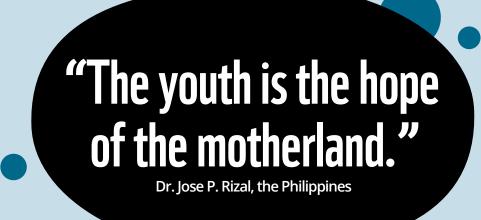




Special thanks

This publication is based on interviews with young people, teachers, WWF and Plan International staff as well as local government officials. A warm and sincere thanks to all of you for your participation!







PREFACE

Climate change as a result of human activity is a fact. Among the consequences are melting glaciers, floods, climate refugees, landslides, desertification and rising temperatures.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has concluded that a 45 per cent reduction in global carbon emissions by 2030 is essential if we are to reach the Paris Agreement goals and cap rising temperatures at 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The goal of the Our Cities 2030 – Youth Visions and Solutions project was to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs, with special focus on climate change, inequality reduction and ensuring, peace, justice, and strong institutions.

The project was jointly run by WWF and Plan International in Sweden, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, and the Philippines.

The purpose of the project was to ensure that:

- Youth contributes to cities becoming climate smart, resilient and sustainable.
- Cities are committed to (or have developed roadmaps for) trajectories that arc towards the 1,5-degree target in the Paris agreement, including mitigation and adaptation, and are guided by solutions and visions presented by youth.

Among many other excellent results, the project clearly showed the active and positive role young people are able to play in the future development of cities.

Now let us immerse ourselves in Our City in 2030. Let the young raise their voices and occupy the public stage.

"The future of humanity and the planet lies in our hands. It is also in the hands of today's younger generation, who will pass the torch on to future generations."

2030 Agenda, paragraph 53

PLAN INTERNATIONAL believes that children, who are among the most affected by disasters and often the least consulted, have the right to participate in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation. The strategy is to work with vulnerable children especially girls so that they can learn, lead, decide and thrive.

WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE WWF strives to sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and nature. WWF collaborates with people around the world to develop and deliver innovative solutions that protect communities and wildlife and the places in which they live. Education for Sustainable Development ESD is a strategy with focus on reflection, discussion, and democracy.



Today, 55 % of the world's population lives in urban areas and this is expected to rise to 70 % by 2050 (Source: UN).

When there are more people living in cities this necessitates extensive forward planning around land utilization as well as water, food and energy resources. Here community planning is crucial. However, our cities are changing. More than ever, cities around the world lead the way when it comes to building a sustainable economy. But we need to move even faster.

In many cities in Africa and Asia the demographics are characterized by a youthful and fast-growing population.

"You should listen to the youth because they have new and powerful ideas about how to curb the global problems that confront us".

> Hope Mutakila, 19 years old, Zambia



THE CHALLENGES CONFRONTING THE WORLD

"Right now, we are facing a man-made disaster of global scale.

Our greatest threat in thousands of years. Climate Change. If we don't take action the collapse of our civilizations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon."

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

We live as if we had 1.7 planets at our disposal, but in actual fact we only have one. Our lifestyles and the way in which we exploit Earth's resources are not sustainable. Our planet's temperature is on the rise and as a result extreme weather is becoming increasingly common. At the same time, biodiversity – the rich diversity of life on Earth – is disappearing at an alarming rate. This loss effects both our health and our well-being. Today, catastrophic impacts for people and the planet loom closer than ever.

A universal call for action

The global sustainable development goals (SDGs) have set up the most ambitious agenda ever adopted by the countries of the world. They are designed to push through four massive breakthroughs by the year 2030: The elimination of extreme poverty, the reduction of inequality and injustice across the world, a radical promotion of peace and justice and a solution to the climate crisis.

The 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development can make all this a reality.



