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Nextfood - Educating the next generation of professionals in the agrifood system

Practice Abstract #63: Visioning as core competency in Agroecological learning

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Visioning is a technique and a competency which helps us learn from the future. It is a process where the learner/stakeholders are assisted to appraise where they are now and where they can realistically expect to be in the future. This helps in setting up goals, identify current gaps and plan action points accordingly. It is an immensely helpful exercise which allows you to set a target and align the roadmap.

To introduce the idea of visioning to the learner, facilitators at the University of Calcutta, India, from NexttFood Case 9 - Improving sustainability in farming and food systems by bringing in agroecological approach through action learning - conducted in the following steps:

- In small groups, ask the students to discuss from all perspectives what kind of community they want to live in.
- Coming back to plenary, each group makes one declarative one-sentence statement in present tense about how that desired community will be in the future. Repeat the process until all ideas are exhausted. Note all these down – that is the shared vision of the future community.
- Ask everyone to highlight some of the major differences between now and the future they have created. Figure out what are the actions we should initiate now to reach that desired community.

The similar exercise was done with the participating farmer, where the learner helped the farmer to draw a diagram of a dream farm and track back what should s/he do now to achieve that dream.