

---

# Special and Inclusive Education through the Erasmus Mundus programme

---

## Special and Inclusive Education through the Erasmus Mundus programme

Rolando has been actively involved in promoting the empowerment of children with disabilities in the Philippines for six years now. He realized that, in order for him to be more effective, he had to study critical background theory on special and inclusive education. He was really happy when he got accepted for a Master's degree in Special and Inclusive Education through the Erasmus Mundus programme.

The programme aims to increase the capacity of students to advocate the rights of children with disabilities, and starts at the University of Roehampton in London. In January students move to the University of Oslo, where the programme continues. After three months the course continues at Charles University in Prague. "It's hard to compare the three countries because they all have their own strengths and limitations. It's important that each university has a different module. In London we focused on international perspectives and policies in Special and Inclusive Education. In Oslo we concentrated more on classroom teaching strategies. The Charles University lessons were oriented more towards society as a whole and the issue of how to make society more inclusive for children with disabilities," says Rolando Villamero Jr.

He is a vibrant young leader from Negros Oriental, Philippines. Since 2008, he has been actively involved in the disability sector specifically on the aspects of advocacy, empowerment, and inclusive education through GPRehab. He co-founded the Ten Outstanding Persons with Disabilities of Negros Oriental Alumni Community (TOPDAC), a community run by 35 Persons with Disabilities recognized for their personal excellence, commendable leadership, deep sense of social responsibility, and good moral values. In addition, since 2011, Rolando Jr has initiated the project which aims to increase the capacities of student teachers on how to effectively accommodate children with disabilities in regular classrooms. Currently, he is the Philippine youth ambassador and a member to the United Nations Global Education First Initiative Youth Advocacy Group. As an ambassador and as a member, Rolando Jr has been given colossal opportunities to represent the young people and Persons with Disabilities in international conferences to speak on special and inclusive education and to mainstream such concept in the post-2015 development agenda.

As a young advocate, Rolando Jr plans to continue his advocacy in his province and to expand it in other provinces in the Philippines. He will never get tired to bringing it forward until the day will come that the 81 per cent children and young people with disabilities who are out of school in the country will be able to receive quality and inclusive education'.