

From the Ground Up: S1E1 Intro to Climate Justice with Luan Transcript

00:00:12:13 - 00:00:30:06

Katie

Welcome to From the Ground Up, a podcast by the UK Youth Climate Coalition. This is a podcast by and for young people who are passionate about climate justice and want to make a difference. In each episode, we will be talking to young activists about a particular issue within the umbrella of climate justice. They're passionate about what it means to be an activist and what you can do to help.

00:00:31:00 - 00:00:31:20

Katie

I'm Katie.

00:00:32:05 - 00:00:32:23

Josh

And I'm Josh.

00:00:33:15 - 00:00:47:06

Katie

And we'll be your host today. We'll be talking to our special guest, the one Warwick from Fridays for Future Brazil, about what climate justice is and what he does in his activism.

00:00:51:17 - 00:00:52:11

Katie

Hi, Josh.

00:00:53:03 - 00:00:54:03

Josh

Hi, Katie.

00:00:54:16 - 00:00:55:09

Katie

How are you?

00:00:55:22 - 00:01:00:20

Josh

I'm good. It's nice and sunny feeling the spring vibes, how are you?

00:01:01:16 - 00:01:12:15

Katie

Yeah. I've also been enjoying the sun today. Did some gardening, really embracing in a middle aged person. Yeah. So it's our first episode of the podcast. You excited?

00:01:12:16 - 00:01:19:22

Josh

Is is. I'm excited and I'm kind of nervous and I don't know what to expect. So we're learning together, I guess.

00:01:19:23 - 00:01:24:15

Katie

Yeah, it's fun. How are you feeling about our theme for today?

00:01:25:20 - 00:01:41:08

Josh

Um, it's such a big, big theme and a broad topic, and it's just something that floats around in my head every now and then. So it felt. I think it'll be really good to, like, talk about it and then talk about, like, campaigning and towards it.

00:01:41:24 - 00:01:52:02

Katie

Yeah. Yeah. So just a reminder, our theme today is Climate Justice, too. And I know what Wikipedia says about climate justice. So we've got a working definition.

00:01:52:06 - 00:01:52:13

Josh

Yeah.

00:01:52:24 - 00:02:11:06

Katie

And climate justice is a concept that addresses the just division, fair sharing and equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of climate change and responsibilities to deal with climate change. That feels like a very wordy way of saying it. But does that does that ring true for you? Is that kind of how you think about climate justice?

00:02:12:00 - 00:02:32:21

Josh

Yeah, that kind of like covers touches of the basis. But I feel like when I think about climate, just I think about the really like human experience of sort of like being in this situation in which you don't have control of a lot of things which are really negatively affecting your life and how like that can make you feel a bit powerless.

00:02:33:21 - 00:02:46:11

Josh

And that wasn't your fault that that has happened. I feel like that human experience is sometimes you need to remind get away from the academic definition and really humanize it a bit more.

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Katie

Yeah, that's so true because I feel like for a long time I didn't really understand what climate justice meant. It sounded like quite an abstract concept and like, yeah, because I'm from like a science background. I still got math at uni. We didn't talk much about like people and stuff. So I feel like for a long time I was like, Oh yeah, climate change is bad because the science says this, but it didn't necessarily translate into like how it actually affects people.

00:03:16:14 - 00:03:45:14

Katie

So it took me a long time to understand that like climate justice is sort of about it's about how like we need to make sure that while we're tackling climate change, climate change, like basically Oxfam, existing inequalities worse. So if we're going to like tackle climate change, we also need to work together to overcome existing inequalities and, like, build a better world for everyone.

00:03:46:02 - 00:04:02:04

Josh

Mm hmm. Yeah. And people sometimes will tell you off for having, like, a utopian vision. But I don't think there's anything utopia about a vision which is built on, like, just common decency and fairness.

00:04:03:20 - 00:04:14:04

Katie

Yeah. Yeah. So, like, some people are quite cynical about, like the idea of like a better world being possible, and you're like, but why not? Why shouldn't we try?

00:04:14:20 - 00:04:16:01

Speaker 4

Yeah.

00:04:16:17 - 00:04:22:03

Katie

How you feel about our guest today? We have Lauren from Fridays for Future Brazil joining us shortly.

00:04:22:06 - 00:04:43:02

Josh

I'm really excited to talk to Lauren Logan. We know as we worked with him on Fridays for Future Brazil at COP26 in Glasgow, we shared a credit accreditations which are like the badges to get into the space with them. So it's really exciting to have a catch up with them and just find out what they've been up to as well since.

00:04:43:19 - 00:05:09:14

Katie

Yeah, I'm excited because I, I didn't really meet I didn't meet the Fridays for future Brazil people when we were at COP and I feel like I really don't know anything about like Brazilian climate activism. I feel like, you know, I know that there are people out there campaigning to defend the Amazon rainforest. And like, I know that Bolsonaro is like not on our side, but I feel like that's about the limit of my knowledge.

