

# AI in Warfare: Actions, Policies and Practices

Deep Dive Workshop, November 14

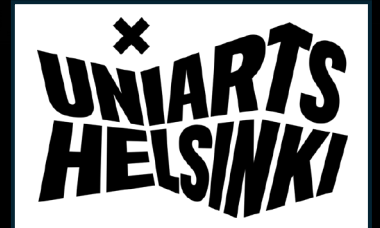
Global AI Policy Research Summit 2025

Organisers: Nitin Sawhney & Petter Ericson

AI Policy  Lab  
at Umeå University



UMEÅ  
UNIVERSITY



mondai  
House of AI



| AI Initiative



## *Meet the Panellists*



### **Virginia Dignum**

Professor in Responsible AI and Director of the AI Policy Lab, Umeå University. Member of the UN High Level Advisory Body on AI



### **Ilse Verdiesen**

Research Fellow, National Defense Academy.  
Chief of Staff Joint IV Commando (Col)



### **Martine Jaarsma**

Doctoral Researcher International Humanitarian Law, Military uses of AI and Critical Legal Studies, University of Antwerp



### **Megan Karlshøj-Pederson**

Policy Specialist at Airwars

**Taylor Kate Woodcock**  
PhD Researcher in Public  
International Law, Asser Institute



### **Rainer Rehak**

Research Associate, Weizenbaum  
Institute

# Agenda & Program

09:30-09:40	Opening and key themes presented by Nitin Sawhney & Petter Ericson
09:40-11:00	Brief Perspectives by panelists (60 min) + audience QA (20 min)
11:00-11:10	Short break
11:10-11:20	Forming 3 thematic groups led by invited experts + framing issues for deliberation and action
11:20-12:10	Participatory workshop deliberations and formulating key outcomes
12:10-12:30	Report-back and wrap-up for future action agenda



Guest Post

Publications

Jan 24, 2024

## The Algorithmically Accelerated Killing Machine

"It shifts the narrative from a technology in aid of adherence to International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the Geneva Conventions, to automation in the name of industrial scale productivity in target generation, enabling greater speed and efficiency in killing."

"Israel's mobilization of algorithmic intensification to accelerate target production should be understood within a wider technopolitical context of so-called network-centric warfare."

Lucy Suchman

by Lucy Suchman

On 11 January 2024, the International Court of Justice opened proceedings on charges of genocide brought by South Africa against Israel's operations in Gaza. Israel, on its side, frames its military operations in Gaza as self defense and a justifiable response to the massacre of Israeli civilians by Hamas on 7 October 2023. In the media coverage on Israeli operations in Gaza, [one investigative report](#) stood out for those of us who have been following developments in the algorithmic intensification of military killing machines, a story of Israel's AI-enabled targeting system named Habsora, or the Gospel.

Headlined "A mass assassination factory": Inside Israel's calculated bombing of Gaza,' the report draws on sources within the Israeli intelligence community who confirm that Israeli Defense Force (IDF) operations in the Gaza strip combine more permissive authorization for the bombing of non-military targets with a loosening of constraints regarding expected civilian casualties. This policy sanctions the bombing of densely populated civilian areas, including high-rise residential and public buildings designated as so called 'power targets'. Official legal



# When Algorithms Decide Who is a Target: IDF's use of AI in Gaza

ATAY KOZLOVSKI / MAY 13, 2024

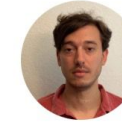


Shutterstock

In late November 2023, six weeks after the horrific Hamas attacks of the 7th of October, Yuval Abraham of +972 Magazine published a frightening expose article entitled “A mass assassination factory’: Inside Israel’s calculated bombing of Gaza”, in which he describes the mass bombing campaign undertaken by the IDF which was aided by the use of novel ‘artificial intelligence’ systems. In his article, Abraham discusses the AI system, ‘Habsora’ (‘The Gospel’), which reportedly enabled the IDF to produce 100 new bombing targets per day for their ongoing campaign in Gaza:

Habsora, explained one of the sources, processes enormous amounts of data that “tens of thousands of intelligence officers could not process,” and recommends bombing sites in real time... the use of a system like Habsora makes it possible to locate and attack the homes of relatively junior operatives.

