

# Cambodian Students Association in Japan Essay Contest 2010

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Topic:

Being a youth of this generation and a leader of the next, how do you contribute to Cambodia?

Brief Summary:

This essay is written to raise people's awareness of contributing Cambodia. Most Cambodian people always ignore the duty of contributing to Cambodia. Therefore, I have written this article under the title of "Care Not How Much Cambodia Can Help Me. Care How and How Much I Can Help Cambodia." In this essay, I have written about two phases of my life. First, when I am youth, I must be a good youth. Therefore, I have to possess four criteria: being a part of solution, getting involved with society, developing myself, and understanding my culture. Second, when I get older than the age of 24, I will become a leader, I must be a good leader. That is, I must commit a good precedent for my lovely succeeding generation and provide chance for the youth. In the end, I believe that when one finishes reading this essay, he/she may be surprised as he/she can actually speed up the development of Cambodia by simple practical activities which every one can do. **BEGIN TOGETHER TO BETTER CAMBODIA.**

# Care Not How Much Cambodia Can Help Me.

## Care How and How Much I Can Help Cambodia.

In his inauguration in 1961, John F. Kennedy cried out, “Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.” To paraphrase, I say, “Care not how much Cambodia can help me. Care how and how much I can help Cambodia.” From a point of view of many Cambodians, they blame that they are born poor, and they are not given a standard of living, education, and so forth as high as that in other developed countries. Therefore, most of them overlook themselves and think they can do nothing to even a little bit improve Cambodia. However, very contrastingly, some Cambodians, including I, are very realistic. They do not care that they are born poor, but they care that they are born to make changes, to improve their beautiful Cambodia, and to provide a better standard for the lovely succeeding generations. To put simply, regardless of who you are, as long as you are committed to contribute to Cambodia, you actually can do so. In the following, I am going to describe how I am a today’s youth and the next generation’s leader can contribute to my and your Cambodia.

The youth who are aged between 15 to 24 years based on UNESCO play a very important role to develop the country as they are usually strong, brave, intelligent, and the majority of the country. More importantly, today’s youth is a future’s leader and decision-maker who can affect the society as a whole. Therefore, for the sake of short-term and long-term benefits for Cambodia, **I must be a good youth.**

Firstly, I must be a part of solution. When you hear the term “Solution” here, you may question: “What IS a problem?” However, it is actually: “What ARE problems?” I must raise an awareness of problems challenging the youth. Those problems are drug, smoking, drinking, HIV/AIDS, and so forth. All of those things are quite very common problems among the youth. To have a bright future for my country and myself, I must say

“No” to all those things. Nevertheless, my saying “No” alone is not enough because I am not a super hero who can lead and improve the country on my own. Thus, I must also spread this message to all my relatives and friends as many as I can. When every one can avoid those problems, he/she will have a very fantastic future; and if every one in the country has a good future, the future of Cambodia is also very good. In addition to above problems, another very serious problem of Cambodia is the education. Today, in Phnom Penh, there are a lot of students in a college or a university, but there are quite a few numbers of who really study compared to the total students. How can I such a youth can make change for this problem? I have tried all my best to persuade my friend to study here, to read book before and after the class, and to try answering the lecturer’s question without being afraid of mistakes. Nonetheless, they just do not care what I have been trying to do. Am I still a part of solution for this problem? Obviously, being a part of solution implies not being a part of problem. That I cannot make some friends of mine study hard is the reality, and if I cannot change it, I must not let myself fall into the problem, so at least I cut down an inequality educated student to better Cambodia. That is I must make sure I myself am the one to study hard.

Secondly, I must try to get involved with the society as much as I can. Studying at the university cannot make me satisfied enough, but doing some volunteer jobs provides me some more knowledge which is not taught at school. I am currently a youth delegate of Out-Standing Youth Group of Cambodia/YESWECAN(OYG). There, I work with the youth to partly improve Cambodia. Mr. PREAP Kol, the founder and chairman of OYG, told me and my friends that, “If you want to make your country successful, make yourself successful without providing bad impact on the society.” This sentence is always in my head. As we are part of society, to make the society developed, we have to best develop ourselves and take serious care about the impact of every particular activity on the society.

