

If All Roads Lead to Rome... Why Are Some So Much Harder?

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Who am I?

Daniela Mendoza Amesquita
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WUS – Grenzenlos Active
Civil Engineer
MSc. Infrastructure Planning Student (Universität Stuttgart)
Animal rescuer
ES, EN, (FR, DE)
Moving, traveling, reading



Author's own



Barranquilla Colombia



Barranquilla

- Carnival: Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO
- Biggest City in the Northern Coast
- Shakira, Sofia Vergara, Paulina Vega, Luis Diaz

Fontur.com.co

Colombia

- 2016: Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict
- Coffee & Emeralds

80 Indigenous groups & African, European, and Indigenous heritage

- Geographical Diversity
- #2 globally in biodiversity: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1r6DMx0FOYk>



WUS – Grenzenlos

Grenzenlos activists conduct the teaching collaborations. The common thread is the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



UN-SDGs

Urgent call for action

ZIELE FÜR NACHHALTIGE ENTWICKLUNG



Introduction

Imagine you're late for an important exam.
Why would that be? What could you do next
time to be on time?



Mentimeter

What do you know?



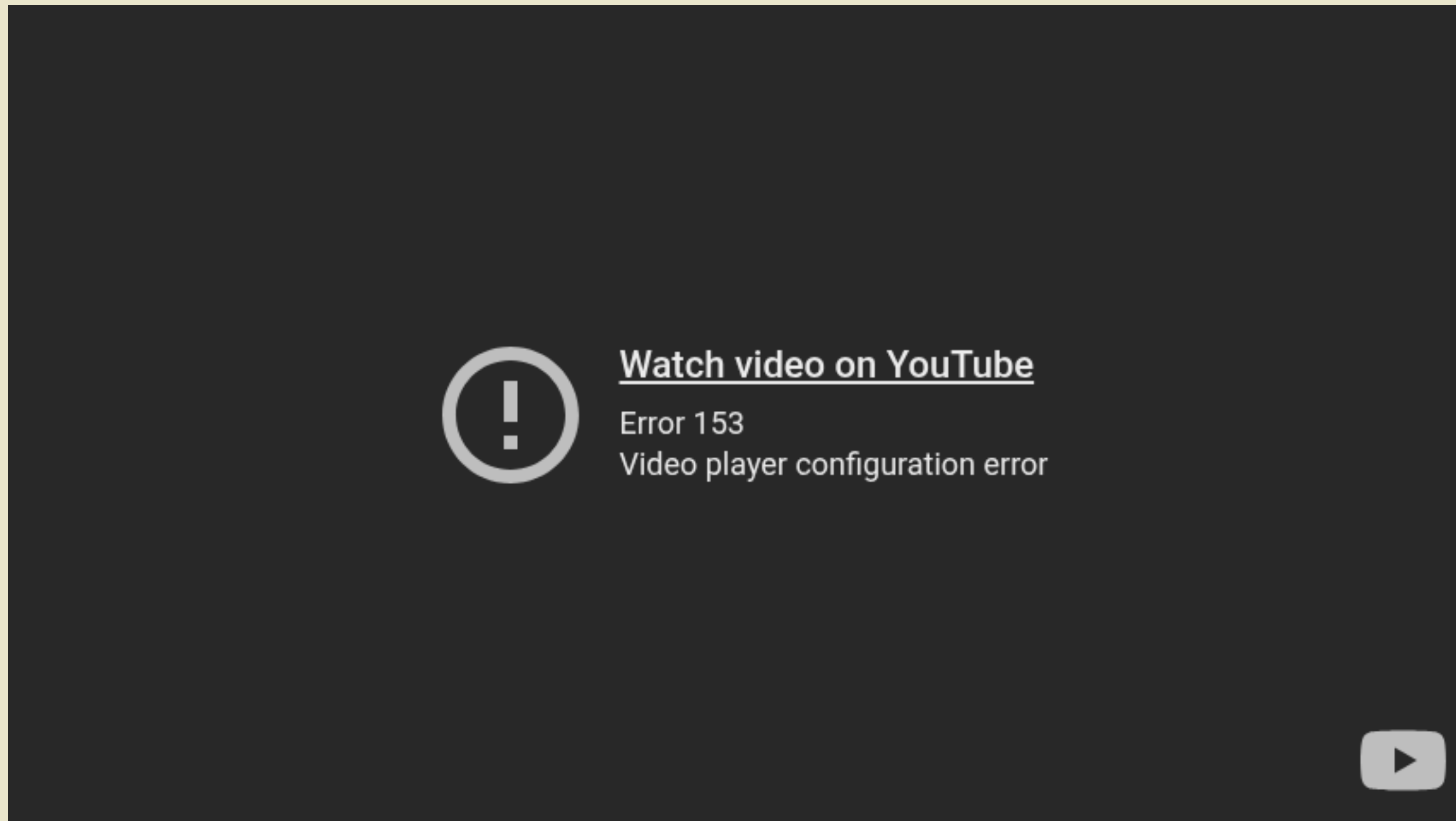
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Why Does Infrastructure Matter?