## AUTHORS



### ATAY KOZLOVSKI

Atay Kozlovski is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Zurich’s Center for Ethics. He holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Zurich, an MA in PPE from the University of Bern, and a BA from Tel Aviv University. His current research focuses on normative ethics, hard choices, and th...

## TOPICS

Artificial Intelligence

Human Rights

## ‘A mass assassination factory’: Inside Israel’s calculated bombing of Gaza

Permissive airstrikes on non-military targets and the use of an artificial intelligence system have enabled the Israeli army to carry out its deadliest war on Gaza, a +972 and Local Call investigation reveals.

Smoke rises after Israeli airstrikes in several location in the Gaza Strip, October 9, 2023. (Atia Mohammed/Flash90)



By Yuval Abraham | November 30, 2023



In partnership with  
**LOCAL CALL**  
שיחה מקומית



The Israeli army’s expanded authorization for bombing non-military targets, the loosening of constraints regarding expected civilian casualties, and the use of an artificial intelligence system to generate more potential targets than





## ‘Lavender’: The AI machine directing Israel’s bombing spree in Gaza

Apr 3, 2024 ... The Israeli army has marked tens of thousands of Gazans as suspects for assassination, using an AI targeting system with little human ...

Yuval Abraham | April 3, 2024 April 3, 2024



## ‘Order from Amazon’: Tech giants storing mass data for Israel’s war

Aug 4, 2024 ... The Israeli army is using Amazon’s cloud service and AI from Google and Microsoft for military activities in Gaza, investigation reveals.

Yuval Abraham | August 4, 2024 August 4, 2024



## Leaked documents expose deep ties between Israeli army and Microsoft

Jan 23, 2025 ... Since Oct. 7, the Israeli military has relied heavily on cloud and AI services from Microsoft and its partner OpenAI, while the tech giant’s ...

Yuval Abraham | January 23, 2025 January 23, 2025



## ‘A mass assassination factory’: Inside Israel’s calculated bombing of Gaza

Nov 30, 2023 ... Permissive airstrikes on non-military targets and the use of an AI system have enabled the Israeli army to carry out its deadliest war on ...

Yuval Abraham | November 30, 2023 November 30, 2023



## How AI is intensifying Israel’s bombardments of Gaza

Jun 6, 2023 ... Israeli bombardments on Gaza are becoming more frequent, thanks to innovations in artificial intelligence (AI) and a military that bends to the dictates of ...

Sophia Goodfriend | June 6, 2023 June 6, 2023



## With Gaza war and Trump’s return, Silicon Valley embraces a military renaissance

Dec 31, 2024 ... At Israel’s first DefenseTech Summit, corporate leaders and army officials openly touted their partnership in AI-driven warfare and ...

Sophia Goodfriend | December 31, 2024 December 31, 2024



## Why human agency is still central to Israel’s AI-powered warfare

Apr 25, 2024 ... military officials. Lavender and Where’s Daddy? may be billed as AI-powered systems, but even Israeli military heads say they are not acting ...

Sophia Goodfriend | April 25, 2024 April 25, 2024



## Israel developing ChatGPT-like tool that weaponizes surveillance of Palestinians

Mar 6, 2025 ... The Israeli army is building an AI language model using millions of intercepted conversations between Palestinians, which could accelerate the process of ...

Yuval Abraham | March 6, 2025 March 6, 2025



# THE PALESTINE LABORATORY

How Israel Exports The Technology Of Occupation Around The World

Verso + Scribe, 2023

Purchase

How Israel makes a killing from the occupation.

Israel's military industrial complex uses the occupied, Palestinian territories as a testing ground for weaponry and surveillance technology that they then export around the world to despots and democracies. For more than 50 years, occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has given the Israeli state invaluable experience in controlling an “enemy” population, the Palestinians. It's here that they have perfected the architecture of control.