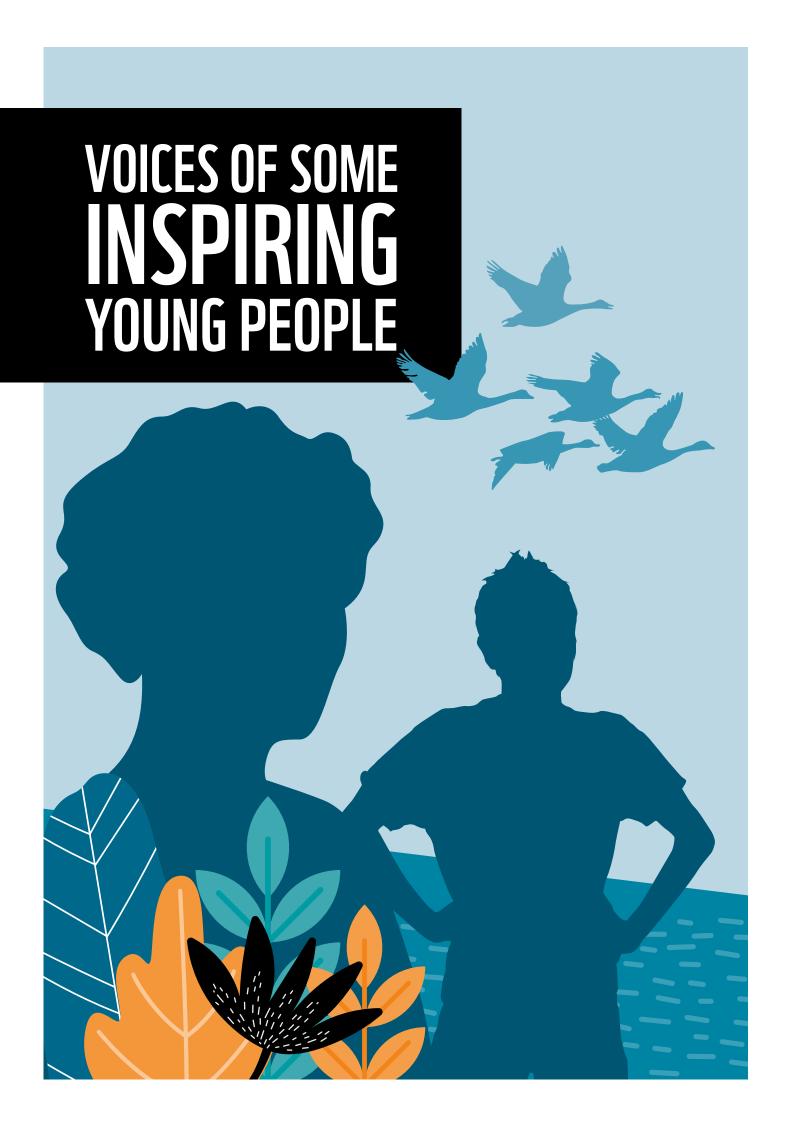
SOME CHALLENGES:

- poverty
- diseases
- malnutrition
- pollution and plastic
- deforestation
- climate change
- reduced resources
- social injustices
- insecurity
- inequality

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

- No Poverty
- Zero Hunger
- Good Health and Well-being
- **4** Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- **6** Clean Water and Sanitation
- Affordable and Clean Energy
- **8** Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

- Reducing Inequality
- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Responsible Consumption and Production
- (B) Climate Action
- Life Below Water
- **5** Life On Land
- Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
- Partnerships for the Goals





You should always listen to youthful voices because they raise new and powerful ideas about how to deal with the global problems that confront us.



"THE PROJECT HAS REALLY CHANGED LIVES AND EMPOWERED YOUNG PEOPLE"

My name is Hope Mutakila Jr and I'm 19 years old. I'm a student at City Secondary School in Lusaka, Zambia. Lusaka is the capital and largest city in Zambia. It is one of the fastest developing cities in the whole of southern Africa. In 2010, the city's population was around 1.7 million, while in 2018 it was estimated to be 2.5 million. Lusaka is the centre of both commerce and government in the country.

I participated in the Our City 2030 project by raising awareness among people about sustainability issues and climate change. I launched a campaign to keep Zambia clean at my school and started a climate change club to raise awareness of the harmful and devastating effects of climate change.

If I were to try and convey to a total stranger what we have been trying to accomplish, I would tell him or her that the Our City 2030 project is an attempt to introduce young people to education for sustainable development – which is all about climate change, inequality and social injustice. I would tell the stranger that this approach helps people, particularly the young, to look after



YEARDIA HOPE MUTAKILA JR

the environment in a responsible way. The project has really changed lives and empowered young people – giving them much of the knowledge they need if they are to save the planet.

