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53 GENERAL
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HEMISPHERIC REPORT

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE YOUTH OF THE AMERICAS TOWARDS THE 53rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

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Preview version

1. Background

The Inter-American Democratic Charter and the Medellín Declaration of the 38th OAS General Assembly emphasize the significance of promoting democratic values in youth. As the 53rd General Assembly of the Organization of American States approaches, the youth of the Americas reaffirm their commitment to maximizing their efforts in addressing current challenges and collaborating with the other actors of the Summit process to provide immediate and long-term responses to the priorities established by the OAS Member States.

During the period 2019 - 2023, the youth participation processes have been integrated through the [Declaration of Commitment and Action Plan](#) created by the VI Young Americas Forum and the [I Report of Contributions of the Youth of the Americas](#) (only available in Spanish), presented at the SIRG, in December 2022.

This document has been systematized by the [Young Americas Business Trust \(YABT\)](#), based on the contributions received from more than 27,000 youth from countries in the hemisphere who raised their voices through various channels of participation: (i) [VI Young Americas Forum](#) held in June 2022, as the official Forum of the IX Summit of the Americas (ii) [I Young Americas Meeting](#) in October 2022, as part of the 52nd OAS General Assembly, (iii) [Policy Lab - Youth and Participatory Democracy](#) during the II Summit for Democracy, in March 2023 and (iv) [I Cities Summit of the Americas](#) in April 2023 and the Dialogue on Migration, Development, and Integration in June 2023.

Through the various consultation processes with the youth, the actions of the youth have been reflected in social impact to help mitigate the development gaps in their communities and their region. This report compiles both the ongoing actions that are already being carried out at the hemispheric level by the youth of the Americas, and the concrete proposals that they have identified according to the needs of their countries.

2. Main Contributions of Youth

The following is a summary of the contributions of youth towards the 53rd OAS General Assembly:

2.1 Climate Change

2.1.1 Actions

- They have led efforts around the construction and approval of environmental public policies. In countries such as the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, El Salvador, and Haiti, among others. This includes the promotion of policies that include Environmental Education bills and the involvement of the population through information guides on environmental legislation to raise awareness.
- They have had an approach with citizen representatives to present the proposals and follow up on the work agenda. For example, in Peru with the Vice Presidency of the Special Commission on Climate Change, where the proposals on Climate Change were announced.
- They have implemented communication strategies and training programs for the population including collection campaigns, reuse of plastics, and reinvention of products from waste. For instance, in Nicaragua they have managed planting and cultivation projects, while in the north of the continent, young people share their skills and knowledge with their communities to improve the soil and create their orchards.
- Young Guatemalans have proposed initiatives focused on the use of biomass briquettes made from sawdust and wood waste, based on the "Waste to Energy" method, in response to the problem of the use of firewood and charcoal.
- Young people from various countries in the region such as Mexico, Peru, Argentina, El Salvador, and Guatemala, developed an application that encourages people to donate and buy clothes, to promote the recycling of garments and raise awareness about clothing waste.
- Young people from Ecuador lead the Bottleyes¹ project to use plastic bottles to produce glasses.
- Young Mexicans who lead the Green Concreta² project contribute to the creation of more sustainable buildings and the development of ecological solutions for urban life.
- Through Siembraco³, Colombian and Guatemalan youth offer a digital platform for the creation of virtual crops that are brought to the field by associated farmers, contributing to reducing the carbon footprint and strengthening forest and agricultural ecosystems.
- Reducing plastic is one of the concerns of Colombian youth who, through the Bagcycle⁴ and Botellas de Amor⁵ projects, contribute to sustainable development.

