URBAN YOUTH DECLAR ACTION

Otavalo, Ecuador
We, the indigenous representatives of youth organizations from Otavalo and its surroundings, gathered at the first National Urban Youth2030 Forum at the behest of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in the City of Otavalo, Ecuador, on March 12, 2022, in view of our right to the city, and expressing our intention to work with all stakeholders towards the meaningful inclusion of young people in sustainable urbanization, towards inclusive, safe and prosperous cities and communities for generations to come, and,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:

That indigenous youth are an especially important part of urban settlements and that our dynamism, skills, creativity, and commitment contribute to the construction of a better urban future;

That we have unique problems and challenges, which at the same time constitute opportunities to improve cities, such as:

I. Culture and heritage

Misinformation and the lack of knowledge about indigenous culture;
The lost of the indigenous language;
The invisibility of the historical legacy of the community.

II. Environment

Contamination of water sources;
Poor waste management;
Expansion of the agricultural frontier and deforestation;
Excessive consumption;
Lack of environmental education.
III. Quality education

Lack of communication and teacher-student relationship;  
Sexual and reproductive education limited by taboos and stereotypes;  
Lack of importance and focus on mental health;  
Lack of programs that promote civics and culture issues.

IV. Economic growth and employability

The requirement of years of experience to access a decent job but no opportunities to gain experience;  
The lack of job training for young people.

V. Land and property

A conformist society and disengagement from the community;  
Bureaucracy in land registration processes;  
Ignorance of processes, laws, and legalization;  
Conflicts between relatives and invasion of property;  
Absence of updated written documentation.

VI. Gender equality

Harassment, violence, discrimination, and misogyny directed towards indigenous women and girls;  
Femicide; physical and psychological abuse;  
Stereotypes and gender roles that replicate inequality.
That it is necessary to strengthen links and alliances between the various actors of integral development in the city of Otavalo, as well as around the world to create networks of exchange and action. Such actors include:

1. The Mayor’s Office of Otavalo
2. Ministry of Environment
3. Ministry of Education
4. Ecuador’s 221 GADs in a shared effort
5. Undersecretariat for Land Use, Land Management and Cadastre
6. Cantonal Council for the Protection of Rights
7. United Nations
8. Educational Systems
9. Neighborhood and community leaders
10. Teachers and professors
11. Individuals in the community
12. Owners of land, plots, and soil

That the coordinated involvement of local and national governments to advance innovative and revolutionary agendas for young people is of fundamental importance;

That the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is an opportunity to focus on youth action with the purpose of “leaving no one or any territory behind”;

That the New Urban Agenda issued in Otavalo in 2016 is another pillar for comprehensive development of young people that can be achieved with their participation;

That for the achievement of the above purposes, it is necessary to enhance the strength that each young person and their organizations, to advance with concrete actions towards a future in which everyone can benefit and prosper, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic situation.

That we have created this space, the Youth2030 National Urban Forum, to openly discuss crucial issues identified by the young participants and to find sustainable and inclusive solutions;
WE MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

1. We call for an inclusive, democratic, diverse, and participatory society for the defense of indigenous young people to exercise their rights.
2. We call for more sustainable systems based on community education, social co-responsibility, and a revival of cultural practices and beliefs.
3. We seek to reclaim the historical memory of indigenous peoples; who we are, where we are from and where we come from; through tangible and intangible heritage with a human rights approach.
4. We desire to influence the change of the educational system and generate alternative spaces for the improvement of the quality of life of young people.
5. We desire a society with equal opportunities for decent work.
6. We call for the strengthening of indigenous identities, and the recognition of our land and territory from patrimonial and community structures for ours and future generations.
7. We desire a society in equality between men and women; free of violence and with equal opportunities.
8. We do not normalize violence.
RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

To fulfill these commitments, we believe all of society must unite. At the Otavalo Youth2030 Forum, we identified what each key stakeholder needs to do to support meaningful youth action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Young people** must:

1. Improve your will;
2. Take care of our common home, the earth does not belong to human beings, rather human beings belong to the earth;
3. Develop together with our peers, processes and projects for sexual and reproductive education;
4. Build capacity;
5. Monitor and evaluate policies, processes, projects, and activities related to youth;
6. Work in a peer-to-peer manner on all axes and levels of action;
7. Seek for updates in land legalization processes; and
8. Seek for the recognition of ownership, and the legalization of indigenous land towards establishing property titles.

**National governments** must:

1. Pass environmentally responsible policies with an ecosystems approach;
2. Prioritize the budget for formal education and alternative education;
3. Survey students to see the shortcomings in the education system;
4. Restore heritage assets from history;
5. Improve the quality, access to, and permanence to education;
6. Prioritize the mental health of the youth in its diversity; and
7. Generate public policies with affirmative actions to access employment and entrepreneurship processes.
Local governments must:

1. Strengthen the waste management system from the source;
2. Democratize cultural spaces and processes;
3. Promote financial education processes;
4. Train teachers to reach students more assertively;
5. Create spaces of attention in the matter of property titles; and
6. Conduct training workshops for community leaders, so that they become a point of information or guidance for citizens who need more direction.

United Nations agency must:

1. Strengthen advocacy; and
2. Give training classes for young people to help them cope with working life.

Intergovernmental organizations must:

1. Provide spaces for attention and information according to its competence;
2. Provide protocols for action; and
3. Normalize issues related to mental health, implement talks aimed at students and parents.
Civil society must:

1. Continue community volunteering programs such as Cleaning Mingas;
2. Create processes of participation and articulation for social generalities;
3. Strengthen self-learning processes;
4. Create spaces where controversies and taboos are discussed; and
5. Conduct workshops on sexuality and creation of spaces for equal dialogue.

Private sector must:

1. Invest in reforestation and environmental care;
2. Invest in social co-responsibility with an intergenerational approach;
3. Create internet access points to facilitate and enhance learning; and
4. Offer internship programs to give more experience to young graduates to hone their skills.
CLOSURE:

Above are the recommendations and objectives of young people to locate the Sustainable Development Goals in Ecuador. We are ready and willing to partner with our local governments and other stakeholders to join forces towards building more inclusive and sustainable cities and communities. We call on governments and local authorities to take urgent action to ensure that our voices are heard, and actions are taken seriously. As young and responsible citizens who have already been working hard to improve our cities, we pledge to continue to be part of the implementation of the action points outlined in this “DeclarACTION”.

PRESENTED BY:

The participants of the National Urban Forum Youth2030 in Otavalo, Ecuador.
YOUTH 2030 CITIES
YOUTH ACTION FOR THE SDGS
SCAN ME