Thirdly, I must keep on developing myself. To develop is to find new experience, and to improve is to compete. If every youth has been thinking in this way, how advanced our country will be. However, the youth are reluctant to compete. For example, a friend of mine discouraged me and himself to write for this essay contest, and his argument is, “We do not have experience and are not enough qualified.” I do not believe him. I even send the announcement to all my friends and encourage them to compete and grow together. If we do not start now, when should we do?

Fourthly, I must understand my culture. I know that today is the 21<sup>th</sup> century; however, our culture remains very important for the country. If this generation’s youths do

not care about their culture, I wonder who cares. I am always aware of a slogan: without culture, without state. I admit some parts of our culture are not quite suitable for the modern society, for example, the concept of thinking that men are superior to women. However, majority of the culture are quite good and relevant for the society. In the real society, I see that majority of youths are moving far away from our own culture. To exemplify, one day when I was called, my phone started ringing, and my phone's ring tone is the traditional song for Khmer New Year's Day; then, every one of my classmates began laughing and looked at me in a funny way. Some people even said I was out of date. For whatever they think of me, I still believe that loving my own culture is a part of being a good Cambodian youth.

Based on UNESCO's definition of a youth, I still have 4 years left of being a good Cambodian youth; that is, on 21 November 2014, I am no longer categorized in the youth. Then, who will I be? Of course, I will be a leader. A leader is in a driver's seat of Cambodia as he/she is the one to make decision affecting the whole country. The word leader should not be confused with the word prime minister, minister, or the ruling class. A leader here means a person who has a capacity and is willing and able to use that capacity to achieve desired goal. To contributory develop my and your Cambodia, **I must be a good leader.**

Firstly and most importantly, I must commit a good precedent. I want to set a good example for my lovely succeeding youths to follow. The reason why the youth do not care about the country where they are living is that they are seeing that older people around them are also careless about Cambodia. Therefore, in the future I want to change that thought. My vision is very good, yet the main question is how to make it happen really, not ideally. The thing is to first start from me myself. I must show my Cambodian youths that I am not selfish, corrupt, but honest for my country, I am very heavily responsible for what I do, and I think triple or more than about the impact of what I have done on Cambodia. When a member in my family is having flu, the rest are more or less attacked. Very similarly, in the society of Cambodia, seeing of what I am doing, the rest of leaders will take it into account and at least change their inactive activity, and the youth will see that. As a result, all Cambodian people will have a spirit of developing Cambodia.

In addition to a good precedent, regardless of any job I work, I must think of increasing and encouraging the participation of the youth in developing Cambodia. Besides my job, I will still be continuing working as a volunteer for the sake of helping the

youth as what I have currently received from OYG. I know that every youth has his/her potential, yet they cannot much contribute to Cambodia because their voice is usually not heard. An out-standing example of making the voice of the youth heard is this essay competition. However, there are more other means. For instance, the creation of youth forum can provide the youth a place where they can raise their concerns, difficulties, and what they think should have been done, but the society did not do.

To sum up, I have divided my life into two segments: while I am studying, I am a youth; and while I will be working, I am a leader. To contribute to Cambodia for its development, I have a very practical idea which to be a good youth and a good leader. I believe that if every one has ideas to develop his/her country, Cambodia is very much likely to be developed. Nevertheless, if every one actually contributory develops, Cambodia will be developed increasingly. Stop blaming the issues on others else, but together take responsibility to develop. Care not how much Cambodia can do for you. Care how and how much you can do for Cambodia. I strongly believe that if every single person in Cambodia has thought as what I think, Cambodia will be very prosperous. I have already done with what I have written for the segment of being a youth, and I will do what I have written for segment of being a leader when I am more than 24. [HOW'S ABOUT YOU?](#)