The most positive things that happened to us during the project was the opening of our minds and our becoming better persons more able to shoulder responsibility. I am full of ideas and coming up with new ones each and every day and planning to embark on new adventures. I have acquired quite a lot of knowledge and experience now.

Finally, I would like to say that you should always listen to youthful voices because they raise new and powerful ideas about how to deal with the global problems that confront us. Young people understand how necessary it is to take responsibility because the future belongs to them.

"Young people understand how necessary it is to take responsibility because the future belongs to them."

The activities I have carried out include;

- The promotion of climate change education in my school, which has helped my fellow students understand the harmful impacts of climate change and how they can make a contribution in the battle against it.
- Initiating a Keep our School Clean and Green Campaign. This has enabled our school to become clean and tidy and in this way prevented some of the diseases associated with bad hygiene.
- Advocating in my community about all the things I learned under the project.

If we were to implement Our City 2030 again at our school, I have following recommendations:

- 1 Increase the number of meetings with students.
- **2** Empower the schools financially so that they can carry out initiatives efficiently and effectively.
- Bnable the most active students to travel to other countries where they can interact and exchange knowledge with their peers.



P RWANDA

"I AM NOW A YOUTH LEADER AND AMBASSADOR FOR THE OUR CITY 2030 PROJECT."

I am a young activist, and I took part in the regional meeting held in Nairobi in May 2019. I was a member of the Youth Council that developed roadmaps for Nyamata city in setting forth trajectories to limit global warming to 1,5 degrees Celsius and I facilitated youth solutions and visions that had been presented in the youth council with our city project stakeholders. I am now a youth leader and ambassador for the Our City 2030 project in the University of Rwanda around environmental protection and equal rights for girls.

Our City 2030 opened the minds of young people and encouraged them to think about visions and solutions for the future, and I want representatives from government, NGOs, the UN and other international organizations to pay attention to input from young people that address sustainable development issues.

I facilitated the Youth Council which inspired other young people to become activists like me, and to speak up about the challenges facing them.

Young people should be listened to and integrated in all aspect of country development to ensure the sustainability of what has been achieved. This builds youth confidence and encourages young people to think about their future.

Reducing inequality

The project also focused on reducing inequality. A lot of attention was paid to this in the training exercises. Young girls freely expressed their thoughts about the challenges they faced, such as gender bias during recruitment. Some shared their experiences of sexual harassment as they attempted to get ahead.

I dream of being an international youth activist dedicated to environmental protection issues.

Our City 2030 will help me to meet more people and share my opinions.



"Young girls freely expressed their thoughts about the challenges they faced..."

Positive outcomes

During the project I noticed some positive results:

- There was excellent collaboration between the youth and local leaders.
- We created green spaces to discuss issues around Nyamata city. The younger participants were very active and their input was very much taken seriously.
- Increased youth participation in the development of Nyamata city.
- Environmental clubs in partnership with local leaders organized monthly community work, discussed environmental protection issues and jointly planted trees in Kanazi Village. This motivated local leaders to think about how every school could work together with the community.
- The project planted trees in one threatened zone in Nyamata city.
- Each school of project internvetion developed an action plan that addressed disaster risk reduction.

THE PHILIPPINES Four young people from Quezon City









I believe in a quote that says that no segment of society can match the power and courage of young people.

.emerence

Winslet Rose G Maniscan is a 22-year-old youth at Alternative Learning System (ALS) She attended the regional meeting in Nairobi, Kenya as a youth representative and went on to become a youth facilitator in the Our city 2030 project.

Lemerence Kylie Estorque is a 17-year-old student at Balingasa High School and participated in the Our City 2030 project as student facilitator.

Marlo Cepeda is a 15-year-old student at Justice Cecilia Munoz Palma High School and is a student facilitator in Our City 2030.

Rachellem Lopez is a young 17-year-old student at Belmonte Br. High School and is a student facilitator in Our City 2030.

- What is Our City 2030?

Lemerence: Our City 2030 is an eye-opening project, and it explained a lot of things that are happening in our country and around the world that our school has been unable to do.

Marlo: Our City 2030 helped engage ourselves in things that were happening to our city as a result of changes in the environment. It also gave us an opportunity to show and express our thoughts, ideas and solutions to what is happening in the world today. It empowered us and taught us how to speak out.

