Dear Friends,

We've now been in the Philippines for 18 months. Thanks to the generosity and support of friends in various countries we have been able to realise our goal of extending a helping hand to young people who have never been given anything. Little by little, as they gain in self-confidence, they become strong enough to make plans and become entrepreneurs.

LP4Y currently supports 50 young people. But we should do more ... **Let us work together to fill the world with dynamic young people.**

Jean-Marc & Laure Delaporte

**SUMMARY**

Together we can act !

Over 500 million young people in the world today live below the poverty threshold, on less than 2 US$/day.

1. **Thierry Delaporte**, President LP4Y France
2. **Olivier Gamel**, Administrator LP4Y Belgium
3. **Pierre Yves Baulain**, Treasurer LP4Y Belgium
4. **Frédéric Van Heems**, Vice-president LP4Y France

Join us in working with these young victims of exclusion !

We can all make a difference, large or small; we just need to start somewhere!

1. **Luc Olivier Marquet**, General Director, L’Oréal Philippines
2. **Frances Valadji**, Green Program Client and Translator
3. **Isabelle Demeure**, Coach
4. **Father Grégoire Plus**, Community of St John
5. **Jean Marie Demeure**, President of LP4Y Belgium

When you decide to join us ...

Wherever you are, each gesture you make creates an opportunity for the young people with whom we work. You can't imagine the boost it gives them to know that someone, maybe far away, is thinking of them.

1. **Laurent Goirand**, Vice-president LP4Y Foundation Inc.
2. **Jean-Baptiste Prache**, Volunteer, Head of Micro-Economic Initiatives development
3. **Lucas Schmitt**, Volunteer, co-Head of HearUs and Zip programs
5. **Marie Prache**, Volunteer, coordinator of Green Program 1 & 2
Together we can act!

Thierry Delaporte, 43, President LP4Y France, Vice-President & COO Application Services, Cap Gemini, New-York

One July evening in Paris, 2009 - about 500 days ago now - a dozen friends joined Jean-Marc and Laure to officially lay the foundations of LP4Y, a humanitarian association. The association’s goal was to assist with the professional and social integration of excluded young people, in France and other countries. And the first target region was to be the Philippines: a country where over a third of the population lives below the poverty threshold. Six weeks later, our two entrepreneurial founders set off with two of their children armed with just a few bags - and their large hearts - for Manila, and its endless slums. The adventure had begun. But the hard part was still ahead: getting settled, making local contacts, learning the reality of the streets – to find out whether the theory behind LP4Y matched with the reality of life in the Philippines. So they got stuck right in, and were soon joined by others, won over by the goals of LP4Y.

18 months later LP4Y is a foundation to be proud of: active and structured, with more than 10 volunteers based in various towns in the Philippines, supported by 300 members and various companies in France, Belgium, Luxembourg and soon the US; it is a foundation which has already made a substantial and irreversible difference to the lives of many excluded young people through its programs such as Green Program and Hear Us. But more importantly LP4Y is a powerful reason to believe that each of us has the power to change the lives of others for the better. LP4Y can bring all of us joy, happiness, but also pride.

In 2011, thanks to all of you, we will be able to provide our fabulous team in the Philippines with the necessary means to continue bringing hope, comfort and the possibility of a real Life Project to the increasing numbers of excluded young people who are hoping to create a future. And to confirm the credibility of our project, LP4Y was recently granted the status of a public interest organisation under French law (meaning that all donations are tax deductible). Alone we can do nothing, but together and with you we can achieve so much. Let’s act together!

Olivier Gamel, 37, Administrator LP4Y Belgium, Head of Katanga, International Red Cross Committee, RD Congo

Partly due to the pitiful state of the Philippines penitentiary system, young offenders often finish their sentences totally ill-equipped for dealing with life outside. Personalised assistance and individual coaching is crucial if they are to have even the slightest chance of reintegration, of finding their place again within their families and society.

One of the principal goals of LP4Y is to be an active partner accompanying young people during this difficult time.

Pierre Yves Baulain, 52, Treasurer LP4Y Belgium, Head of cooperation, Delegation of European Commission, Paraguay

Development is an enormous subject, covering individuals, disenfranchised groups, poor countries... But how can we help? And whom? To do what? How? With what results and for how long?

For many years these questions have been the thread running through my work in the field of development aid. Experience shows that there is no miracle recipe which works everywhere, that there are no simple solutions to complex situations and that often one has to operate on many levels in order to achieve lasting results.

The heavy machinery of international aid is set in motion in an attempt to find solutions, creating mountains of paperwork and good results too sometimes, but all too often the necessary contact with the ultimate beneficiary is lost, and human relations - that essential ingredient in all development action – become a mere accessory. The people, institutions or countries we are trying to help should always remain at the center of the action. Large agencies, despite being well-organised and structured, perhaps benefiting from 50 years experience, do not find this easy.

