

# SIX ACTIONS WE CAN DO TOGETHER TO CO-BUILD A SUSTAINABLE AND FAIR WORLD

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The global summit is an opportunity for all people to co-build our shared sustainable futures where everyone can have trust and confidence. Already contributions, ideas and actions are coming in from individuals, communities and organisations throughout the world. We now invite you to join us on this journey.

This short document is one person's contribution, based on discussions with many local and global partners as this movement grows. It presents six actions we can take, created to inspire other ideas for a balanced eco-social world. These points do not address all issues and I am sure that in the process of discussion these approaches will be further shaped, added to and refined as collectively we work together.



## **IMPRINT**

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# INTRODUCTION

The world is full of change. The interlinked triple global crises of climate change, rapidly growing inequality and a global pandemic are robbing people of their dignity and futures.

This requires us all to work differently. We need to co-develop a new cooperation, beyond national borders that brings security, peace and confidence for all people and the sustainability for the eco-systems on which we depend. Such cooperation, linking local and global aspiration, is within our collective grasp. Already, significant developments have been made and can be further built upon.

**This document proposes six integrated actions for co-building change:**

**Economics:** From market driven economies to sustainable wellbeing society

**Environment:** From exploitation to recognizing the rights of nature for sustainable co-existence

**Nationalism:** From national introspection to global citizenship

**Business:** From independent markets to sustainable cooperation

**Work:** From being undervalued to recognition and decent working conditions.

**State responsibility:** From reactive public spending to public investment in well-being

In June 2022 the global people's summit 'Co-Building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind' will create opportunities for all people to contribute to a world that is ecologically sustainable and socially just. The summit will bring together diverse contributions in recognition that no one

culture, model or philosophical approach can provide the answers for all people and the whole ecosystem.

The global partners to the summit have their roots in different cultures and interests and are committed to working together in shaping a new world structure for this and future generations. The partners represent 100's of millions of people and communities and there is unlimited space left for all others to participate in this process and journey.

**Collectively, the partners have identified steering principles to guide the summit process:**

Buen Vivir<sup>1</sup>, love and care of people and the planet, responsibilities and rights.

Respect, dignity, harmony and justice

Diversity, belonging, reciprocity and equity

Ubuntu<sup>2</sup>, togetherness and community

All our ideas and positive experiences of change will be presented to the global people's summit. These will be collated into key values, principles, practices, and policies to be used as reference points for future development. Immediately following the summit, the world's political leaders, gathering at the UN High-Level Political Forum, will receive these reference points and will be invited to join us as we continue to embed the changes we seek.

**FOOTNOTES**

- 1 Buen Vivir – an indigenous social movement from South America that describes a way of life and a form of development that sees social, cultural, environmental, and economic issues working together and in balance, not separately and hierarchically as at present.
- 2 Ubuntu – an indigenous African philosophy based on people's interdependency and interconnectedness with their environment; I am because we are.

# SIX INTEGRATED ACTIONS FOR CHANGE

## 1 Economics: From market driven economies to sustainable wellbeing societies

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a progress indicator is not working globally. It reinforces the status quo of inequality and unsustainability. Many economists, mass movements and civil society organisations are promoting a fundamental rethink of the part that economics plays in sustainable development and wellbeing. GDP measures the production of goods and services; it does not measure sustainability, people´s quality of life, their contributions to society, or if human rights have been realized or not. The dominant global economic systems are built on the idea that the world economy is somehow separate to social and ecological conditions and that the marketplace determines what people want and what is best for them.

People across the globe are now saying that collective wellbeing should be the ultimate indicator of progress rather than GDP. That the economy should be viewed as one factor in an integrated policy development but not the dominant force.

Various governments (Scotland, New Zealand, Iceland, Wales, and Finland, for example) as well as many regions, and cities have already started transitioning away from top-down market driven economic formulas. This recognizes that communities themselves are in the best position to identify the concerns and to be a main actor in the solutions. The preferred process by these governments and communities is found in working together across all government departments and civil society to identify concerns and address them helping co-build sustainable development. This requires a mentality of bottom-up driven policy.

These emergent new ways of running economies by political leaders, have emerged from new political analysis and policy development which focuses economies on wellbeing with the whole of society working together. They provide direction on the needed answers in addressing the challenges of discrimination and inequality.

## **2 Environment: From exploitation to recognizing the rights of nature for sustainable co-existence**

Mass movements and concerned citizens worldwide have changed the political direction of some countries to keep fossil fuels in the ground and to reinvest in renewable energy. This is only the beginning of a change in thinking which acknowledges that humans do not have complete domination over the natural world for our gratification. This relocates global understanding towards Buen Vivir and other indigenous philosophies that recognize the rights of oceans, sky, rivers and land.