Best-selling journalist Antony Loewenstein, author of *Disaster Capitalism*, uncovers this largely hidden world in a [global investigation](#) with secret documents, revealing interviews and on-the-ground reporting. This book shows in-depth, for the first time, how Palestine has become the perfect laboratory for the Israeli military-techno complex: surveillance, home demolitions, indefinite incarceration and brutality to the hi-tech tools that drive the ‘Start-up Nation’. From the Pegasus software that hacked Jeff Bezos’ and Jamal Khashoggi’s phones, the weapons sold to the Myanmar army that has murdered thousands of Rohingyas and drones used by the European Union to monitor refugees in the Mediterranean who are left to drown. Israel has become a global leader in spying technology and defence hardware that fuels the globe’s most brutal conflicts. As ethno-nationalism grows in the 21st century, Israel has built the ultimate model.

*The Palestine Laboratory* is endorsed by Noam Chomsky, Ilan Pappé, Avi Shlaim, Gideon Levy, Eyal Weizman and others and has been translated into many languages including Spanish, Italian, Arabic and South Korean.







**Antony Loewenstein**  
Investigative Journalist,  
Author and Filmmaker

Investigating Technologies of War &  
Surveillance: A Human Laboratory  
of Oppression and Control

# opening keynotes



**Lauren Gould**  
Assistant Professor in Conflict Studies



**Jessica Dorsey**  
Assistant Professor of International  
and European Law

The Realities of Algorithmic  
Warfare and Civilian Harm

CHECK OUT THE FULL [+](#)

# Contestations.AI

TRANSDISCIPLINARY SYMPOSIUM ON  
AI, HUMAN RIGHTS AND WARFARE

OCTOBER 23, 2024  
THE TRAIN FACTORY, HELSINKI  
+ LIVESTREAMED



HEBATALLA TAHA



FABIO CRISTIANO

PANEL DISCUSSION

## Politics of Technology and Colonialism in the Global Middle East



WASSIM GHANTOUS



TAYSIR MATHLOUTHI

MORE PANELS [+](#)



ANDREAS SCHÜLLER



JOHANNA VEKKO



MYRIAM FRANCOIS



ALEKSI KNUUTILA



NEIL CHRISTOPHER RENIC



MIKE ANANNY



JESSICA DORSEY



LAUREN GOULD

PANEL DISCUSSION

## Critical perspectives on AI, Big Data and Autonomous Weapons



NITIN SAWHNEY



SARAH CISTON



CHRISTIAN HECK



MIAPETRA KUMPULA-NATRI



JOONAS LEPPÄNEN

CONVERSATION

## EU and Global Implications for Responsible AI



TEIVO TEIVAINEN



SALLA-MAARIA LAAKSONEN

MORE PANELS [+](#)

PANEL DISCUSSION

## International Humanitarian Law, Disinformation and Counter Media Narratives in Warfare



YULIA DUKACH



SALLA-MAARIA LAAKSONEN



KRISTIAN HUMBLE



PATRICK BRIAN SMITH



Contestations.AI

**OCTOBER**  
**THE TRAIN FACTORY,**  
**& LIVES**

# Contestations.AI

## A TRANSDISCIPLINARY SYMPOSIUM ON AI, HUMAN RIGHTS AND WARFARE

PROGRAM

PEOPLE

## SHOWCASE

## MOMENTS

TRANSDISCIPLINARY SYMPOSIUM ON  
AI, HUMAN RIGHTS AND WARFARE

**Contestations.AI**

OCTOBER 23, 2024  
THE TRAIN FACTORY, HELSINKI  
+ LIVESTREAMED

### WHAT BROUGHT ATTENDEES TO THE SYMPOSIUM?

**WATCH**

## WHAT BROUGHT ATTENDEES TO THE SYMPOSIUM?

I have specific interest in peace among nations and wish to learn more about the dynamics which underlie conflicts and their interplay.

**WATCH**

Photos: Jenni Holma

## Contestations.AI





## Ukraine

## Ukrainian computer game-style drone attack system goes ‘viral’

System rewards soldiers who achieve strikes with points that can be used to buy more weapons in an online store

