



# SUMMARY WORKSHOP POINT OF NO RETURN

THE WORKSHOP WAS PART OF THE NEW NORDIC FOOD SEMINAR PROGRAMME:

»A Social Improvement of Quality of Life in Rural Areas: The Importance of Food and Architecture to the Nordic Welfare Model«.

AT STOKKØYA, NORWAY, 2-3 SEPTEMBER 2012.

## INTRODUCTION

The workshop 'Point of no Return' was conducted in order to examine the values and criteria that were important to people in city areas, when they considered whether they should move to a rural area. Which kinds of demands do they make, and are they willing to compromise? When is something so important that

you simply have to be part of it? The basis for our discussions were the different lectures during the day, in combination with a documentary about young people made by young people (the digital natives), examining Nordic people's hopes for the future, as well as a documentary exploring happiness in Denmark.

## METHOD – A DESCRIPTION OF THE INNOVATION WORKSHOP

The aim of the workshop was twofold. One was to introduce a creative innovative method to people involved in developing rural areas. The other was to look at challenges in new ways and to pose new questions to these challenges.

In the workshop, we gathered knowledge from three main fields: food, architecture and human values. We then asked the participants to produce the core believes of their own lives and to work in groups to combine the key factors of all three areas in random, unforeseen

ways in order to start a creative process. The method is used to initiate innovation by transforming and combining things in ways we would not think of when using the rational part of our brain.

The method is developed to overcome the artificial division of society into different fields and to be able to create new ideas in a field where questions of food, architecture and human living are not isolated from each other.





## PROCESS

### STEP 1 – BACKGROUND: THE TWO DOCUMENTARIES

Below, the core values identified in the two documentaries are listed:

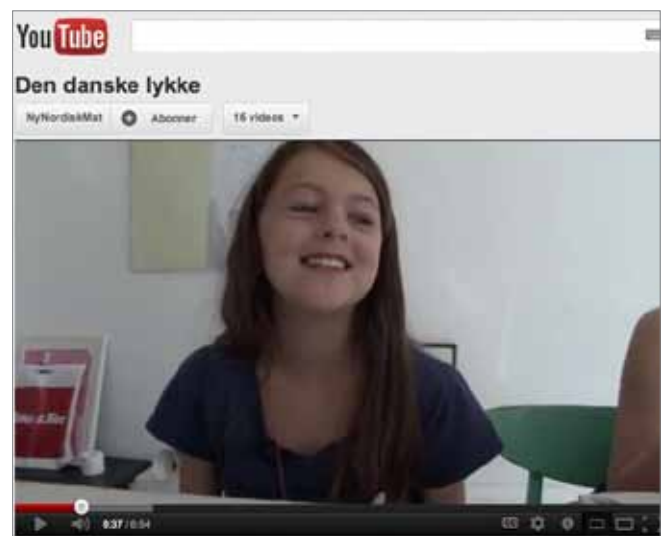


#### DREAMS

A documentary about young people made by young people

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWLYzUQdFc8&feature=plcp>

- Being surrounded by children and elderly people
- Being surrounded by friends
- Being able to experience the unforeseen
- Meeting new people
- Being close to nature, growing your own food, eating good food
- Being close to everything you need
- Being with someone you love



#### HAPPINESS IN DENMARK

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_7D2p7\\_TgBU&feature=plcp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_7D2p7_TgBU&feature=plcp)

- Belonging – being part of a social network or community
- Strong family relations
- Drinking water from the tap – welfare society
- Confidence in democracy – the feeling of democratic participation
- Striving, being ambitious and obtaining one's goals
- Making a difference for others
- Feeling safe in one's home
- Strong and long friendships





## PROCESS

### STEP 2 – INTERACTIVE PART 1

Below, the core values based on the second part, where we had the opportunity to listen to persons, who had moved to another place within the last five years, are listed.

- Nature
- Children
- Security
- Education
- Work
- Freedom
- More space
- Experiences
- Different places – different phases
- Coincidences/opportunities
- Taking a break
- Families and friends
- Be loved
- Slowing down
- Not using the city – using nature
- Surprises
- Balance

### STEP 3 – WHAT ARE THE CORE VALUES OF THE INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS?

Below, the core values based on the third part, where each of us, in groups of three, presented the most essential core values for only that person, in the categories food, architecture and human value, are presented.

