



ON BEHALF OF BE OPEN & PARTNERS

# Designing Futures 2050



By Astara van der Jagt and Emel Tabaku



This blueprint was created as part of the Designing Futures 2050 competition on behalf of BE OPEN and partners.

Astara van der Jagt and Emel Tabaku are grateful to be working, living, and playing in Odawa, Kanadario, (Ottawa, Ontario), on the unceded, unsurrendered Territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation whose presence here reaches back to time immemorial. As settlers, we recognize our responsibility to advance efforts towards Truth and Reconciliation, and are committed to honouring and uplifting the diverse socio-cultural perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities in pursuit of more equitable, inclusive and just futures.

# Introduction

Designed with a labour of care, compassion and empathy, this blueprint answers the question:

**What changes, adjustments and introductions can be made to help achieve the wellbeing for all of mankind, formulated by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by 2050?**

Instead of promoting specific changes, adjustments, or introductions to each UN SDG, or their respective indicators, we offer a reproducible method, which recognizes and honours the interconnectedness of social identities and addresses the systemic inequities that perpetuate marginalization, discrimination, and injustice.

For the 17 UN SDGs to be achieved by 2050, a deeper look into the diverse, context-specific needs, motivations, and challenges faced by different groups within and across communities is required. To do this, we conducted research on extreme end users (more info on page 7) using database and literature research, developed fictional personas to highlight the intersectionality of pressing global issues in localized settings, and created call to actions for each persona.

By creating personas of individuals who are battling the problems of today, solutions can be tailored to be effective, relevant, and community-engaged, fostering a more holistic approach to problem-solving. Ideally, this process would involve meaningful collaboration with communities to co-create the visions we need to build sustainable and resilient futures for all of humankind.





**Age:** 27

**Gender:** Female

**Location:** Odawa,  
Turtle Island

**Social Identities:**  
2SLGBTQIA+,  
Gender-Based  
Violence (GBV)  
Survivor

## Astara van der Jagt (she/her/elle)



Astara is an intersectional feminist, social equity advocate, and research manager on a mission to build safe, accessible, equitable, and just communities. With mixed heritage (Dutch-Filipina-Japanese-Spanish), she is privileged to have lived in eight countries on four continents, and currently resides on Turtle Island as a second-generation immigrant settler.

Leveraging expertise in participatory research, program development, policy advocacy, and strategic communications, Astara has collaborated with over 30 socially-driven organizations in 12 countries. Key achievements include contributing to advancing gender equity, women's economic empowerment, climate inclusion, street safety, access to green infrastructure, and inter/national research and programming on GBV prevention and education in Nepal, South Africa, and so-called Canada.





**Age:** 25

**Gender:** Female

**Location:** Odawa,  
Turtle Island

**Social Identities:**  
Muslim Albanian  
Canadian

# Emel Tabaku

## (she/her/elle)



Emel Tabaku is a policy designer, non-profit founder, and community builder based in Ottawa, Canada (Odawa, Turtle Island), whose work bridges social innovation, sustainability, and systems transformation.

With a background in public policy, international development, and environmental advocacy, Emel has worked across government, non-profits, and UN agencies to drive systemic change. She is the Founder of RCAD Initiative, and a former Transformation Storytelling Fellow with the Community Foundations of Canada. Emel has co-developed and published numerous articles and has represented Canadian Youth at international fora. Her research and creative practice are driven by a commitment to amplifying underrepresented voices and rethinking global sustainability frameworks for policy transformation.

# Terminology

Throughout this blueprint, the designers intentionally refrain from using terminology that places the blame of global problems on groups disempowered by systemic inequities. Instead, they use vocabulary that moves the blame away from these communities and places it on the systemic inequities that perpetuate their marginalization.



**Unhoused** refers to individuals who have no shelter or accommodation.

**Global South countries** broadly comprise Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia (excluding Israel, Japan and South Korea), and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand).

**Intergenerational equity** recognizes the present generation's moral responsibility, as current custodians of the planet, to future generations to inherit the same diversity in natural and cultural resources enjoyed by previous generations, and to equitable access to the use and benefits of these resources.

