



Input for the 2024 Reports of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development

By One Future Collective, India¹

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¹ **One Future Collective (OFC)** is a feminist social purpose organisation with a vision of a world built on social justice, led by communities of care. We work with and for people and communities surviving systemic oppression and fight for the right of each person to live a life of safety, dignity and belongingness - by leading research and advocacy, building just institutions and enabling leadership communities. You can read more about our journey so far [here](#).

1. What does the right to development mean for children in line with the relevant policy frameworks and normative instruments? What about the right to development of future generations?

The right to development for children, as enshrined in the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child, encompasses inherent rights such as life, survival, and comprehensive physical, mental, and social development. It mandates access to education, healthcare, and adequate living standards which can be facilitated through their active participation in decision-making processes and protection from exploitation. In line with sustainable development principles articulated in agreements like the Rio Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is a responsibility on present generations to create an environment where these rights are realised by future generations in their entirety. This includes environmental preservation, resource conservation, and fostering intergenerational equity, amongst other actions, to meet the developmental needs of future generations.

Addressing transnational disparities in development burdens and accountability is imperative. Acknowledging global inequities in environmental impacts and resource allocation is crucial for promoting equitable development practices and accountability mechanisms. An intersectional approach is necessary to understand the diverse vulnerabilities and access to resources among children and future generations. Recognising the intersecting factors of age, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status informs more comprehensive strategies for promoting rights-based development. Critically assessing the costs and benefits of development programs, especially those leading to large-scale displacement and land grabbing, is essential. Prioritising the well-being of affected communities and considering social, economic, and environmental impacts are paramount in sustainable development efforts. Furthermore, safeguarding indigenous cultures and knowledge systems is integral to sustainable development. By acknowledging culture as a foundational pillar of sustainable development, efforts can be made to preserve cultural diversity and promote inclusive development practices. In summary, a confident approach to the right to development for children and future generations necessitates holistic, equitable, and rights-based strategies that prioritise their well-being while ensuring the sustainability of resources for future generations.

2. How are the human rights of children and future generations impacted by development-related decisions (e.g., related to economic development or new technologies) made by the present adult generation? Please provide examples from your country or area of work.

In India, development-related decisions made by the adult generation have profound implications for the human rights of children and future generations, especially when viewed through an intersectional feminist lens. These decisions intersect with factors such as caste, class, gender, and ethnicity, exacerbating systemic inequalities and perpetuating injustices. One stark example is the impact of economic development on child labour. While industries like textile manufacturing and agriculture have grown, they've also led to the exploitation of children, particularly among marginalised communities like Dalits and Adivasis. In Tamil Nadu's textile industry, for instance, young girls from Dalit backgrounds endure hazardous working conditions, compromising their rights to education, health, and safety. Moreover, rapid urbanisation often results in the displacement of indigenous and marginalised communities from their ancestral lands. Construction projects, including dams and highways, frequently force tribal communities to

relocate, disrupting the lives of children and depriving them of their cultural heritage and access to education. In the digital age, the digital divide poses significant educational barriers for marginalised children. Limited internet connectivity and infrastructure in rural areas disproportionately affect Dalit and tribal children, hindering their access to online learning platforms and perpetuating inequalities in educational outcomes based on socio-economic status and caste. Environmental degradation, driven by industrial pollution, disproportionately affects marginalised communities, leading to adverse health outcomes, especially among children. In cities like Delhi, air pollution disproportionately impacts lower-income families, including Dalits and Muslims, exacerbating existing health disparities and violating children's right to a clean environment. Furthermore, gender discrimination perpetuates harmful practices such as child marriage despite legal prohibitions. In Rajasthan, girls from lower caste and impoverished backgrounds are often forced into early marriages, denying them education and autonomy and perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality for future generations. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive strategies prioritising equity, social justice, and the empowerment of marginalised communities. By recognising and addressing the intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression embedded in development-related decisions, India can move towards a more inclusive and equitable society for all its children and future generations.

3. How to ensure a meaningful participation of children and future generations in development-related decisions at all levels (e.g., in policy formulation or impact assessment)? Are there any existing good practices or models?

Ensuring the meaningful participation of children and future generations in development-related decisions from an intersectional feminist perspective is crucial for addressing the complex and intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression faced by marginalised groups in the Global South. Examples from various regions highlight initiatives to promote intergenerational equality while considering factors such as disability, indigenous identity, caste, race, class, and gender. For instance, the Generation Equality Forum, convened by UN Women, serves as a global platform for governments, civil society, and youth to advocate for gender equality. By centering the voices and experiences of diverse groups, the forum seeks transformative change and inclusive policies that promote gender equality and intergenerational justice. In Brazil, participatory budgeting initiatives empower citizens, including marginalised groups such as indigenous communities and people with disabilities, to participate in decision-making processes related to budget allocations. These initiatives promote social inclusion and intergenerational equity by allowing communities to prioritise projects that address their specific needs. Dalit women in India lead grassroots movements and advocacy efforts to challenge caste-based discrimination and gender-based violence. Organisations like the Dalit Women's Self-Respect March mobilise Dalit women to demand justice, access to resources, and recognition of their rights, addressing intersecting forms of oppression faced by marginalised communities. In Latin America, indigenous youth organisations advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples and intergenerational justice. These movements work to preserve indigenous cultures while advocating for land rights, environmental conservation, and social justice, promoting intergenerational equity and sustainability. Similarly, youth-led climate activism movements in Africa mobilise young people to demand urgent action on climate change and environmental degradation. Recognising the disproportionate impact of these issues on marginalised communities and future generations, these movements advocate for climate justice and intergenerational equity. By integrating an intersectional feminist perspective into development practices and policies, stakeholders can address the challenges marginalised groups face in the Global South. This approach promotes intergenerational equality, social justice, and inclusive development for all members of society.

