

Building Hopeful Futures – Implementing the Declaration on Future Generations

From Declaration to Delivery: How Future Generations Governance Drives Transformative SDG Action

Date: Tuesday, 14th July 2026

Location: Baha’i International Community United Nations Office + Hybrid

The Dialogue Session on “How Future Generations Governance Drives Transformative SDG Action” was hosted by the **School of International Futures (SOIF)** in partnership with champions of the Declaration for Future Generations (DFG). Convened on the margins of the 2026 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the dialogue explored how the Declaration can accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by strengthening long-term governance at national and multilateral levels. The discussion sought to move from **declaration to delivery** by showcasing practical innovations, **connecting emerging practice with multilateral processes**, and identifying opportunities to embed the principles of the DFG within the future of global governance. By convening policymakers, Member States, UN representatives, civil society, academia and youth leaders, the Dialogue highlighted how long-term governance can help translate the ambitions of the Declaration into **practical action**, while strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda and laying the foundations for the 2028 review of the Declaration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Three key messages emerged from the discussion:

1. The Declaration provides a unifying framework for a changing global landscape

Against a backdrop of geopolitical fragmentation, accelerating risks and uneven progress towards the SDGs, participants described the Declaration as **a unifying framework that offers hope, agency and shared responsibility to current and future generations**. Rather than introducing a new policy agenda or creating new institutional mandates, the **Declaration provides a common framework through which governments, the United Nations and wider society can strengthen existing efforts on sustainable development, resilience, participation and institutional reform**.

The discussion reinforced that future generations governance is fundamentally a whole-of-society endeavour requiring collaboration across governments, legislatures, civil society, academia, youth, the private sector and international organisations. Strengthening long-term governance was therefore framed not as a parallel agenda, but as an enabling approach that can improve public decision-making across sectors while building more resilient, inclusive and anticipatory institutions capable of addressing both present and future challenges.

Taken together, these reflections positioned the Declaration not simply as a political commitment, but as a practical framework for helping societies navigate uncertainty while creating stronger foundations for sustainable development and intergenerational fairness.

2. Momentum behind the Declaration is increasingly translating into implementation

Evidence shared throughout the session demonstrated that **implementation of the Declaration is already generating practical innovation across multiple levels of governance**. At the **multilateral level**, the Jamaican Ambassador highlighted the work of the Group of Friends, the mainstreaming of the Declaration within the UN80 process, and discussions with the PGA on how its principles and mandates can help frame upcoming multilateral conversations. Participants also emphasized the importance of mainstreaming the Declaration in other international fora, and work underway to do so, including the G20.

At the **national level**, there were excellent examples of the Declaration driving innovative action within **governments**, such as Argentina's bicameral Committee for the Future and the Netherlands' civil service scrutiny and accountability check, as well as through **civil society and youth initiatives**, including citizens' assemblies in Nigeria and Ireland. A consistent theme across the examples was that the strongest and most impactful work **connected government and civil society**.

This growing body of practice demonstrates that the conversation around the Declaration has evolved from political commitment to practical implementation. Increasingly, attention is shifting towards how successful innovations can be connected, adapted and scaled across different governance contexts.

3. The next phase is about further consolidation as we approach the halfway point to the 2028 review

Looking ahead, participants agreed that the next phase of work is no longer about demonstrating that implementation is possible. Across governments, legislatures, international organisations and civil society, an increasingly diverse ecosystem of implementation is already emerging. The priority now is to **strengthen the connections between these efforts, consolidate practical experience and ensure that progress continues through future political and institutional transitions.**

Four key insights from the country case studies:

1. **Nigeria (Rivers State):** A strong example of how the Declaration on Future Generations (DFG) can inspire action and long-term governance in fragile states and fragile democratic contexts. It demonstrated how it can inspire and support action by young people, leading to calls for legislation and engagement with senior political leadership, creating momentum for longer-term institutional change.
2. **The Netherlands:** A compelling example of intergenerational policymaking in practice, built on scrutiny, transparency, accountability, and the gradual building of trust. It also highlighted the importance of being specific about the issues being addressed, ensuring that the agenda moves beyond warm words to tackle concrete policy challenges, such as student loans.
3. **Ireland:** A powerful example of both the recipe and the roadmap for whole-of-society LTG coalition building. It showed how legislation and political leadership can connect effectively with local government action, technical capacity-building efforts, and citizen engagement processes, including citizens' dialogues and academic engagement.
4. **Argentina:** An important example of how legislative and governance processes can be connected to resource decision-making. It highlighted the value of grounding long-term governance in specific policy issues, such as climate change and mineral extraction, while reinforcing that these major debates require broad participation. Thinking about future generations and acting in the long term is ultimately everyone's responsibility.

