Borderlands Project PONTIANAK - INDONESIA (Sample Questions)

What are your earliest memories of the border?

I am not sure if I have earliest memories of the border. As my life is mostly far away from the border, I also did not have too much interest in it before. I only got close to the border when I and some friends conducted the border blogger movement program in the middle of 2011. That program was established to empower the border people to sharpen their awareness about their life by sharing their life story through web blogs.

What did your parents/older people tell you about the border?

From my source of information, there were no borders between Indonesia-Kalimantan and Sarawak-Malaysia a long time ago. There was only one people, a sub-ethnicity of the Dayak, living in both in Kalimantan and Sarawak. But after that, the line across the country made them separate.

Have you ever crossed the border and if yes, for what purpose? Where and how do you usually cross the border?

Yes. Some friends and I crossed the border to meet our Malaysian friend and we spent our relaxed time in a small restaurant in the Sarawak area, near the border. We crossed the border in Entikong in the Sanggau district, one of the formal borders between Kalimantan and Sarawak Malaysia.

Does the border have an impact on your life? Which?

Yes. I recently became more interested in borderland life. It's so unique, challenging, and beautiful. Many different ways of life can be find on the border. Also, we hear from its people about how they understand the "nation" concept. People who live on the border are more reachable by the Malaysian services instead of their own country's. For examples: Indonesians who life across the border have it easier to consume many Malaysian products, such as foods, but also services such as hospitals, education, radio and television. It is caused by the long distance of their village from the capital city of their district, province, even country.

Do you have relatives across the border? Do any of your friends/neighbours have?

Yes, I have some friends who live on the border.

How do you get your information about what is going on on the other side of the border?

I get the information from many media: internet, mobile phone connection, and sometimes I get it directly from person-to-person talks.

How do you feel when you are on the other side? Have you had problems on the other side? Do you know of people who have had problems?

If I were living on the border, that would be so challenging! Maybe I will see a new life that I never imagined before!  Many people I asked always told me about their problems. Especially difficult to access government services such as health, educational, infrastructures, etc.  services.

If people cross the border, what are they likely to purchase? How safe is cross-border trade?

Which border that you mean? There are formal and informal borders between Kalimantan-Indonesia and Sarawak-Malaysia. People become easier to establish the trade in the formal border, but they have to be more careful if trading via the non-formal border, that is illegal but they are looking for a better life!

Do you own property across the border?

No, I don't.

Can you imagine a relationship with somebody across the border?

Yes. I have some friends on the border. No problems with the relation, we can build our communication via the cellular phone and internet.

The idea of a borderless world vs. - nationalism - can they coexist peacefully?

Yes, if the government always tries to empower the people there. But if the government never gives it attention, nationalism is only a joke!

How do you hope the border will look like in 20 years time?

Become a modern border!