00:05:09:14 - 00:05:15:09

Katie

So I'm kind of interested to hear about what activism is like for people in Brazil.

00:05:15:09 - 00:05:22:04

Josh

So this would be a really good moment to bring one on to the call that.

00:05:22:04 - 00:05:27:24

Katie

So now I'm really excited to welcome our guest Luan Werneck from Fridays for Future Brazil. Luan, would you like to introduce yourself?

00:05:28:02 - 00:05:46:08

Luan

Yes. Hi, guys. Hi, everyone. My name is Luan. I'm 18 years old and I've been working with Friday For Future Brazil for almost two years. I'm from the Rio de Janeiro and I'm very happy to be here and talk about the Brazilian experience in activism, climate, justice and everything related to climate change.

00:05:48:00 - 00:06:01:08

Katie

Amazing. I didn't know how young you are I guess like with the Fridays for future like with the Youth Climate Coalition. I'm 25 in a way, I'm like "Am too old to be here?"

00:06:01:08 - 00:06:03:08

Luan

Oh, you're 25. Oh, my God.

00:06:05:07 - 00:06:05:22

Katie

All right.

00:06:06:18 - 00:06:09:09

Luan

I thought you were, like, 21. 20?

00:06:09:09 - 00:06:12:14

Katie

Oh, thank you. Yeah.

00:06:15:08 - 00:06:18:13

Katie

So how did you first get involved with Fridays for Future?

00:06:19:00 - 00:06:43:00

Luan

Oh, like it was during the pandemic, during the quarantine time. It just started here in Brazil, March 2020. I don't know when it started in the UK, but during the first part it was very okay for us like to stay at home and do our homework. I was doing high school during that time, so we had lots of things to do.

00:06:43:06 - 00:07:04:07

Luan

But in the middle, me, middle, middle June I was like, Oh my God, there's something so, so many things going towards I need to do something to help. I need to do something to help. And if I too, I'm at home, I can do nothing. You can't go to the streets and help people. I can see just strikes because we are in the middle of a pandemic.

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Luan

But then I. Then I get to know Friday For future. I was following them for some months and they posted those stories saying, oh, you want to be part of the do you want to be part of the movement? Just send us your WhatsApp number and we will get in touch with you. So it was like, Oh, it's so easy to do it.

00:07:27:15 - 00:07:54:15

Luan

And I send them my WhatsApp number. One month later they send me, uh, they put me in groups to introduce the new members and here I am like my life is completely the opposite that I was before this. It was very, it was something very simple but changed my whole life. You know, that was the first time I get involved in climate activists climate activism to be.

00:07:55:23 - 00:08:14:08

Luan

It was the first time I get involved on dates on that and just lighting the the end of last year, I could really go to the streets because we were in the time of the pandemic in Brazil. But during this first two years it was all online.

00:08:14:08 - 00:08:19:01

Josh

So how how long were you working with people before you actually met them in person?

00:08:20:04 - 00:08:33:02

Luan

I started I started in FFF Brazil, like June 2020, and I met my friends from Brazil for the first time all in the UK in COP26. I never really.

00:08:34:08 - 00:08:43:03

Katie

We were because we first met like me and Josh both joined UK YCC during the pandemic and we all first met in Glasgow as well. Yeah, we realized it was the same for you.

00:08:43:10 - 00:09:02:20

Luan

Yeah. And for us it was very, it was very funny because we were like, oh, we are in the same country. And we went to meet each other in Edinburgh. I just, I stayed in Edinburgh during COP26 and we're like, oh my God, we are like there was a friend of mine that was in half an hour from my City and I met her in the UK.

00:09:02:21 - 00:09:19:08

Luan

So this was like the first time we, we really meet each other with people. Like I was working almost two years everyday and it was a very, very unique experience to be honest, to meet people you are working during pandemic. I don't know if you felt the same.

00:09:20:13 - 00:09:36:09

Katie

Yeah, yeah. I think for us it was just so exciting to all be together. We were just like we had on the middle weekend. There was like so many of us there because we had half the people were there the first week. Half the people in the second week. But over the weekend we were all that together and everyone was just so happy to see each other.

00:09:36:09 - 00:09:58:00

Josh

It was such a Mad Birds wasn't there. It was just like, Oh my God, excitement. Yeah. So like the topic we're kind of talking about today and this is the first episode we thought would just start with the broad thing we campaign for is climate justice. So like, what does climate justice mean to you?

00:09:58:08 - 00:10:27:15

Luan

It's like for me, climate justice. It's a range of things. But we talk, we talk about it.... We always talk about getting the rights of Brazil inside of all our activism groups, and we always try to get it to the people with climate change. And for me, there is two main things about climate justice. The first one is to understand that we are not the countries are not in the same boat like the Global South.

