

Student Handout

Visioning a New Africa — Vision #1

By Ruth Bamela Engo-Tjega

Excerpted from: Nagpal, Tanvi, and Camilla Foltz, eds. *Choosing our Future: Visions of a Sustainable World*.
Washington, D.C.: World Resources Institute, May 1995. **Permission Pending.**

A VISION FOR AFRICA

I am sitting under a palm tree

My eyes are closed

There's a cool breeze blowing

A VISION

I see a small stream

It is swelling, swelling

I see a lot of water but not a flood

Oh!

This water is taking a strange shape

A triangle

Water in a shape of a triangle

Yes, water covering the whole triangle

Water, a lot of water but not a flood

A triangle . . .

Africa

A VISION

I see a highway going from N'Djamena to

Windjhek through Adamaoua and Bitam

Oh . . .

Big trucks on the highway!

I see long trucks

Modern trucks

What are these trucks carrying?

Well, one just stopped in front of

A Golden Palace

It is offloading

Bags

Boxes

Cases

Bags, boxes, cases of what!

Wow!

Bags of corn

Cases of okra

Boxes of cassava

Modern trucks, on beautiful

Highways stopping in front of

A golden Palace and you

Tell me they are carrying

Just plain cassava?

Ah . . .

I see a Head of government

Followed by an elegant first lady

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Holding a delicate little princess
They just entered their
Dining room
They are eating
But what?
They are eating okra and gari
Not spaghetti
They are eating mangoes and pawpaws
Not peaches
They are eating the food
Their people grow
They are eating the food of their land

A VISION

I see many learned people
Holding books but speaking
Strange languages
Oh . . .
A university in a village!
I am now in a classroom
No, I can't believe it
They are teaching science
In Zulu not Afrikaans
I see a college of women farmers
They are graduating right here
In the village
Swahili
Hausa
Lingala
Bassa
Zulu
Amharic
Academic languages!

A VISION

I see Sahara green
I see Kalahari desert filled with cotton.
Cotton fields again?
Don't tell me we are back to slavery
Cotton fields
With people singing
Not sad songs . . .
They are not crying
They are singing Makossa!
Trucks on highways again
But this time they go across
From Dar-es-Salaam
To Nouakchott
Through Luanda
Benin and Ouagadougou
Trucks filled with cotton

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They stop in Kumasi
Offload cotton and
Load the finest Kente cloth
They stop in Bamako
Offload cotton and
Load the most colorful tie-dye
They stop in Kano
Offload cotton and
Load adire
A VISION
Then I see a crowd
Women, men, children
They are peaceful and proud
It's fascinating
All the men look like royals
In their cotton robes
Women in their Kaba ngondos
Complemented by large turbans
Exude confidence and pride
A VISION
I see a wonderful choir
Composed of young people
Coming from north, South, East and West
They are all wrapped in Kente cloth
They walk along the gardens of Achimota College
Singing with one voice
AFRICA
A VISION
Who are the designers of these beautiful clothes?
Who are the masterminds
Celebrating the beauty of our people?
Chris Seydou
Not Christian Dior
Anne Bebe
Rose Wisseh
Water not a flood
Cassava eaten in a golden palace
A college of women farmers
Choirs dressed in Kente cloth
Chris Seydou
Anne Bebe
Rose Wisseh
Ahneva
AFRICA

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Community Vision for Madison's Central Park, Madison, Wisconsin — Vision #2

Adapted from: http://www.uosf.org/new_vision.html. Permission Pending.

These renderings integrate ideas generated during the Urban Open Space Foundation and Jones & Jones' Community Visioning process (November 26-28, 2001). These visioning workshops produced a grass-roots concept of what Madison's Central Park can be.

In these drawings, a landscape architect has created conceptual park “rooms” that illustrate how public input can be fit together, especially focusing on the synergy between the park and its built surroundings.

Note that these rendering are not to scale, and that they are not intended to depict specific Madison streets or specific blocks of a Central Park — they are conceptual drawings.



The “nature room” concept (left) shows how rain collected in the residential areas next to the park can be directed to a network of green infrastructure that becomes an amenity in the park and an important wildlife habitat. The wetlands might even be used to create a physical barrier between the park and the rail corridor that doesn't block views. Also, integrating community gardens around a marketplace builds relationships between urban and rural farmers, artists, craftspeople, and residents. Gardeners and small-scale commerce contribute a steady source of “eyes on the park” to ensure safety.

vendors' kiosks could serve food and expand the space of the marketplace and serve people arriving and departing on a future rail station. Paths and boardwalks could wind through the woods, small ephemeral ponds, and wet prairie. These paths would sometimes be in shade, and sometimes break into openings such as the Sky Garden or Drumlin Field to provide a peaceful and dynamic journey through the park.

