



## Khalid Ahmad - UK

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Hello, my name is Khalid Ahmad, I am 20 years old and I am from London in the UK. I am studying Psychology and Criminology at City University. Before I start I just want to say thank you to all of the organisers, Gabriella, Federica and everyone involved in the organisation of this event, and to the judging panel and Professor Jeffrey Sachs for being here, for providing the inspiration behind these goals and to actually implicate them worldwide. So thank you very much for everything and thank you all the speakers so far for imparting all of your knowledge upon us and your very innovative campaign ideas.

So, as introduced, I have a solution, which is about Multi-Faith Pods set up in different communities. So, just out of interest, can I have a show of hands, who here associates themselves with a faith? Ok! Great. So, the idea is to give the tools required for young campaigners in their own communities, with the tools that they need to set up campaigns within their own communities called Pods. So the mission statement is as follows *"To mobilise young people, faith communities and NGOs in a coherent and unified approach to tackle the SDGs. Multi-Faith Pods of young people will work on delivering actions in a local area strengthening inter-faith and inter-NGO relations in the process"*.

So, where I am from, in London, we have eight and a half million people and of those, 50 per cent of them associate themselves with a Christian faith, 25 per cent are associated with other religions and 25 per cent are unassigned. In my own community, in Harrow, there are two hundred and forty-six thousand people and 35 per cent of them consider themselves Christian and 21.6 per cent consider themselves Muslim. So, the core of this idea is to have young people, such as everyone over here, to be interested in the SDGs and for them to actually show this by going on to the website that we have and to say that they are interested in, let's say, Goals 3, 5 and 7. They can then find a network of NGOs who are working on those Goals and actually network with them and get the tools that they need to set up a Pod in their own community. These different Pods will then be working together as part of a hub, which will be made up of the NGOs. And this hub will come up with the ideas and these will be critiqued by the Pods who can actually come up with their own ideas and work on them together.

The barriers and hurdles that will arise from this, of course, is to convince the NGOs to join up on to this campaign. So, the way I would like to get over this is by convincing NGOs that it is a dual beneficial process. The youth will be involved in these campaigns and will give a new spin on these campaigns and have innovative ideas, which would not have come otherwise. Also, funding is another issue. However, I am hoping to get over this by having local business in the areas where the Pods are, to actually contribute and to have other initiatives here, which are working on funding to actually be involved in this campaign as well. And then, finally, it is keeping all the members keen and understanding what changes can be made to make the campaigns even better and to make the organisation as a whole more approachable. So, the real crux of it is to have these Pods working together on all of the SDGs. Every single one of them will be worked on by different individuals who are interested in different things. So, each Pod will be centred around a number of goals that they are interested in and, collectively, we will be working on all of them, all across the country. Hopefully, I have already gathered interest from a colleague of mine that works in the EU to try and mobilise it Europe-wide if the control works in the UK.

Looking to the future I am hoping to spread the campaign across nations and to see it going across Europe. With campaigning groups such as ONE and Made in Europe behind groups like these they can really push the creativity and the productivity of these Pods by giving the resources that they need and imparting their knowledge with them.

This symposium is a great opportunity to network with all of you and to get an idea of all of the campaigns you are interested in and seeing if, perhaps, we could work together in a coherent way to actually create an umbrella organisation where all of our ideas can be fed together and we can get the youth mobilised in these campaigns together.

So, I would like to conclude by quoting Bob Dylan – not Bob Dylan sorry, Bob Marley. I was going to do Bob Dylan but I changed my mind.

*"One love, one life, let's get together and feel all right"*. I would sing it but it is not exactly appropriate. I have got one more quote, finally, I just remembered now and this is actually called a *Hadith* in Arabic and it is a quote from the Prophet. Peace be upon him.

*"If you see an injustice change it with your hands, if you can't do that then speak out against it and if you can't do that then hate it with your heart and that is the least of faith."* Thanks for listening to me, if you have any questions please come and find me. Thank you so much.