LP4Y lies at the opposite end of the spectrum. In the Philippines we are one hundred percent concerned with human relations; we work side by side with those we wish to help as they confront their daily hurdles. This close contact with local reality, which we hope to develop yet further, is in my view the real value added by our association, its ‘raison d’être’. That doesn't mean that we don't also wish to improve our structure, means and methods, to strengthen our field team and mobilise our European associations. To do so would improve the results of our projects based on our understanding of these young people, those who already support them and the bonds we create with them. If there is treasure to be found, that’s where it is.

Frédéric Van Heems, 44, Vice-president LP4Y France, company director, Paris

As a business man I have often been on the receiving end. With LP4Y it is now my turn to give something ... and since to give is to receive you can imagine how rewarding this is! By opening Life Project Centers in the slums in the Philippines, offering training and support to young people who would not normally dream of creating a business, LP4Y is showing that these excluded youngsters can rebuild their lives around a business project. Their work lends them dignity and strength and makes them useful to their communities.

LP4Y's Board Members are inspired by what Jean-Marc and Laure, and all the volunteers and participants have managed to achieve in 1 year, and we feel like sponsors to the participants and ‘emotional shareholders’ in their budding businesses. We have a dream... that 10 years from now LP4Y will be funding Life Project Centers in the slums of the 50 largest cities in the world, thus helping thousands of youngsters escape exclusion through entrepreneurship.
Getting involved with young victims of exclusion ...

Luc-Olivier Marquet, 42, General Manager, L'Oréal Philippines, Manila

L’Oréal Philippines was keen to get involved in the insertion of excluded young people, a subject also close to the heart of our parent company back in France. LP4Y gives us a wonderful opportunity to introduce young people from deprived backgrounds to the many facets of the world of business: marketing, sales, logistics, finance, HR. We want to give these young people a new look at business life, and maybe awake in them hidden talents (and they certainly have them!).

Any material donations we are able to make are an extension of this initiative. We believe in LP4Y’s project, in its durability, and we want to assist with its development, once again as an extension of our policy of helping with the insertion of excluded young people. I believe firmly that these young people have the necessary talent and will to overcome their handicaps. This is true of all Filipinos but particularly of these young people.

When they came to do work placements at L’Oréal Philippines, they were welcomed and treated like any trainee from the major universities here. They faced certain challenges and proved their desire to succeed and their ability to adapt to an unfamiliar environment. With help they can further develop this entrepreneurial spirit and make this project a success.

Frances Valadjji, 44, Green Program client and translator, Manila

When Jean-Marc and Laure launched LP4Y and started looking around for their first clients for Green Program I was immediately drawn to the concept: the idea of being, as a client, a part of this opportunity that they are creating. We see the young people regularly when they deliver to our homes, and are able to follow the gradual increase in their self-confidence – and competence!

Then after a few months as a client I was asked to help translate the occasional document to reach out to locals and other non French speakers in this predominantly English-speaking country. When it was time to create an English version of the website I had the pleasure of working with Vanessa Wright in Brussels.

I recently accompanied the Green Team to one of Manila’s big fresh produce markets in Cubao. I had been dazzled by the fresh produce here when arriving from France 2 years ago, and have enjoyed learning what’s what and how to use it. The idea was to look at what’s on offer and share my thoughts on what works well for their clients. They didn’t need me!

They have come on so far since they started out, and it was them showing me what to look out for and what to avoid, rather than the other way round. Product knowledge is obviously specific to one particular field, but whatever field they eventually move into, I am sure that the skills they are acquiring now will stand them in good stead.

Isabelle Demeure, 63 ans, Coach, Paris

Paris, late June, temperatures reminiscent of the Philippines… Our choir “La Voix est Libre” performed that night to raise funds for the excluded youngsters of Manila, now supported by LP4Y. We wanted to help them, by whatever means, and we wanted to mobilise others. Catherine, our generous choir leader, had been deeply moved by what she heard of the project, and despite being new to the choir announced that she wanted us to sing for their benefit! What magical spontaneity and generosity!

We learnt our parts, rehearsed, and had fun; we were all motivated and prayed that our singing would touch other hearts and attract new patrons. The church was full, the performers inspired and all those involved were moved by the experience. If we could be granted one wish, it would be that we might one day sing a Filipino song with these young people, underneath the Eiffel Tower.

Father Grégoire Plus, 36, Community of St John, coordinator for the African priories.

In the community of St John our mission “according to the openness to the world desired by Vatican II, includes a philosophical look at what is man, his finality and his aspirations. It takes into account the enormous problems facing today’s Christians in a world of many ideologies, many of them atheistic, which disfigure the image of God in man by preventing us from using our intelligence in the service of love”.

