

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Project: *Inhabiting Heritage: An Urban Regeneration Strategy for the Habitability of Cuenca's Historic Center***

The Historic Center of Cuenca, recognized as a World Heritage Site, constitutes a living urban system where its heritage value is sustained by its ability to accommodate and invigorate daily life. However, in certain areas, signs of urban deterioration were evident, reflected in the wear and tear of facades, the presence of unauthorized graffiti, and a decline in the use of public space, directly affecting quality of life, perceptions of safety, and residential stability.

In response to this situation, the project promotes an urban regeneration strategy aimed at enhancing the habitability of the Historic Center, integrating the restoration of the built landscape, the improvement of public spaces, and active community participation. Beyond a one-off intervention, the initiative proposes an approach that influences how the area is inhabited, managed, and envisioned, consolidating the Historic Center as a place to live.

Implementation was carried out through a collaborative governance model led by the General Directorate of Historic and Heritage Areas of the Municipality of Cuenca, coordinating the participation of municipal entities, community actors, and the private sector. This approach allowed for a coordinated intervention in the area, integrating physical, social, and operational dimensions into a single process of action.

The results show a progressive improvement in habitability, reflected in the restoration of 211 facades along Calle Larga (94% of the total identified), the technical survey of 182 properties in other sectors, and the participation of more than 100 property owners in maintenance and environmental improvement processes. These actions have contributed to a more active use of public space, the revitalization of social and economic dynamics, and the strengthening of the bond between residents and their environment.

The project has also generated a catalytic effect, evidenced by the replication of interventions in nearby sectors and the strengthening of institutional coordination, consolidating a foundation for future, more integrated actions in the Historic Center.

The monitoring system incorporates verifiable indicators, supported by before-and-after photographic records, technical data sheets, outreach minutes, and technical reports, which consistently document changes in the urban environment and its use.

In this way, the experience goes beyond a one-off intervention to provide a model for action that enhances habitability and positions the Historic Center as an active space within contemporary urban dynamics.