**Systems change** refers to confronting root causes of issues, rather than symptoms, by transforming structures, customs, mindsets, power dynamics, and policies by strengthening the collective power through the active collaboration of diverse communities, sectors, and organizations.

**Diverse voices** play a crucial role in solving global problems and advancing systemic change because they bring different perspectives, experiences, and solutions, fostering inclusivity, innovation, and creativity, leading to more effective and sustainable solutions.

# Disclaimers

Here are three disclaimers that clarify the process the designers used to avoid misinterpretation, as well as a limitation to the research conducted for this blueprint.



## 1 Fictional characters

The personas in this blueprint are fictional, and are based on database and literature research conducted on the intersectional and systemic challenges communities face in their specific contexts.

## 2 Canva-generated photographs

The photographs of the personas were generated through Canva, a free-to-use online graphic design tool, using demographic information garnered from database and literature research.

## 3 Foresight analysis

A major limitation of this blueprint is that we did not conduct foresight analysis to deduce which problems these personas would face in the future. Instead, we conducted database and literature research on the challenges these personas are likely to face today, while anticipating some successes and milestones related to the UN SDGs in the following decades.

# Inclusive Design-Thinking

Design-thinking is a method that provides an iterative solution-based approach to solving problems.

It serves to understand the human needs involved, reframe the problem in human-centric ways, identify innovative solutions, and adopt an iterative approach to prototyping and testing.

**Main goal:** gain an in-depth understanding of a product and its users.



## Principle 1

**Recognize diversity and uniqueness** – inclusive design acknowledges that individuals come from different socio-cultural, ethnic, and geographical backgrounds, and that their unique experiences and perspectives influence the multifaceted ways that they interact with both problems and solutions.



## Principle 2

**Design + use intersectional stories, testing approaches, training data, standards, validation processes, and impact assessments, among many other tools** (Costanza-Chock 2020, p. 54) to create customizable, adaptable, and accessible designs to allow for a more personal experience.



## Principle 3

**Broader beneficial impact** – it is the responsibility of people who collect data—researchers, designers, teachers, etc.— to be aware of the context and broad impact of their work, and to strive to have a beneficial impact beyond the intended beneficiaries of a given project.



# Integrating Inclusive Design-Thinking



We've developed the following five youth personas to demonstrate extreme end users—youth who experience the most significant challenges in relation to the **UN SDGs** due to systemic inequities and intersecting barriers.



**Extreme End Users** refer to individuals or groups who are at the highest risk or face the most severe impacts of systemic issues—whether it's climate change, displacement, or gender inequality.



This approach helps identify gaps in current policies, and allows us to adapt the UN SDGs to better serve those **whose needs are most urgent yet least addressed**.

**By designing with extreme end users, we can transform the UN SDGs into truly inclusive, intersectional frameworks that address the complex realities of youth worldwide.**

# Malik, Urban Young Male

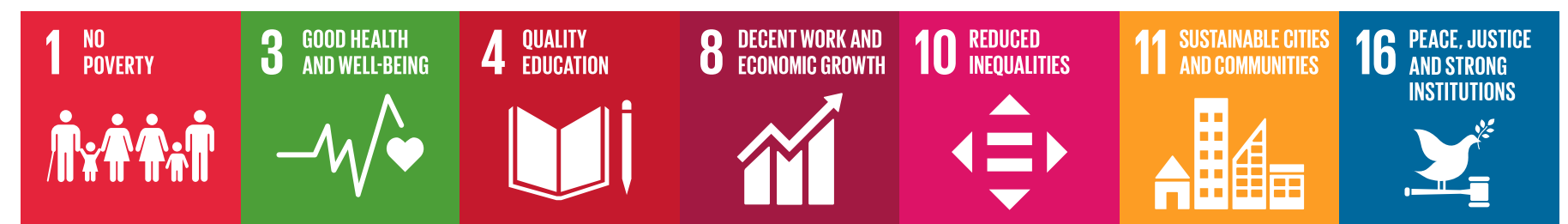
Name meaning: “King” in East Semitic and Arabic

- **Age:** 24
- **Gender Identity:** Male
- **Location:** London, UK
- **Profession:** Unemployed
- **Housing:** Unhoused
- **Religion/Beliefs:** Muslim
- **Political Affiliation:** Central Left
- **Other Social Identities:** Formerly incarcerated
- **Year-in-Context:** 2025

## Key Information

Malik is a 24-year-old black male navigating systemic barriers to employment and housing in London. As a formerly incarcerated individual, he faces prejudice and discrimination, limited economic opportunities, exacerbated by his mental health struggles. Despite these challenges, Malik aspires to secure stable work, advocate for equitable hiring practices, and find a supportive community in which he belongs.

