



ANNUAL REPORT



2021



voorwoord

Maart 2022

Dit jaar wil ik namens ons bestuur beginnen met onze achterban bijzonder te bedanken.

Ondanks de aanhoudende COVID-19 pandemie die mogelijk op velen van u een zware wissel heeft getrokken, heeft het werk van Young Focus door kunnen gaan mede door uw betrokkenheid. Dat hebben we niet als vanzelfsprekend aangenomen en daarom past ons u daarvoor nadrukkelijk onze dank over te brengen.

Het werven van de middelen die nodig zijn om het werk van Young Focus in de Filipijnen mogelijk te maken, is de belangrijkste taak van Young Focus in Nederland.

Het is belangrijk om elk jaar weer die middelen te werven die de continuïteit waarborgen van het onderwijsprogramma en de daarbij behorende infrastructuur zoals bijv. goed toegeruste leslokalen, leerkrachten en studiemateriaal.

Hiervoor heeft Young focus een fondsenwervingsstrategie gebaseerd op drie pijlers.

- a) **Sponsoring.** Onze grootste pijler is het fondsenwervingsprogramma waarbij meestal particuliere sponsors in Nederland een kind voor langere periode met een vast bedrag sponsoren. Hierdoor hebben we een stabiele pijler waar veel mensen aan deelnemen die een warm hart hebben voor het werk in Manilla en zich zeer betrokken voelen.
- b) **Bedrijven en organisaties zonder winstoogmerk.** Er zijn een aantal bedrijven die al dan niet regelmatig een bedrag overmaken aan Young Focus omdat ze een deel van hun opbrengsten willen schenken aan een goed doel. Vaak zijn dit bedrijven met een link naar de Filipijnen of een persoonlijke link met Paul en Ann. Soms leidt dit ook tot een bezoek aan het werk in Manilla. Daarnaast ontvangen we vaak giften afkomstig uit collectes van kerken.
- c) **Fondsen.** Er zijn veel bedrijfs- en vermogensfondsen in Nederland die goede doelen willen steunen. Wij streven ernaar om die fondsen op te sporen die aansluiten bij de doelen van Young Focus en dan een aanvraag te doen. Als resultaat hebben diverse fondsen in het afgelopen jaar het werk met donaties ondersteund.

De drie pijlers vindt u terug in ons financiële jaarverslag.

We hebben in 2021 afscheid genomen van Anne Tensen als bestuurslid. Gedurende zes jaar heeft zij als secretaris van het bestuur zich ingezet en met haar inzichten de organisatie mede gebracht waar wij nu staan. In het bijzijn van Paul en Ann, die vanwege Covid-19 maatregelen tot september genoodzaakt waren in Nederland te blijven, hebben wij goed afscheid van haar kunnen nemen.

Als nieuw bestuurslid is Piet Huibers toegetreden. Hij is al jarenlang betrokken bij Young Focus en we zijn blij met zijn komst in het bestuur.

In het Engelse jaarverslag wordt ingegaan op de uitdagingen die er ook dit jaar weer waren om de kinderen die nog steeds niet naar de reguliere scholen mochten, te helpen met aanvullend onderwijs.

Neemt u gerust contact met ons op als u vragen heeft, wij staan u graag te woord.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Netty Visser

Voorzitter bestuur Young Focus Nederland

Intro

DEAR FRIENDS

THANK YOU for standing with our students and staff this past year. It was another year of pandemic, another year of educational challenges, of classrooms remaining closed in the Philippines.

At one point Young Focus carefully opened up a little bit, inviting older students and parents to come to the center. However, later in the year, a sudden rise in Covid infections in Manila meant new restrictions in the area.

Yes, our students have been getting more and more used to online learning. We've seen the resilience of the Filipino youth in impoverished areas like Tondo: in spite of their limitations they are hanging in there, doing their schoolwork and few are seriously complaining. Nevertheless, they are expressing their concerns.

Young Focus is worried about their academic levels. How much will they have to do to catch up once schools open up again? A proper assessment can be executed by means of exams and tests - without the assistance of parents, siblings or Google giving them answers...

In spite of the difficulties due to the pandemic, we also look back and are reminded of one of our first graduates, Glenn R Lachica. Now, 10 years later, he has a successful career and works with Messy Bessy as a Trade Partnership Manager.

This is what Young Focus is all about: seeing children and young people grow up with opportunities that go way beyond the limitations their parents experienced. From the beginning Young Focus tackles poverty through sponsoring and supporting a child with education. I hope that this report might inspire you to catch the same vision.

Paul van Wijgerden
Managing Director

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COVER: Giving out school supplies to some of our college students. It was really special to see them dropping by during the pandemic. It was so encouraging to see their happy faces (or, more accurately, their smiling eyes), particularly knowing that they were going through such tough times having to study online. They reassured us that they won't give up, but will go after their dreams.