Winslet: The project is about transforming and making our cities more attractive with a focus on collaboration. It is not only about the natural world, but also about ourselves –because we are the ones who benefit from nature's plenty.



"It empowered us and taught us how to speak out."



- What did you do in Our City 2030?

Lemerence: I have spoken in front of groups of students and taught them about the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs. If I were to highlight one thing we have learned, it would be about how to develop urban gardening and how to grow trees. We have informed the students about the No Plastic Policy. We have also sent letters to sponsors and officials calling for them to increase the number of trash bins to help people Reuse, Reduce and Recycle.

Rachellem: I have passed on a lot of the knowledge that Our City 2030 has given me about climate change to others. We have had online communication activities; some of us made videos on TikTok and shared important topics on Messenger.

Marlo: I have been part of making a vision statement of youth for the year 2030 and contributed some ideas and solutions to help us deal with the problems that our city faces today. We also facilitated Our City 2030 at our school. We used social media platforms such as Facebook, Messenger, Instagram and TikTok to spread environmental awareness. We focused on 1.5°C Global Warming and how can we prevent this.

Winslet: I became a youth facilitator in the Our city 2030 project.

- Tell us about a something really positive that happened during the project

Lemerence: We met a lot of people in the project and I've enhanced my skills, especially my communication and

speech skills because we learned how to talk in front of a large audience.

Rachellem: Letting strong young voices discuss important things without fear was very positive. This creates a solid foundation for youth. I believe in a quote that says that no segment of society can match the power and courage of young people.

Marlo: I've met a lot of people and gained a lot of knowledge. It gave me another perspective over the world. I do care about the condition of the Earth much more than before. The project was an eye-opener. It encouraged me to adopt a holistic approach towards everything that lives.

Winslet: I became passionate about nature. I became observant about the environment and I built up self-confidence which helped me overcome my shyness when talking about the environment.

Letting strong young voices discuss important things without fear was very positive.

THE PHILIPPINES 4 YOUNG PEOPLE FROM QUEZON CITY

- What's your opinion of Our City 2030?

Lemerence: It is an excellent way to tackle Climate Change because it educates us about the 1.5°C threshold, and The Story of Climate Change. Even though our school taught us about this it isn't discussed in any depth.

Marlo: This project has ad a great impact on climate action. We who are young must be open for climate action. It's better to start early when you are young than to start in your middle years.

- Why should we listen to young people?

Lemerence: We are the in line to be the leaders of the next generation. If something bad happens today, we'll be the one to suffer and be responsible for fixing it. We also share a lot of innovative ideas and modern ways of fixing stuff

Rachellem: You should listen to us because we are young, we are the future.

Marlo: Perhaps people say that young are stupid and reckless, and some think we shouldn't get involved in the problems facing society today because we are too young and lack experience – however this doesn't mean that we shouldn't be heard. We are part of the world. We have right to speak for ourselves. We are not blind, and we are aware of what is going on in the world. If there is problem, let us help fix it. If adults can, we can also. The older generation might not realize we can come up with ideas that can really change things. We are curious and love to explore new





things. Let us be heard – we can build a better future for coming generations.

Winslet: Today's young have the ability to open their minds to the future. Young people are full of curiosity and love exploring different things.

- What does the way forward look like to you?

Lemerence: Climate Action is a way of preparing for disasters. This project ensures that we understand waste segregation, how using paper bags will help reduce the use of plastics, and we also learned how to prepare for disasters.

Winslet: I wish I could start school activities so I could share with other students what I've learned at Our City 2030. But, because of this pandemic, all I can do is remind my family and friends to keep safe and of course always cherish the environment. I just want them to keep their minds open and learn new things, to love what they are learning and take action. Do not be ashamed to share what you know with other young people.

- Tell us about the Climate Council.

Marlo: We have a Climate Council called Solution Revolutions. Many students, teachers, professionals and government officials have taken part in the event. We were given the chance to present our solution to climate change, an Eco-Brick made of dog manure. There were many questions about our brick. We were very nervous, but we were lucky, because we were able to answer them with facts from our experiences creating the eco-brick. We were overwhelmed and proud because the Climate Council has made it possible for us to present this on national television.

"We are the in line to be the leaders of the next generation."







"THE PROJECT HAS GIVEN US THE CHANCE TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION."

Eight young girls and boys aged 17-19, share their experiences of Our City 2030 in Lusaka, Zambia.