00:10:27:15 - 00:10:56:15

Luan

Countries are suffering more with climate change and the the marginalized groups as well, like the LGBT community, the people of color community, indigenous communities and other ones are suffering more with climate change. We are not seeing this, all of us realizing the same boats. And the other thing is to understand the responsibility as well, to understand, like some people say, that it's their responsibility is all their humanity.

00:10:57:03 - 00:11:25:18

Luan

Everyone has their faults for the faults in the climate change. We all know that the countries that the most pollutes, emmit most greenhouse gases are the global north global countries. So for me, this is the two main things to understand the division between responsibilities and consequences of climate change, and how we from the Global South are suffering more about it inside the solution.

00:11:25:20 - 00:11:49:09

Luan

That's good for both of us in that respect. Indigenous people, black people. And how can I say that people of color, communities and other traditional communities know of the words

for us is that it's to respect and defend this. That's communities because they are the real the real warriors for the earth.

00:11:50:01 - 00:12:13:11

Josh

My father. That of real worries for the Earth. That's a good way of summing up, which I thought about before you kind of touched on like as a young person in Brazil or young people in Brazil, do you do you think young people feel the effects more of climate justice in their daily lives, or do you think they realize they feel those effects.

00:12:14:00 - 00:12:15:15

Luan

Of climate justice, of climate.

00:12:15:15 - 00:12:21:05

Josh

Change? Well, the effects of climate change. And then obviously it's a climate injustice because of those effects.

00:12:21:21 - 00:12:47:15

Luan

But really understand that there are two realities that so for for climate, for climate change and fight against climate change. First, we have the reality of the common people like me, who is like a white guy who is doing the tourism and have the people that are really on the frontlines of the fighting against climate change, that are the indigenous communities, the people of color communities.

00:12:47:15 - 00:13:09:17

Luan

The most marginalized communities in these loans will suffer a lot more from the climate change and have really threatening against their lives really different ways that I can say about its leader in Brazil. We are suffering from climate change in very different ways because we are a very big country. So like every region of Brazil is suffering from indifference.

00:13:09:17 - 00:13:38:06

Luan

We some some oil. For example, in the Northeast we have desertification. It's a very common thing that most people don't know about Brazil. Like we have a big area, like if I'm not wrong, it's the size of the UK that is suffering from desertification. So it's very big in my region. Have lots of floods. Last month we had the floods in your city called Big Drop Metropolis, near my city where more than to 200 people died because of our floods.

00:13:38:06 - 00:14:12:00

Luan

In just one day, we have the amount of water that was going to rain this year in just like 6 hours because of climate change. So it's very something very unique. We have lots of heat waves, cold waves and other stuff. And more recently, like since storms like this, storms that

started happening in some states. So we have like lots of things going on at the same time and they and people are suffering with it, I'm suffering, lots of other people are suffering as well.

00:14:12:03 - 00:14:22:12

Luan

But we need to make it clear that the people that suffer more with it are the marginalized communities. They are the ones that will suffer. With it all of the all of that is.

00:14:25:18 - 00:14:44:07

Katie

Thank you for that. Like I, I really don't know a lot about Brazil, so I think it's really, really great that you've been able to highlight that actually. You know, people think of Brazil and they think of the Amazon rainforest, but there's actually so much other stuff going on. And yeah, it's a huge, diverse country and there's so many, so many different issues of.

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Luan

Yeah, I think that's something cool to say because people will think about Brazil like they just think you have just one biome, like it's Amazonia, but we have like five biomes, all Brazil and like they are all the biggest ones of them. We have the one that's like savanna in the northeast. We have the biggest flooded area in the world.

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Luan

That's Pantanal, very cool. We have the Mata Atlânticas, that I don't know the translation. Who is the most diverse forest in the world more than Amazon because of the number of different animals and plants. And we have also the pampas that are in the south that's like it's very similar to the UK biome to be honest.

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Luan

But like we have.

00:15:28:08 - 00:15:29:20

Katie

Like temperate forest, you.

00:15:29:20 - 00:15:59:13

Luan

Know, it's like just fields, fields of grass with some trees and in some parts like we are sort of diverse. Like I've never went to Amazon, but we have lots of biomes in Brazil and most people don't know about it. And everybody has its own problems, its own that biodiversity. And for me that's what makes Brazil unique. Our biodiversity, lots of biomes like when I go to other states of I'm it's it's looks like I'm in I'm not in another country.

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Luan

The culture is very diverse. The people are diverse. The language is diverse. They have our unique accents. So for me, that's what's unique.

00:16:09:12 - 00:16:37:09

Josh

I feel like kind of leads onto like the next thing I would talk about is... Brazil's really diverse and there's lots of different diverse climates and diverse people. How as activists do you talk about climate justice and help people make the connection of like the effects of climate change in their lives and the injustice that caused it and what they can do to be part of campaign and to solve the issue, to get politicians to act.