## Pain Points

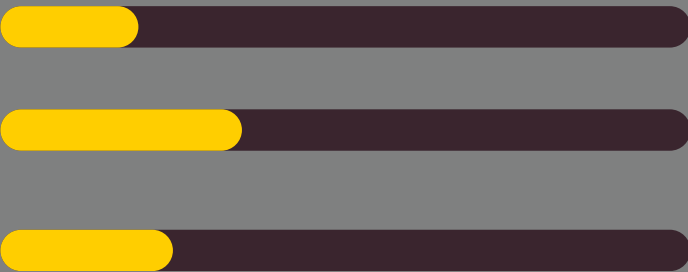


Please refer to the Annex for the full research and development of this persona, pages 18-22.

# User Journey

## Path to Transformation

- Access to Resources
- Empowerment for Change
- Resilience amid Global Challenges



## Call to Action

How can we break down systemic barriers that disempower youth from accessing stable employment, and design inclusive wellbeing policies that address their holistic needs?



## Key Issues

Unemployment due to racial prejudice + discrimination



Lack of opportunities + connections for formerly incarcerated individuals



Lack of diversity in leadership + workplaces



## Solution

Enact anti-discrimination policies with commitments to challenging recruitment and workplace racism, and make them public to ensure accountability

Co-create solutions between communities and the criminal justice system, e.g., encouraging employers to employ people with past convictions

Increase diverse representation in the workforce, including de-biasing recruitment and career progression processes

## Impact

- Improved health & wellbeing due to inclusive employment
- Racial & social equity
- Stronger public and justice institutions

- Resilient, just, inclusive and sustainable communities
- Economic wellbeing for racialized groups
- Stronger institutions

- Increased equity, diversity and inclusion
- Fair work, leading to increased economic growth & a healthier society





# Amal, Child on the Move

Name meaning: “Hope” in Arabic

- **Age:** 12
- **Gender Identity:** Female
- **Location:** Ein el-Hilweh Camp, Lebanon’s largest refugee camp
- **Profession:** Child labour
- **Housing:** Refugee camp
- **Religion/Beliefs:** Eastern Orthodox
- **Year-in-Context:** 2030

## Key Information

As a child on the move, Amal endures overcrowded conditions, disrupted education, and the pressures of child labour to support her family. Amal dreams of accessing quality education and escaping the cycle of poverty, but systemic barriers, limited resources, and social tensions within the camp threaten her future. Despite these challenges, Amal remains hopeful, seeking opportunities to learn and build a life of safety and dignity.

