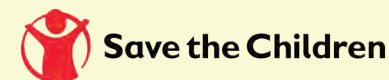


# the cities of our dreams



A safe and child friendly New Urban Agenda





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“...and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements, to foster prosperity and quality of life for all.”

QUITO DECLARATION ON SUSTAINABLE CITIES FOR ALL





# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW FIRST:

## WHAT IS HABITAT III?

Habitat III is a Global Conference that is being held from 17th to 20th October 2016, in the city of Quito in Ecuador. It has been organized by the **United Nations**. Government leaders, parliamentarians, mayors, governors, indigenous people, communities, researchers and representatives from different groups of society, among others, have been invited to participate in this meeting.

The struggle to improve living conditions for people that live in cities has been going on for some time, but there is still a lot to do. Poverty persists and causes inequalities. We children and adolescents are witness to this. Even though a lot of us enjoy the advantages that urban life has to offer, like health, education, sanitation or recreation, a lot of other children living in the same city are still denied basic rights, such as the rights to quality education, comprehensive healthcare, water, basic services, recreational spaces and to be protected from any kind of violence. This directly affects our survival, nutrition and education, among other things.



*Check the glossary at any time for concepts that aren't quite clear to you ;)*

When cities are home to a large number of people, they are called metropolises. Everything related to cities is called urban. Over the last few decades, thousands of people have moved from living and working in the countryside to living and working in cities. These people arrived in the cities with big dreams, but also important needs.

*Did you know that...?*

More than half of the world's population lives in cities. It is calculated that by 2050, four out of five people will live in a city.



## SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Urban Development is the big challenge to be discussed in this conference. This means transforming cities into places that take us all into account and whose resources are used responsibly, always thinking about the needs of both present and future generations.

### THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

In the Habitat III conference, governments are going to commit to the **NEW URBAN AGENDA**. This declaration's objective is to get everyone to work together to build better cities and more just, secure and friendly societies for everyone. It considers both people who live in cities now and people who will live in them in the future.

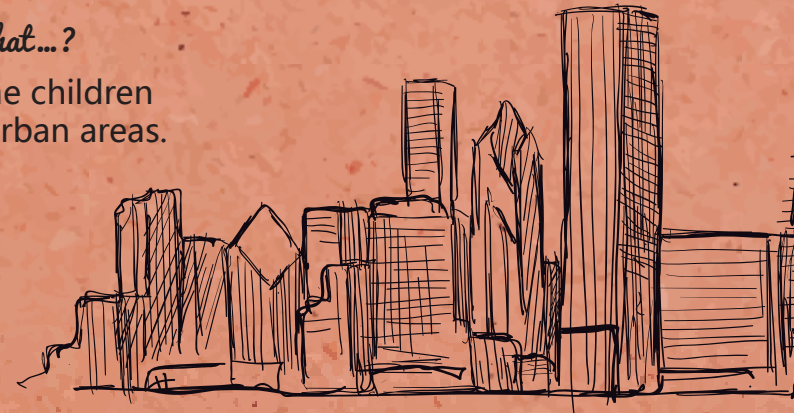
The New Urban Agenda is a great opportunity and will have a big impact on government agendas across the whole world. It must include how to confront poverty, discrimination, insecurity and violence in cities, among other things.

Various initial documents (called drafts) were written in order to produce the final version of the New Urban Agenda. The final document, which contains the issues, intentions and objectives to work towards and which we will describe in more detail later on, was agreed on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

We ask you to read this document attentively and, by answering the questions we ask you, let us know your ideas and proposals. With your help we can build the cities of children and young people's dreams.

*Did you know that...?*

Almost half of all the children  
in the world live in urban areas.





## WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NEW URBAN AGENDA AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

The New Urban Agenda reaffirms States' commitment to confronting poverty, inequality, discrimination and violence, through **sustainable urban development**.