The next steps

1. **Locking in multilateral progress on the DFG.** There was a strong sense of the importance of embedding and institutionalizing the progress made around the DFG and future generations. Four ideas emerged:
 - a. **Communicate the broad support for the DFG** as a unifying framework and a key way of thinking about the future of the UN and the multilateral system, including at UNGA in September.
 - b. **Ensure the DFG is reflected in upcoming multilateral discussions.** One immediate opportunity is the Beyond GDP process, where Spain has already invited comments, making this a timely priority.
 - c. **Continue exploring institutionalization mechanisms at the UN.** The Kenyan Deputy Permanent Representative reiterated the importance of establishing a Special Envoy for Future Generations, while wider discussions highlighted the need for durable institutional arrangements. Following the session, some participants also suggested exploring the possibility of a Security Council resolution as another promising avenue for embedding the agenda.
 - d. **Shape the conversation around the next Secretary-General and the post-2030 agenda.** SG Guterres has established that the role is a steward for future generations, not only the present – it would be valuable to ask the candidates their support for this position? There was also a strong sense that conversations need to begin now to build long-term planning and future generations thinking into discussions on the post-2030 agenda.
2. **Building the connective tissue for global learning and action.** The second theme was the importance of continuing to connect the growing range of innovations and initiatives emerging at city, national, regional, and multilateral levels. Participants emphasized the need to surface and share good practice, celebrate successes, identify emerging opportunities, and maintain momentum by strengthening the connections across the wider community of practice.

To support this, participants were invited to share and [complete a survey](#) that will inform an independent mid-review stocktake to be published at UNGA.

FULL SUMMARY

The 2026 HLPF, convened under the theme "Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals for leaving no one behind," provided a timely opportunity to explore how the DFG can help accelerate implementation of the SDGs and intergenerational fairness through stronger long-term governance. As the international community approaches the midpoint between the adoption of the Declaration at the 2024 Summit of the Future and its 2028 review, the Dialogue examined how future generations thinking can strengthen governance, improve decision-making, and translate global commitments into practical action.

Against a backdrop of growing global uncertainty and only limited progress towards the SDGs, the Dialogue explored how the Declaration provides a unifying framework for hope, agency and collective action while showcasing how future generations thinking is already informing governance innovation across governments, legislatures, civil society and the multilateral system. Building on previous DFG Dialogue Series discussions, participants examined how practical implementation is evolving across institutions and countries, and how these experiences can inform wider international processes, including UN80, the Beyond GDP agenda and preparations for the post-2030 development framework.

In particular, the session highlighted:

- Mainstreaming future generations thinking across multilateral processes, including UN80, the Group of Friends on Future Generations, the Beyond GDP agenda and other emerging international discussions.
- Embedding long-term governance within national institutions through practical innovations such as legislative reforms, intergenerational policy scrutiny, strategic foresight and accountability mechanisms.
- Strengthening whole-of-society approaches by connecting governments with civil society, youth, academia and citizens to co-design and implement long-term governance solutions.
- Building a more connected ecosystem for implementation, enabling countries and institutions to share practical innovations, strengthen peer learning and accelerate progress towards the 2028 review of the Declaration.

- Shaping the future of international governance, including preparations for the post-2030 agenda and ensuring future generations thinking remains embedded within evolving UN institutions and leadership.

The Dialogue demonstrated that the conversation around the Declaration has shifted from asking why long-term governance matters to exploring how it can be implemented across institutions, governments and the multilateral system. In doing so, it underscored that long-term governance is not a parallel agenda, but an increasingly important enabler of sustainable development, institutional resilience and more anticipatory public decision-making.

