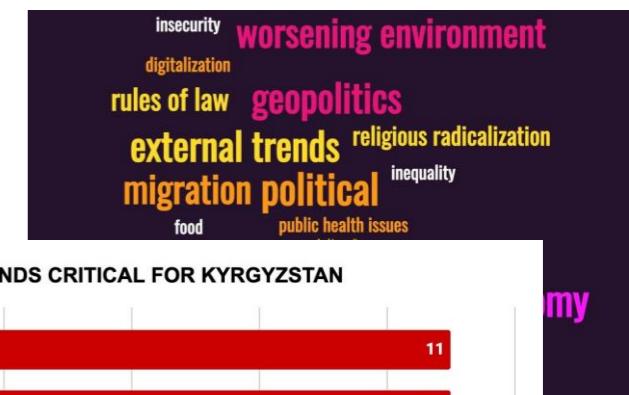
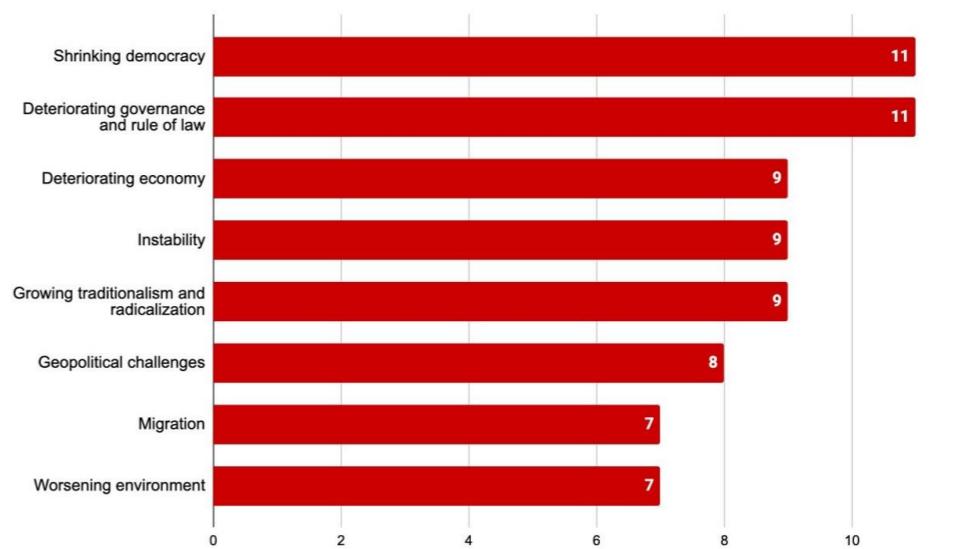
Phase 4. Stress testing of UNSDCF Outcomes against scenarios



Q1: HOW DO YOU EVALUATE THE CURRENT SITUATION IN KYRGYZSTAN IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS?



Q3: MOST MENTIONED TRENDS CRITICAL FOR KYRGYZSTAN



Key principles and lessons learnt

- Knowledge-based: external expertise (1) half of responders to the online survey – national experts; enable to compare views/perceptions of UN staff and non-UN experts; 2) 6 external experts with unique views (economist, head of creative business, religious sphere specialist, political scientist, former President invited to the workshop); 3) CCA, RMR results
- Inclusive and iterative preparation (engaging PMT, UNCT to design the process)
- Linked to strategic prioritization of the UNSDCF