But these efforts are not alone. We also have a global agenda, known as the **Sustainable Development Goals**, or as some people call them, the 2030 Global Goals. These aim to guarantee that people from all over the world live in a more just, equal, safe world that protects our planet for future generations.

There are 17 goals overall and Goal 11 specifically includes the mandate to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.” In other words, improve cities so we can all enjoy living in them equally. Our hopes, our visions and our surroundings must be taken into consideration.




# the cities of our dreams

The New Urban Agenda proposes that ideal cities should include the following elements. We are sure that you have a lot of dreams and ideals too.

- We want cities where everyone's human rights and opportunities are realized
- We want cities where we can all enjoy our rights. Cities with adequate housing that let us live peacefully. With running water in our houses and fresh air and food to nourish us. And adequate public transport, to make our daily lives easier.
- Cities belong to everyone and everyone should feel part of them. They should have friendly areas, where we can spend time with our friends and families. Green spaces that everyone can enjoy, especially children and the elderly. Cities should promote art, culture, political participation and peace. We should all be able to feel safe in them, especially those living in **vulnerable situations**.



- We want to be treated equally and to be listened to. Special attention should be paid to women and children, to ensuring their participation, to them making themselves heard and to them always being listened to.
- We want cities where we can live without violence. All types of discrimination and violence against women and children, in their homes, their schools, on the streets and anywhere else, should be prevented and eliminated.



The challenge of economic growth should be met. It should have a positive impact on our lives and the lives of future generations. Our resources should be looked after and used creatively, taking local economies into consideration.

Cities should be prepared against natural disasters and their inhabitants and authorities should be prepared and ready to act. Climate change must be taken into consideration.

Cities should have public transport that helps link people to their jobs, to public services and to daily city life, in an orderly and organized fashion.

Our natural resources, oceans and rivers, natural environments and ecosystems like woods and deserts, should be protected and respected.



*What other dreams do you have for your city?*

# THE NEW AGENDA'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The New Urban Agenda is also guided by the following principles:

**LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND.** No one must be left out when poverty is eliminated. We should all enjoy the same rights and opportunities, at all stages of our lives and live free from all forms of violence.

**THE ECONOMY SHOULD INCLUDE THE WHOLE POPULATION.** It should focus on PEOPLE as the basis for **sustainable development**. The economy should improve everyone's lives, promote decent work for all and ensure productive and well paid employment. The economy should improve cities and urban surroundings.

**PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT.** Clean energies that do not damage our environment should be promoted. Resources, such as the earth and water, should be given good use. Our ecosystems and biodiversity should be protected. Ways should be found to live healthily. Cities have to be prepared to face up to possible disasters and reduce their risks. It is important to live without damaging others or the environment.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THESE THREE PRINCIPLES? CAN YOU THINK OF ANY OTHER PRINCIPLES THAT SHOULD GUIDE THE NEW URBAN AGENDA?





# *the issues included in the new urban agenda*

## 1. CITIES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

In order to ensure that cities take everyone into consideration and that everyone has the right conditions for their personal development, it is important to consider that:

- Cities should be planned to include quality public spaces, such as parks for everyone to enjoy, cycle lanes for cyclists, art and culture as tools that connect us to our heritage, etc. Cities should make us feel safe and happy.
- Education, health, running water, employment, housing and justice are basic rights and should be defended in an urban environment.
- In order to improve a city, everyone living in it needs to participate. It is important to include people of different ages, especially children and adolescents from different religions, cultures and origins. That will help us to feel included and improve our relationship with the community.
- Violence and delinquency directly affect the lives and peace of people living in the city, particularly women and children. It is necessary to eliminate the inequalities which often lead to young people falling into criminal networks, to change sexist behavior, to educate and to reinforce positive bonds.
- Discrimination is a barrier to development. We need to fight firmly against it. Discrimination affects children, women, indigenous people, people with disabilities, the elderly, the unemployed, those that live on the edge of cities, migrants and refugees, among others. We all have equal rights.