¹ <https://bottleyes.com/>

² <https://www.instagram.com/greenconcreta/?hl=en>

³ <https://www.siembraco.com/>

⁴ <https://mybagcycle.com/>

⁵ <https://www.instagram.com/botelladeamor/?hl=en>

2.1.2 Proposals

- Public and/or private financing for research and investment in sustainable projects, energy efficiency, clean, sustainable, and quality energy infrastructure.
- Policies that promote and finance the development of green solutions in urban planning, plastic recycling, and substitution with sustainable alternatives.
- Regional and local policies that involve non-governmental actors for reforestation and forest protection.
- National reports on the measurement of the carbon footprint generated by industries to contribute through collective action to entrepreneurship and innovation in the reduction of greenhouse gases and the carbon footprint.
- Inclusion and dissemination of environmental education in educational systems in partnership with youth organizations.
- They suggest strengthening policies for the conservation, management, and protection of water resources, documenting good practices, and sharing lessons to guarantee agreements and effective surveillance mechanisms.
- Ensure the sharing of good practices in sustainable agricultural production through collective initiatives aimed at achieving food security in communities.

2.2 Combating Corruption

2.2.1 Actions

- In countries such as Paraguay, Colombia, and Ecuador, youth network initiatives aimed at civic education have been promoted, through which they seek to put forward responsible governance, as well as raise awareness in society around key concepts, such as democracy, political participation, and transparency, among others.
- In Guatemala, they have held student political training workshops to attract new leaders committed to the population, thus reducing mistrust of their rulers.
- Young people from Colombia have proposed to highlight the importance of collective awareness and focus on generating new habits in the population through a marketing and social media strategy that generates content such as informative videos, challenges, and competitions.
- They have promoted campaigns against corruption and encouraged the political participation of more people through social networks. In Nicaragua and Colombia, they continue to receive training in national and international forums aimed at combating corruption, which has allowed them to delve into the formation of dialogues and alliances for projects with institutions such as USAID.

- Delegates have sought various spaces to raise their voice through interviews and writings, where they have presented control proposals to mitigate corruption, such as transparency, open government, and digital tools, among others.

2.2.2 Proposals

- Updating school curricula with civic education and citizen participation plans, aimed at providing tools and knowledge on government structures, control processes, and accountability.
- Implementation of friendly open data digital platforms, through the monitoring of government administrative offices and the incorporation of information banks, thus promoting the conscious use of new technologies.
- Creation of spaces for non-partisan citizen participation, promoting the inclusive participation of youth and their leadership.
- Implementation of training and integrity standards for public practice, to have more and better public servants in management and control positions.
- Implement transparency mechanisms for the financing of political parties, allowing electoral campaigns to be honest and the electoral process to be clean.
- Implement or reform anti-corruption judicial processes (through mechanisms that allow agile processes, protection of victims, and avoiding impunity).

2.3 Connectivity and digital transformation

2.3.1 Actions

- They have promoted training programs in the use of digital platforms and new technologies with the support of their governments and in cooperation with civil society. In Colombia, preventive health platforms have been built and the acquisition of technological equipment for young people has been financed.
- They have created courses to reduce digital gaps; In the Dominican Republic through training for digital entrepreneurs; In Honduras and Mexico, training in technological skills for young people.
- They have established binational integration channels between youth delegates to promote policies for the implementation of information technologies and innovation between local and regional governments.
- In Colombia, the *Generación Plus Internacional*⁶ network, as a youth initiative, contributes to closing social gaps through digital transformation, employability, competitiveness, and STEAM projects.

2.3.2 Proposals

- Digital education policies at all educational levels include the creation of job opportunities and the collaboration of non-state actors.

⁶ <https://www.instagram.com/generacionplusint/>

- Policies and/or development plans in telecommunications infrastructure focused on rural populations, reducing the digital divide and increasing connectivity and access to digital networks by the entire population in an inclusive manner.
- They request the use of technologies for accountability and access to state information; cooperate to promote cyberactivism as a tool against censorship and disinformation; and the promotion of data protection and education on cybersecurity issues.
- We call for strengthening digital security and the ethical use of data, both at the level of data management and in the prevention of cyberbullying.

