



OUR
WORLD
2050

Conditional optimism

A global report on the hopes, concerns, and
conditions of the next generation

Survey: Imagine the Future

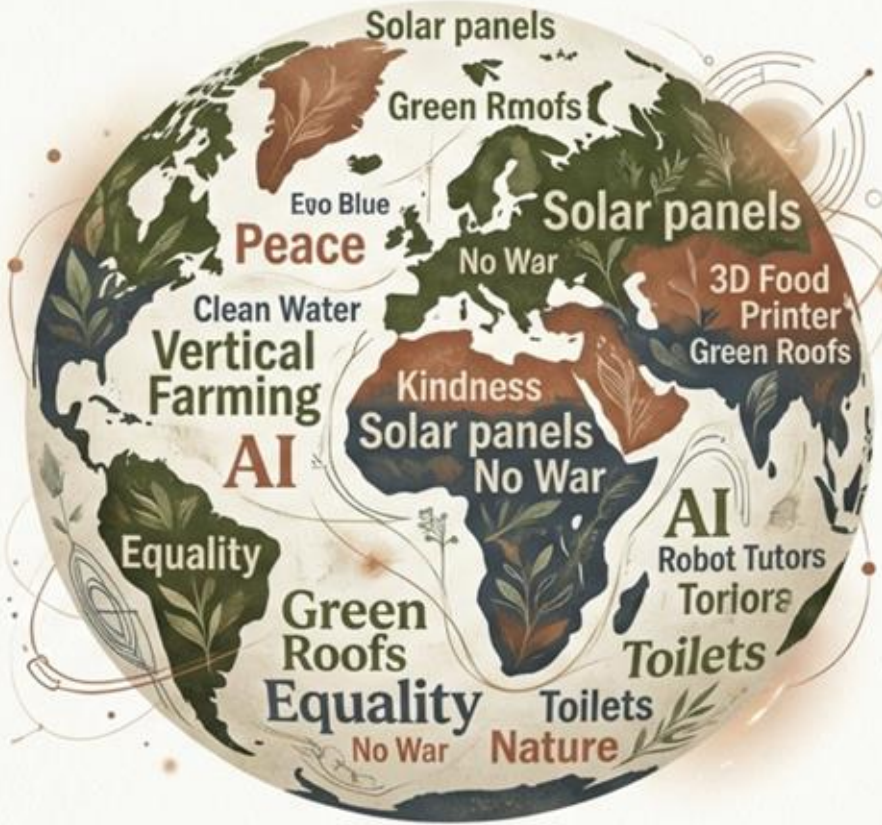
June 2025 – February 2026

Why involve children?

- 35% of the world population are children and youths, but they have little or no impact on shaping their future.
- Their voices are often not taken seriously.
- They grow up surrounded by crisis narratives leading to future anxiety without agency.
- There is a need for new perspectives, more creativity, and more change makers to take action in creating a more sustainable future.



So we asked them 4 questions



1. Imagine the world in 2050: Describe the life and world you hope for.
2. Do you believe the world will be a better place to live in than today?
3. What are the MOST important things for you in the future?
4. Do you have any worries about the future? What would you change if you could?



This is how we did it

- Partners, Youth Ambassadors and Advisors from Our World 2050 have distributed our survey – through SoMe, network and schools.
- All responses have been collected online via Google Form.
- In Nigeria and Uganda responses were gathered via paper and then filled in the form.
- The children are anonymous, but we asked for their first name, age and country.



The children who answered

- Gen Z and Gen Alpha (6-21) from 21 countries*
- 294 voices across:
 - Global North (e.g. Denmark, USA)
 - Global South (e.g. Nigeria, Pakistan)
- Responses are unevenly distributed across countries, so the results are directional only.



*Bangladesh, Brazil, Georgia, Indonesia, Italy, Netherlands, Philippines, South Africa, Sweden, Vietnam, England, Kenya, Northern Ireland, India, Uganda, Canada, UK, USA, Pakistan, Denmark & Nigeria





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Here is what the
children told us
about their hopes
and dreams for
the future



1. Imagine the world in 2050: Describe the life and world you hope for.

I want a world where everyone has equal rights, love each other, eat good food and play together.

Melody, 14, Indonesia

In 2050 I hope the Earth is clean, with lots of trees and animals, and that people don't throw trash everywhere.

Lucas, 9, Brazil

A world where humanity has successfully addressed climate change and social inequality.

Princess, 17, Nigeria

I hope that there will still be a lot of nature all around the world for animals and people to live in.

Aela, 10, England

I hope that we've managed to elect better leaders.

Olivia, 13, Denmark

I hope everyone has a home, food, and friends, and that children are safe everywhere.