# A story...

## Little Laura

Laura daydreams. How she would like the alleyway in her neighborhood to have streetlights! It's dark, it smells horrible and people are always being attacked there. And people are always saying that "children aren't safe."

We are all scared! But no one does anything about it, thinks Laura, while she wonders what could be done.

A few days ago, her neighbor's son was attacked and he is a big strong boy. Why doesn't anyone do anything?!

Little Laura thinks and dreams as she walks, hastening her pace.

Answer these questions:

**Do you ever feel the way Laura feels?**

**What makes your city insecure?**

**What are the most common situations of violence that children and adolescents have to deal with in your city?**

**What do you think the State could do to prevent violence in your city?**

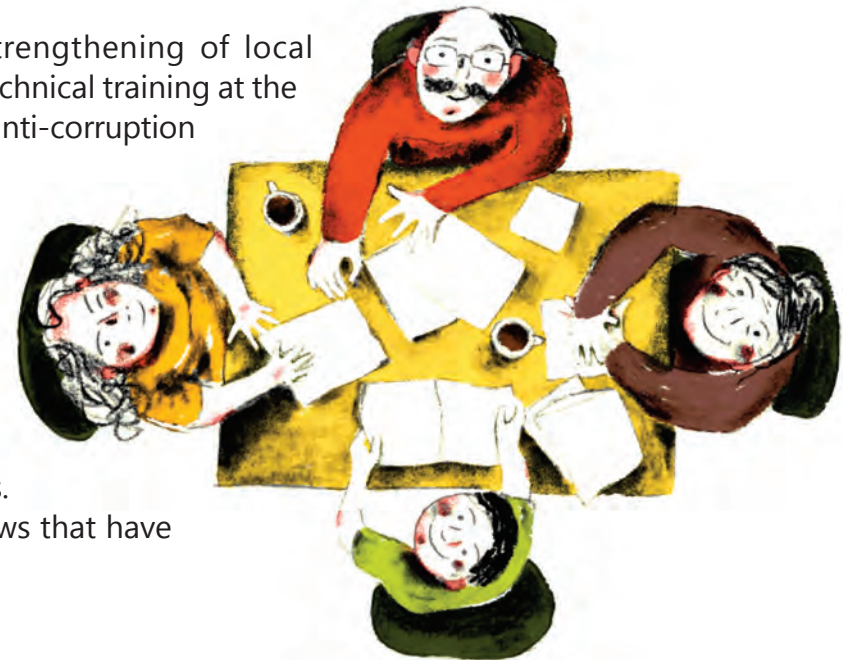


## 2. HOW CITIES WORK

Cities have a specific function. To understand this better, imagine a school. For a school to work properly, you need the director, the teachers and the students to agree on the schools rules, school finances and school projects. It's the same for cities. For them to work properly, they need laws, economic resources and people who are in charge of these things. For example, people who collect taxes so that public works can be implemented, people to think about projects, people to carry out the public works, etc.

For cities to work better, it is necessary to consider the following things:

- The decentralization of the national government and the strengthening of local governments (e.g. municipalities and communities), support for technical training at the different levels and the promotion of transparency, autonomy and anti-corruption measures.
- The municipal government should motivate the active participation of the population, particularly young people and children, in decisions to improve the city.
- In many urban areas, people are affected by their relationship with the law, for example, if they work informally or have informal housing. This puts people into even more vulnerable situations. For this reason, it is necessary to promote quality policies and laws that have a positive impact on people's lives.



*A story...*

## Defending happiness

"We are representatives from the children's organization *Voices and Hope*," said Luisa and Flor as they greeted the Councilor, who had come to inaugurate the new neighborhood sports ground.

"How interesting! Tell me more about your organization!"

"We meet every Friday in the community center, just over there," said Luisa, the smallest of the girls.

"About 20 children participate and we help each other with our homework. Some nice teachers help us too. At the end of the afternoon, we talk about our rights; the teachers have told us what they are," Flor adds.