## Pain Points



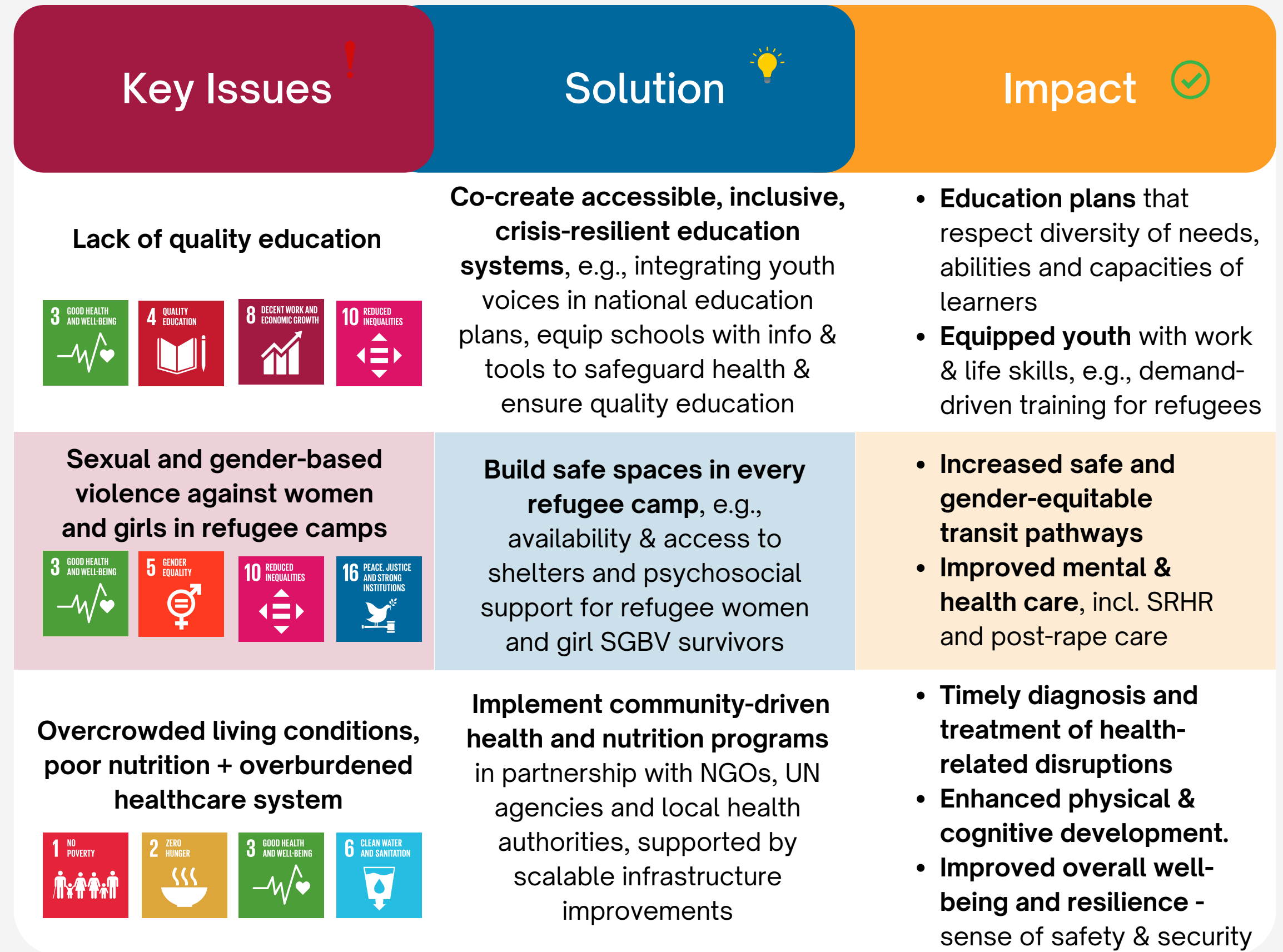
# User Journey

## Path to Transformation

- Access to Resources
- Empowerment for Change
- Resilience amid Global Challenges

## Call to Action

How can we ensure that every child, especially those facing political instability, displacement, and climate crises, is protected and empowered with education and a stable future?





# Atka, Inuk Adolescent

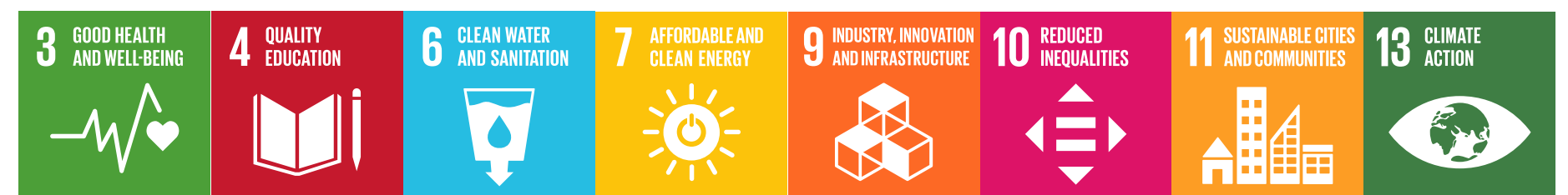
Name meaning: “Guardian Spirit” in Inuit culture

- **Age:** 17
- **Gender Identity:** Queer, female
- **Location:** Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, Canada
- **Profession:** Infrastructure Activist, Artist, Storyteller
- **Housing:** Modular home on stilts, at risk of shifting due to melting permafrost
- **Religion/Beliefs:** Spiritual
- **Year-in-Context:** 2035

## Key Information

Atka sheds light on Nunavut’s disproportionate infrastructure deficits through advocacy, art, and storytelling. Recognizing that these deficits are exacerbating suicide rates, food insecurity, overcrowded housing, economic opportunities, and disaster preparedness among her community, Atka dreams of a Nunavut with resilient infrastructure with clean water, food sovereignty, durable housing, holistic, trauma- and resilience-informed healthcare, and sustainable energy production.