2.4 Strengthening Democracy

2.4.1 Actions

- Salvadoran youth, through the work of Youth to Lead⁷, highlights the importance of the non-partisan political participation of young people. Through citizen education, the project encourages their political participation for the benefit of democracy.
- In Peru, the youth organization: Politon - Fortaleciendo la Democracia⁸ promotes tools for political innovation and disseminates topics related to democracy.
- Juventud LAC⁹ is a network of young people committed to defending, strengthening, and consolidating democracy.

2.4.2 Proposals

- Promote media literacy, strengthen regulations, and safeguard the principles of free and fair elections.
- Reinforce the integrity of the information disseminated. The promotion of transparency and accountability of the media, while defending the principles of freedom of expression and freedom of the press.
- Governments must collaborate with civil society organizations, academia, and youth representatives to create effective and inclusive solutions.
- Social media app development should incorporate a fact-checking mechanism before disseminating information to the public, thus avoiding sensationalism and falsehoods.
- They propose to formulate new schemes, methodologies, and action approaches that guarantee a decrease in inequalities and speed up the exercise of democratic processes and democratic life.
- They highlight the need to educate young people on how to verify the veracity of news, analyze it and understand how it originates. It is essential to equip youth with critical thinking skills, media literacy, and

⁷ <https://www.youthlead.org/>

⁸ <https://pt-br.facebook.com/Politones/>

⁹ <https://juventudlac.org/>

digital education, we empower them to discern fact from fiction.

- They identify that sustainable democracy feeds on multiculturalism and diversity, which is why they request the creation of inclusion channels so that vulnerable groups with little access to digital connectivity are heard.
- They request to enable and strengthen social and political spaces that provide youth with a platform for action in which they can generate the change they want to see in the world.
- Create youth councils to serve as direct advice to the government on public policies that directly affect youth.

2.5 Inclusion and Equality

2.5.1 Actions

- In Colombia, *Fundación Soy Oportunidad*¹⁰ offers opportunities to mothers who are heads of household in vulnerable situations who, through their professional training and personal enrichment, can lead their life projects and generate decent income, while continuing to care for their children.
- *Mujeres WOW*¹¹ is an Ecuadorian initiative that seeks to support women entrepreneurs in the region with financial solutions for their businesses, allowing them to be active agents in their businesses, and empowering themselves with the tools and skills to boost the financing of their projects.
- In Mexico, the Women Ideas Center¹² develops digital tools to break the social barriers imposed on women, migrants, and LGBTIQ+ youth, enabling the creation of safer, and more inclusive workspaces.
- In Mexico, Oaxacanita Chocolate, an enterprise focused on the production of chocolate, gives indigenous communities job opportunities, generating alliances for the development of initiatives focused on education and community development.
- In Panamá, *Fundación Contra-Peso*¹³ strengthens leadership capacities, citizen participation, and identity in young people through the seventh art.

2.5.2 Proposals

- Inclusion of a non-discrimination approach in education.
- Multilevel awareness campaigns on non-discrimination towards Afro-descendant communities, LGBTIQ+, and indigenous peoples, among others, at local, regional, and national levels.
- Job insertion and protection policies for migrants and refugees.

¹⁰ <https://fundacionsoyoportunidad.org/>

¹¹ <https://www.wowmujeres.com/>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/womenideascenter/>

¹³ <https://www.instagram.com/contrapeso03/?hl=en>

- Creation of platforms that promote the political participation of indigenous communities, Afro-descendants, and other vulnerable groups.
- Implementation of protection mechanisms against gender violence.