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Josh

How do you communicate this across this diverse country?

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Luan

So once I was talking about that, we're some friends last week, to be honest. So it's a very good question. And like for me, for me, what we do in Brazil is like we have lots of movements, like movements call I don't know if you use there was collectives that are a group of people we know explicitly community collective.

00:17:00:09 - 00:17:29:04

Luan

Well I know I don't know if that so it's like organizations we have a lot of organizations in Brazil that talk about climate change, like lots of them, more than one hundreds. And everyone is working in the specific community in the area. For me, the biggest, biggest challenge in Brazil is to talk about climate change with the common people or with the people like that, to walk every day and to get that home to sleep and don't have time to like be will be like us.

00:17:29:04 - 00:17:51:13

Luan

Activism is fighting for fighting for against climate change for us is that that's the biggest, biggest challenge. We know that most of the people I read know that global warming is something that climate change is happening, but they really don't know what it is or, for example, how to relate. Oh, my street is flooded today. That's because of climate change.

00:17:51:22 - 00:18:18:21

Luan

Or, for example, my grandmother died in the floods. This is related to climate change. Sometimes they don't know, don't, don't just relate relate to these topics and don't realize that that's all the same thing when the middle of a drive for example in the agribusiness because we are not producing enough foods for us and people don't realize, oh, that's because of climate change.

00:18:18:21 - 00:18:45:16

Luan

We are in the middle of a climate, climate crisis and that's why the food is so expensive. That's why the why that is so expensive in Brazil. That's why we are in economic crisis, that that's our biggest challenge to relate this with the realities of everyone and the way we do it is by groundwork. I don't know if you are related to the familiar to this world in the UK, but it's a word that you use a lot in Brazil.

00:18:45:23 - 00:19:20:20

Luan

That is true. Walking our communities and in this town, people by people, person by person. What's the problem and how to say to that's own your problem is the problem of everyone. Everything is climate change, everything is climate crisis. And we need to see the solutions and work against it. Like this is our main our main form of work to spread the knowledge about climate change and about climate crisis, growing the community is talking with them, giving them speaks, like in schools and other stuff.

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Luan

And really, really talking is talk, talk person by person. And so everyone knows, like climate change is a thing. Climate change is already happening and you are suffering from it, but you might don't know about about it. So that makes sense.

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Katie

Yeah, I think it's really like good that you highlight the importance of like engaging like within your community because I mean like it's easiest to reach the people that are around you. And I guess it's by like engaging everyone around us that we like spread the word and then collectively can work.

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Luan

Yeah, because like I see some, some organizations in Brazil do like a big work like, oh, we're going to use a hashtag on Twitter, we're going to make a big campaign, all Brazil in that work as well. But our main difficulty is to go to the common people, the people, the person that lives in the slums and has its own problems, economic problems and don't know about climate change.

00:20:20:04 - 00:20:29:07

Luan

This is our main goal to make this people know what they are suffering for. And I guess it's important to point this out. You know.

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Josh

It's I guess it's really that that this is a phrase which only had a few few weeks ago. So think globally. Actually locally. Yeah. Yeah. I love connect with people. Yeah. And make bring it to people's everyday lives. Yeah.

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Luan

I love this phrase and that's, that's, it's it's to think globally and work locally. Yeah.

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Katie

I guess on the subject of like thinking globally and I guess sometimes acting globally, we talked a bit about you coming over here for up 26 or like how was that experience for you? What was it like to represent Brazilian youth?

00:21:08:06 - 00:21:44:23

Luan

Yeah, it was like a very unique experience when people ask is I usually say that that that this was like the two weeks that two of the craziest weeks in all my life until now to be honest. And how can I say that? It was very crazy. Oh, I have lots of things to say since the beginning when we said we are going to COP26, how we do it like it was one year of work until we get to Edinburgh to get all the financial things that you needed, the credentials we needed.

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Luan

So just from the start it was a crazy thing. To get everyone there and we, we did this like one one week left to the start of COP26 and seeks to get everyone to go. We had 18 people all going by for FFF Brazil. And what's the question again? Can you please.

00:22:10:14 - 00:22:13:23

Katie

I get just generally how was how was it for you?

00:22:14:01 - 00:22:35:01

Luan

I mean, like for me, it was a unique place. It was my first time going to Europe and to the UK. So just for for me and my friends, which was very unique because of that, met people from all across the, all the locals across the wards and mainly youth people, which was very, very so as were experience.

00:22:35:01 - 00:22:55:05

Luan

It's very hard to describe it because like to be in a place with people, like in a room with people from 30 different countries talking about climate change, climate justice. And the reality is, for me, it's a unique thing. The best thing for me was to meet other people from Latin America because we relate a lot with our problems.