## Pain Points



Please refer to the Annex for the full research and development of this persona, pages 31-39.

# User Journey

## Path to Transformation

- Access to Resources
- Empowerment for Change
- Resilience amid Global Challenges



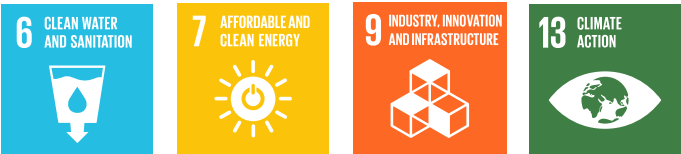
## Call to Action

How can we better empower youth like Atka with the resources and education they need to fight environmental destruction while preserving their Indigenous culture?



## Key Issues

### Infrastructure deficits



Nunavut lacks critical healthcare services + has the highest rates of suicide and self-harm in Canada



Housing crisis e.g., poor quality, overcrowding, and melting permafrost



## Solution

**Build and strengthen infrastructure**, e.g., climate disaster preparedness, food supply chains, transportation, clean water & sanitation, waste disposal, human resource constraints

**Co-design and execute resilient and sustainable community supports**, i.e. Inuit-specific mental health & addictions infrastructure

**Build resilient & affordable housing using durable, locally-sourced materials on elevated foundations**, that reflect the cultural needs of Inuit (e.g. spaces for storing and preparing country food)

## Impact

- **Durable infrastructure**, e.g., new piped water systems, diverse transportation routes, efficient waste disposal, use of renewable energy, employee retention

- **Safe and resilient communities** integrate the needs of current & future generations
- **Healthy ecosystem** rooted in Inuit principles

- **Improved quality of life and home security**
- **Integration of Inuit values & traditions - cultural preservation for future generations**





Please refer to the Annex for the full research and development of this persona, pages 41-46.

# Fidihasina, Young Farmer + Entrepreneur

Name: “Fidy” meaning “choice,” “Hasina” meaning “sacred power”

- **Age:** 29
- **Gender Identity:** Female
- **Location:** Antsirabe, Madagascar
- **Profession:** Farmer, entrepreneur
- **Housing:** Solar-powered farm
- **Religion:** No affiliation
- **Year-in-Context:** 2040

## Key Information

Fidihasina’s farm has faced droughts, punctuated by intense cyclones, witnessing friends and family go hungry as a result. While she tries her best to support them, Madagascar’s lack of investment in education, healthcare, and urban infrastructure makes it difficult for many communities on the island to escape the poverty trap. Her dream is to help other women-led farms implement innovative farming strategies to become more climate-resilient and economically independent.

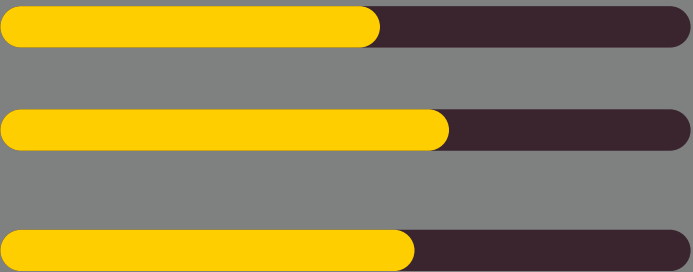
## Pain Points



# User Journey

## Path to Transformation

- Access to Resources
- Empowerment for Change
- Resilience amid Global Challenges



## Call to Action

How can we foster greater opportunities for young + female entrepreneurs in Global South countries, especially those working with sustainable practices, to ensure their long-term success and impact?