2.6 Migration

2.6.1 Actions

- *Enlace con Venezuela*¹⁴, is an initiative that was born out of the concern and need for action of a group of young people with a strong conviction that making or building a country does not depend on being within the territory, but rather, an attitude, a desire for change, a “want to do”. *Enlace con Venezuela*, is a community to promote spaces for discussion, dialogue, collaboration, and meeting of, by, and for young people, to encourage youth makers of cultural, social, environmental, economic, political, and rights changes for the benefit of their host communities and with Venezuela.
- In Guatemala, organizations coordinate radio campaigns on Radio Sayaxché, in Sayaxché, Petén¹⁵, to promote migrant rights. The radio campaigns are recorded in Spanish and Q’eqchi’, being an innovative initiative for this community.
- In Peru, the Venezuelan Lawyers Association leads immigration regularization and orientation programs. Its objective is to restore the legal and professional conduct of foreign lawyers in Peru through the development of activities and projects to provide expert capital to Peruvian society, the economic independence of migrant families, and human transformation.
- The NGO *VeneActiva*¹⁶ is an association that carries out social and charitable assistance, promoting and developing projects to seek integration and protection for the full enjoyment of the fundamental rights of external and internal migrants, forced migrants, displaced persons, refugees of Venezuelan origin, or any other nationality in the territory of the Republic of Peru.
- The non-profit organization *Plan País*¹⁷ is dedicated to creating spaces for connection and experiences for high-impact individuals and organizations in Venezuelan society through a platform for the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and talent. Since its founding in 2011, *Plan País* has become the main platform to connect and empower the Venezuelan diaspora with a focus on youth.
- In Honduras, the *Instituto Nacional Demócrata*¹⁸ works with youth in the region to ensure safe and orderly migration; It also impacts indigenous populations and vulnerable groups to protect their guarantees and fundamental human rights on human mobility.

¹⁴ <https://instagram.com/enlaceconvenezuelaorg?igshid=MmJiY2I4NDBkZg==>

¹⁵ https://www.facebook.com/radiosayaxche/?locale=es_LA

¹⁶ <https://veneactiva.org/>

¹⁷ <https://www.planpais.com/>

¹⁸ https://www.facebook.com/NDIHonduras/?locale=es_LA

- Democratic Culture in Argentina executes the *Academia de Liderazgo e Innovación Democrática*¹⁹ which seeks to strengthen the leadership of young migrants who have initiatives aimed at strengthening democracy in the region.
- In Peru, the organization “*Empodérate Vecino: Sé una agente vecinal de cambio*”²⁰, promotes effective citizen participation. This initiative impacts both national and international migrants. Another initiative to highlight is the MAG-THEBAY foundation (*Construyendo un mundo sin Límites*)²¹, the main objective of this foundation is to achieve the integration of the Venezuelan community in Peru, through the regularization of their migratory procedures, integration days, psychological and cultural.
- In Haiti, the virtual initiative Haitian Bridge Alliance²² seeks to break paradigms and raise awareness about emigration from the Caribbean.
- In Panama, the Afro Moda²³ initiative integrates young people of African descent from Latin America and the Caribbean to promote their ventures and art.

2.6.2 Proposals

- Promote support and accompaniment spaces for young people who are unaware of legal tools or legal mechanisms that allow them to integrate into their host community. It is not mentioned in the contributions, but it is important to refer to the fact that these spaces can be facilitated from a physical or face-to-face environment, as well as through virtual channels, using technological platforms, for people who have said tools.
- It is important to create mechanisms and spaces for interaction for the integration of migrants, recognizing cultural differences, while opening a space for intercultural dialogue in two ways, on the one hand from the host community and the other with the person in mobility that is integrated into a new social and economic ecosystem, which will facilitate their adaptation and insertion.
- The youth emphasize that this intercultural dialogue also allows the generation of more active participatory spaces, which makes it possible to strengthen communication channels with local authorities to incorporate the demands of migrants in the generation of public policies at the local level.
- Networking creation plays an important role. Young entrepreneurs can guide, and offer mentoring and networking opportunities to young migrants and refugees.
- They request to join efforts and find effective measures for the labor insertion and protection of migrants in the countries of transit and reception. To this end, the creation of a registration platform for migrant professionals with university and/or technical studies that have the support of Multilateral Organizations,

¹⁹ <https://cultdemocratica.org/academia-de-liderazgo-e-innovacion-democratica/>

²⁰ https://www.facebook.com/people/Empod%C3%A9rate-Vecino-a/100082302937837/?locale2=ms_MY

²¹ <https://magthebay.org/>

²² <https://haitianbridgealliance.org/>

²³ https://m.facebook.com/afromodapanama/?refid=52&_tn_ =C-R

including IOM, is identified so that the private sector obtains systematized information on which profiles it could hire.