Amelie, 10, France

People would respect each other and there would be no wars to fear about.

Efezino, 16, Nigeria



The hopes - consolidated:

A peaceful, fair, and green world where people and planet thrive together

- A world without war, violence, and fear
- A healthy planet with clean air, water, and thriving nature
- Fairness, equality, and dignity for all people
- Technology that helps people live better – not faster or more stressed
- Strong communities, kindness, and a sense of belonging
- Lives filled with meaning, creativity, and hope



The children and youth are not asking for more - they are asking for better.



North & South:

Same dreams - different priorities

Global South

- Peace, safety, and political stability
- Access to basics: Jobs, education, healthcare, food
- Economic opportunity and a secure future
- Clean environment linked to health and survival

Global North

- Climate action and environmental protection
- Sustainable cities and renewable energy
- Equality, inclusion, and human rights
- Work-life balance, mental well-being, quality of life



Younger vs. older children:

From simple hopes to systemic change

Younger children (6–10 years)

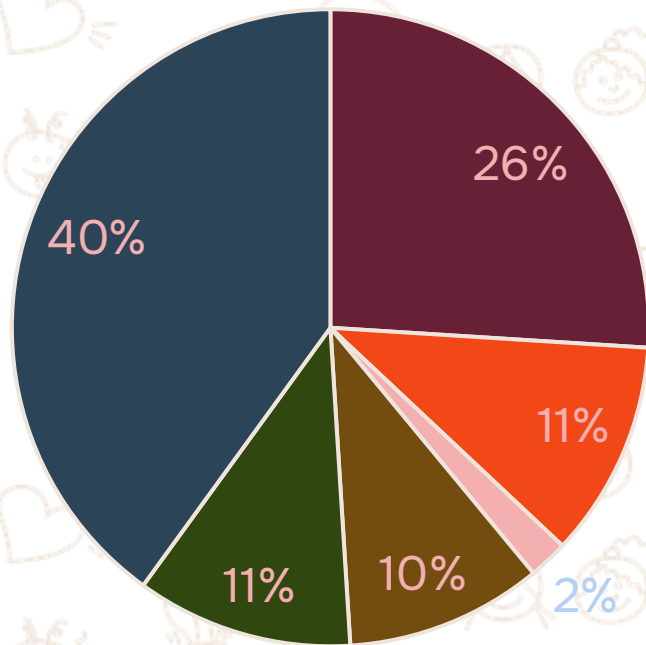
- “No fighting”, “clean world”, “happy people”
- Focus on family, safety, animals, nature
- Imagination-led, emotional, optimistic
- Technology feels friendly or magical

Older youth (14–21 years)

- Climate urgency and responsibility
- Fairness, justice, and leadership
- Education, jobs, and system change
- Technology with ethics and limits



2. Do you believe the world will be a better place to live in than today?



- Yes, much better!
- Maybe a bit better
- About the same as today
- Probably worse
- I really don't know
- Only if people start making better choices



The dominant view is not passive hope or quiet resignation. It is a demand for action. **Their optimism is conditional.**



Optimism fades with age

	Age 6-12 (%)	Age 13-21 (%)	Difference
Only if people start making better choices	35%	42%	Older respondents are more conditional.
Yes, much better!	29%	24%	Younger respondents are more outright optimistic.
I really don't know	24%	7%	Younger respondents show higher uncertainty.



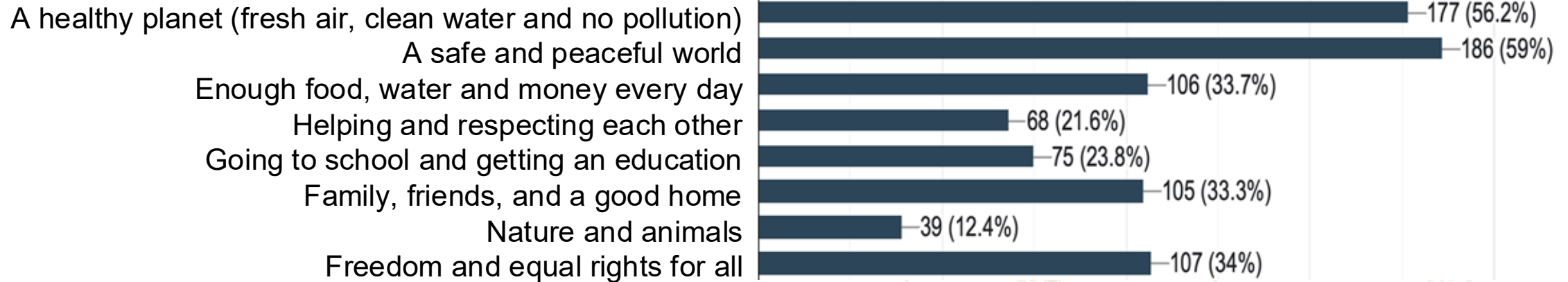
Developed countries are more pessimistic

	Global North (%)	Global South (%)	Difference
Only if people start making better choices	43%	40%	Developed countries are more conditional.
Yes, much better!	11%	31%	Developing countries are much more optimistic.
Probably worse	18%	7%	Developed countries are nearly 3 times more pessimistic.