Thus in our priories we seek both human and divine ways of helping everyone to grow in both dimensions, human and spiritual. With this as our goal we set up a center in Cebu four years ago; a center for training, meeting, prayer and reflexion – a place to live. When we met Jean-Marc and Laure we were looking for a way of providing practical, social and professional training for our young Filipinos, leading to real work and hopefully creating a snowball effect.

My meeting with Jean-Marc and Laure was truly providential and at the St John Center we saw their project as heaven sent. I trust that this collaboration will not stop there. My community has given me charge of all our houses in Africa, and I sincerely hope that this experience can be expanded.
Jean Marie Demeure, 64, President LP4Y Belgium, consultant, banking expert, Luxembourg

The die is cast. Life Project 4 Youth now has a Luxembourg office. Why? To take advantage of one of the country’s characteristics: generosity. Luxembourg is one of the world’s most generous countries, giving 1% of its GDP to poorer countries. By having a base in Luxembourg, getting ourselves known and making contacts, LP4Y can access private and public resources as well as the specialised structures of a very committed country.

LP4Y Luxembourg enjoys close ties with LP4Y Belgium and LP4Y France and is staffed by a motivated team determined to make a difference to victims of poverty and exclusion. We aim to make a place for ourselves amongst the many local charitable organisations by emphasising LP4Y’s speciality: the vital link between disadvantaged youth and the world of employment which for them is so inaccessible.

Side by side!

Laurent Goirand, 32, Vice-president LP4Y Foundation Inc., General Manager NetBooster Asia, Manila

In my days working with Virlanie I used to come across many children ... from lost or abandoned street children with nothing, to the ‘lucky’ ones who still had their families but lived in the slums in the North of Manila. Whatever the background, the importance of early childhood and schooling is obvious. Those who are lucky enough to have a supportive family and interested parents can base their lives on a solid foundation.

The gulf between these children and those less fortunate only gets wider as time goes on. Even in the most disadvantaged sector of the community, almost all children have been to school at least once. But the instability of their lives means than many are unable to complete a whole school year, and they are therefore labelled as “Drop-outs”. Often they will pick up again the following year, only to drop out yet again. This to-ing and fro-ing between school and the street, combined with an uneducated family, means that few of these children will graduate from high school. Without a high school diploma they will find it near impossible to get a decent job. The only options remaining are jobs such as pedicab or tricycle driver, or in one of the markets like Divisoria. Girls might work in a shop, or as a yaya (a job which provides a roof over the head but no possibility of saving any money). Those who do finish school and can get the funding might become nurses or seamen ... always in the hopes of finding work abroad. Their parents will then have the comfort of an assured income for their old age.

When we created our education program the main aim was to support the children’s education and help keep them in school. We later added a special program designed to find work placements for young adults in order to increase their knowledge of the business world and open up new avenues. For many the part this proved an enriching experience. On the rare occasions when the experiment was not successful this was usually because the young person had difficulties adapting to a business environment. For example we had a young man who got an interesting placement working in the Starbucks warehouse dealing with stock management, but who was fired after 2 weeks because he had been absent 2-3 days due to a headache, and had not thought to contact his employer to explain his absence! The young man did not realise how lucky he was, earning more than the employees at Virlanie! To him it was just a job, like any other, and anyway he’d soon get another one ...

Some of the young people manage pretty well; self-taught but without the basics that would be provided by regular schooling. They learn enough to cope with their daily needs. These youngsters are the ideal candidates for Professional Training for Entrepreneurs. They are not suited to the rigidity of a typical work situation, but given a project that they build themselves and for which they create their own rules they are capable of achieving something. You can see examples of this kind of small business on every street corner: cyber cafes, laundromats (2 or 3 washing machines and a dryer), sari-sari, mini-markets ...

Anyone can set up their own business, providing they have a small sum to invest and someone to guide them and give them the management basics necessary to the successful running of a small business. The Philippines is a developing country, which means that anyone a bit resourceful with a bright idea has a chance at success. But to achieve this success they will still require guidance and support, which makes LP4Y particularly relevant, not to say indispensable, to those young people seeking a way out and a chance to build their own Life Project.


I work as business coach to the young people at LP4Y and as support for those in charge of the LPCs and Programs. I look after the business aspect of the training we provide for the young people. My aim is to devise highly relevant training courses with a direct application. The courses are unavoidably condensed to fit into the time frame within which we work. I thoroughly enjoy this course planning dimension of my work: trying to work out how best to answer the young people’s needs; thinking back over my previous experience to find something of use to them; coming up with a plan that is fun (otherwise they’ll switch off), practical (we always finish with role play in the context of their business), and useful. It’s not easy! But it’s very interesting.