"This year we gave ourselves the slogan 'Defending happiness'."

"And how is that going?" the Councilor asked, surprised.

"Look, last month we painted this pretty mural. Its message is CHILDREN HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE WITHOUT VIOLENCE.

The next thing we are going to do is organize a party to raise funds to help Juan to buy some new glasses, because his broke playing football. His parents can't afford to buy him any and he can't read without them."

The Councilor was left speechless. He took a minute and then said:

"We need both boys and girls to help us with the arduous task of improving our **community**. I will personally bring you an invitation to participate in the next neighborhood Council meeting. I want to hear what you have to say. Congratulations on everything you are doing!"

### Answer these questions:

Did you learn anything new from this story?

What would you like your neighborhood/ city/ place that you live to be like?

What could you do to improve your city or neighborhood?

What do you think should be done to help local authorities take children and adolescents into consideration?





### 3. CITIES AND PUBLIC SPACE

Streets and public spaces define a city's character and have a positive or negative influence on its inhabitants. Disorganized cities provide a chaotic, informal environment and bring a series of problems with them. Cities that do not take their close relationship with nature and rural areas into consideration run the risk of not being sustainable.

In order to improve cities' designs and make them safer, more organized, more connected and stronger, the following must be taken into consideration:

- Public space should be well used, to generate equality. Streets and cities should be well designed and well-connected so that no one feels isolated. Schools, hospitals, banks, etc. should be well connected by a good public transport network.
- All levels of the State should commit to making cities ready for possible disasters, by developing **quality infrastructure** and providing effective information to homes, schools and communities. Special attention should be paid to homes and schools located in informal settlements and neighborhoods in areas of risk.
- Rural areas, marginal neighborhoods and urban areas should be integrated, because they complement and sustain each other. It is important to promote the connections that unite them, instead of focusing on their differences.
- People and communities should have secure rights to their land and properties. The right to land is a tool to end poverty and hunger.



## 4. CITIES AND THEIR ECONOMIES

In order to have sustainable cities, their economies need to be aimed at achieving sustainability too. To ensure this is the case, the following must be considered:

- It is important for them to have urban economies that, both using local resources and looking towards a global market, promote employment and **decent work** for everyone. This would help to achieve sustainable and strong cities.
- In many cities, informal employment is part of our day-to-day lives. Although it does bring economic benefits, more often than not it puts women and young people in **vulnerable situations**.

### *A story...*

#### **Seven**

Rita is 7. She is a freckly, smiley child. She is the youngest of 7 brothers and sisters. And she has to walk 7 blocks to school. It's not easy, especially the walk back home. The burning sun has given her more than 7 freckles, but she smiles happily. At 7 o'clock her mother will come home. She is always tired, but always ready to give her a cuddle.



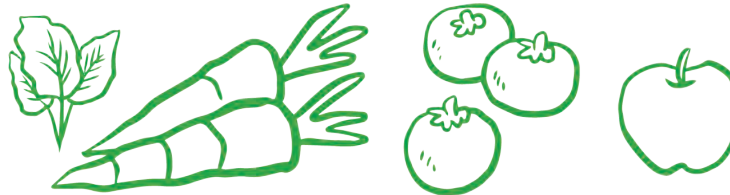
## 5. CITIES, THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

The New Urban Agenda has a special commitment to promoting urban resilience. This is a city's capacity for overcoming disasters or for being prepared to confront them in the best possible way.

- The large amount of people that live and work in cities and the impact that they have on nature mean that we need to be alert and to have thorough plans for confronting possible problems. We need to involve all citizens and all government levels.
- We have the right to a healthy environment. Therefore, we need to protect the earth and its resources, regulate and control gas emissions and manage waste, in order to stop climate change.

*A story...*

**#agardeninmyschool**



"We all have a farmer inside us!" says Alejo firmly, as he starts his presentation for the class's annual project. One of his friends, Lucia, who was the most surprised at what he said, decided to interrupt him. "Who told you that? You're so funny."