The Declaration on Future Generations Provides a Unifying Framework for a Polarized Global Environment

Against a backdrop of geopolitical fragmentation, accelerating risks and declining trust in institutions, participants presented the Declaration not simply as an outcome of the Summit of the Future, but as a practical framework for strengthening governance, improving decision-making and supporting more anticipatory approaches to public policy.

Participants emphasised that the Declaration offers a positive vision centred on hope, agency and shared responsibility to current and future generations. Rather than creating a new policy agenda, it provides a common framework capable of connecting existing efforts on sustainable development, resilience, participation and institutional reform while encouraging more joined-up approaches to governance.

Opening the Dialogue, Kenya's Permanent Representative to the United Nations highlighted the importance of moving from reactive to anticipatory governance through greater investment in strategic foresight, science, innovation and international cooperation. Drawing on national experience, participants reflected on the importance of embedding future generations thinking into everyday policymaking while strengthening international solidarity to address shared challenges. The discussion also reaffirmed the value of institutional mechanisms capable of sustaining long-term thinking, including continued interest in proposals such as a United Nations Special Envoy for Future Generations.

The session emphasized the importance of adopting whole-of-society approaches that bring together governments, legislatures, civil society, academia, youth and the private sector. Future generations governance was therefore presented not as the responsibility of a single institution or policy community, but as a shared endeavour requiring collaboration across sectors and levels

of governance. Collectively, the discussion reinforced the Declaration's role as **both** a political commitment and a practical governance framework, capable of helping societies respond to immediate challenges while strengthening the institutions, partnerships and accountability needed to safeguard future generations.

Momentum Behind the Declaration is Increasingly Translating Into Action

Mainstreaming at the UN Level: Embedding Future Generations Thinking Across the Multilateral System

The Dialogue demonstrated that implementation of the Declaration is already generating meaningful innovation across multiple levels of governance. At the multilateral level, participants highlighted growing efforts to embed the principles of the Declaration within existing UN processes rather than treating future generations governance as a standalone agenda.

The Group of Friends on Future Generations continues to play a central role in maintaining political momentum and supporting implementation following the Summit of the Future. Participants also highlighted opportunities presented by the UN80 process, where strategic foresight, anticipatory governance and longer-term thinking are increasingly informing discussions on mandate implementation and institutional renewal.

Rather than creating parallel structures, participants emphasised the importance of building on existing processes and institutions. Initiatives such as UN80, the Beyond GDP agenda, the Group of Friends on Future Generations and engagement with successive Presidents of the General Assembly were presented as opportunities to strengthen existing governance architecture while embedding longer-term thinking within ongoing institutional reform. They emphasised that future generations governance should act as a connective framework that links and strengthens existing initiatives rather than duplicating them. Participants also highlighted opportunities to reinforce the principles of the Declaration through the G20 and early discussions on the post-2030 development framework.

National innovations: Demonstrating Implementation in Practice

The Dialogue showcased a diverse range of national and local innovations, demonstrating that there is no single pathway for implementing the Declaration. Across different political and institutional contexts, countries are adapting shared principles through legislative reform, strategic foresight, participatory governance and accountability mechanisms, illustrating the flexibility of the Declaration as a framework for practical action.

The Netherlands illustrated its Generation Test as a practical mechanism for strengthening intergenerational fairness within public decision-making. By introducing greater scrutiny of long-term impacts during policy development, the initiative seeks to improve transparency, accountability and the quality of policymaking while ensuring that future generations are considered alongside present-day priorities. Participants also highlighted the importance of meaningful public participation, particularly by young people, as an integral component of forward-looking governance.

Nigeria's Rivers 2050 initiative demonstrated how long-term governance can emerge through citizen-led innovation, even in complex governance environments. Bringing together thousands of citizens, young people, experts and community organisations to develop a shared long-term vision, the initiative illustrated how participatory foresight can strengthen public ownership while laying the foundations for more durable institutional reforms supported by legislation.

Argentina showcased the role of legislative institutions in embedding long-term thinking within democratic decision-making. Discussion focused on how parliamentary mechanisms can strengthen oversight, encourage more strategic approaches to natural resource governance and climate policy, and create institutional spaces where future impacts become part of everyday policymaking.

