

Talk show summary: Green growth and green jobs for youth (January 2013, Bangkok)

January 2013, Talk Show #14

Moderator: Mr Matthieu Cognac, ILO
Youth Employment Specialist

Participants on the panel:

Ms Pornchanit Kaew-Nate, Dean of
School of Tourism and Hospitality
Management, Suan Dust Rajabhat
University;

Ms Choy Kim Lee, Universiti Malaya
Faculty of Medicine;

Mr Mohamed Husni, Founder of Eco
Care Sri Lanka

Ms Pebbles Sanchez, Planning Officer,
Climate Change Commission

Camera, sound, editing: Mr Julian
Hadden



From left to right: Mr Matthieu Cognac, Ms Pornchanit Kaew-Nate, Ms Choy Kim Lee, Mr Mohamed Husni, Ms Pebbles Sanchez

You can watch the video of the show at: <http://www.apyouthnet.ilo.org/podcast>

Question 1: Why is it important to address the issue of youth employment at the same time as addressing that of green jobs and the growth of green jobs?

Ms Sanchez began by giving personal experience of when she graduated in 2010 and her main considerations were to find a job in line with her passion, a job which improved skills and knowledge, but practicably a job which would give a sufficient income for herself and family. She was lucky, in that she soon found a suitable job, but she highlight that there are 1.3 million unemployed young people in the Philippines, and 2.3 million who are underemployed, in that they are in work with low pay and low social protection. She pointed out that greening is a way to create innovation, and that innovation can create new jobs. Therefore, green growth's capacity for innovation can be a solution to the youth employment problem. Mr Husni added that youth unemployment and the environment are the crucial issues of our time, and that by bridging the two issues we can solve the two issues. An important initial step in achieving this lies in communicating the problems at hand.

Question 2: What are the experiences of the Philippines in assimilating green skills into new curriculums?

According to Ms Sanchez, the 2008 National Education and Awareness Act mandated several government agencies including Education, Higher Education, Technical Education, Science & Technology and Environment & Natural Resources to mainstream environmental concerns in their functions.



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Furthermore, the Climate Change Act of 2009, engaged the Department of Education to integrate climate change into education. Since policies go hand-in-hand with programmes, Ms Sanchez emphasised the importance of knowledge and capacity development to pursue greening in the Philippines.

Question 3: Since attending the Rio+20 Conference for Sustainable Development, does Ms Choy think that this event will have a direct impact on the lives of young people?

For Ms Choy, the most standout aspect of Rio+20 was the protest staged by young attendees when they were unhappy with the outcome document and so left the building stating that “the future we want is not in this document. The future we want is not found here. It’s not about talking, it’s about action.” Ms Choy believes that for impact to be achieved, there must be awareness of the topics at hand, secondly there needs to be green skills and jobs to power economies, and thirdly there must be action.

Question 4: Employers are looking at green skills due to growing consumer demands. Does the Dean believe that Thai graduates are looking for green jobs or other opportunities?

Dean Pornchanit began by saying that graduates are mainly guided by what they measure as quality of life and that there is a new trend for entrepreneurship. So, many graduates initially prefer to work in large companies to gain experience since such employers have standards and can teach employees. To match the students’ interests, the University offers entrepreneurship classes so that after graduating, students can use their knowledge for their own enterprises or to support their family business.

The floor was opened to attendees, and a participant from the Asian Institute of Technology reflected that many graduates are concerned about quality of life and that green jobs are not always attractive, and so asked what support is available.



Question 5: How are vocational and skills academies working with the private sector to identify and adapt new skills?

The Dean acknowledged that employers sometimes question why graduates are not ready to work immediately. In light of this, the Dean shared a strategy of the School of Tourism and Hospitality whereby it invited the private sector to come together with the school to develop curriculums, graduate students and academic staff. Learning moved from the classroom and into industry, and so students now spend two semesters working in a hotel or airline, for example. This collaborative approach has assisted the school in understanding the gap between the classroom and industry, and so in turn overcome any deficits.

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Question 6: Inline with on-location training and the need for further apprenticeship programmes, is there a way in which green skills can be gained in the Philippines?

Ms Sanchez informed the audience that Filipino government agencies are exploring opportunities to ensure that graduates have the skills and knowledge that is expected of them. Ms Sanchez continued by saying that she believes in the capacity for green jobs and technological innovation to help improve the lives of people. For this to be realised, education and information campaigns are needed.

Question 7: Does Mr Husni believe he was invited to attend the Global Youth Summit in London to help introduce new ideas?

It is important to prepare the young generation as to what green jobs are and the opportunities available, according to Mr Husni. At the moment there are a few organisations doing this, however few if any have a global level of impact. Mr Husni stated that most organisations work hard, utilise their limited funds and have local impacts, but nothing broader is achieved, for example a solar lantern initiative in Sri Lanka and a recycled clothing project in Indonesia, which Mr Husni is aware of. More, however, can be done.



Choy Kim Lee
United Nations Association of Malaysia
and Universiti Malaya Faculty of Medicine

Question 8: Turning to the 80% who live on less than USD 1 per day, and the 75% who live on less than USD 1.25 per day, how can it be ensured that documents, strategies and initiatives will directly and concretely touch the lives of those people?

Ms Sanchez reflected the question by asking “how do we ensure that policies and programmes reached marginalised groups, particularly the marginalised, such as the youth?” In the Philippines there are efforts which target the poorest to enhance their capacity to deal with climate change, and communities and students are also being supported, but all of this is at the policy level. A convergence of efforts amongst all groups is needed. This view was shared by Mr

Husni who offered the expression “accept the agenda globally, achieve them locally”. Governments must localise their action plans. Civil society has a role to play, and so there is a need to build an inter-generational dialogue, and the UN must take a uniform approach.

Ms Choy cautioned that there can be significant barriers to success, such as those faced by young entrepreneurs in the form of bureaucracy which takes time and money, and that regardless of political will, one politician is not enough, particularly in the face of corruption. In spite of this, Ms Choy is pioneering a composting initiative in Malaysia and offered the ILO a sample of the initiative’s product. In conclusion, Dean Pornchanit added that collaboration is important since everyone must be made aware of their responsibility, and that this requires educating younger generations on what being green is and how to do it.