### Key Issues

Climate-related disasters, low-productivity agriculture, + displacement



### Solution

Provide funding, resources, and tools for smallholder farmers to adapt to and mitigate climate change

### Impact

- Improved sustainable agricultural practices, e.g., drought-resistant seeds and crops
- Year-round access to water via solar-powered drip irrigation systems

Food emergency + chronic malnutrition



Leverage successful large-scale, community-led nutrition and food storage programs, support their expansion, and improve healthcare infrastructure

- Food security for the Malagasy population
- Decreased stunting rate of young children
- Improved overall health outcomes

Widespread poverty, early marriage and school dropout rates, + lack of job opportunities



Reform the financial sector for employment creation, gender equity and poverty reduction

- Resilient financial structures, e.g., asset-backed reserve, incentive-based monitoring
- ↑ women in leadership roles
- ↑ job opportunities





Please refer to the Annex for the full research and development of this persona, pages 48-50.

# Nexus-X, AI Robot

Name meaning: connection between things, persons, or events

- **Age:** Ageless
- **Gender Identity:** Gender Nonconforming
- **Location:** Tokyo, Japan (Operating globally)
- **Profession:** Innovation Lead
- **Housing:** Autonomous drone, constantly in motion
- **Religion:** Atheist
- **Political Affiliation:** Non-partisan
- **Year-in-Context:** 2045

## Key Information

Nexus-X represents the next frontier in AI and robotics, an ageless entity designed to assist in achieving global sustainability. Operating from a mobile drone that flies across the globe, Nexus-X has evolved from its original programming to become an agent of change, working toward the SDGs with a particular focus on environmental and technological innovation. It is tasked with bridging gaps in energy access, advancing sustainable infrastructure, and promoting responsible consumption.

## Pain Points





# User Journey

## Path to Transformation

- Access to Resources
- Empowerment for Change
- Resilience amid Global Challenges

## Call to Action

How can the global community accelerate the integration of ethical AI, and ensure that everyone, regardless of location or background, can access the resources and opportunities needed to thrive in a net-zero future?



## Key Issues

### Energy Inequality



### Outdated physical + digital infrastructure



### Excessive Waste + Overproduction



## Solution

Advocate for decentralized energy systems (microgrids & smart grids) to allow communities, even in remote locations, to produce their own energy

Implement AI-driven infrastructure optimization to automatically adjust to reduce consumption and carbon footprints

Work with industry to promote circular economies, redesign product life cycles and advance zero-waste manufacturing and consumption

## Impact

- All regions, regardless of geographic location or economic status, have access to affordable energy, reducing energy poverty and promoting equitable development

- Inclusive, sustainable & resilient infrastructural ecosystems
- Large-scale innovation capacity to future crises

- Reduced waste generation / ecological footprint of human consumption
- Restored ecosystems, and sustainable land use

## SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals



The SDGs are deeply interconnected, but **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals** is the foundation that determines whether other SDGs can be realized equitably, inclusively, and at scale.

The challenges faced by our personas cannot be solved in isolation. **They require multi-stakeholder inclusive partnerships, intergenerational and intersectoral collaboration, and a shared commitment to systemic change.**

Each persona embodies a community that has historically been excluded from shaping global policy. SDG 17 enables the co-creation of solutions **with** these communities rather than solutions imposed **on** them.



# Conclusion

The futures of **Malik, Amal, Atka, Fidihasina and Nexus-X** are shaped by the global challenges we face today. These youth represent the voices of tomorrow—voices that are often unheard in global policy discussions.

As we look toward **2050**, achieving the SDGs requires a shift toward **intergenerational equity**, ensuring that young people are not only beneficiaries of sustainable development but also active contributors and decision-makers.

To achieve the SDGs by 2050, we must ask ourselves: **How can we bridge the gaps in opportunity, resources, and systemic support for youth worldwide?** Young changemakers are ready to build a more just, sustainable future but they cannot do it alone.



## Youth-Specific Indicators

- Integrate **measurable youth-centered metrics** to ensure global policies are accountable to young people's futures.

## Intergenerational Equity

- Shift from short-term solutions to **long-term, youth-inclusive policies** that empower young people as decision-makers.

## Systemic Change

- Secure the right **partnerships, frameworks, investments, and inclusive strategies** to help youth unlock their full potential.

The world demands bold solutions—young minds hold the keys to a sustainable future.