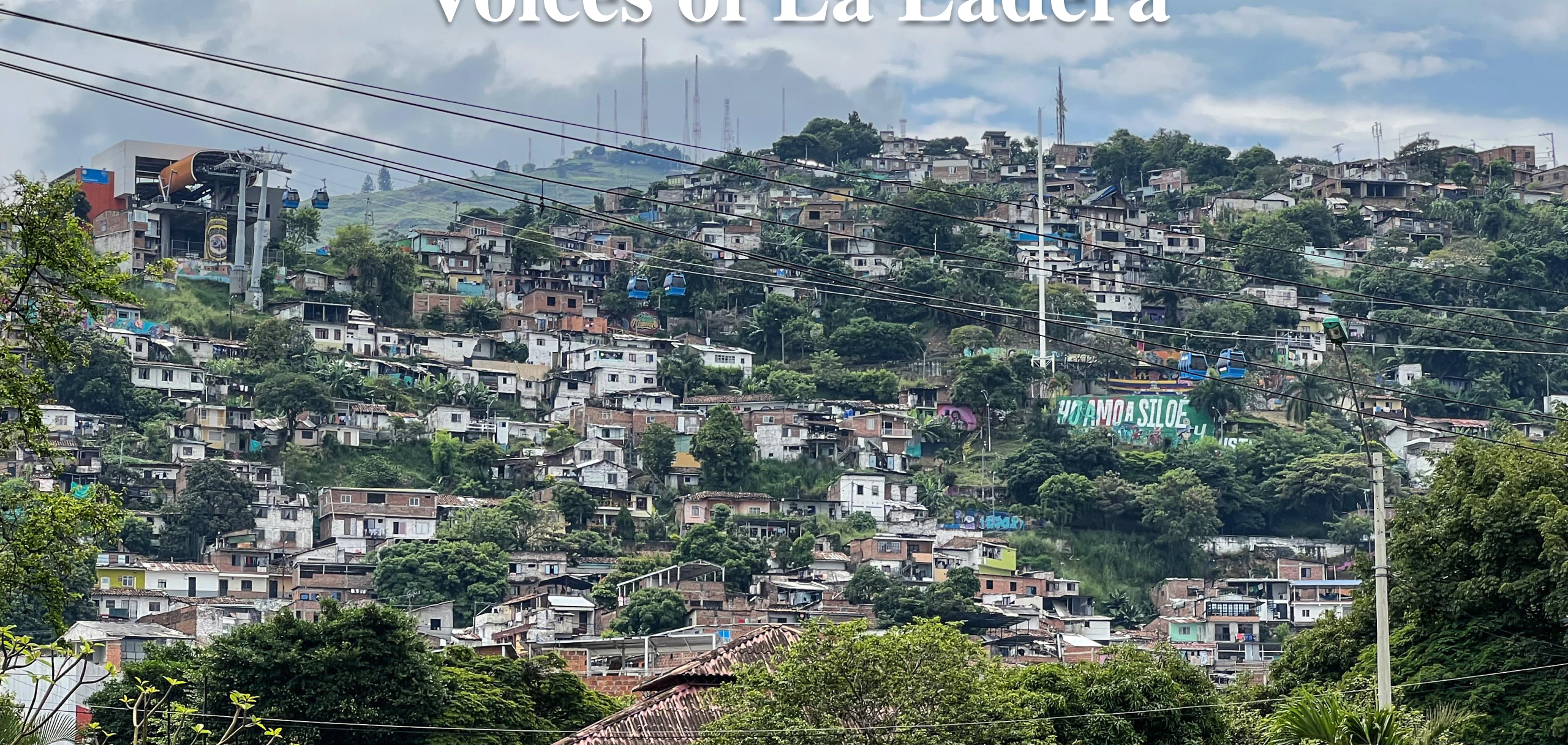


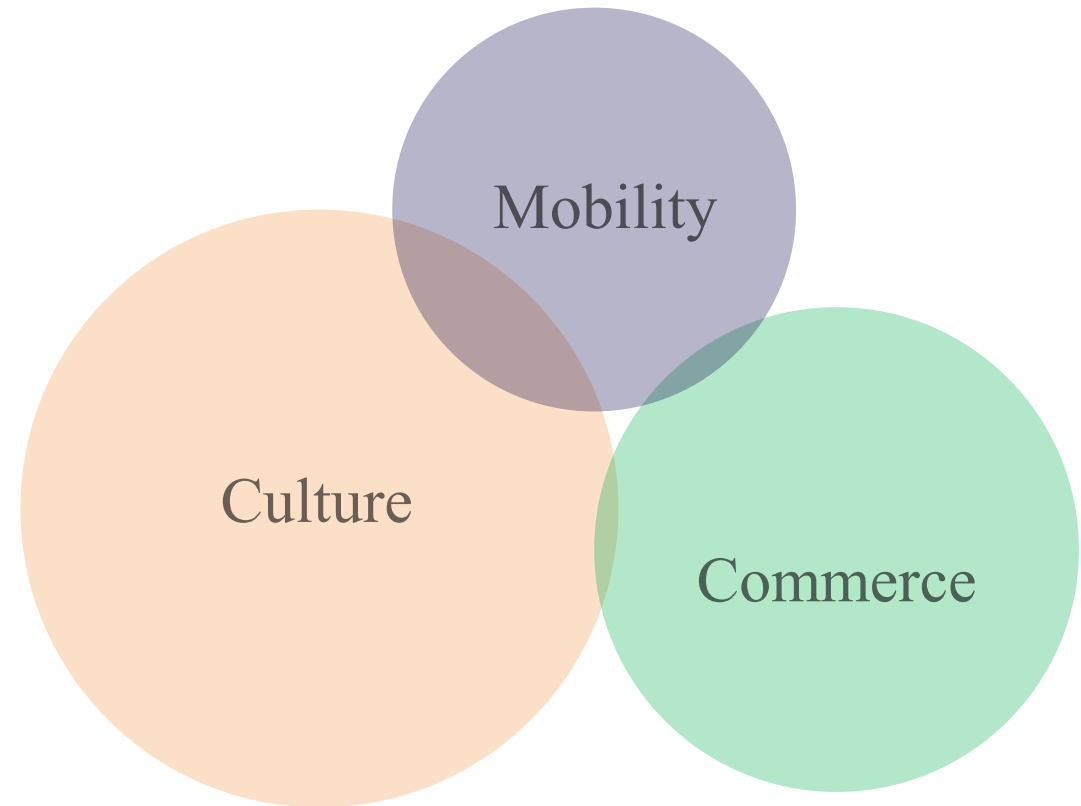
Voices of La Ladera





Objective/ Objetivo

To bring visibility to the joy, strength, resilience, compassion of individuals in vulnerable communities and their transformation through the support and presence from community leaders to create a more sustainable future for themselves.



We invite you to join us to step into the unknown,
as we climb the hillside to meet
the voices of La Ladera.



Connector, social activist, mobilizer, and community leader. Here we see the mutual love and respect with Maria Evangeline who has witnessed the impact that Eduardo has made for her and her family.



Apolinar reminds us, “We need to know our past and have a vision for where we are going.” As a carrier of history, he represents mobility by transmitting the culture of Siloé.



Recycling the rubbish from more affluent districts provides barely enough for this man to pay his rent. Despite the low pay and long hours, the recyclers are proud of the contribution they make to the environment and community.



William uses his hands to fabricate parts for *gualas* which is a critical service to help keep the mobility of the hillside going. During the strike last year, he was beaten by police and as he tried to get away, he was shot twice in his chest and barely made it to Red Cross which saved his life.



Manuel is 72 years old and cannot work any longer because he injured his hand and lost a finger. He receives 80K pesos a month from the government which he depends on to survive. To collect his money, he has to wait in line for 8-9 hours so he can have something to eat.



This woman at the entrance to Siloé spends 12 hours a day recycling or reselling used items; followed by time with her children, before finally sleeping for a few hours. A small symbol of self-care is the pedicure, complete with a butterfly and flower motif. Everyone deserves something that brings joy.



Jenny moved to Cali to escape violence. She is a florist in the commercial district and creates bouquets and party favors for the people of La Ladera. She works 12 hours a day and gets 1 day off every 15 days. She rents nearby but would like to find something less expensive.