Robert Booth *UK  
technology editor*

Mon 3 Nov 2025 06.00 CET



Share

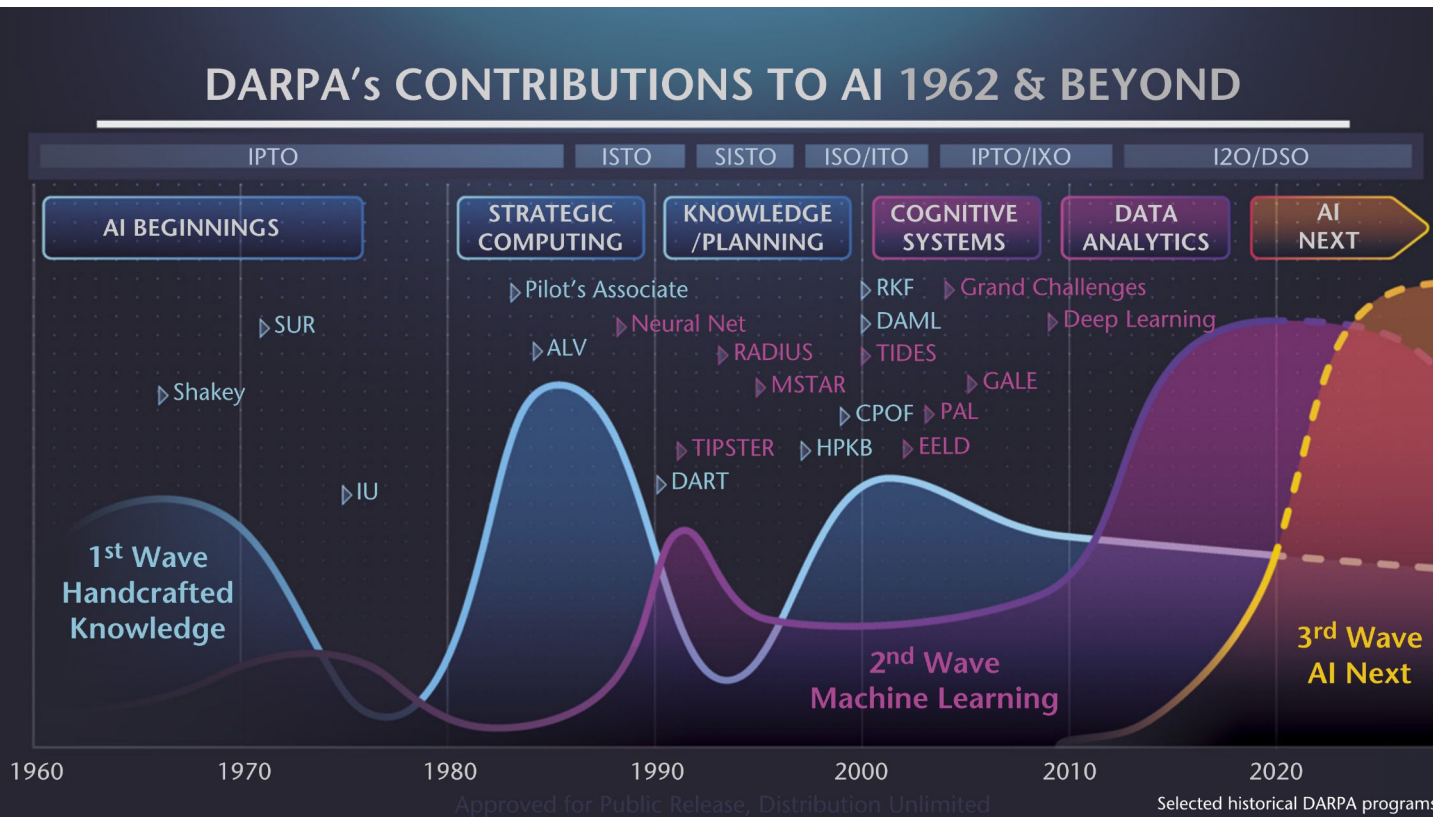


Ukrainian soldiers operating drones. Drone teams competing for points under the ‘Army of Drones Bonus System’ killed or wounded 18,000 Russian soldiers in September. Photograph: Sergey Kozlov/EPA

