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HABITAT III
ASSEMBLY REPORT

Title of the Assembly:	Children and Youth Assembly
Assembly Component:	Children's Section
Date:	Saturday 15 th October
Time:	9AM – 6PM
Venue:	Casa De La Cultura
Name of leading organizing Institution(s):	World Vision International UN Major Group for Children and Youth
Country/City where leading organizing Institution(s) is/are based:	Global
Contact Person	Jacqueline Trieu Knowledge Management & Project Coordinator, Centre of Expertise for Urban Programming Sharon Lo Regional Focal Point (N&SE Asia) UN Major Group for Children and Youth
Approximate number of participants:	120 children
Number of female participants:	60
Number of male participants:	60

1. Summary of the Assembly reflecting the structure and format

The Children and Youth Assembly provided a formal platform for children and youth to express their experiences of living in a city and propose urban solutions to support and operationalise the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The event welcomed children and youth participants from local, regional and global children and youth led and serving agencies, organisations, networks, and groups. It applied innovative and diverse methods to include young people's voices and expressions on issues that are important for sustainable urbanisation.

Following the opening ceremony, featuring keynote addresses from the Secretary General of Habitat III, Dr Joan Clos; the Minister for Social Development, Gabriela Rosero Moncayo, child representative Ms Emily Daniela Palma Intriago; and youth representative, Ms Sharon Lo, the children and youth groups separated into two parallel activity streams.



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For the children's component of the Assembly, the program of activities highlighted the role of children as potential leaders and empowered agents of change to create 'inclusive and smart cities'. The four activities included:

1. Design an 'inclusive and smart city' using art and plasticine (aged 8-12)
2. Build a child friendly and smart neighbourhoods (aged 8-12)
3. Debate on the meaning of 'inclusive and smart cities' (aged 12-16)
4. 'Map my city' by youth from the slums and informal settlements of Quito (aged 13-16)

The activities were successful in promoting the genuine inclusion and participation of young people to influence the decision makers of the city in designing safe, resilient, prosperous and healthy cities where children can thrive. It aimed to change the perception of the role of young people in shaping cities, and create awareness of the importance of their inclusion and contribution to just, equitable and sustainable cities.

The key recommendations and discussion outputs of the Assembly informed a "Children's Charter", which was launched during the Children and Youth Roundtable and presented to the Secretary General of Habitat III, Dr Joan Clos, during the closing press conference for the Habitat III Conference.

2. Key messages from the discussions:

Rights of a child and genuine participation in urban governance

- Every child and youth should grow up in a fair, just and socially cohesive city; cared for and protected; with equal opportunity to grow, learn and contribute to shaping future cities.
- Children and youth must be recognised as a key resource and agents of change through genuine participation in local, national, regional and global decision-making processes; including in planning and design of cities they live in.
- Children and youth can drive social, political, technological and economic transformation in the city, being knowledge bearers of their local contexts.

Call for the protection of the most vulnerable children, especially from abuse and exploitation:

- Children, especially from migrant groups, become the first casualty of urban poverty and marginalization falling victims to abuse, exploitation and violence. Some of the common forms that occur in informal, unplanned settlements in or near cities are child labour, trafficking and criminal gang violence.

Call for improved access to and quality of urban public services and built environment:

- Inadequate living conditions are among the most pervasive violations of children's rights in urban contexts. The lack of proper planning, especially in the informal areas, and the lack of child-friendly public spaces and green areas result in children being forced to play in dangerous areas.



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- Many newly arrived migrants and refugees of all ages face challenges in accessing their rights and entitlements to urban services (including children's access to education and social services) and opportunities, which impact their ability to fully participate in urban life.

Call for building social cohesion to contribute to inclusive cities:

- Urban development interventions can only be sustainable if they build the sense of community and strengthen social cohesion. However, trust and solidarity is often lacking among urban residents, which is fundamental for maintaining cohesive and strongly networked communities; pre-requisites for the wellbeing of children in urban areas.

3. Action-oriented recommendations/ way forward in the framework of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda [key points only, including specific global, regional and local actions].

- Governments (at local and national levels) need to ensure children and youth are given the space and tools, including through the use of technology, to advocate their needs and views. This can be done establishing permanent structures and platforms for dialogue with young people, especially the most marginalised and vulnerable among them.
- All urban actors, including children and youth, need to collaborate in mutually beneficial cycles of information sharing, in order to become valuable local knowledge assets for local decision-makers to support more inclusive and accurate policymaking and pro-poor interventions.
- Cities need to promote evidence based solutions, increased financial resources and better budget allocations to end violence against children. This should be done through building partnerships across multiple levels, including with businesses and the private sector.
- Cities need to provide an equitable and ethical provision and quality of basic services, and safe spaces to live, learn, develop, and grow in a healthy and stable environment where children and youth can thrive. This lies upon the responsibilities of local and national governments with the support of civil society and private sector.
- All interventions need to promote social cohesion among city residents as key for building collective actions, addressing social tensions and building bridges between diverse groups sharing same geographical boundaries.

4. Key commitments (if any) within the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

[Collective, individual and from the organization represented]

World Vision and its global, regional, national and local partners will continue to address urban vulnerabilities, rising inequalities and exclusion faced by the most marginalised, living in the fragile pockets of the city, as per their organisational mandates. They will continue working with peer international organizations and UN agencies to collaborate with local actors (including local governments) and the private sector and businesses for taking on



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various new strategic roles, depending on the context, to scale up impact and contribution to creating just and inclusive cities for children that are safe, resilient, healthy and prosperous.

5. Way forward and next steps on monitoring the implementation of the outcomes and the commitments from the Assembly.

- The Children's Charter will be shared through World Vision's communication channels and the Habitat III Secretariat, General Assembly of Partners, World Urban Campaign and other participating partners and their associated networks.
- The Children's Charter aims to inform discussions on associated action plans post Habitat III amongst participating child-focused agencies and organisations to operationalise the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. These action plans will also be aligned to the follow-up and review processes of the New Urban Agenda.

6. Proposed partnerships, network and synergies with other stakeholders and constituency groups within the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, emerging from the Assembly.

- Strengthened relationships between children and youth participants from local, regional and global children and youth led and serving agencies, organisations, networks, and groups for post Habitat III collaboration.

7. Outreach and communication strategy to take forward recommendations and commitments for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

- World Vision has media and communications teams placed across its offices nationally, regionally and worldwide. Information on the event outcomes will be shared across World Vision's offices, especially those in Latin America region and Ecuador itself.
- World Vision will also promote the event outcomes through its partners and networks, especially communications platforms available through the General Assembly of Partners and UN-Habitat's World Urban Campaign.