Captured here is one of the many vehicles called *gualas* or *jeepetos* traversing the steep, winding roads of La Ladera. *Gualas* are a key mode of transportation in Cali. They've been modified to be able to carry many riders of the city as well as to climb up and down the hills. If all seats are occupied, it isn't uncommon for people to hang onto the back.



During a heavy downpour, Elbia, the abuela of the IGZ Productions studio, dashed to the tienda next door to provide coffee and bread for the studio's 10 guests. We were struck by her warmth and generosity to give so much, a common trait in the Colombians we have met.



Most rappers, including Alex of IGZ, have an image to uphold and pose with a tough facade. There's more to the rap life than intimidation, and his studio serves as an outlet for the area youth to explore their creative expressions.



This mural can be found in the center of Siloé. It represents the youth being an active part of the resistance; fighting for and watching over their neighborhoods. Many youth were an integral part of the protests that have happened over the last few years; many murals in the community depict their participation in those events.



Josue is from Venezuela and instantly greeted us in Siloé with a passionate rap. His gaze represents curiosity, warmth, and a longing to join us in our journey.



“Contenders:” Juan David y Victor showing their swagger, their confidence, and their pride as rappers and athletes.



We met Laura during our visit with Semillas Siloé. Her gaze is reflective of her hopes and dreams of her future as an astronomer, while still bound by the fence that constrains her reality.



Creative expression, fun, and athleticism are seen throughout the park of Siloé. The benefits of pedaling are more than just providing mobility; self-esteem and confidence are found in a body in motion.



Kevin is a young leader passionate about empowering youth through education. His smile is contagious, and his energy helps generate the love, art, culture and seeds of change.



Geronimo is part of the youth group Semillas Siloé. He is a passionate and eager storyteller when speaking of the history of his community. As mentioned earlier, young people are an active part of the change taking place in this community and it is inspiring to see the passion that emanates from them. Geronimo was proud to share the story of his neighborhood, and this image shows his enthusiasm and pride.



The students of the Semillas Siloé stroll from their basketball court playground to the casa wearing t-shirts that show their pride in their neighborhood – ‘Siloé isn't how they make it up, it's how we make it.'



Danna is a student in Juventud Arte y Vida, a youth acrobatic group from Siloé. She is doing a backbend on the street right outside the organization. This image illustrates the sense of home residents have. For example, despite a community that is often painted as upside-down or chaotic, Danna remains grounded (through her hands and feet) to the steep hills of La Ladera.



The acrobats of needed appropriate clothes to perform in Siloé. Enter the seamstresses who made their own patterns from American-style leotards. They also earn an income by making gymnastic team uniforms for others in Cali.



Sceja grew up in Siloé and fell into delinquency. He decided to change his life and Rap became his vehicle to move up and out of a negative mindset. He became a rapper and a barber which he uses to serve his community and youth. Last year, his brother was killed in an auto accident and in addition to his own daughter and mother, he also cares for his brother's 3 children and wife.



'El Senor' lives near La Estrella, and he has eyes that rival its brilliance.



We met this ‘*Abuela*’ on our first day in the community – her 84th birthday. She has envisioned a place to grow traditional plants and crops. It speaks to her foresight to feed the people from the soil of their mountain. When we were dropped off at the round-about the activity and noise was almost overwhelming. As we ascended the mountain the air was cooler and refreshing. We stepped into the quiet garden where las *abuelitas* cultivate growth and beauty for their community.



This is the view of Siloé from the adjoining *barrio* of Brises de Mayo. It shows the span of the neighborhood and the diversity of the community. You can see the different types of houses and the colors that make up these homes. When looking closely, one can also see the various activities taking place in the area.



Josue is originally from Venezuela. His raps are produced by IGZ Producciones, which is based in Cali. Josue's artistic power and talent is represented by "holding" the star (*La Estrella*) of Siloé, which is akin to the light of his potential.



When we asked a young girl what her favorite thing about Siloé is, she shared, “La Estrella!” The bright shining star is represented in a lot of the art and culture and is a marker of great pride for a community that we had the pleasure of being able to spotlight.

“Heart, mind and soul. What’s most important is how we connect to the people. We need to look into our hearts to find those connections. These are part of greater global issues and not isolated local issues. Telling stories is a way to make those connections, understand the different actors, and how they can be part of the conversations.”

Eduardo Montenegro, father/community leader

Muchas gracias