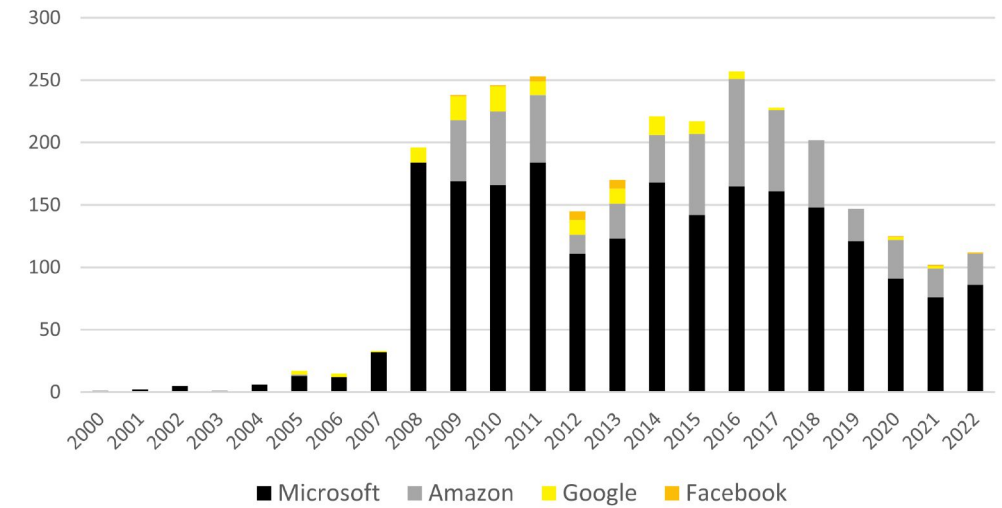
A computer game-style drone attack system has gone “viral” among Ukrainian military units and is being extended to reconnaissance, artillery and logistics operations, the nation’s first deputy prime minister, Mykhailo Fedorov, has told the Guardian.

Drone teams competing for points under the “Army of Drones Bonus System” killed or wounded 18,000 Russian soldiers in September, with 400 drone units now taking part in the competition, up from 95 in August, Ukrainian officials said.

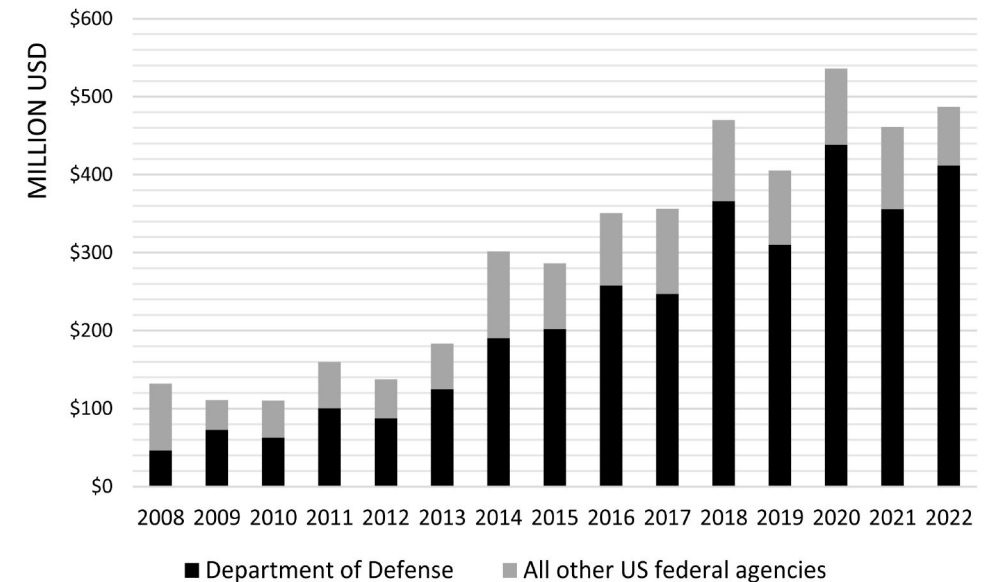
# (US) Military ❤️ AI



Fouse, S., Cross, S., & Lapin, Z. (2020). DARPA's impact on artificial intelligence. *Ai Magazine*, 41(2), 3–8.



Coveri, A., Cozza, C., & Guarascio, D. (2025). Blurring Boundaries: An Analysis of the Digital Platforms-Military Nexus. *Review of Political Economy*, 37(4), 1632–1663.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09538259.2024.2395832>





# The Digital-Military-Industrial Complex

## US Military to Big Tech

Technology

Funding

Access

Privilege

Testing

## Big Tech to US Military

Services

Surveillance

Soft power

Flexibility

Cover

A REUTERS SPECIAL REPORT

# Musk ordered shutdown of Starlink satellite service as Ukraine retook territory from Russia

Soldiers panicked and drones surveilling Russian forces went dark.