00:22:55:14 - 00:23:18:21

Luan

So like sometimes I was talking with someone from Europe, from the United States, and we said something and they were like, Oh, this happens. We didn't know about that. But when we talked with someone from Latin America, they were like, Yes, this happens in our country too. We are like brothers. You know, we have this unique thing that's Latin America.

00:23:18:21 - 00:23:46:08

Luan

People see each other and we act like we're from the same family. It's a very unique thing. And I even I even joke with my friends that's when I was in the UK. I talked more in Spanish than in English sometimes because I was just with Latin American people. So this was very unique for me as well. And also to know people from Brazil, I guess the youth delegation from Brazil was the biggest one of them, like the youth one.

00:23:46:08 - 00:24:37:16

Luan

So we are like we were like 80 people. If I'm not wrong for all Brazil, like different organizations, different movements, different institutions. So this was very unique for me that I could meet people from all the country and share and share what's to make friends? You know, there are people that I meet that's got met its COP26 that's one from Brazil and I'm friends and to today and I just have the opportunity to meet them there so it was a really unique experience to talk about climate change, understand what we are suffering, understand the the planet based solutions and to really be in the national, the national environments that's everyone's had the same goal to

00:24:37:17 - 00:25:01:10

Luan

save the climate change. So medical decisions on this things what we are suffering and that was very important to me as well because when we talk because we are from Brazil, everyone was like, Oh my God, we are Brazil. How is stuff there with your presidents? Everyone just said the same thing. So which was very good for us to understand that people knew what we are passing through in Brazil.

00:25:01:10 - 00:25:16:04

Luan

We're still passing through. So I guess this is what COP26 was for me, which was a unique experience. Like I don't have to how to describe it, just photos can describe it.

00:25:16:04 - 00:25:33:01

Katie

Yeah. I mean it's a hard one to describe and we didn't even go into the space. We were just kind of on the outside. And I feel like, yeah, it's, it's strange to be in that environment where everyone is there with a common goal and you've got all these people from all around the world. Yeah. And then you go home and it's like, okay, just back to it now.

00:25:33:02 - 00:25:33:17

Katie

But yeah, for.

00:25:33:17 - 00:25:59:14

Luan

Me it was, it was a very for me it was very yeah, it's very crazy. It was the crazy excuse my life like every day we we were doing ads and brewing the hostel like it was eight people in

the room in a very small room. So every day we get the train to Glasgow and like whenever we were there was some someone doing strikes, there was activism, activism everywhere.

00:25:59:20 - 00:26:26:15

Luan

So this was very meaningful to me. Like we get off of the train there was something some people for Extinction Rebellion, the UK was y c c protesting making this stuff. So this was very unique for me and the when we Interscope this thing seem there are so many different cultures some in different communities there. I don't know if you know about that, but like you said, cop, you have different stands.

00:26:26:15 - 00:26:55:00

Luan

That's right? And there was one that was the Brazilian official one. This was from the government that just said good things about the government. And that was one that there was the civil society of Brazil who then that was the there was the one that the government did that just said good things about it. And there was also the Brazilian one that was the Brazil Climate Action Hub that just the civil society did.

00:26:55:00 - 00:27:42:16

Luan

It's like more than 100 different stands and hubs. The Brazilian civil society one was the biggest one that we like everyone there was people inside. It's lots of people from different countries were singing about it, talking about it. People from all the Brazil was inside of it. So this was like very unique to see that the civil society of Brazil was so strong that the the biggest the biggest standout was ours, which was like a second home to us, to be honest, whenever we needed to meet, whenever we need to have discussions, having meetings, we went to the Brazil Climate Action Hub, and that was something very important for us.

00:27:42:16 - 00:27:47:18

Luan

Like we really occupied COP26, the Brazilian activists.

00:27:49:08 - 00:28:13:17

Josh

That's amazing. That's really great that you got that chance for Community. I remember we went into... that was the blue zone, which is the main negotiated space which all of these countries had the stands, the pavilions on. There's also the Green Zone, which was had stands from the sponsors of this cop, which were like UK companies. And the amount of greenwashing which was happening was unbelievable.

00:28:13:17 - 00:28:23:08

Josh

And a climate change conference, it was just sort of like, Oh, we're going to be green for this two weeks. And then after that, we'll just hope that nobody else notices so much.

00:28:23:16 - 00:28:24:13

Luan

Was Yeah.

00:28:25:11 - 00:28:45:06

Katie

Like two of my favorite things that I spotted in there was like there was a stand that was like Hellmann's mayonnaise and it was like, mayonnaise is going to help you solve climate change because you're not going to throw away your leftovers because you have them with mayonnaise. And I was like, that seems like a bit of a reach, and then the other one was Microsoft with that.

00:28:45:06 - 00:28:46:02

Katie

And they had a thing that.

00:28:46:02 - 00:28:47:16

Luan

Was the Minecraft one O.

00:28:47:17 - 00:28:49:16

Katie

With Microsoft.

