

LU causal map and scenario building process

Prepare

Identify relevant theme(s) for target group or organisation

Do steps in [blue](#) in advance.

1 » Build causal map

Set context

Agree [theme](#) to be explored: this should represent a strategic challenge to the group/organisation involved.

Pick from master list of futures issues (or add to this if new).

Decide [scope](#) - international, national, regional, organisational. Note: NOT boundaries – encourage externalities

Set [timescale](#) (usually 5-10 years).

Identify Events

Select [related issues](#) from master list and phrase as events (unless facts) with active verb, avoiding uncertainty (use an alternative for this) e.g. [likely](#), [possibly](#), [may](#). Provide contextual data where possible. Capitalise key words.

[Date](#) events – note NOT a prediction.

[Categorise](#) events as past/current, intermediate/linking or goal/outcome. Locate in left, middle and right zones of the map. Encourage links to past.

Estimate [likelihood](#) of future event as sign, trend, imminent or observable. [Optional]

[Brainstorm](#) missing key events that will drive change (avoid detail). Date, capture context and capitalise key words. Remove irrelevant items.

Identify Links

Add [links](#), causal or taxonomic, laddering up (consequences) or down (explanations).

Identify [alternatives](#) (of effects or causes) where appropriate.

Identify clusters

Identify event [groupings](#). [Optional]

Explain method

Outline three stage process. Explain purpose and goals or exercise.

2 » Analyse and challenge map

Analyse

Check integrity and logic.

Identify non-events, orphans and key drivers (events in multiple chains).

Review

Examine the content and identify areas of interest.

Customise

Add supplementary events (especially linking) and links.

Re-analyse

Check the revised map.

Stage 2 should be done briefly during a workshop and completed afterwards.

3 » Develop scenarios

Identify scenarios

Look for interesting [stories](#) (from current events to goals/outcomes).

Explore 2-4 scenarios to reflect uncertainty but keep focussed. Avoid good/bad mentality. Seek novelty or new insights. Highlight on causal map and/or sketch independently.

Check logic of each one, modifying events and links if necessary.

Present

[Present](#) graphically or as a narrative.

Capture explanation and [reactions](#) to the stories.