

Response at the Kabataan (Youth) Jobs and Alternatives to Migration

By Jayson Canete

Out-of-School Youth and recipient of Entrepreneurship Training under the joint programme

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Maayong buntag sa inyong tanan!

My name is Jayson Canete from the municipality of Sibagat, Agusan Del Sur. It is my first time to be here at the SMX Convention Center. It is also my first time to speak for hundreds of youth who have been part of the joint programme on Youth Employment and Migration.

I am here today to tell my story and thank the people who are giving us an opportunity to improve our lives.

I am the eldest among eight children. My father is a farmer and my mother used to work in Manila as a domestic helper. Despite the hardships in life, I was able to graduate from high school. I wanted to become an engineer so I became a working student. But at the age of 19, I quit school completely because life was getting harder. I could no longer continue studying and working at the same time.

I decided to go to Cebu to work full time to help my family back home. I became a laboratory assistant and fast food crew moving from one job to another as a contractual worker regularly borrowing money to complete my pre-employment requirements. There were many times I felt hopeless and even paralyzed because I could not get regular work.

In January 2011, I was one of the lucky out-of-school youth that participated in the entrepreneurship training with the Department of Labor and Employment under the joint programme. I was very happy because I learned the details of setting up a business and can now plan to go into piggery raising. I learned many things. And felt fortunate.

One day, my sister went home and told us that she was selected to be an educational subsidy scholar to avoid dropping out. I could not believe our luck. She received 1,000 pesos per month for transportation allowance and to buy project materials. Many young people in Sibagat cannot go to school because they live far. So instead of going to school, they choose to be absent.

Now, she too can finish high school. At that point I realized that so many people were behind the joint programme who want to help.

My dream is simple. I want to uplift my family from poverty. The opportunities and the learnings gained from the training on YEM could be a ladder to achieve my simple dreams.

Our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal said the youth is the hope of our nation. But as I go back to my home town, there are still many young people like me who almost lost hope. And I continue to pray that there will be many more programs like this to help keep young people in school, maybe start their own business and maybe have better opportunities to find jobs. Not just any kind – but one that is decent.

Now I can dream for a better life and a better future for myself, my family, and for many young Filipinos.

Daghang salamat sa inyong tanan!

