“Poverty does not have to result in exclusion for young people! Together and with them we can make a difference!”

Activity report 2009-2010

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In 2009 there were 23 million Filipinos living below the poverty threshold of $1 per day (40 million survive on less than $2 per day). Poverty is on the increase in the Philippines, despite the fact that GDP has grown on average 4.7% annually over the past 10 years. This increase has greatly benefited the richer 10% of the population, to the detriment of the poorest. What will happen when the international economic crisis hits?

Editorial
It is only 20 months since LP4Y held its first General Assembly in Paris, on the 4th of July 2009. On that day we just had 7 members from France and Belgium. By the end of 2010 our numbers had swelled to over 300.

With this 3rd newsletter, we would like to present an overview of these first months which have been so enriching for all involved.

With each passing day the young people have become an increasingly important part of our lives. The foundations are now in place, transforming what started as an intuitive act into a viable enterprise!

Every day, in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Philippines and elsewhere, the members of our association awake to the heart-felt wish to help excluded young people to build a new Life Project.

We would like to thank you all for your confidence and enthusiastic support. The task before us is enormous but we believe that the sense of commitment we share, wherever we may live, breathes life into the mission we have chosen to fulfill.

Laure and Jean-Marc Delaporte

Activity report, 2009-2010

Emergency for Excluded Young People

In November 2009 LP4Y published a report entitled “Jeunes en Situation de Grande Exclusion” (“Youth Facing Extreme Exclusion”), and revealed that today 515 young people worldwide live below the poverty threshold, by 2025 that number will have risen to 2 billion!

One year later in November 2010 our revised edition of the report, entitled “Youth Facing Extreme Exclusion” was an urgent plea on behalf of excluded young people who form an extremely vulnerable group which must be taken into account in future development policies.

- By targeting young people it is possible to break the cycle of trans-generational transmission of poverty
- Young people show great flexibility and resilience in the face of suffering, and are thus more likely to respond positively to anti-poverty policies, increasing the chances of such policies having a real long-term effect.
- Employment among young people should be encouraged as a means of avoiding social exclusion, delinquency and drug abuse.
- In all countries it is the young who drive economic development.

Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the UN proclaimed the year beginning 12th August 2010 “International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding”. In the light of this specific focus it is up to us to make sure the voices of excluded young people are heard.

A close collaboration: 32 administrators in 4 countries

At the heart of the Life Project 4 Youth alliance are national volunteer organizations.

Each one operates independently yet in collaboration with the others, thanks to the almost daily contact between the presidents through informal conference calls.

During the extraordinary General Assemblies held in November 2010 and in order to reinforce links between the individual organizations the Boards each elected a Vice-president and 10 to 12 administrators.

In Luxembourg
President – A Devresse
Vice President – JM Demeure
Treasurer – JM Vandenbergh
Secretary – JM Caze
Administrators – F Barzin, F Chartier, JP Spang

In Belgium
President – JM Demeure
Vice President – C Del Marmol
Treasurer – JM Delaporte
Secretary – JM Delaporte
Administrators – A Devresse, S Bretton, H de Saint Exupery, V Wine, T Delaporte, E de la Rochère, F Vanheems, H Renaud, MP Montigny, A D’Avoit, P Delaporte, O Demeure, E de la Rochère, P de Malartic, O-Frady, C Gil-Franzén, L Martel

In France
President – JM Demeure
Vice President – JM Delaporte
Treasurer – JM Delaporte
Secretary – JM Delaporte
Administrators – A Devresse, S Bretton, H de Saint Exupery, V Wine, T Delaporte, E de la Rochère, F Vanheems, H Renaud, MP Montigny, A D’Avoit, P Delaporte, O Demeure, E de la Rochère, P de Malartic, O-Frady, C Gil-Franzén, L Martel

In the Philippines
President – L Delaporte
Vice President – L Delaporte
Treasurer – L Delaporte
Secretary – C De Leon
Administrators – JM Delaporte, C De Leon, L Delaporte

www.lifeproject4youth.org
Who are these young people?