A plaza and the marketplace and the station could function in different ways for community events and activities: art fairs, farmers markets, and more. Mobile



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The “culture room” drawing (right) shows how the development of higher density mixed-use buildings near the park creates opportunities for terraced spaces such as cafes, restaurants, and commerce, with views over the rails into the park and its vibrant array of activities.

Affordable housing and space for artists and small businesses could be located above the ground floors and take advantage of the abundant sunlight. The ground floor is devoted to commercial and retail uses that draw activity to the streetscape. Structured parking could be built into these buildings and open to natural light on the sides facing the rail corridor.

Nearby streets in the revitalized commercial/industrial corridor are attractively streetscaped and made friendly for pedestrians and bikes, while still allowing for motor traffic. Themes of energy weave through the park and the adjacent areas, involving historic architecture, modern production facilities, innovative methods, public art, and perhaps an energy museum

Performances and happenings in the Amphitheater — both organized and spontaneous — as well as activities in the Skateboard Bowl and the “Small Fry” Play Area encourage civic engagement and bridge differences between visitors of different ages and lifestyles. A diversity of visitors to the park and wide range of inviting ways to experience the park provides more “eyes on the park” to ensure safety.

Student Handout

World Bank Institute: Vision of The Future Gallery Southeastern Europe — A New Approach — Vision #3

Adapted from: <http://www.papaink.org/gallery/home/picture/display/2294.html>. Permission Pending.

Over the past several years, the people of Southeastern Europe have lived through a period of extraordinary turbulence, hostility and unpredictable change. Most efforts at stabilizing the region have focused on the political level, and in particular, on promoting dialogue between governments. Clearly, such an approach is inadequate on its own. In response to the needs mentioned by participants in prior activities in the region, in 1996 the World Bank Institute launched a program in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, and Romania that seeks to develop local capacity to institute change.

As part of the World Bank's Vision of the Future project, over 5,000 children and students from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, and Romania participated in art and essay contests on their vision of the future for themselves, their city, their country, and region.

Ultimately, a selection of paintings was displayed in an exhibited entitled "Children Look to the Horizon," which was shown at World Bank Headquarters in Washington, DC April 19-30, 1999.

Title: *My Vision Of The Future*

Description: *Today people talk a lot about environmental protection, but they should talk about how to protect the environment from their own destructive desire to ruin everything that surrounds them. The future belongs to those who will have sound food, water, and pure nature, but not all to those who are piling up weapons and destroying what nature offers.*

Artist: *Elma Softic*

Age: *Thirteen years old*

Place of Residence: *Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina*



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Title: *My Street Will Look Like This*

Description: *In my fantasies I see how the streets will look when I grow up, and this is depicted in my painting. There are lots of stories about flying saucers and life on other planets. I believe that there is life somewhere else in the universe. I would like it if my vision of the future could become reality: instead of wars people should take care of their*

future. I am sure that flying saucers will replace cars. I would like to see my street look like the one in my painting.

Artist: *Dragana Lukic*

Age: *Six years old*

Place of Residence: *Lipnica, Bosnia-Herzegovina*

Title: *My Vision of the Future*

Description: *I am a refugee from Zvornik. There is no war, sadness, illness, or hatred in my painting. My most sincere wish is to have peace, joy, and happiness all over the world.*

Artist: *Selvedina Mumic*

Age: *Fourteen years old*

Place of Residence: *Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina*



Part II: What is Visioning?

Visioning Excerpts

Read the following three explanations of “visioning.” Mark the text so that you have indicated what you feel is most important to your understanding of visioning.

LOOKING AHEAD

Excerpted from: League, Isaak Walton. *Community Sustainability Collection*.
September 1998. 27-28.

Our society’s vision of its future plays a powerful role in shaping decisions about the way we live, the types of available employment, and the way we spend our time when not at work. Our vision of the future has changed dramatically during the past 20 years. Technology has advanced, systems of government have changed, and our national security has been challenged. World population has grown exponentially and the environment has been altered on a global level.

Students’ expectations for the future are shaped by events happening around them. Today, world issues like political insecurity, poverty, hunger and climate change are shaping bleak views of the future. Local issues like crime, unemployment, pollution, racism and homelessness are having a similar effect. This generally has led to few expectations for a future that is better than the present. This kind of thinking drives the pursuit of short-term benefits that characterize a range of environmentally, socially and economically harmful activities.

Visioning — projecting the positive and negative aspects of life at some time in the future — is an important tool for achieving sustainability. Negative forces can be addressed proactively by identifying the forces that may threaten or enhance the future and developing a preferred scenario. Similarly, assets can be identified and developed to enhance the prospects of life for current and future generations.

Students hear and read about other people’s visions of the future more than they talk or write about their own. Visioning and scenario development are effective tools for initiating proactive, issue-based learning. These activities provide useful first steps in identifying topics that are relevant to students and their hopes and aspirations. From this point, the process of researching an issue, seeking solutions, carrying out actions, and evaluating the impact of these actions becomes more meaningful and effective.