Ireland's experience highlighted the importance of building broad coalitions to sustain implementation over time. By connecting government, local authorities, civil society, academia and citizens, participants illustrated how whole-of-society approaches can strengthen institutional resilience while embedding long-term governance across multiple levels of decision-making. Alongside legislative reform, emphasis was placed on building futures literacy, strengthening institutional capability and creating enduring partnerships capable of carrying implementation forward.

Although these examples reflected diverse governance contexts, several common lessons emerged. Successful implementation depended on embedding long-term thinking within existing institutions rather than creating parallel structures, connecting governments with wider society, and linking strategic foresight to practical decision-making. Collectively, the examples demonstrated that the Declaration's greatest strength lies not in prescribing a single model of governance, but in providing a flexible framework through which countries can adapt shared principles to their own institutional realities while contributing to a growing ecosystem of practice.

From Momentum to Movement: Connecting and Sustaining Momentum Towards 2028

Participants welcomed the growing momentum behind implementation of the DFG while recognising that the next phase of work will require moving beyond isolated examples of innovation towards a more connected and sustained global effort. Across governments, legislatures, civil society, academia and international organisations, a diverse ecosystem of implementation is beginning to emerge. The challenge is no longer whether innovative approaches exist, but how to connect them, strengthen institutional resilience and ensure that progress continues through future political and leadership transitions.

As preparations begin for the 2028 review of the Declaration, participants emphasised the importance of consolidating emerging practice, strengthening peer learning and demonstrating how future generations governance can improve decision-making across different political and institutional contexts. Capturing practical experience, identifying common lessons and communicating successful implementation examples will be essential to building confidence and supporting wider adoption. Participants identified two priorities for sustaining momentum in the years ahead:

- To continue embedding future generations thinking within broader multilateral processes, including UN80, the Beyond GDP agenda, preparations for the selection of the next Secretary-General and discussions on the post-2030 development framework, while maintaining political leadership through Member States, successive Presidents of the General Assembly and other institutional champions.
- To strengthen the ecosystem supporting implementation by connecting practitioners across governments, legislatures, civil society, academia and international organisations; conducting a stocktake of emerging innovations and governance mechanisms; strengthening knowledge exchange and peer learning; and building an enduring community of practice capable of carrying implementation forward through future political and institutional transitions.

Ultimately, the Dialogue concluded that the opportunity ahead goes beyond implementing the Declaration. It lies in connecting the growing ecosystem of actors, institutions and innovations already working to advance future generations governance. By strengthening collaboration, sharing practical experience and celebrating emerging successes, participants underscored that future generations thinking can become an enduring feature of national and multilateral decision-making in the lead-up to the 2028 review and beyond.

**Representatives from the following
were in attendance at the event:**

Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam
Permanent Mission of Jamaica
Permanent Mission of the Netherlands
Permanent Mission of Kenya
Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Permanent Mission of the Russian
Federation
Permanent Observer Mission of the
African Union
UN Executive Office of the
Secretary-General
UNFPA
UNU
UNDESA
UNDP
Pathfinder International
Giving Tuesday
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Coalition for the UN We Need
IDLO
UN Foundation
Coalition 2030
International Rescue Committee
Global Affairs Development Union
Team Wonder
Forum for the Future
Starling Institute
Outright International
Baha'i International Community
United Peoples
Kiplomacy
The New School
University of Texas at Austin
O.P. Jindal Global University Sonipat India
The GovLab at New York University
The Stimson Center
Global Governance Innovation Network

Annex 1. The **Foresight Governance Prism**, from the [Working for Current and Future Generations: Handbook on DFG Implementation](#) (SOIF, 2024).