For the majority of these young people school is but a distant memory. But it is also for them the only familiar benchmark of an organized structure. They think of LP4Y as a second chance, and a means to take the first step of building a future and choose to trust in the development of skills in order to live in a world of projects, and yet young men may not marry before the age of 22 without their parents’ consent! And while the legal age at which one can start work is well defined there are many who work illegally much earlier. It’s a matter of survival. Young people living in poverty work to survive: collecting rubbish, carrying bags of cement, cleaning out vats: dangerous work ... and yet 3 out of every 5 young workers are unpaid. As in most developing countries the problem is not so much work, as decent work: that which enables the worker to live above the poverty threshold. But certain categories of young people are particularly at risk:

- Handicapped young people. Often hidden away and considered an embarrassment to the family, they are declared inept and are not expected to attend dig deep into their past in order to build a self-confidence which enables the worker to

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The most shocking - - We The young people - - who does what in exchange for what. In ral we create a re's always an exchange of sorts. In gene- such. We don't give them anything; the- other. And so we try not to emphasis on honor, respect, valuing each There is always an exchange that they are capable, and per- them some mangoes and ask them to go sell them. When they get back they can talk about what happened, and analyze the experience. The coach will quickly make a few recommendations, and they're off again. They improve rapidly as do the coaches!

**Life Project Centers**

LPCs are breeding grounds for micro-economic initiatives within the framework of a 6-8 month teaching course for teams of 8/12 young people.

Life Project Centers are learning centers set up near poor areas for excluded young people. LPCs have been created in the framework of the Life Project in in smaller towns (Cebu), and we hope to set up soon in rural areas. A Life Project Center has classrooms and rooms for meetings and workshops for the various activities to be developed.

Since the first LPC opened in November 2010 we have decided to specialize each center in one particular activity in order to benefit from specialized skill sets and the particularities of the local environment.

Example: The Tondo LPC is located directly opposite an enormous dump where tens of thousands of people sift through the rubbish day after day. After reviewing the environment we decided this LPC should be dedicated to teaching techniques for adding value to rubbish recycling.

The LPC activities overseen by the LP4Y coaches (workshops, training, studying, meetings) take place every morning, Monday – Friday 8-12am. During the lunch break the kitchen area is shared. The afternoon is free for individual lessons (mainly English and IT), for paid work (small projects requested by one of the partners), or for launching an activity chosen by the young people. We try to reproduce the structures of a real business in terms of punctuality, dress code, behavior, use of equipment etc.

Each LPC is headed by a permanent LP4Y coordinator, advised by 2 consultants in development and management of activities, and assisted by the head of teaching, the training volunteers and the activity advisors, volunteer or sala-.

Their involvement depends on the teaching plan and the fixed termly planning.

**The Programs**

Each program is a learning cycle for 8/12 young people that lasts 2-3 years and consists of business training and professional preparation for entrepreneurship.

Programs can operate at an LPC, on another site, or at the Training and Development Center (also the LP4Y staff headquarters).

The young people work on the program Monday – Friday 8am – 6pm. They have 3 weeks holiday per year and some public holidays.

After a period of ‘discovery’ lasting 2 weeks and aimed primarily at determining their degree of motivation they are asked to sign up in writing for the first stage.

Autonomy (6 months). This seems to be the hardest stage, during which the young people learn to make a commitment and follow it: they learn punctuality, behavioral skills, commitment, time management, how to live as a team.

The second stage, Responsibility (4 months) comes with a contract. The young people are required to see a small project through to its completion, coping with any hurdles they meet on the way. During this stage they have their first business experience in the form of a 1 month internship.

The third stage is Management (4 months), representing a marked progression, as the young people are now required to take responsibility for 1 or more newcomers to the program.

Take initiative. These young people have never received praise for something well done, but have instead lived a life of put-downs and humiliation. It therefore takes them several weeks to understand the concept of initiative. Initiatives which serve an immediate purpose are easy enough: how do you cook rice when there's no gas, or oil? But initiatives with medium-term results are harder to imagine as they are not immediately useful.

To illustrate examples of awareness we write slogans on our walls. They are often conversation starters! For example:

**Bring your dreams to life!** During the discovery week we ask them about their dreams and ask them to list their dreams in 2 columns: column 1 for dreams which could become reality, and column 2 for the more far-fetched. It is often the first time they've been asked about their dreams and they find it hard to answer. No matter, we come back to it a few weeks later and gradually the dreams are clearer, and become possible!

**Think before you act.** The young people who join LP4Y are very intuitive. As a result of the terrible conditions in which they've been living they have developed a kind of second sense for every situation ... or almost. And initially they find it very boring having to analyze everything ... until one day someone impresses the group by coming out with a profound observation!
Green Program: 90th Delivery!

