



Tomas Horvath - Slovakia

I would like to ask you if any of you saw the campaign, which is based on speech bubbles. We use it in Slovakia to show different messages that people can identify with. These speech bubbles are showing the concrete actions of some of our NGOs in Slovakia, what the organizations are doing. This one says "I'm not for sale".

It's interesting, it's nice, and it can also bring you somewhere, but it doesn't matter where you put it, it still means the story behind. So, "I'm not for sale", but who is? Are there other people for sale? For example, do you know who made your clothes, which you are right now wearing? I know some of the organizations are focusing on this, but I think we are still missing the platform to share the information about this. We do make media trips in Slovakia, so we try to find some grassroots activities. For example, we send journalists to uncover these activities and they bring the story to Slovak media. It is working quite well. We are creating, for example, also aid watch materials, which are showing how we, as Slovakia, are helping and how we are doing development cooperation, humanitarian aid or global education.

I think it would be great to have an e-platform, some kind of a hub, of advocacy experts and journalists from different countries which can uncover the business practices in different countries and share this knowledge among them, and to work together to uncover the real causes, which can be translated into different languages in the countries where they would be published. Also, the people would be able to write tips and some ideas about what to try to uncover. For example, if you want to know where a manufacturer is producing specific jeans, so you ask that, and you can try to figure it out through this e-platform.

The other thing we should do is campaigning. But, as I showed you, probably nobody saw these speech bubbles because it is a national campaign, and nobody else here is from Slovakia. So, what I think we should do is to have strong model campaign, which can be adapted to different countries. Only when we will have something which a lot of people are behind, when we have the public supporting us, we can achieve something which has a great impact. So, I think, instead of creating many awareness campaigns – for example right now there are three campaigns in Slovakia focusing on fashion industry and modern slavery – only in Slovakia! – and we are like five and a half million people – which is not even like a big city in some countries – and we have three different campaigns. So, I think it's really essential to make networking with each other and I think the more we are, the greater impact we will have.

The last part is to create local action and inspire others. It varies in different countries and in different cultures; for example, in Slovakia we have a lot of clothes in our charity warehouses. So, right now I'm working on a project, which is starting an eco-social fashion brand. It is using recycled materials, it is involving the most vulnerable ones in the process, it is involving professionals to make the project sustainable and it is involving students to bring the idea of alternative solutions and offer them the possibility to think differently. So, inviting multi-stakeholders into the project, I think it can be social, it can be eco-friendly, but it can also be sustainable and lasting.

Thank you for your attention.