Many policies are decided upon by adults but profoundly affect young people and this means that their voices must be heard.



Our roles in Our City 2030

We have had different roles in sensitizing the people around us at home and at school to climate change and environmental issues. We came up with a campaign we called the Clean Management Campaign: We picked up litter and separated bottles and paper and put them in special bins. We took them to a recycling company which earned us some money making it possible for us to buy identity items like T-shirts for our environmental club.

We have also planted trees like Acacia and grown vegetables in the schoolyard. People from outside have come and learned from that. Planting trees is good for reducing the carbon dioxide emissions that cause climate change. The trees also make our school green and healthy. We took this knowledge about waste management and the importance of trees back home to our families, friends and neighbours. If we sensitize them to this and teach them how to manage their waste it will help all of us.

Our work at the Climate council

Each school in the project selected climate ambassadors among the pupils to represent the school at a climate council. We held a meeting at a hotel where we showcased our various projects about how to build sustainable cities – reducing carbon dioxide, waste management, water preservation, etc. The mayor, the education officer and other officials were present. We took the opportunity to talk about climate change.

The climate council was a platform that brought us into contact with officials and other stakeholders and enabled us to showcase our ideas and the innovations we proposed to combat climate change. We have, for example, suggested an industrial carbon dioxide absorber, a wonderful idea, which uses no chemicals and the end product of which could be used as fertilizer and to make toothpaste and more.

Some positive outcomes of the project

- Young people were given the opportunity to speak up about different climate change solutions.
- The project has given us the chance to be part of the solution.
- We have been exposed to many different kinds of people which enabled us to express our own ideas rather than keeping them to ourselves.
- Many brilliant ideas were aired by the youthful participants.



We have encouraged students to walk or ride a bike to school to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and we have had some success. We have also educated the community about waste management and why you shouldn't burn your trash. We also alerted the younger children about the danger of burning rubbish and informed their parents and neighbours.

Our City 2030 - an inspiring arena for young people

Everybody is affected by climate change, regardless of whether they are young or old. Our City 2030 is a brilliant initiative because it provides an arena for the ventilation of different solutions to climate change. It endows a sense of responsibility and pride and lets individual pupils feel that they are being seen and that their opinions count.

Why should we listen to young people?

Those that will be most affected by climate change are young. We are the most vulnerable, but we are brimming with ideas and solutions. Many citizens are ignorant or live in denial, but the young have innovative solutions and we are the future.

Many policies are decided upon by adults but profoundly affect young people and this means that their voices must be heard. If you are impacted by something you need a platform to air your ideas and concerns.



Some recommendations to other schools

A school should be a hub for other schools and a place in which students can meet and share ideas and solutions. This should be facilitated by an investment in information and communications technology.

HOW CAN YOU CHANGE THE WORLD?

Hope Mutakila Jr, 19 years, gives us his view:

- By launching a keep Zambia clean campaign in my school.
- Starting a climate change club at my school yhat makes people aware of the harmful and devastating impact of climate change.
- You should listen to young people because they have new and powerful ideas about how to curb the global problems that confront us. They understand why it is necessary to shoulder responsible because the future belongs to them.



HOW CAN YOU CHANGE THE WORLD THEN?

Let your creativity flow!

The first step is to believe that you can influence things and the best way is to start by changing yourself.

No one is too small to make a diference.

Join a Youth Council.

Start a blog.

Explore your inner self.

Which questions do you think are important and interesting?

Become engaged!

Engage in Our City 2030. Get together Talk to your friends with friends or share something and start an on Instagram. organisation. Engage your school in **Demonstrate** Send letter or for a better debate article to world. newspaper. **Earth Hour.** Find venues Learn things, where young people be curious, study, congregate. read a book, take a class. Speak out. Enjoy. Knowledge is easy to carry around with you and gives you power! | | | What can you do to engage people and change the world?

HOW IS OUR CITY 2030 WORKING?

The Climate Council is an important part of the Our City 2030 project.



Our young participants prepared for it by:

- A Developing knowledge around the raft of challenges facing our shared planet and in particular our cities.
- **B** Discussing and coming up with sustainable solutions for the city in the run-up to 2030.
- Creating concrete models that illustrated some of the innovative solutions they proposed and
- Implementing a climate council in which young people meet the adult world in lively plenary/round-table discussions. Many different kinds of guests were invited to take part, the general public, other schools, city officials, politicians, businessmen, etc.