The Green Program makes weekly deliveries of fresh fruit and vegetables to private addresses in Makati and Abang – the upperclass neighbourhoods of metropolitan Manila. The program was launched in December 2009 with 8 young men aged 18-21, all ex-prisoners, and one young woman aged 27.

The activity was created with three young people within the framework of a “learn-work-guide” training program called the Professional Training for Entrepreneurs (PTE). This activity takes up nearly half the week and provides exposure to the various elements of a business, giving the young people a chance to test their skills. The work is organized into 4 departments: Sales, Purchasing and supplies, Packaging and invoicing, Delivery and receipts. The young people are in charge of a process that comprises nearly 80 tasks.

The Green Program was initially set up on premises loaned by Acay in Quezon City. Then in April 2010 the team moved to their own address in the TDC at the headquarters of LP4Y in the Philippines. At the same time the team took up residence in a small house just opposite the TDC. They were therefore able to concentrate fully on Green Program and save on travel expenses, not to mention the 3 hour commute every day. On the ground floor there is a kitchen and a bedroom for the only woman on the team. On the second floor the boys share 2 bedrooms. (In fact they all share the biggest room as they maintain that the other one is haunted…)

Each resident contributes 1,000 Php per month towards the rent (26,504 €). This is a considerable expense, representing 39% of their salary (5,000 Php for a 2 bedroom, but is comparable to the cost of renting a bed in one of Manila’s dormitories.

After some shuffling the team finally stabilized in May 2010 with 6 members. In July they spent the month on an internship within L’Oreal Philippines: an amazing and extremely valuable experience.

Life Project Center in Cebu City, Cebu

Cebu City, situated in the center of the Philippines, is its second largest city with a population of 2 million. From the beginning we felt that LP4Y should be present there. We first met with several NGOs who were active in the field of education and concerned by the lack of job opportunities for school leavers.

Our meeting with out of school youth was decisive. The difficult task of finding somewhere to set up the Life Project Center was suddenly resolved when over the summer we met the members of the St. John Community who generously offered us a home on their site. When Solène, our volunteer coordinator, arrived we were able to welcome the first young people to the center in mid-October 2010. A 5 of them have settled in well and are developing a handicraft activity: candles to start with. Soon to come are jewelry, and bags woven from recycled materials etc. There is no shortage of ideas.

Life Project Center in Old Bala, Quezon City

Old Bala is in Quezon, which has the highest concentration of slum dwellings in metropolitan Manila. Old Bala is one such slum, home to tens of thousands of families. Some manage to build a solid home of breeze blocks, while others barely survive, suffering from tuberculosis or domestic violence.

For out of school youth there is no hope of decent work, just odd jobs with no security, sometimes unpaid … in an attempt to survive.

In June 2010 while thinking about setting up a Life Project Center in N.E. Manila we had a fortuitous meeting with Father Daniel – a member of the Fils de la Charité association. He’s been active here for nearly 10 years, implementing dozens of community projects in his parish with great skill and sensitivity. He confirmed our estimate of the high number of out of school youth and offered to house a Life Project Center in his parish premises.

Grégoire is in charge of the center which he opened in November 2010. He lives in the area and has become something of a local celebrity. During the first 3 months the emphasis was on the learning phase. The first project was launched: the creation of a garden and shrine in front of one of the chapels in the neighborhood. Within a matter of days the young people had come up with the concept, tracked down suppliers, chosen the materials and plants, designed, costed and sold the project. They are now putting the plan into action.

There were 4 young people at the outset, since joined by 8 others. But in order to attract the young people, their families often have to be won over first.

Took together, We Can!
Hear Us! Program in Iligan, Mindanao

The city of Iligan stands on the border of the autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) on the North West coast of the largest southern island. But things are fairly calm and peaceful.

In early 2010 we were contacted by Father Henri, who’s been in the region for a number of years. He told us of the fate in store for the only specialized school for the deaf in the area which was threatened with closure for want of funds and a lack of viable projects for the young deaf students.

Here deafness is a shameful condition to be concealed. Without the means to communicate deaf people are often considered mentally lacking. Were it not for the energy and determination of Chay most of these young people would have had no schooling. “What’s the point as they’ll never get a job…”?

After several meetings and with the support of a number of key Iligan personalities the LP4Y Management Committee decided to offer financial support to the School for the Deaf (12 children under the age of 37) beginning in June 2010 and until a specialized NGO could take over. Enfants de Mekong is now set to take over the financial management and support of the school and will provide financial security through sponsorship programs.