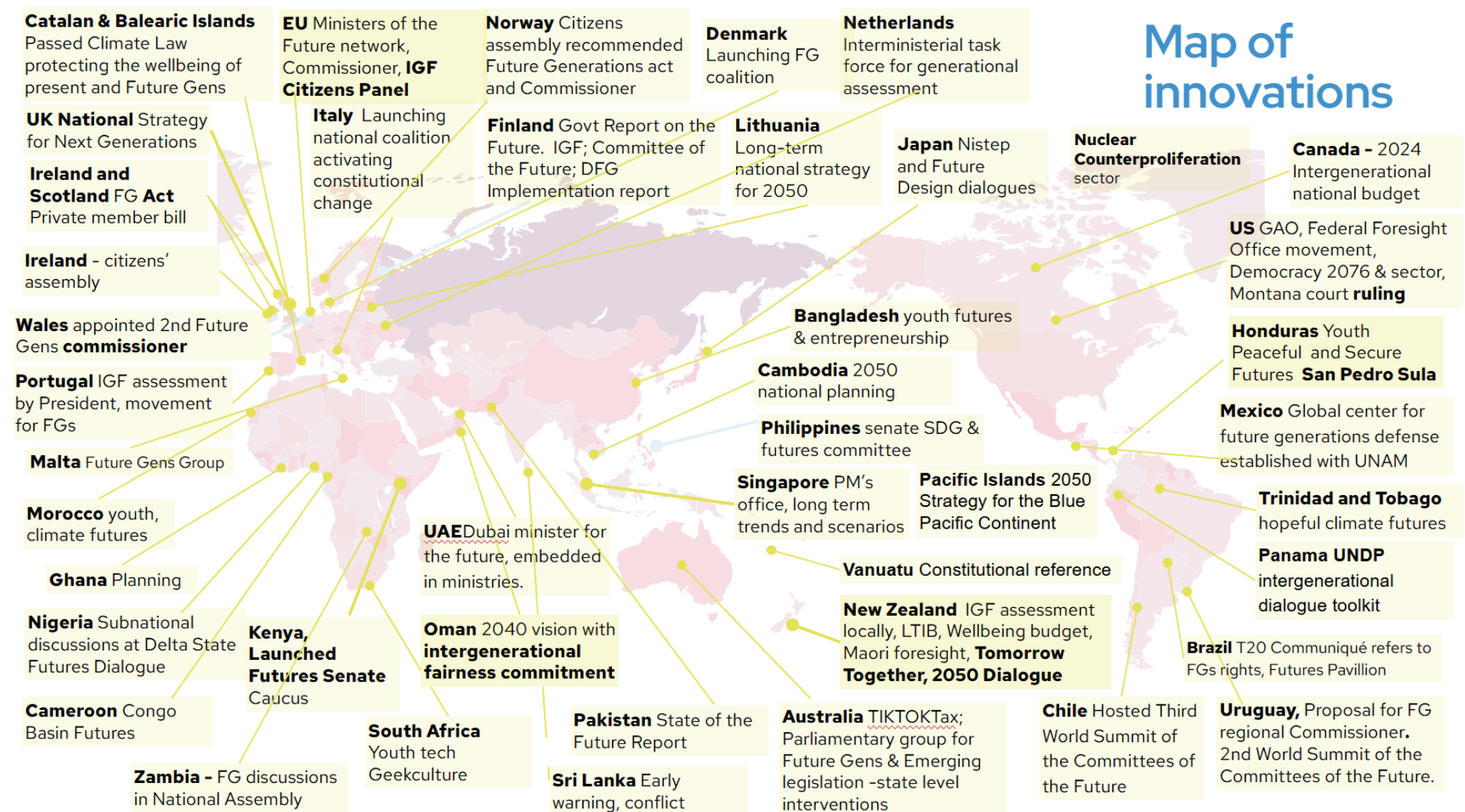
Figure 1: The Foresight Governance Prism