By Joey Roulette, Cassell Bryan-Low and Tom Balmforth

July 25, 2025 1:00 PM GMT+2 · Updated July 27, 2025





# UN rapporteur: Tech firms and corporations profiting from Israeli 'economy of genocide'

Francesca Albanese says major tech companies and executives should be held to account in new report documenting profiteering from Israeli 'displacement and replacement' of Palestinians



UN Special Rapporteur for the occupied Palestinian territories Francesca Albanese speaking in The Hague in February 2025 (Robin Utrecht/AFP)

By Dania Akkad

Published date: 1 July 2025 14:08 BST





# Panelist Perspectives

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**Virginia Dignum:** Dual use and responsibility: Who, what for, wow?

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**Taylor Woodcock:** Human-machine (learning) interactions: Distinction, precautions and proportionality assessments in armed conflict

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**Martine Jaarsma:** AI decision support systems in targeting: the construction of legal categories by private companies?

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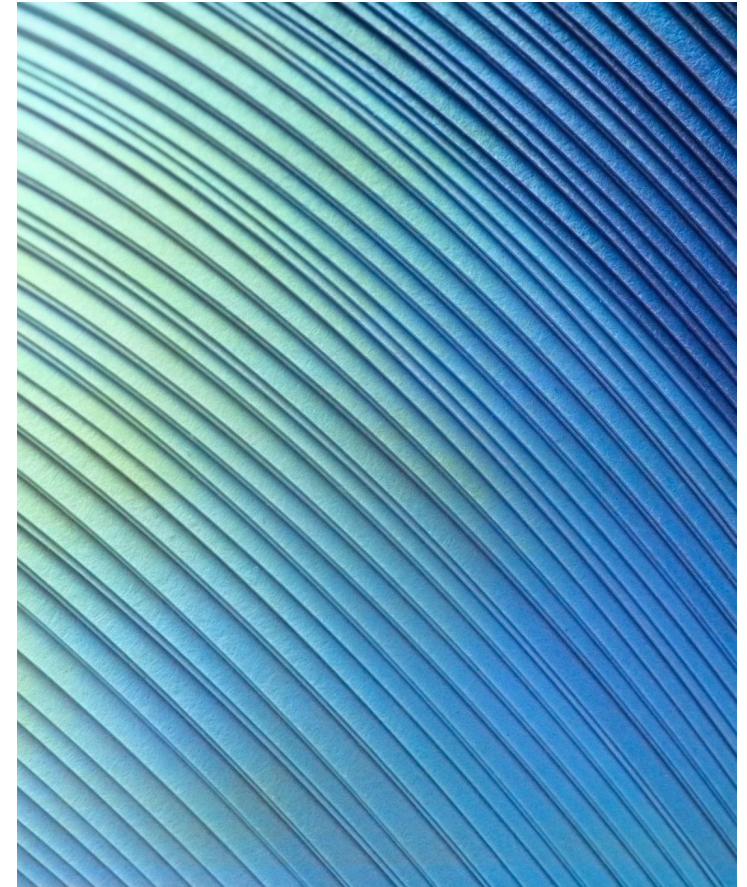
**Ilse Verdiezen:** Comprehensive human oversight of military AI systems

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**Megan Karlshoej-Pedersen:** The role of AI-based systems in increasing the speed and scope of risks to civilians caught in conflict

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**Rainer Rehak:** Technically deconstructing AI-based “targeted killing” as moral red herring to actually enable genocide





# Intended Outcomes



Discussing implications for policy research agenda



Fostering new collaborations or working groups for research, policy action or advocacy



Plan to engage policymakers and defense institutions through targeted stakeholder dialogues



Organizing the next Contestations.AI symposium (in 2026) and opportunities for similar workshops at other conferences?



Developing critical case studies and/or policy research scenarios



Report summarising outcomes for wider circulation and future publications or policy briefs

# Breakout Groups