Source: Our World 2050



3. What are the MOST important things for you in the future?



*We asked them to choose a maximum of 3. They could also choose 'Other' and specify further. 3% did this. And most responses were "All of the above".

Source: Our World 2050



4a. Do you have any worries about the future?

My worries about the future are very much, there would be high rate of conflicts, war, insecurity, misuse of technology etc.

Melody, 14, Indonesia

I worry about disconnection: people surrounded by information but starved of meaning, community, and touch. A future where we talk more to screens than to each other.

Lucas, 9, Brazil

My biggest worry is the increasing use of artificial intelligence and becoming too dependent on technology.

Bernice, 16, Nigeria

I am worried that people don't make better choices and our planet becomes more polluted.

Alba, 12, South Africa

How climate change will change the way we live in the future.

Julie, 17, Denmark

My worries are about insecurity, bad government, lack of electricity, clean water, and toilets.

Halima, 14, Nigeria

I worry about pollution, climate change, and whether cities will be safe places to live.

Ravi, 16, India



Children's concerns about the future

Climate Change and Environmental Degradation: Many respondents expressed worry about climate change, its resulting extreme weather, pollution, loss of nature and animal habitats, and the lack of sufficient global action or political priority to address these issues.

Political Instability and Conflict: A significant concern is the prevalence of war, conflict, political problems between countries, the rise of dictators and fascism, nuclear war, and general insecurity, with a desire for global peace and cooperation.

Socio-Economic Issues and Inequality: Concerns include poverty, inequality, high costs of living, lack of resources (clean water, food), inadequate healthcare, poor education, and insufficient job opportunities, often with a focus on specific country problems like Nigeria.

Technological Impact (AI and Social Media): Respondents worry about the rapid advancement of AI potentially leading to job displacement, the misuse of technology, and the negative effects of social media/technology on mental health, human connection, and the spread of misinformation.

Human Morality and Leadership: Many are troubled by human greed, selfishness, lack of empathy, corruption in leadership, and the rise of radicalism, hoping for leaders who make better decisions and a world centered on kindness, cooperation, and community.



4b. What would you change if you could?

I would change how people treat each other, so everyone feels respected and included.

Thea, 17, Denmark

I would stop all wars and make countries talk instead of fighting.

Basham, 10, Pakistan

I would change how people treat the Earth. I want everyone to care more and stop polluting.

Alba, 12, South Africa

I will increase security allowance, provide free water and toilet system, and free education and library.

Halima, 14, Nigeria



I would definitely be about fighting for equal rights for everyone in the world.

Melody, 14, Indonesia

I would make sure everyone has clean water, electricity, and a safe place to live.

Ravi, 16, India

I would make sure technology helps people instead of replacing real human connection.

Makera, 18, Nigeria



Children's desires for change

Peace & Safety: Children repeatedly express a desire to end war, violence, and insecurity. Many imagine themselves actively stopping conflict and creating a safer world for everyone.

Equality & Fairness: A strong theme is equal rights and social justice – regardless of gender, background, or where people are born. Children want a world without discrimination or blame.

Care for the Planet: Many responses focus on reducing pollution, addressing climate change, and protecting nature, often linked to everyday human choices and responsibility.

Access to Basic Needs & Opportunity: Children emphasize clean water, sanitation, education, healthcare, electricity, and safe housing as things that should be guaranteed to everyone.

Better Leadership & Governance: Older children and teens in particular want to change bad leadership, corruption, and unfair political systems, calling for leaders who act responsibly and for the common good.

Human Connection & Community: Some worry about a loss of care, empathy, and real human connection, and want a future where people treat each other with kindness and respect.

Technology Used Wisely: Technology is seen as powerful but risky. Children want it to support human well-being, not replace relationships or deepen inequality.



Across ages and countries,
children don't just name
problems. They imagine
solutions and believe in
their own ability to create
change.



Help us empower children & youth across the world and turn their hopes and dreams into actions.



www.ourworld2050.com



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“Conditional Optimism: A Global Report on the Hopes, Concerns, and Conditions of the Next Generation.”

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