WHAT IS A CLIMATE COUNCIL?

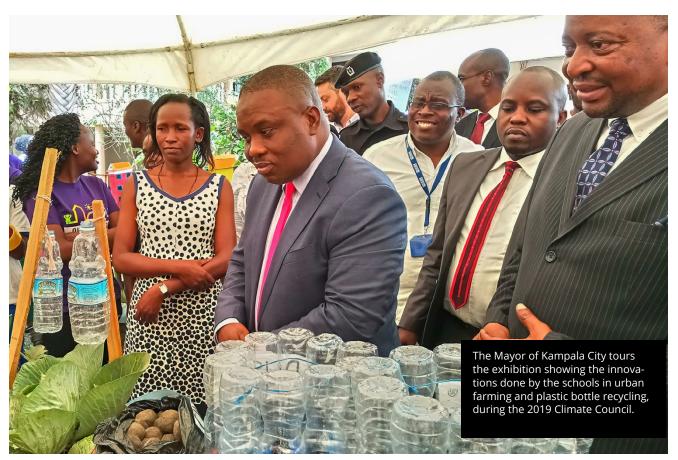
Hope Mutakila Jr. from Zambia talks in his own words about his experiences from The Climate Council:

The Climate Council meeting was one of the most beautiful events I have ever attended. During this meeting, participating schools were given a chance to present some of the challenges they faced in their own communities and to talk about how they intended to tackle them. His worship, the mayor of Lusaka city, was present to grace the event.

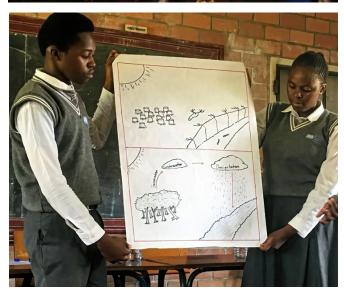
The event comprised of pitching and sketch presentations. Some schools were told to pitch their presentations, while others were asked to present a sketch of their assignments in front of the Mayor. This gave the mayor an opportunity to learn about innovative ideas hatched by young minds as to how the government might deal with a number of pressing issues.

I will always remember the council as a positive experience in my life as everyone else who was there undoubtedly will. I think the biggest thing we took with us from the meeting was that we had witnessed the birth of a communications platform that could enable young minds to lobby innovative ideas to the government.











RESEARCH ABOUT BEHAVIOUR

Doing something concrete for the environment creates hope

Research indicates that anxiety can start us thinking about the climate, force us to start looking for information on the subject and to think about what we can do to fix the problem. Anxiety is a signal that something serious is about to happen and makes us set our habitual behaviours to one side and think about ways of dealing with the situation. There are several ways to address climate issues.

Researcher Maria Ojala, an associate professor of psychology and senior lecturer at Örebro University in Sweden, tells us that young people who are worried about the future, such as the onset of climate change, should talk to their parents or friends about their concerns and team up

and do something together with others. Action will make you feel better.

Doing something concrete can be about quite simple things like sorting rubbish or riding a bike to school. The effect this has is enhanced if you feel that you are doing something collectively with other people.

There are several ways to deal with your feelings around climate change. Some people adopt so-called meaning-focused strategies. These are about arousing positive emotions, such as hope, that can help you confront negativity and make something constructive out of your situation.

How can a constructive way for young people to deal with climate change be promoted?



- Knowledge: Anxiety triggers critical thinking and a need for more information. Knowledge can give a sense of control.
- Discussion: Discuss your concerns about the climate. Putting words to emotions gives young people some control over them and lets them also break the "spiral of silence" thinking that no one cares because no one talks about how worried they are.
- Actions: Concrete actions can lead to increased well-being and may allow you to function as a role model.
- Carry out collective actions: Research shows that collective commitment is positive for well-being and invokes feelings of hope.
- Emphasize positive emotions, such as the joy of being able to help and entertain hope.
- Work with meaning-focused strategies. For example, develop exercises at school in which students learn to handle complex problems.
- More discussion: Young people often have a dark picture of the future which needs to be discussed and critically examined. Young people also need discussions about what we want the future to look like, what the world we want to live in should look like. This is the very starting point for action, to have something positive to strive for.