Since 2008, countries, cities or specific legal actions have resulted in the recognition of the legal rights of nature and eco systems (e.g. Ecuador, Bolivia, New Zealand, Colombia, Argentina, Peru, Pakistan, India, USA, Uganda and Canada). These examples and the worldwide movements calling for the rights of nature to be recognized highlight that ecosystems should have the same level of rights as humans. Rights that protect nature from being harmed, degraded or violated. This wave of action needs to be supported and developed by everyone.

## **3 Nationalism: From national introspection to global citizenship**

To co-build a balanced eco-social world for our survival we need to recognize that national and individual interests are secondary to global fairness and sustainability. As a principle, the right of every person to be equal with all others has been enshrined in many constitutions and enhanced by global accords. These now need to be developed to recognize that all countries are socially and economically interdependent for survival and progress for our shared futures.

Co-building actions that stem from the principles of cooperation and reciprocal respect needs to rank higher than self or national interest. The principle needs to be embraced by all global citizens and their democratic frameworks in the realization that no one population can protect itself from climate change, pandemics or the longer-term effects of market change and spiralling economies. Yet we have created structural barriers. Narrow democratic systems that prioritize one population over others, and social movements that have

highlighted one set of concerns without reaching out to others; both fail to co-build shared futures for the benefit of all and result in leaving people behind. People in these circumstances often feel abandoned following too many experiences of not being heard, resulting in their political alienation. Given that we all contribute to these failed systems, we can all work together to change them.

The summit partners recognize that the factors for success in sustainable change is to work beyond the notion of tolerance, and reach a deep appreciation of shared futures and commitment to co-build together. This models a process that governments, international agencies, business communities and others can advance to reach beyond our national borders to global citizenship.

#### **4 Business: From independent markets to sustainable cooperation**

Business practices in many countries are changing. The influence of consumers and social movements is helping some businesses to incorporate a focus on social and environmental outcomes. Yet the world is a long way off from securing ethical and sustainable markets and fair trade. The majority of multinational businesses, for example, have significantly contributed to inequality, failed to pay taxes in the countries where products are made or sold and act without regard to the wellbeing of people and their communities.

International trade regulation can be informed by bottom-up policy development based on a fair, ecologically sustainable and balanced approach. This could include realising the strength and capacity of all communities, by reciprocal understanding of our different conceptual philosophies of trade, as a foundation for our sustainable cooperation in commerce and business, enabling all parties to participate equally and thrive.

#### **5 Work: From being undervalued to recognition and decent working conditions**

Unions and labour movements have, since their inception, called for international standards of labour, living wages and decent working conditions. This has been reinforced by global agencies as a key method for eliminating poverty. Existing international standards of labour, that are not fully

implemented in much of the world, focus on fundamental, universal and indivisible human rights: Freedom from forced labour, freedom from child labour, freedom from discrimination at work and freedom to form and join a union, and to bargain collectively.

These principles can be extended to include a living wage and working environments that support belonging and wellbeing. The effect of implementing such international laws would transform people's lives so that they would experience recognition, respect and improve their wellbeing, as each individual feels they have something to contribute it increases social capital.

## **6 State responsibilities: From reactive public spending to public investment in wellbeing**

If no one is to be left behind they have to belong! This will require changes in public policy and practice in order to achieve this social transformation. The pandemic has graphically illustrated the already evident limitations of siloed reactive public, private and non-profit services. Countries that have fared better in the pandemic have refocused from reactive public spending to investment in wellbeing involving their communities in developing new processes.

The global professions of social work and health, civil society organizations and education have already started co-working together to shift policy design to promote this social transformation. This learning can be used to shape, for example, education services to equip people, not just for the job market, but with the capacity to co-contribute to wellbeing in their communities. Health and social services that engage with people in their communities to co-design preventative and reactive services, build social capital and meet the wellbeing needs of their communities.

In co-building healthy communities, we create resources. The experiences from Africa, where provision of infrastructure by the state is often limited, in implementing the philosophy of Ubuntu provides an example of community capacity to co-create change.

# **INVITATION TO BE A PART OF THE CHANGE FOR OUR SHARED FUTURES**

**These six examples of actions have constant themes of:**

Holistic and ecological methodologies,  
Civic engagement,  
Social responsibility,  
Ground-up policy development,  
Balanced rights,  
Reciprocal systems,  
Harnessing the power of community and diversity, and  
Creating leaderful societies.

## **We can all get involved in these actions**

The above ideas are far from original. For many years they have been spoken from lips of community members, marginalized peoples, professionals and politicians seeking a just world. They direct us to a new eco-social world where societal and global systems are rooted in the aspirations of people and their communities. To add to these ideas, to connect with us and to bring new ideas, register here and make a contribution:

[www.newecosocialworld.com](http://www.newecosocialworld.com)



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