



Jellferlyne Joseph - Malaysia

Hello and thank you for the opportunity. So, as mentioned, my solution is “Advocacy and Community Empowerment Program”. The objectives of this program are first to empower young people on the margins to be courageous, to share their stories, to voice out the injustice that they are experiencing, to take responsibilities, to go beyond their comfort zone and to seek for opportunities for self-development. And, second, to educate people at all levels about the issues faced by these young people.

This solution paper addresses the issues that are faced by the young people on the margins, particularly in Sabah, the poorest state in Malaysia, and specifically those who are stuck in the cycle of poverty, at risk of exploitation, vulnerable to be trafficked and those that are experiencing inequality in relation with access to education and rights to identity. Young people on the margins in southern Malaysia need to be empowered to be courageous enough to speak up and stand for their rights.

There are many stories of these young people where their rights have been violated; these stories need to be shared in order for changes to take place. They may not be able to do it on their own, since there are people whose voice is ignored because of their background, nationality, race, religion or status. Therefore, these young people need support from their family, their community and trusted external parties, to make them feel that they are not alone, to convince them that they are the generation that can make the difference. Because of that, the program is not just aiming to empower these young people but also their family, community and, in fact, people at all levels in the state or country, because everything and everyone in the world is connected.

Moreover, in this solution paper, the objectives of the program and the strategy planning are also explained. It is hoped that in the long term, as people are being empowered to step up, changes in the social, economic and political system will happen, so that the rights of each person will be restored and everyone shares the responsibility to uphold human dignity. So, in the long-term the aim of the program is to influence changes in the current unjust system, to a system that gives equal benefits to everyone, especially those who are most vulnerable or on the margins. Based on the current situation in Sabah, Malaysia, there is high inequality in terms of access to information, services and development. It is either because of nationality, like I mentioned before, race, religion, background or status of a person that their voice, rights, existence and dignity are being ignored. For example, migrant youth have no access to the same quality of education in Malaysia. There is a huge gap between the Head of State and the people on the margins, as if they are left out in the development mapping. On the other hand, these marginalized communities are lacking information and supports to claim their rights and therefore they have been keeping quiet for all this time. Hence it is time to make a change; people on the margins need to be empowered. That is all, thank you.