Source: A summary of a manuscript from Örebro University "Climate anxiety - driving force for action or paralysis of action?" by Maria Ojala, 2018.









OTHER YOUTH VOICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Greta Thunberg is only 17 years old, but she has already become famous all over the world for campaigning against climate change.

She's given a number of powerful speeches since she first started her #FridaysForFuture movement. Millions of young people have joined her in protests, with many children walking out of school to take part.



"NO ONE IS TOO SMALL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Photo: Daniele COSSU /

A book by Greta Thunberg

"We need to tackle two crises at once, whether we like it or not the world has changed, it looks completely different from how it did a few months ago and it will probably not look the same again and we are going to have to choose a new way forward."

Greta Thunberg, The 50th anniversary of Earth Day

"I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is."

Greta Tunberg, World Economic Forum, Davos, 24 January 2019



"You should listen to the youths because we are young, we are the future."

Rachellem Lopez, Philippines

"As youths it is our duty to plant a lot of trees in order to secure our country's future."

Fabrice Iradukunda, student from Rwanda

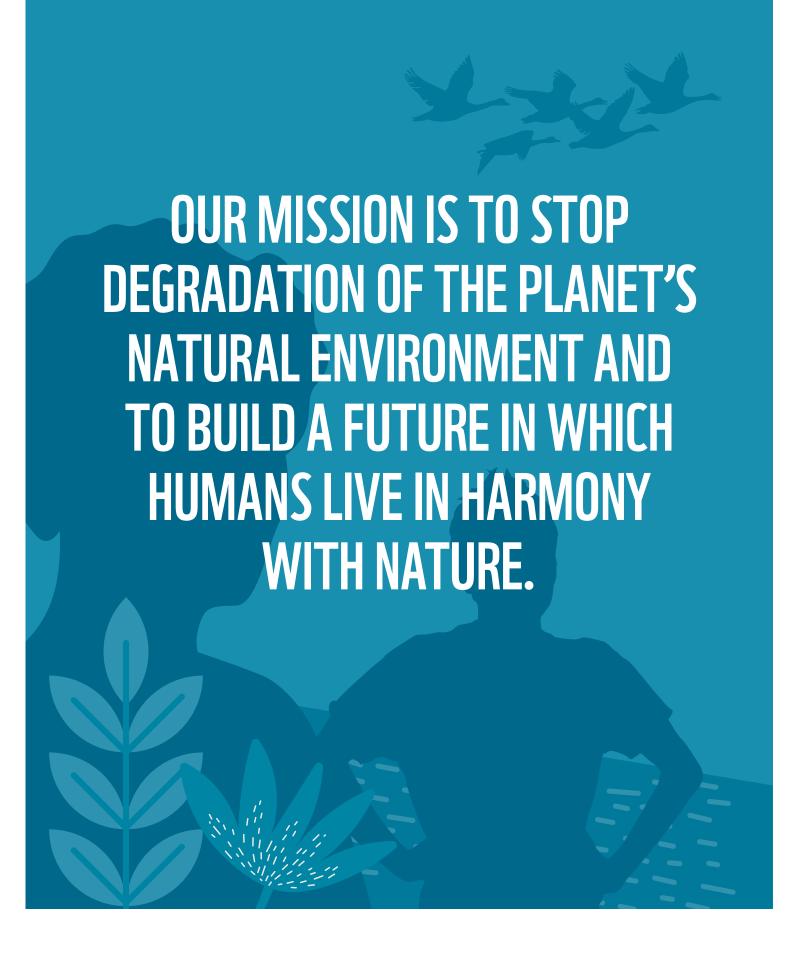
"I will not keep the knowledge I learned in the project to myself, I will spread this knowledge, starting with people in my own community. This may increase our chances of protecting the environment."

Safina Mugirasoni, student from Uganda

→ NEXT STEPS:

- Read more about Our City 2030 wwf.panda.org/projects/one_planet_cities/youth_visions_and_solutions
- Visit <u>www.panda.com</u> and read more about Our City 2030, about biodiversity and sustainable urban development
- Read more about the trouble planet Earth finds itself in at <u>livingplanet.panda.org</u>
- Read more about Plan International's work at plan-international.org







Working to sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and wildlife.