



Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Contribution to the Summit of the Future

Operationalizing the Right to Development for the rights of future generations

The Declaration on the Right to Development recognizes the **continuity of development processes** across generations. The right to development pertains to both present and future generations and provides a framework for safeguarding the interests of future generations in decision-making processes that affect the environment, the economy, society and culture.

Solidarity with future generations is anchored in the principle of **intergenerational equity**, i.e. the benefits and burdens of economic, social and environmental decisions need to be shared equitably among different generations. Translating this principle into practice requires:

- Designing **forums** to act as trustees of future generations, and **instruments** to further protect their interests. Technological advances offer the unprecedented capacity to forecast and understand the impact of current policies and activities on future generations;
- Paying attention to the voices and aspirations of **young people**, who are the closest to future generations. They predominantly live in the developing world;
- Protecting the **environment** and addressing climate change and other critical sectors that affect the well-being of future generations;
- **Addressing inequality** within and between States. Most members of future generations will be born in currently low- or middle-income countries; supporting vulnerable communities through social investments will also benefit future generations.

“Recognizing that development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom”

Preamble, Declaration on the Right to Development

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