And the real pleasure is in working with these young people. It’s been a baptism of fire! Over the past 3 months I’ve seen a bit of everything: sometimes they walk out; once (at only my second session) I found one of them fast asleep under the table! But when they stick with it, when they see the personal message for each of them in what we do, when they apply our teaching to their business, and it works ... then what a joy!
Although the programs and LPCs have an important business element, the heads of these programs and LPCs do not necessarily have a strong business background; either because they come from a different field (social work or psychology), or because they have only just finished their studies. So I assist them with this business element, addressing questions such as “How can one develop a program’s activity and let it become profitable?” or “What type of small local business might be appropriate for the young people in the Manila LPC?” and “How could such a business be launched?” etc.

This part of my work is becoming more time consuming as we increase the number of programs and LPCs. I’m sometimes reminded of my old job as a consultant, but with a little bonus that makes all the difference: we put our ideas into practice immediately. And they are immediately put to the test by the reality of the field. Either it works, or it doesn’t. One of the things I love about my job is that I cover all the sites of LP4Y in the Philippines: programs and LPCs, in Manila, but also in Cebu and Iligan. So quite apart from the very enjoyable exotic dimension, this means that I get to work on very different projects with a variety of young people (released prisoners, street children, the deaf, slum dwellers …).

And if you asked me for my first impressions I would say “It’s great! And absolutely fascinating.” Because LP4Y is still young all our ideas are valued. Everything is decided upon (and acted upon) very fast. And as a personal adventure it’s amazing. In fact we get to experience a double entrepreneurial adventure: on one side with the young people following the programs, and on the other with the Foundation itself. To put it simply … I love my job!

Lucas Schmitt, 27, Head of business projects, Volunteer in Cebu and Iligan, co-Head of the HearUs and Zip Programs

Hear Us is an unusual program which aims to prepare young deaf people for work with data inputting. The problems facing this program are two-fold:
1. The young people on the whole have a fairly poor academic level, roughly equivalent to between Grades 1 and 7. They have grown up without the means to communicate adequately, imprisoned by their lack of words. Then they had the good luck to meet Chay and get a place at the School for the Deaf in Iligan, but there is still a lot to do if we are to open them up to the world.
2. The pedagogy is another work in progress. I have personally never organised training courses for the deaf. Every day teaches me something new. Perhaps because of my Italian origins I use my hands a lot when I talk, and I’ve had to get that under control in my role as a trainer. My hand movements distracted the young people’s attention from the translators and they could not therefore follow what I was saying.

Juliette Brossard, 26, Project leader, Volunteer (May – September 2010), editor of LP4Y’s 2010 report “Youth Facing Extreme Exclusion”

July 2010, the Philippines. Jean-Marc and Laure in France; the Green Program team on work placements at L’Oréal... In Valley Vista Village everything pointed towards Marthe and me, LP4Y volunteers for 1 and 2 months respectively, spending long hours with our new best friend, the swimming pool. But we had not counted on the Delaportes who took advantage of this rare moment of calm to hand us a near impossible task: to edit a report on young victims of exclusion worldwide. Our remit was to put together a resumé of the subject for readers who were new to the subject; a plea on behalf of the young victims of exclusion to act as a springboard for thought and actions of LP4Y. OK, mission accepted!

So Marthe and I began the research phase, collecting information – the phase when you’re really happy to discover lots of studies on the subject, by the UN, ILO, EU or the World Bank. Because next comes the reading part when you have to process all that information and collate the figures, and select the relevant passages. The part when you wonder why you had to find that 220 page report (in English mind!) which was so helpful on the issue, or when you curse the efficiency of Google. Anyway, despite some depressing moments things gradually became clearer, as so often they do. And after reading dozens of reports and spending hundreds of hours staring at a computer screen (you think I’m exaggerating?), endless cups of coffee, numerous fits of manic, stress-induced laughter, a few companionable meals shared with our friend and part-time colleague Carine, we at last got to the end of “Youth Facing Extreme Exclusion”. We are now much better informed on the alarming subject of poverty and youth exclusion, and we know that there is work for thousands more at LP4Y.

Marie Prache, 32, Corporate Lawyer, Volunteer in the Philippines 2010-2012. Green Program 1 & 2 Coordinator

I’ve now been a coach for Green Program for about 5 months, and have been able to see firsthand the incredible progress made by the participants; in self-confidence and initiative. And ever since they realised that Green Program was not yet solvent they are the ones who say “No waste money”.

Despite the best forward planning each day is full of surprises. Sometimes it’s hard! Because our work is anchored in the day to day, and we have to make sure we are always positive, motivated and good-humoured. And what’s to be done, when G. falls asleep right in the middle of a working session on the Christmas Special Offer?

On the other hand what joy when I sense that one of the youngsters is beginning to get it; when I see the same G., who barely spoke a word of English 2 months ago, giving the weekly presentation with confidence – and a smile! There are many indications that they want to go forward and learn. And even if the famous Christmas Special wasn’t perfect the important thing to remember is that they prepared it themselves, and were proud.

www.lifeproject4youth.org