How does infrastructure affect daily life?

Infrastructure impacts daily life by determining how easily we access essential services, move around, and connect with others. Well-planned systems improve efficiency, opportunities, and resilience, while poor infrastructure creates barriers that limit access to education, work, and even basic needs, affecting overall quality of life.

Inequality in infrastructure



PAUSE

How long does it take you to get to school or work?

We all pursue similar goals — school, work, health — but infrastructure can make the path easy... or extremely difficult.



Hner Zibari's photo



nypost.com

Inequality in infrastructure

Germany	Global South / Rural Areas
100% access to clean drinking water	2 billion people lack safely managed water (WHO/UNICEF, 2023)
100% access to electricity	675 million people lack electricity (IEA, 2023)
99% internet penetration (urban)	Only 27% in least developed countries (ITU, 2022)
Fast & safe public transport	Many students walk >1 hr to school (UNESCO, 2022)

Inequality in infrastructure

Why Does This Happen?

- Historical inequality & colonization
- Uneven economic development & investment
- Geography & conflict (e.g. rural, mountainous, or post-conflict areas)



Inequality in infrastructure

How does it Affect Real Lives?

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- 💧 No water
- 🚫 No transport
- ⚡ No electricity
- 🌐 No internet



The Infrastructure Challenge

Instructions

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1. Your group must build a bridge at least 20 cm long that can hold a small object (like a pen or marker) for 5 seconds.
2. You can only use the materials in your box — no sharing between groups.
3. Be creative, collaborate, and finish within 15 minutes!
4. When time's up, we'll test each bridge and discuss how the building process went.

The Infrastructure Challenge

Reflexion

Inequality in Resources

Materials:

- Group 1 (Very High): Cardboard, tape, glue, scissors, rulers, popsicle sticks, string — unlimited
- Group 2 (High): Same as Group 1, but limited quantity of glue/tape
- Group 3 (Moderate): Paper, string, straws, limited tape, no ruler or glue
- Group 4 (Low): Paper, a few sticks, no tape or glue, only scissors
- Group 5 (Very Low): Only paper and straws (no tools, no tape, no scissors)

Challenge in Action

Each team is facing unique challenges—some are working with limited tools and fragile materials, while others have access to stronger resources. This phase illustrates how, just like in the real world, the resources we have access to can significantly shape the outcome of our efforts. Even though the goal is the same for everyone, the journey and the obstacles faced are far from equal. Let's see how these differences influence the final results.

Testing & Discussion

What was frustrating?
What was easy?

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Real-World Connection

Many students worldwide walk hours to school because there's no transport.

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- 60% of the world's population (approximately 4.6 billion people) still lacks access to safe sanitation and reliable water services.
- 1.5 billion people globally live without electricity, impacting their ability to work, study, or access healthcare.
- Transport barriers in rural or underserved regions result in significant delays in accessing education and employment, limiting socioeconomic mobility.

Reflection & Call to Action

 Raise awareness

 Fundraisers

 Digital advocacy

 Support NGOs



Thank you

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