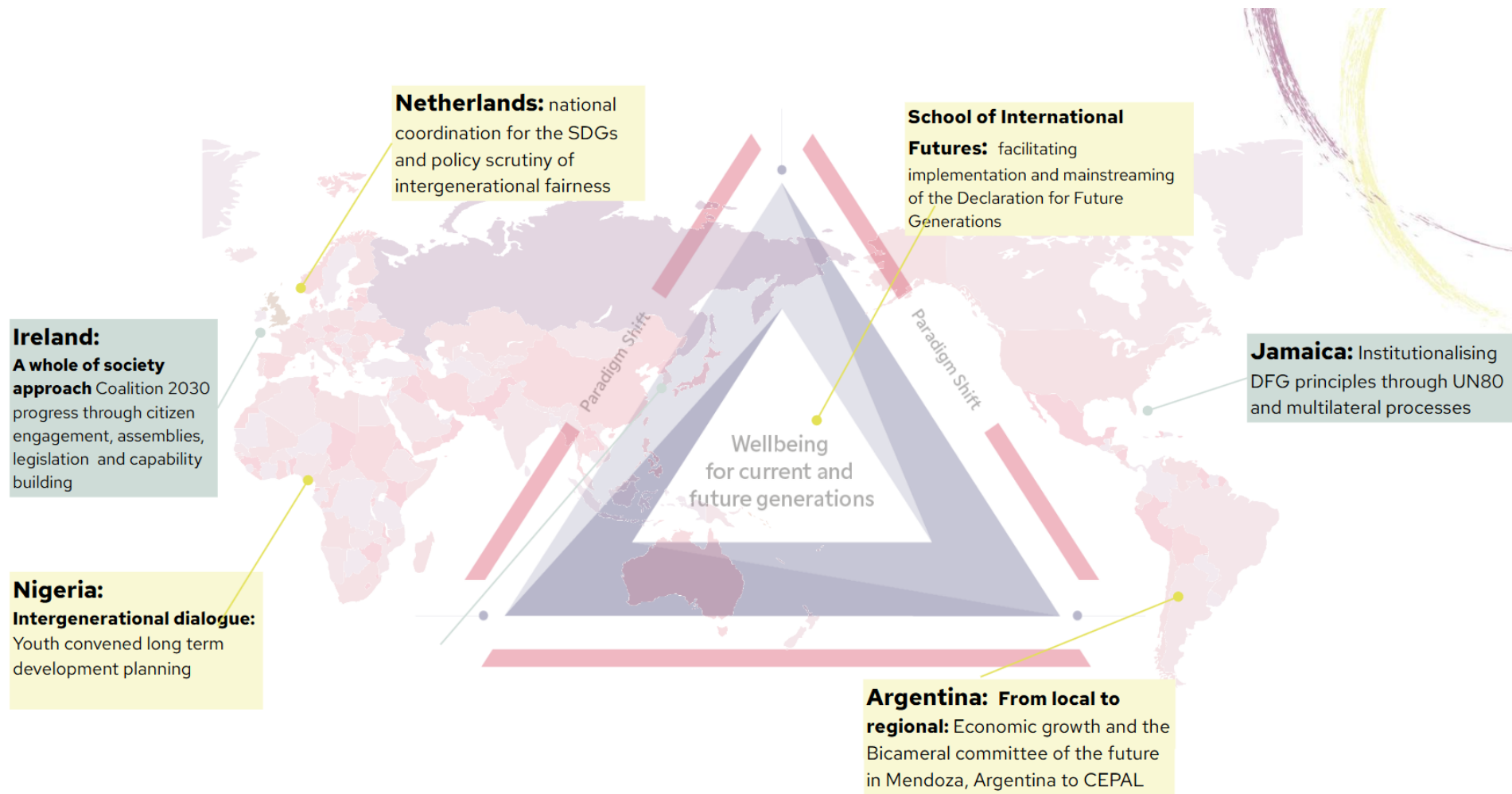
For further information on [in-country innovations, technical advice on national level mapping and implementation or opportunities for engagement](#), please contact:

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Annex 2. Long-Term Governance Innovations Across the World



Annex 3. National Long-term Governance Innovations reflected by speakers



Annex 4. Event agenda

Agenda

I. Opening Remarks

- ★ H.E. Ambassador Yabesh Monari, Deputy Permanent Representative, Kenya

II. Framing Remarks

- ★ Cat Zuzarte Tully, Managing Director, School of International Futures

III. Mainstreaming at the UN Level

- ★ H.E. Ambassador Brian Wallace, Permanent Representative, Jamaica

IV. National Innovations

- ★ **The Netherlands:** Anna Pot, National Coordinator for the SDGs and Anouk Graal, Youth Representative
- ★ **Nigeria:** Udokanma Georgewill, Steering Committee Member and Ebenezar Wikina, Convener, Rivers 2050 Vision
- ★ **Argentina:** Javier Vitale, Director of the Center for Foresight Studies at the National University of Cuyo and Assistant Economic Affairs Officer, ILPES, ECLAC
- ★ **Ireland:** Catherine Carty, Coalition 2030

V. Open Discussion

- ★ Interventions from government and civil society in the room

VI. Closing Remarks