00:28:50:09 - 00:28:50:16

Luan

That.

00:28:50:23 - 00:29:05:05

Katie

And they were like, we are going to solve climate change because we're because Rolls-Royce use our software to design their more efficient engines. And I was like, again, I feel like I feel like that's not you personally solving climate change.

00:29:05:06 - 00:29:15:15

Josh

So it's just the way they put like lots of plants everywhere. As if that I'd like just trick you if they're just like kind of big green wall.

00:29:15:18 - 00:29:43:24

Luan

We are green, but like, if the environments are not green, let's be. Yeah, the Brazilian. We said that about the Brazilian. The right word. It's pavilion inside the blue zone. We have two pavilions, the government ones and the civil society ones. The government ones was ridiculous. It was just plants like the the the walls of it was plants like they put a green, green ring.

00:29:44:06 - 00:29:54:07

Luan

Rick was rounding it just to make them feel like they were green and sustainable, which was they were not they were just lying there, to be honest.

00:29:54:22 - 00:30:06:24

Josh

In Brazil, how does your activist community support each other? What do you do to to best, to stay resilient against all this greenwashing, against all this government hypocrisy?

00:30:06:24 - 00:30:31:06

Luan

The reality in Brazil is that sort of nowadays, to be honest, we just got back from the we were like the near ends of the pandemic in Brazil in the I don't know if you then just talked about that in the UK, but it was very difficult for us, the pandemic, because the government didn't do anything. We had more than 660.

00:30:31:23 - 00:30:59:12

Luan

Let me see how to say it. We had lots of lives that were taken away because of COVID 19 and the government's incompetence. And we are in the middle of a climate crisis and the economic crisis in Brazil like they're like the worst crisis like 30 years. So in the middle of that, the elections year, like in five, five or six months, we're going to elect a new president.

00:30:59:19 - 00:31:29:15

Luan

And the the the Bolsonaro is like in the second place, but like it's very near the first place. So it's a very tough reality, to be honest. It's very hard. And to do that, we tried to we tried to make to be friends like the community of the climate activism in Brazil. It's a really big community. Everyone's friends of each other, everyone knows each other.

00:31:30:10 - 00:31:56:16

Luan

And you try to do stuff to relax sometimes and escape from this reality group. Sometimes we meet each other, sometimes we do trips with each other. We try to stay focused, we try to stay calm. We go to terror, to be honest, and we try to do stuff together, play online, video games, like meet each other, like when they get back to from COP26.

00:31:56:16 - 00:32:30:02

Luan

I meet some friends that I meet, they're just relaxed and go to the beach with them and talk about other stuff that are not climate change. So we try to relax a bit because we know when Monday starts life we will open, then use something bags. That's going to happen somewhere off the country. It will be on fire, literally on fire because we are having lots of legal fires and like half of the country somewhere is going to be a big flood that would let us people the president is going to say something horrible and awful.

00:32:30:06 - 00:32:57:24

Luan

So it's very difficult. But we try to stay together to be friends and like really be friends and help each other doing some sometimes stuff to relax and like escape from this reality. But it's not going that's in the next day, we will we will be together fighting for a better world, for the better. Brazil, to be honest.

00:32:57:24 - 00:33:15:11

Josh

Yeah, yeah. Having that time to switch off is so, so important where you just sort of throw the phone away, delete the news. So you just kind of have those important, like, denial days where you just like everything's okay and I'm just going to carry on what I'm doing.

00:33:16:18 - 00:33:33:13

Katie

Yeah, as it should. Like after COP, because you were saying before, it's like, it's amazing, but it's a crazy and intense environment. So like, yeah, I said to everyone, like on the day I left, I was like, Nobody contact me for a week. I'm going to be off grid. Nobody speak to me. I'm going away for the weekend.

00:33:34:00 - 00:33:34:21

Katie

No, to me.

00:33:35:24 - 00:33:59:08

Luan

Yeah, I'm the same like I. I took the one month after COP like I'm on vacation and don't talk to me about climate change, climate activism. I don't want to know about it. And there was also in my final exams and my exams to start college. So I was like, I don't want to know about climate and for just two, three months, two weeks after that.

00:33:59:08 - 00:34:10:14

Luan

So we get into it. But that's very important, I guess, because if you don't do that, we will get crazy and we won't be able to help.

00:34:10:14 - 00:34:33:21

Katie

Yeah. Yeah. That's something that like as well because I, I came into activism sort of after I graduated. But for so many of us, like in the movement and like particularly the youth movement, you know, we are at school we're at college, at university. So we're doing this alongside our studies and it's like obviously we're all in the movement, so we're passionate about climate justice, but also.

00:34:34:04 - 00:34:35:02

Luan

We have our lives.

00:34:35:02 - 00:34:38:10

Katie

To get some qualifications to enjoy our lives as well.