- Make bureaucratic procedures more flexible and recognize the higher education qualifications of young migrants to facilitate their labor and economic integration.
- Create projects with young people who were unable to continue their higher education, developing free entrepreneurship workshops, vocational training, and mentoring spaces.
- Generate savings funds for migrants that work for emergencies or to promote entrepreneurship in motion through seed capital. A better approach to public and private investment in border areas is needed to rescue the sociocultural factor and promote rural areas since it is where a large part of the migrant communities conglomerate.
- Increase intersectoral cooperation and alliances in the region with the private sector and civil society for the effective integration of migrant and refugee youth.
- Young people recognize the importance of training and awareness with a migratory approach aimed at public officials. At this point, the youth identify that audiovisual production can be a means to raise awareness on the subject.
- Generate activities that gather spaces for social, cultural, and economic integration of migrant youth through sports and culture. These spaces in turn foster environments for entrepreneurship.
- Strengthen labor insertion and protection policies for migrants and refugees. As well as the processes of regularization of the migratory situation for the reception of public services.
- Strengthen access to health care services, including mental health, given that many of the initiatives that they manage to develop as migrants are hampered by a lack of information, lack of support in the family or the environment where they live, social or political situations that weaken aspects such as resilience to move forward.
- Motivate local governments to continue supporting eco-sustainable and tourism entrepreneurship projects devised by young migrants and/or refugees, and fostering links with international and non-governmental organizations.
- Public policies should seek mechanisms to follow up on young migrants and refugees who require guidance so that they can have access to information on how they can legalize their personal, academic, and professional documents so that they do not face obstacles when integrating into the receiving country.

- Youth also highlight the importance of promoting an inclusive culture, for example, through the creation of spaces where they can raise awareness about practices of xenophobia²⁴ and aporophobia²⁵ that people direct towards migrant populations, since in many cases, these practices are given due to ignorance and lack of empathy.

2.7 Health and Resilience

2.7.1 Actions

- In Mexico, UNIMA²⁶ is a Mexican venture that seeks to democratize access to health through the development of rapid application tests and immediate results that allow the detection of tuberculosis in the subjects analyzed.
- Wellogi²⁷, is an initiative in Mexico aimed at solving the lack of digitalization in professional health, nutrition, and training services, as well as the accompaniment and follow-up of these with their respective patients and advisers, through practical tools to improve the results obtained.
- BRAVE UP!²⁸ is a Chilean start-up, which works so that educational institutions have better data on the emotional well-being and relationships of students, to improve the management of school coexistence, helping to reduce violence, and school absenteeism and strengthen learning.

2.7.2 Proposals

- They stress the need to insert mental health into the public agenda and guarantee access to preventive and control treatments with an emphasis on young people.
- They suggest developing inclusive education strategies for mental health programs that include youth, rural populations, and vulnerable groups.
- They highlight the importance of ensuring the inclusion of the sexual and reproductive health of young people in government agendas.
- They emphasize the importance of investing in training programs in the health sector for young people, as an essential mechanism in educating populations on the prevention of chronic diseases and health problems that result from the lack of early medical care.
- They request greater investment in programs to promote the creation and expansion of innovative initiatives led by young people, as sources of new solutions that contribute to the development of science, technology, and innovation in the different branches of the health sector, as well as recognition of their ventures.

²⁴ According to the rae, phobia of foreigners, available in <https://dle.rae.es/xenofobia>

²⁵ Phobia of poor or disadvantaged people, available at <https://dle.rae.es/aporofobia?m=form>

²⁶ <https://www.unimadx.com/>

²⁷ <https://www.wellogi.com/>

²⁸ <https://www.braveup.com/>

**Young Americas Business Trust
General Secretariat of the Organization of American States
1889 F Street NW, Washington DC, 20006
United States of America**