4. How to integrate an intersectional approach to the participation of children to ensure that differentiated impacts on children due to various discriminations, exclusions or vulnerabilities are considered? Kindly share any good practices.

Integrating an intersectional approach to children's participation is crucial for acknowledging and addressing the various forms of discrimination, exclusion, and vulnerabilities that children may face due to their intersecting identities. Here are some strategies and examples from the Global South that demonstrate practical ways to ensure that children's participation processes are inclusive and responsive to their diverse needs and experiences: One essential aspect is establishing inclusive participation mechanisms that cater to children's diverse backgrounds. For instance, organisations like BRAC in Bangladesh create safe spaces where children affected by poverty and other challenges can voice their concerns and participate in decision-making. Moreover, providing intersectional training and capacity-building programs for facilitators and decision-makers is essential. In countries like Brazil, organisations such as Instituto Alana offer training on intersectionality and child participation to professionals working with marginalised children in urban slums, empowering them to engage effectively with diverse groups. Meaningful engagement strategies involving targeted outreach and consultation methods are also key. For instance, the Centre for Child Law in South Africa conducts community workshops and outreach programs in rural areas to ensure that the voices of children from marginalised communities, such as those living in informal settlements, are heard and valued. Collecting disaggregated data on children's experiences is vital for understanding and addressing intersecting inequalities. In India, organisations like Pratham conduct surveys that disaggregate data by gender, caste, and socio-economic status to identify disparities in access to education and advocate for targeted interventions. Lastly, policy and programmatic responses should mainstream intersectionality into child rights policies. For example, in Kenya, the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Development has developed a National Policy on Gender and Development that integrates intersectional approaches to address the specific needs of marginalised children, such as girls with disabilities or those living in rural areas. By implementing these strategies and drawing on examples from the Global South, stakeholders can ensure that children's participation processes are inclusive, responsive, and meaningful, promoting social justice and equity for all children, regardless of their identities and backgrounds.

5. What measures should be taken to protect and empower child human rights defenders?

Protecting and empowering child human rights defenders is crucial in ensuring their safety, well-being, and effectiveness in advocating for children's rights. Governments, civil society organisations, and international actors must take decisive actions to achieve this. By enacting and enforcing laws safeguarding child human rights defenders, providing training and capacity-building programs, ensuring access to information and legal resources, raising awareness of their contributions, and mobilising international support and solidarity, we can effectively protect and empower child defenders. Several successful initiatives from around the world demonstrate the effectiveness of these measures. For example, Colombia's 'Protection Program for Human Rights Defenders' provides bodyguards, panic buttons, and safe houses to safeguard child defenders. The 'Youth Advocacy Network' by Plan International offers workshops, mentorship, and global resources to empower young activists. Networks like 'Child Rights Connect' provide a platform for child defenders to connect, share information, and access resources supporting their advocacy work. The International Children's Peace Prize honours

outstanding child defenders annually, providing visibility and support to their advocacy efforts. The United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children promotes policies and practices worldwide that support and protect child defenders. By implementing these measures and learning from successful initiatives, we can effectively defend and empower child human rights defenders, enabling them to fearlessly advocate for the rights and well-being of children globally.

6. How to create child-friendly judicial and non-judicial remedial mechanisms to address violations of children's rights in the context of development policies, projects or programmes?

Establishing child-friendly judicial and non-judicial remedial mechanisms to address violations of children's rights in development contexts is crucial for safeguarding the well-being of children globally. Countries can draw inspiration from successful examples worldwide and confidently implement effective strategies tailored to their needs and circumstances. One such example comes from South Africa, where specialised Children's Courts have been established to handle cases involving children, including violations of their rights in development contexts. These courts employ child-friendly procedures and personnel trained in child rights law, ensuring that the child's best interests are prioritised in legal proceedings. Similarly, Norway's Ombudsman for Children is an independent institution dedicated to promoting and protecting children's rights. By providing children with a platform to voice their concerns and advocating for child-friendly policies and practices in development projects, the Ombudsman confidently contributes significantly to ensuring children's rights are upheld. In Canada, Youth Advisory Councils at both federal and provincial levels confidently empower young people to participate in decision-making processes and advocate for their rights. Through these councils, children and youth confidently play active roles in shaping policies and programs that affect them, contributing to more inclusive and child-centred development initiatives. Costa Rica has confidently implemented a child-friendly justice system, incorporating specialised procedures, protocols, and training to ensure that children's voices are heard and their rights respected throughout legal proceedings. This system confidently prioritises children's well-being and ensures they receive appropriate support and protection in the justice system. Sweden's use of Child Impact Assessments confidently evaluates the potential effects of policies, programs, and projects on children's rights and well-being, identifying and addressing potential risks and confidently ensuring that children's interests are considered in decision-making processes related to development. By confidently adopting and adapting these successful examples, countries can establish child-friendly judicial and non-judicial remedial mechanisms tailored to their unique contexts. These mechanisms are vital in promoting children's rights, holding duty-bearers accountable, and ensuring that development projects prioritise children's best interests.

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www.onefuturecollective.org
info@onefuturecollective.org