#### ARCHITECTURE

Space, space, nature  
Space, entirety, ocean view  
Structure, natural, freedom  
More space, security, innovative architecture  
Space, statement, value  
Space, nature, air  
Duality between cities and rural areas, meeting place,  
lots of people  
Functionality, transparency, »natural material«



SPACE  
 VISUELL SIGHT  
 ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY  
 NUTRISCIOUS



## FOOD

Local, fresh, pure  
 Passion, NNM-pure-fresh-simple-ethical, quality  
 Social, co-producer, home-grown  
 Social interaction, close-to-producer, own food  
 Origin, health  
 Closeness-to-resources, fear-of-dying-independence,  
 simple living  
 Local, involvement, sustainable  
 Sustainability, health, terroir

terroir food **Local**  
 sustainable home-grown close-to-producer  
 quality Closeness-to-resources  
 fear-of-dying-independence  
 NNM-pure-fresh-simple-ethical  
 living **health** fresh pure **Social**  
 co-producer Sustainability  
 simple interaction involvement  
 Passion Origin

Passion  
 belonging Flexibility Freedom  
 relationships change  
 freedom Togetherness choices  
 influence excitement  
 challenges love/friendship Transparency  
 Love flexibility balance  
 open-minded network harmony  
 Balance ability Horizon

## HUMAN VALUE

Flexibility, open-minded, relationships  
 Horizon, freedom of choices, challenges  
 Togetherness, excitement, network  
 Transparency, challenges, love/friendship  
 Passion, flexibility, balance  
 Love, flexibility, belonging, balance  
 Freedom to influence, ability to change, influence  
 Balance, balance, harmony



NATUR. GRET.  
 LOVE FLEXIBILITY  
 SCIENCE  
 Model Al  
 rabin





## PROCESS

### STEP 4 – INNOVATION

Forced to combine the specific words/values written down in step 3, the participants were then told to turn these words/values into impossible and unlikely questions, engaging the participants in a process of innovative thinking out of the box. Only few of the many questions were written down, and please get inspired by the following ones.

- How do we create co-producing food networks?
- Does co-producing need structure?
- Is architectural freedom a prerequisite for generating togetherness?
- How do we structure architecture to build togetherness?
- How do we make home-grown excitement legal?
- Will architectural structure produce more »social food«?
- Why do you need space?
- What do you mean by space?
- Why is nature so important?
- How to connect wild food and creativity?
- What do you want from nature, what is nature more precisely?
- How can you unite space, nature and locality?
- How can you unite space, fresh and open-mindedness?
- How can you unite nature, purity and relationships?
- Why do you choose local food?
- Why is fresh important to you?





## CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

In order to create innovative solutions to 'the global food' problem, they need to be balanced between the everyday needs and dreams of modern people and the food production. Sustainable solutions have to be found in the clever combination of these areas.

The workshop was an eye-opener as regards the complexity of the task and a method to gain insight and to produce creative and innovative results. Time did not allow us to unfold the complexity, but gave us an idea and first and foremost a way to make the developing process dynamic and able to handle more than one issue at the same time.

Still, we managed to produce knowledge in the three areas. When analyzing the core values, we found some interesting variation. For instance, the words 'local', 'social' and 'health' are very frequently mentioned in the area 'Food'. As regards the area 'Architecture', the word 'space' is the one most used, followed by the word 'natural'. The core values in the third area, 'Human values', are more evenly divided between the words 'influence', 'balance', 'changes' and 'flexibility'.

Further examination would have allowed us to create sustainable solutions by merging the core values of

the target groups with for instance food production. In the first phase, this would involve posing new kinds of questions to food production concerning social aspects, or how food production relates to health questions in society.

In order to solve the problem with food production and the depopulation of rural areas, it is essential to identify the human values that make it attractive for people to grow food and to take advantage of the local production possibilities. The workshop shows that some of the values that make it attractive to grow food have to do with values such as communities and social relations. Questions such as these are relevant when discussing food production in order to create a link to the population who are to solve the task.

The material seems to suggest that there is unexploited potential for supporting the community and for establishing local structures, which could develop into strong local economies. The young people attach particularly great importance to community. There may therefore be potential for promoting young "social engineers" as a driving force for the development of rural areas.