Teacher Resource/**Student Handout**

Visioning Excerpts

VISION: WHAT COULD YOUR COMMUNITY BE?

Excerpted from: *Exploring Sustainable Communities: Teacher’s Guide*.
World Resources Institute, 1998.

“What future do I envision for my community? What part do I see myself playing in this future? “Visioning” is different from “Problem-Solving.”

- *Visioning* generates a common goal, hope and encouragement; offers a possibility for fundamental change; gives people a sense of control; gives a group something to move toward; and generates creative thinking and passion.
- With *problem solving*, a group can become mired in technical details and political problems and may even disagree on how to define the problem. Problem solving, although useful, rarely results in any really fundamental change.
- A *problem* is something *negative* to move *away from*, whereas a *vision* is something *positive* to move *toward*.
- In moving toward a vision, you will be likely to encounter a number of problems to solve.

Both problem solving and visioning are important; they are quite different approaches that should be used in combination.

VISIONING

Excerpted from: Driskell, David. *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth: A Manual for Participation*. UNESCO Publishing, Earthscan Publications, 2002.

“Visioning” is a tool for identifying common values, building consensus and developing comprehensive statement of what you hope to achieve.

A “Vision Statement” describes what the community or project site (such as a park, neighborhood or street area) will be like in the future — what it will look like, who will live there, what types of activities will take place there, etc. It is based on what participants think their community will be like once all the current issues are addressed. In other words, it is a statement of goals for the community’s future, presented in a manner that is understandable to all. Individual projects and activities can then be evaluated against the vision to determine how effective they will be in making the vision a reality. The vision also provides a tool for monitoring success over time.

The more people that are involved in the vision process, the more successful it will be. All members of the local community as well as decision-makers and other key stakeholders should have the opportunity to participate.

Teacher Resource/**Student Handout**
Visioning Packet

What is Visioning?

Use the space below to document what you’ve learned about visioning.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to write down what they have learned about visioning.

Share your understanding with the class. Note any new insights that develop as a result of this conversation.

Teacher Resource/**Student Handout**
Visioning Packet

Part II: Articulating a Vision

Look back at the goal that you had for your community at the end of the previous unit. Using the case studies from [Module 2, Chapter 1](#) and what you’ve learned about visioning from the three excerpts you’ve just read, revise the wording of the goal so it better represents a vision for your community. In a few sentences, explain that vision below.

Teacher Resource/**Student Handout**
Visioning Packet

Part VI: Articulating Our Class Vision

Now that you have a class vision, it’s time to share that vision with a larger audience.

Directions:

1. Decide on a “visioning” area — this could be a corner or a portion of the bulletin board or wall area — or it could even be a school showcase, if a more public arena is desired.
2. In the area you’ve selected, create a display that articulates your vision and communicates it to other people.

Student Handout

Basic Steps in Developing a Vision Statement

Adapted from: Driskell, David. *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth: A Manual for Participation*. UNESCO Publishing, Earthscan Publications, 2002. 103-114, 168-169. **Permission Pending.**

The basic steps in developing a vision statement include:

Brainstorm. This gives everyone an opportunity to share his or her own vision and ideas about the future. It is a chance for all ideas to be heard — not for debating the merits of each vision or idea.

Individual visions are shared at the end of Part III of the Student Handout, when the revised descriptions of visions are posted around the room.

Identify common themes and shared values. What do people’s individual visions have in common? What ideas or images are mentioned most frequently? Are there any major differences of opinion? Work together to explore differences as well as common themes, trying to understand whether perceived differences are due to miscommunication, misperceptions, or fundamentally different ideas about the future.

This step corresponds to Part IV of the Student Handout, when you read and take notes on the different descriptions posted around the room.

Develop the vision. Based on the common themes and shared values that emerge from the discussion, develop an initial description of the group’s emerging vision. If possible, develop a sketch to give visual expression to the vision. Also, continue to explore ways in which different ideas about the future might be reconciled.

This step corresponds to the class discussion in Part IV of the Student Handout.

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Articulate the vision. Use words, sketches, diagrams, or whatever medium the group finds most effective to communicate the vision to other people. Some groups have described their visions for the future through stories (for example, ‘a day in the life of . . . in the year 2020’) or even short plays. The purpose of the vision is to express a set of common goals, to help the group to see their work in a long-term, ‘big picture’ perspective, and to stimulate others to join in making the vision a reality.

This step corresponds to Part V of the Student Handout.

Revisit and update the vision. Make sure the vision remains relevant by reviewing it periodically, thinking about new trends and developments in the local area as well as changes within the participating groups or organizations.

This should occur throughout the remainder of the course.