00:34:38:15 - 00:34:58:18

Luan

Yeah, for us, for Brazil, which was very crazy because like in Brazil we have a big exam called AM. So getting the activists is like all the country do one exam through the end of the year that will decide if you go to your university or no. Like 5 million people do this exam in just one day, one weekend.

00:34:59:01 - 00:35:28:10

Luan

It's very crazy. This exam was one week after we get when one week after the end of the COP26. So we're like, Oh my God, we are Crazy. All the youth from Brazil was like, and I don't know how I'm going to do it. And it's so much pressure, you know, and we have to offer some to we have to like have our lives working climate activism study.

00:35:28:18 - 00:35:34:06

Luan

There are lots of things that you have to do. At the same time, it's very crazy, I guess.

00:35:34:11 - 00:35:35:22

Katie

Did did you pass your exam?

00:35:36:03 - 00:35:58:11

Luan

I'm waiting for the like it's it's very crazy because I, it's very I, I really look at how you guys went to go to college in the UK. It's very difference. Like it's very hard to explain, to be honest. But I wait. I'm waiting for my results. I am trying to go in the second semester because I was promised the SATs in the beginning of the year.

00:35:59:00 - 00:36:00:11

Luan

But I'm still waiting.

00:36:01:04 - 00:36:01:13

Josh

This.

00:36:01:23 - 00:36:07:20

Luan

Because like it's my waiting. It's very honest.

00:36:07:20 - 00:36:08:06

Katie

Well, good luck

00:36:08:07 - 00:36:29:10

Josh

I feel like it. I've really one more question. And for that, we're going to try and ask at the end of all of our podcast recordings, with all of our guests. But, what gives you hope? What keeps you going.

00:36:30:16 - 00:37:04:20

Luan

To be honest? Like when some months before COP26, I was very hopeless, to be honest, because it was a very difficult year for me because I was in the middle of the last year of high school and I don't know in the UK, but it's a very tough year in Brazil. Like everyone's like crazy and in the August, from August to November was like just capturing six trying to go to COP26 like all my day was trying to get badges and get the financial stuff and make protests in COP26.

00:37:04:20 - 00:37:27:12

Luan

So it was very hopeless. There was something so much things going on. But when we went to COP26 I really notice and what gave me hope was the people there. So no, that's like whenever I am I, I have friends, I have people from other countries that are working in the same amount of the same amount of time.

00:37:27:12 - 00:37:51:00

Luan

I'm walking with the same goal, that is to save the planet just to work for the climate, to stop climate change, to know that there are people follow suit, there is people that don't agree with us, the people that we will try to make us said try to us to stop. There's going to be people from other countries, people inside of my country, people next to me.

00:37:51:10 - 00:38:16:12

Luan

That's part of work, work of wish me and have the same goals, the same objectives, the same hope that we will do our best to try to stop climate change. And if even we can do it, we will be to. If it is even we, we can't do it. We will do the best. So adapt ourselves, adapt humanity to the consequences.

00:38:16:24 - 00:38:45:02

Luan

Because what was giving was what was making me hopeless, that it was the time we we have so so little time to stop climate change. Let's it's 5 to 7 years like something so big for us and so little time, you know. But when I noticed that the amount of people that really want to change the most, people who wants to save the world, it's so great.

00:38:45:03 - 00:39:12:13

Luan

I know this. Whenever whatever happens, whenever we were, whenever we were going to be, there's going to be people that have the same hope. That's that's our going to work with us and do the same to adapt ourselves to fight against climate change, to save and help

other people with their problems. Because this this is what gives me hope to meet people and see that they have hope as well.

00:39:12:13 - 00:39:45:21

Katie

It's not such a good answer, but yeah, it's a really good answer. I think like the fact that yeah, the feeling that gives you hope is that we're not in this alone and that we're all working together on this. So many people out there that are passionate about making the world better and stopping climate change. Yeah. One thing I wanted to ask before we let you go is what can we and our audience do to support your work and other activists in Brazil?

00:39:46:02 - 00:40:08:04

Luan

I guess the main thing you can do, to be honest, is to search about Brazil, know, our reality. Because one thing that I feel when we talk with people from other countries about Brazil, mainly from the global north that I'm going to talk about because you guys are from the UK. So it makes sense is that people don't know the reality of Brazil.

00:40:08:16 - 00:40:43:08

Luan

We talk about them, they are like, Oh, you have the Amazon rainforest. We have just that. So let's talk about our reality. So to give us your microphone, to talk about it, to talk about about our president that is killing our biodiversity. So talk about our economic crisis, spoke about all our other biomes to really understands what we are suffering and to make everyone knows about that because most of the countries don't know the reality of Brazil, the reality of Latin America, countries and we need voice.

00:40:43:08 - 00:41:06:03

Luan

We just need a voice to make all of the worlds aware of what we are passing for this country. I guess this is the main thing such about Brazil know our reality. Get to know more activists from Brazil, mainly indigenous ones. There are so many great indigenous climate activists in Brazil. I can pass some names for you guys.