This project has been in the pipeline for a long time, ever since the idea was first mooted in the summer of 2010. It is a tough project. Tempo is one of the most desperately miserable places imaginable.

Life Project Center in Tempo, Tondo, Manila

This project has been in the pipeline for a long time, ever since the idea was first mooted in the summer of 2010. It is a tough project. Tempo is one of the most desperately miserable places imaginable.

9,000 families do their best to survive on this dumpsite, by sifting through the rubbish. They are at the mercy of the local mafia, and the young people are often imprisoned, turning to drugs, or to prostitution to earn a few pesos.

We struggled for months to get the local authorities’ permission to establish the foundation in 2 houses opposite the dumpsite.

We plan to open a Life Project Center for very young mothers, creating a handicraft activity using recycled objects from the dumpsite: plastic, cardboard etc.

teachers and advised by Jean-Baptiste and soon Emmanuelle. Lucas also contributes when necessary.

The next step will be to provide a home where the young people from Hear Us! can live together as a community, like their counterparts in the Green Program. This would help their progress enormously.

TDC
Training and Development Center

Emmanuelle is in charge of program management and micro-projects. She intervenes on all sites.

Elsa is responsible for the technical side of communication: website, on-line fundraising, e-letters, on-line photo albums etc.

Julie is a coach in charge of training programs and the Manila LPC. She runs the extra-curricular activities.

Green Program 2 in Paranaque, Manila

Green 2 comes at the request of clients of Green Program (1): “We can’t find fresh herbs in Manila. Why don’t you supply some?”

After looking into it we decided to take the plunge into organic farming! The first shoots (right) show what we’ve achieved.

The young people from Green Program are tending to the plants, and we’re very touched by their care and attention. As soon as we’re ready to sell we’ll involve those young people who want to play a part. We’re still a few weeks off … and the dry season is ahead.

But we’re being very well advised; Oscar, a consultant on loan from the Ministry of Agriculture, has offered to help!

Zip Program, Cebu city, Cebu

Lucas (left) is a pioneer. After first launching the Hear Us Program in October 2009, and assisting the Cebu LPC from the moment of its inception, he is now laying the foundations of Zip Program, a “team-work-guide” training program for the development of woodwork skills and the commercialization of the finished product.

These skills have been neglected because of the commercialization of the finished product. The participants are touched by their care and attention. As soon as we’re ready to sell we’ll involve those young people who want to play a part. We’re still a few weeks off … and the dry season is ahead.

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Criteria for success

Each participant has a file which includes the letters of motivation they have to write at the end of each level before moving on.

The first quality that is evaluated is that of “success” i.e. the degree to which the young people have evolved. Occasionally someone will get stuck and either can’t or won’t unblock himself, in which case he leaves LP4Y.

Success is evaluated on 3 levels:

* : the participant is progressing;
* : the participant is taking part in the development of the activity; he has become employable;
** : the participant is ready to develop his own activity and will in time be able to offer work to others.
In France in 2010 LP4Y was registered as being a general interest service, an official stamp of approval of our activities which are acknowledged as benefiting many.

For French tax payers 66% of any donation is reimbursed by the State in the form of a tax rebate, with a ceiling of 20% of one’s taxable income. Donations made by companies can be deducted by up to 60% of the sum given, with a ceiling of 0.5% of the current turnover.

In Belgium we have not yet received the official general interest service label for 2011. In Luxembourg we will be seeking the general interest service during the course of 2011.

How can we get involved with young adults facing extreme exclusion?

Let’s get involved together!

MEMBER: You will receive up-to-date news by email or letter. You are invited to our meetings, events and general assemblies. Annual membership in France, Belgium and Luxembourg for 2011 is 30€.

SPONSOR: Through regular or one-off payments you can contribute to the funding of LP4Y. You may also make donations in kind.

PARTNER: Make a social investment in the program of your choice, to be reinvested by the foundation once the program takes off. You are welcome to participate in the quarterly orientation committee meetings of your chosen program.

CORRESPONDENT: Share LP4Y news with your own network. Help organize fundraising events or information meetings. Set up a new LP4Y association in the country in which you live.