Workshop



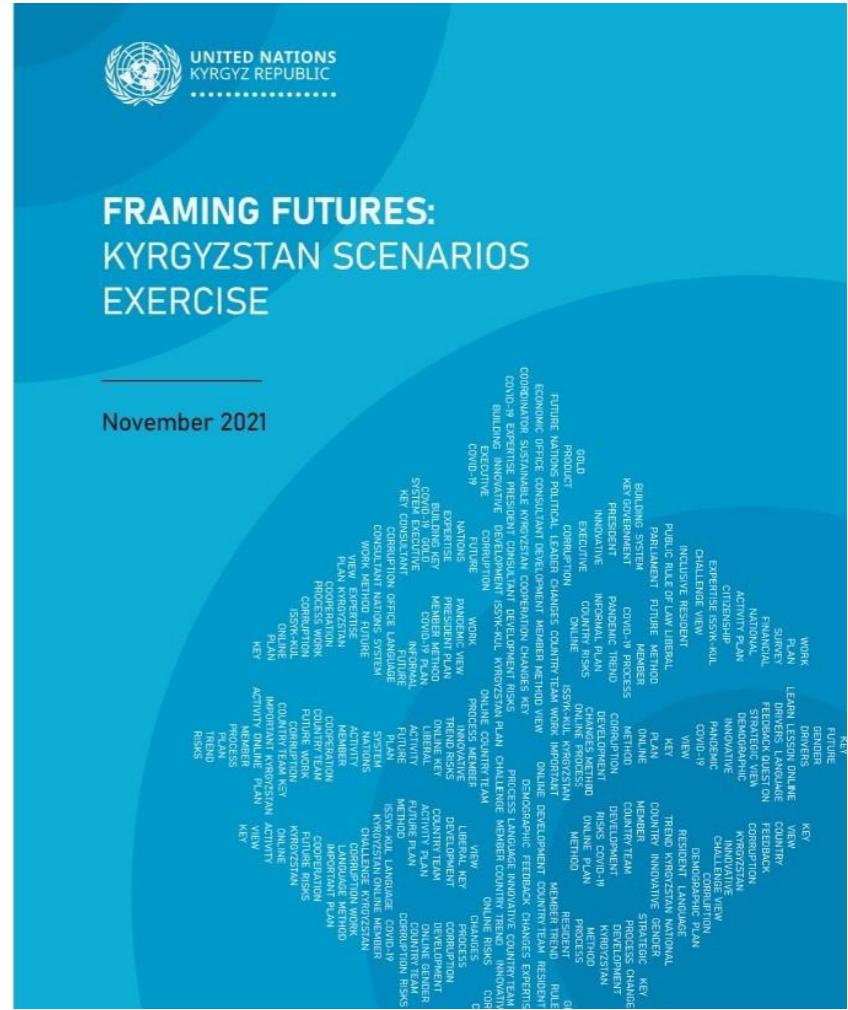
- Developing a shared language
- Special speakers/participants
- Interactive sessions, gamification
- Drivers, trends -> Critical Uncertainties -> Scenarios modelling -> Implications for UN (e.g. what programming is relevant under scenario, what is UN role under this scenario) -> Contradictions and tensions (between exercise and operation (real life/slow operation of UN vs. ambitions; exercise vs. substance - between “what” and “how”; programme and life - related to workshop agenda and delivered expectations)

RESULT – ‘FANTASTIC’ FUTURES



A focus on 'crazy futures' may be the most adaptive strategy we can encourage people to adopt, and a focus on 'plausibility' the most maladaptive. Is your future crazy enough to help you, your organization, your community evolve? Better that we rehearse the full range of surprises that may await us across our futures, than be ill-prepared and unable to adapt. Emergence and evolution are preferable to equilibrium

Wendy Schultz



Outcomes – use for the UNSDCF



- UNSDCF formulation:
 - ✓ brings everyone to the same understanding of key development/peace/human rights gaps and plausible futures
 - ✓ point of departure in discussion at the UNSDCF Strategic Prioritization Retreat: combining scenarios and accelerators enabled us to develop new methodology for the discussion
- Stress testing of the UNSDCF Outcomes (after they were developed)
- Scenarios also inform other “thought processes” of the UNCT – e.g. PBF programming

Lessons learnt – good practices



- Strong political buy-in by the UNCT; leadership of the UN RC is critical for success;
- Written outputs (document) for every stage;
- Look for internal UN resources to challenge assumptions and gain advice (DPPA, UNESCO, DCO);
- Engage the UNCT at an early stage, and ensure a participatory and inclusive approach;
- Establish a core technical team (RCO -> PMT in KG);
- Engage external resources for the workshop and surveys;
- Apply innovative tools: online questionnaire to summarize the drivers;
- Ensure senior management attendance at the workshop;
- Good planning – everything takes time.

Lessons learnt – good practices



- No less than 3 days for the workshop
 - Apply interactive and innovative tools of group engagement - gaming and simulations
 - Manage expectations
 - Consider engaging the government in a scenarios exercise (not applied in KG)
 - Decide between keeping up with the agenda and ensuring flexibility and space for discussion
 - Professional external facilitation is advisable



THANK YOU!



UNITED NATIONS
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC



Guiding questions for interactive discussions

1. How can foresight help accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda?
2. How does policy scenario analysis incentivize joint programming and collaboration within the UNCT?
3. In your experience, which other tools can be deployed to support strategic prioritization for the UNSDCF?

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