COMMITMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS TO ENCOURAGE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PARTICIPATION

Agreed upon at the 3rd Pan-American Child Forum, held in Cartagena, Colombia on October 28-31, 2019.

At the workshop on child and adolescent participation, held at the 3rd Pan-American Forum, eighty (81) children and adolescents and civil society representatives formulated commitments and recommendations with regard to the promotion of the principles-rights-process of child and adolescent participation expressed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The workshop participants represented the following countries and third sector: Barbados, Brazil, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, El Salvador, Argentina; Children’s Villages, Chic@snet-pasc, Renacer Foundation, FUNDASIL, LUMOS, MOLACNNATS, Plan International, REDNNYAS, Save the Children, Students Commission, and World Vision.

The children and adolescents declared the following commitments and recommendations:

**Commitments:**

1. Advocate with our organizations and then beyond, in order create visibility of the problems we face. We want to highlight the importance of making participation effective in all areas of society through the use of networks so that all children and adolescents can express their opinions, and for those opinions to be taken into account in the decision-making process.

2. Stay well-informed by making proper use of various media outlets with regard to the participation of children and adolescents.

3. Strengthening and boost the dissemination of networks for the participation of children and adolescents at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

4. Prepare and work hard to exercise our rights in a responsible and respectful manner.

5. As children and adolescents representing our countries and organizations, we urge family members and/or representatives to provide assurances so that children and adolescents can participate.

6. Ensure safe and inclusive spaces in which the participation of children and adolescents can occur seamlessly, with due responsibility for our rights.

7. Seek more economic, human, and management resources to promote child and adolescent participation, as well as cultural, artistic, and sports processes through social mobilization and making our voice heard.
Recommendations:

1. Families and their members should support the participation of children and adolescents in their organized groups.

2. Child and adolescent participation should be active, inclusive, and purposeful in all spaces that children and adolescents inhabit.

3. Governments should create public policies or laws so that children’s participation can be guaranteed at all levels of government as a fundamental process and right as part of their actions.

4. Governments should create spaces and organized groups that promote child and adolescent participation, inclusive to all children and adolescents, without discrimination, and encouraging the acceptance of vulnerable groups, respecting their voice as well.

5. States and their officials should not make use of forced participation or participation for decorative ends.

6. Organized groups of children and adolescents should be recognized and consulted by local governments and the academia.

7. As representatives of children and adolescents, we DO NOT want to be superficially showcased at the spaces for participation available in our territories, but rather that our rights be truly enforced.

8. Governments should create a system that helps children and adolescents access opportunities to be involved in topics of their interest. Existing systems for protection must be improved, and the implementation of SDG’s must be ensured.

9. Governments should take the participation of children and adolescents into account in the decision-making process concerning children and adolescents and there should be accountability with regard to the fulfillment and assurance of our rights.

10. Governments should improve the training given to existing organized groups of children and adolescents, as well as enhance accessibility and, if necessary, the creation of more spaces for participation.

11. Governments should hold forums and/or congresses on a local, national, and regional level where children and adolescents are empowered and encouraged to participate.

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1 We recommend that Governments create a system to help children find opportunities to participate in their preferred manner.
12. We recommend better follow-up efforts on the ideas and implementation of the recommendations that children and adolescents have made in the 3rd Forum².

Cartagena, Colombia. October 29, 2019.

Signed by the attending children and adolescents:

² Closer monitoring has been recommended on the ideas and implementation of the recommendations that children put forth at the 3rd Forum.