VOLUNTEER: you can volunteer with LP4Y at any age (17-77) on an occasional or permanent basis, in Europe or in Asia. Training and preparation as well as social security, insurance and pensions are covered by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Don’t hold back! Get involved with LP4Y! Contact us by email: info@lp4y.org

Together We Can! is the LP4Y newsletter for all regions.

Written and edited in French and English by volunteers in the Philippines, LP4Y Foundation Inc., Valley Vista Village, Better Living, 704 Paranaque City, Philippines. # Together, We Can! - March 2011

Income

The income for the first 6 month period in 2009 and 2010 was 123,555€, mainly (69%) from donations. During this period 2009-2010 we gained 307 members, proof of the considerable enthusiasm and commitment surrounding LP4Y. With membership at 204 this represents 6% of the total income. Events: 8% Gifts in kind (computers and a second-hand car): 14% And lastly, an important figure for this first year: 9,385€, Green Program’s first turnover from the sale of fruit and vegetables.

Outcome

Total expenditure of LP4Y’s 3 entities, in the Philippines, France and Belgium, for the period 2009 – 2010 was 104,000€. This sum was split between general expenses (17%) and cost of the 4 programs and 2 LP4Ys (83%). Green Program required 25,000€, partly covered by the sales of fruit and vegetables. See us and the School of Deaf in Iligan which we started supporting in June 2010 account for expenses of 16,000€.

Sponsors and regular donors

Our thanks to everyone who has made the development of LP4Y possible.

You have been most generous:
- For the period 2009 – 2010 the average donation has been 345€ in France and 456€ in Belgium.
- 7 donors in France and 5 in Belgium gave more than 5,000€.
- 2 donors in France gave 20,000€ each.
- 15 donors in Belgium committed to making automatic monthly transfers.
- One friend has made a bequest to LP4Y in his will.
- Our youngest donor is 4, and our oldest is 81!

Thank you to those of you who offer your skills, we truly appreciate this valuable contribution: translating, secretarial assistance, help with meetings, advice, networking and introductions, event organizing.

We established the missions for 2009-2010 in the Philippines only after consultation with the management committees. The provisional budget for 2010 was presented to the General Assembly and Administrati
council in March 2010 and revised in April 2010, each national association having by then indicated the provisional level of their contribution.

In the year 2009-2010 all the teams consist of unpaid volunteers. In the Philippines the permanent volunteers are unpaid.

When they sign up for 1 year or more they receive a monthly allowance plus a contribution to the schooling costs for their children. Housing is provided. Social contributions and pensions are maintained through the CFE at the minimum rate. Expenses are paid. One return flight to Europe is provided every year, based on the cheapest flight available at the time.

We are looking for ways of saving money on housing and rent by taking all requirements into account and signing contracts that can be interrupted if necessary.

The young people make all the furniture for the houses and centers, and are also responsible for repairs and maintenance. Apart from 1 printer per center all computer equipment has been donated. The volunteers use their own laptops.

The centers and houses are equipped for the most part with second hand items that have been donated (fridges, fans etc).

We have not incurred any fund raising or communication costs. All communication material is produced internally.

The administrators and volunteers pay their own travel to the Philippines.

Companies and Organizations working with LP4Y

L’Oréal Philippines has been exceptionally supportive of LP4Y Philippines: offering a 6-month internship to 7 members of the Green Team in July and donating a car in November (Honda CRV) which has been invaluable for deliveries and for getting about in the vast city of Manila.

Capgemini made the generous donation, for the symbolic sum of 26, of 25 HP laptop computers, for use by the young people in the 4 centers.

Banque Degroof has provided logistical support for the organization of fundraising activities in Luxembourg.

Fondation Devoteam and Natixis have made donations in France of 2,000€ and 3,000€ respectively for the launch of “Hear Us!”. Banque du Luxembourg has donated 2 computers for LP4Y’s coordinating offices in Europe.

The following have also generously offered support:

Kreono Consulting for logistical support and printing of information documents, and Cabinet Sonnet for auditing, both in France.

HRT Group in Belgium and Luxembourg for accounting.

Yakaar, an association based in Africa, who paid its liquidation surplus of 5,035€ over to LP4Y France.

Thank you to the 2 associations which, from September 2010 and with a commitment of 3-4 years, are supporting LP4Y with recruitment, training and financial assistance with volunteer missions in the Philippines.

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HRT Group in Belgium and Luxembourg for accounting.

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Thank you to Manille Bienvenue, the association for francophone expats in Manila, for their donations and support of the General Assembly.

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