"I've heard it since I was a little boy. My grandma repeated it non-stop. She was a farmer and when she arrived in the city she missed the trees, the seeds and the smell of wet earth so much, that she decided to have the most beautiful garden in the neighborhood. No, the most beautiful garden in the whole city! We shouldn't be afraid of gardening, because it's inside of us. Our gardens will be the best!"

Lots of the children joined in the project "A garden in my school." By the end of the year, they had sown and harvested spinach, chard and tomatoes and had made and shared delicious salads. The project was a success and they started to plan for next year's garden.

"Let's plant fruit trees next year!" said Lucia, to a surprised Alejo.



## 6. CITIES AND BASIC SERVICES

The idea of urbanization being for everyone is mentioned all the way through the New Urban Agenda, as a strategy for reducing urban inequality throughout the world.

To achieve this, communities, neighborhoods and human settlements need:

- Quality water. Every home should have clean running water at accessible prices. People should not have to go and find water, as this demands extreme physical labor. Often, women and children are given this task.
- Local governments to invest whatever is needed to ensure waste collection, street maintenance, electricity networks, sewage, etc.
- Adequate security for people's homes. The authorities must ensure quality construction, in safe places and that their inhabitants are protected from extreme climatic conditions.
- Access to sustainable transport. In other words, for everyone to enjoy safe, clean and non-polluting transport, in order to reach possible opportunities.





## A story...

### Alone at home

Simon can't reach the ball that went up onto his kitchen roof.

I shouldn't have kicked it so hard, he thought as he ran to get a brush.

He couldn't reach it and so he decided to climb up there. He thought twice, but carried on.

His mother, Maria, was not at home. She had left him on his own ten minutes ago, as she had many times before when it was time to go and fetch the water.

"It's late and its cold, don't get up to mischief!" she told him.

Maria talked to her neighbors in the queue for the water, all the while looking at her watch and hoping that her son was ok.

I'm nearly there, thought six year old Simon. But he slipped; the buckets that he was using as stairs started to wobble and, suddenly, he fell to the floor.

He couldn't get up. It hurt him too much.

Maria couldn't believe what she was seeing! She immediately dropped her buckets and ran. Confused and panicked, she held on to her son and took him to the medical center.

"It was only two stitches on the side of his eyebrow this time, but it could have been much worse," the nurses warn her.

Maria and Simon walked back home, tired and thoughtful.





Thanks for helping to build and implement a New Urban Agenda. With your help, we can share what children and adolescents dream of for their cities, along with what they think the best strategies are for making them safer, friendlier, more human, more resistant and more respectful of their environment, in the Habitat III Conference.



# GLOSSARY

**United Nations (UN):** created in 1945, the UN is the biggest international organization in the world. Almost all countries are members. Its job is to maintain peace and security in the world, to help resolve the problems that affect us all, to promote respect for human rights and to support all countries so they can work together for these goals.

**Sustainable development:** is a model of development that aims to improve living conditions in the present without affecting future generations' resources. It aims to take others into consideration, respecting them, our surroundings and the planet that we live on.

**Urbanization:** the physical growth of urban areas as a result of migration.

**Decent work:** sums up people's aspirations for their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and that delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. Source: Habitat III Issues Paper 13: Jobs and Livelihoods.

**Vulnerable situations:** difficult living situations that leave us in a fragile state. Examples include children living through armed conflicts, refugees, people living in extreme poverty, etc.

**Community:** a group of people united by a shared interest, who feel they belong to a specific place or geographic space, in which they share their daily lives. In Latin America, neighborhoods or districts tend to be called communities.

**Urban infrastructure:** also called public works, because the State or municipal government are in charge of building it, in response to the needs of a city or country. For example, highways, ports, hospitals, schools, public streetlights, streets, etc.



Find the user friendly version of the Sustainable Development Goals at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=1616&menu=1300>





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