00:41:06:10 - 00:41:31:20

Luan

They do amazing work in all of Brazil, not just in the Amazon rainforest, but in other biomes as well. That went to COP26 as well. Like get to know them and know about our reality. That's just the own thing I ask and the speak our message and make all our voices more and more louder. Because this is just what I ask.

00:41:31:20 - 00:41:46:20

Katie

Yeah, that's so important, I think. Yeah, because it's very easy for us in the Global North, I think to be a bit detached from the reality that other people are living. So it's so important to kind of make sure we're listening to your stories and like, yeah, seeking out the voices of people that we might not hear from.

00:41:47:01 - 00:41:49:06

Luan

Yeah, exactly.

00:41:50:06 - 00:42:04:05

Josh

Thank you so much for coming and chatting to us today. This is a very, really interesting and I find it kind of really therapeutic because I have to say that I have felt a bit like doom and gloom recently. So this has been good. Thank you so much.

00:42:05:02 - 00:42:13:19

Luan

Thank you, guys. It was a pleasure. I love the UK, to be honest. It's one of my favorite countries so I was very happy about. Yes and hope to see you guys next time.

00:42:15:13 - 00:42:32:08

Katie

Yeah. Thank you so much. How did you find that?

00:42:32:10 - 00:42:51:13

Josh

That was really, really good. I found it kind of therapeutic talking to Luan and just hearing about the activism he's been up to. And also his journey of joining FFF Brazil, I thought was really fun and relatable about becoming an activist in a pandemic.

00:42:52:22 - 00:43:21:04

Katie

Yeah, I felt the same as like he was like, Oh yeah, we never saw each other until we were in Glasgow. I was like, Oh my God, yeah. I thought was really interesting. Like some of the stuff he said about like just the diversity of Brazil as a country is. Like, yeah, we were saying like, oh, everyone in the UK just thinks it's like the Amazon rainforest and then like a couple of cities and that's all anyone here really knows.

00:43:21:04 - 00:43:32:05

Katie

But actually it's not like that at all. There's a whole like range of Yeah, biomes and people and cultures and languages going on that like we're very ignorant of over here.

00:43:32:13 - 00:44:00:14

Josh

And also what he said about desertification when like people talk about desertification like my mind instantly jumps to sort of the Middle East or like Sahara Desert, not to like South America, which you have like connotations of it being lush and green and full of fruit. And it really strikes home how, like no where is like inescapable from climate change.

00:44:03:12 - 00:44:04:02

Katie

A depressing conclusion

00:44:04:05 - 00:44:11:17

Josh

Yeah I guess that's that's not the ray of hope it should have been.

00:44:11:17 - 00:44:31:02

Katie

The other thing as well I thought was really good was when he was talking about like the, like the people and community and like the energy that that gave him at COP because I think I kind of I was similar like I went to COP and I felt very tired and drained at the end of it. But I also felt really like inspired and engaged by all the people that I met.

00:44:31:15 - 00:44:55:15

Katie

And I think that was something that like I think particularly because we've been doing this during the pandemic and not been able to see each other, I think that's something that was really rewarding for a lot of people that came to COP like to be energized by the people around us and to be like inspired by all these people that actually also care about the same things as you and are also trying to make make the world better and yeah, yeah.

00:44:55:15 - 00:44:57:11

Katie

Towards solving climate change.

00:44:57:11 - 00:45:19:08

Josh

And obviously it's good to have all that energy. And I think, um, another hopeful thing taking away from his stories like it is, it's quite simple to get involved. Like if you just see a group you like the look of and your're interested in their work, just, just give them a message because that would be always keen to take on more people when they can.

00:45:19:08 - 00:45:19:23

Josh

Really.

00:45:20:21 - 00:45:23:04

Katie

Yeah. Like there's a lot to do. We need everyone we can get.

00:45:26:15 - 00:45:31:04

Josh

And find in your local struggle as well. I think it's also really important.

00:45:31:15 - 00:46:06:05

Katie

Yeah, yeah. I think having like local groups to engage with and like tackling the issues that matter to you locally, whether that's like people in slum communities in Brazil or if it's people

in your local community here, like, yeah, finding ways to engage with the people around you is so important. A lot of like making the transformation we need to see in society.

00:46:06:05 - 00:46:26:13

Josh

Thanks for listening to From the Ground Up, a podcast by the UK Youth Climate Coalition. Our guest today was Luan Werneck, your host were Katie and Josh. Music is by Nick Battel. To learn more about our work, follow us on social media or go to UKYCC.com to learn more about Loan's work with FFF Brazil, follow them on social media.

00:46:27:00 - 00:46:59:06

Josh

The one also sent us a great list of Brazilian youth activists you can follow on Instagram, which is available in the show notes for this episode.