*Studying at home during the pandemic
- Picture by REUTERS/Eloisa Lopez.*

Mission

Improve the spiritual and social well-being of young people in poor communities by means of education and personal support.

context

Young Focus operates in a highly complex environment, holistically addressing a myriad of socio-economic issues for target beneficiaries - children and families who live in the Smokey Mountain area (Manila's former dumpsite). Thousands of families rely directly or indirectly on the garbage 'industry'. Jobs range from scavenging for recyclable materials to driving bike taxis. Financial constraints, as well as a lack of educational and social support, mean that many children are unable to complete their education, and as a result, are unable to break the cycle of poverty. Young Focus works here in three main communities: Permanent Housing, Vitas and Temporary Housing, all located in the Smokey Mountain area, and including smaller pockets of shacks. In total Young Focus estimates that about 40,000 people live in these communities. Young Focus also has a number of beneficiaries in Bulacan and Cavite, who were relocated in recent years.

Vision

Give underprivileged children and young adults the chance to develop themselves intellectually, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually by means of education and personal coaching. The organization wants to see young people developing their (hidden) talents, and, in doing so, escape the vicious cycle of poverty.

What does YOUNG FOCUS do?



- 1.** Enroll children into the government education system and provide extra educational, as well as social and creative support



- 2.** Motivate, stimulate and prepare children and youth who have dropped out of school so that they can finish elementary, high school and college



- 3.** Provide comprehensive Early Childhood Education and Development for 3-4-year-olds, giving them a solid basis for enrolling in elementary school



- 4.** Provide social support for all the students, families and wider communities in which Young Focus works

Programs

Child Care PLUS / Early Child Care & Development

Child Care PLUS is for children aged 3-4 years old. The main objective is to provide high quality education which helps the children's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. It also provides them with life skills, play and basic education.

Grade 1 - Grade 12 and College Education

Local students aged 6-20+ are supplied with school fees, uniforms, books and other required materials. In addition, Young Focus runs compulsory tutorials for all of these students at the Student Center, which has a computer room, a library, classrooms and recreational areas for them to use.

Love2Learn

This program focuses on children who dropped out of elementary school due to poverty and a lack of educational and social support. This program provides classes for one year before re-enrolling them into government schools, and works with the families to solve any problems that might get in the way of the children completing their education.

PostCare

PostCare students have re-enrolled into government schools. During the the transition from being a school dropout these students receive extra coaching to prevent them from dropping out again.

ALS (Alternative Learning System)

The ALS program is the formal 'study acceleration' program of the government. It allows us to work with youth who cannot re-enroll into high school as they have been out of school for too long. Students receive an official high school certificate upon successful completion.

YoUNgLI (Young Unlimited)

Youngli works with the most vulnerable 13+-year-olds who have received no - or very limited - formal education, many of whom are addicted to solvents. We provide them with a safe space to hang out and receive training in hygiene, education, personal coaching and life skills with the aim of recapturing their love for education. We then either enroll or re-enroll them in local schools through our school sponsorship program.

Combat Malnutrition

The program Combat Malnutrition provides nutritious and healthy meals for children in Love2Learn and YoUNgLI. Combat Malnutrition also teaches parents on health and nutrition.

Family & Social Care

Young Focus works with families and students who are in need of more specialized social support. Besides personal social support the social workers also provide training on child protection, health, hygiene, nutrition, family planning and parenting skills for the parents of all Young Focus beneficiaries.



2021 NUMBERS

Preschool

79

Elementary

268

High school

238

college

135

catch-up

270

Parents

800



Socio-demographic Profile of YF Families



At the start of the school year, the Social Workers gave a checklist to the parents of beneficiaries in order to assess how each family functions. This form helped determine their socio-demographic profile and identify any potential child safety threats within the family. These threats include physical and mental health issues, developmental disabilities, domestic violence and chemical dependency. To ensure that the families had meaningful engagement with the activities implemented by the Social Support Team, efforts could be focused on building the strengths and capacities within these families to promote education and ensure child safety in the community.

Sources of family income - 71% of the families have fathers as the main income earners. Almost all of these fathers are engaged in elementary occupations. They are workers performing simple and routine tasks, which mainly require the use of handheld tools and often the use of physical effort, such as street vendors, construction site workers, cleaners, garbage collectors, deliverymen, porters, etc. 7% of these fathers are scavengers.

Only 38% of the families have mothers who are earning income. Most of them earn by having small retail stores or by selling cooked food in front of their homes. 44% of the mothers identified themselves as housewives without contributing financially to the family.

There are 10% of beneficiaries who have both parents as non-income earners. Most of these beneficiaries have guardians who provide for their basic needs.

Parents' educational attainment - Only 31% of the families in Young Focus have fathers who finished their elementary education, and 35% have mothers who completed theirs. There are only 4% of families with fathers who reached college level education, and 7% for mothers. Fewer than 1% have parents who are illiterate.

Number of members in a family - 49% of families in Young Focus have 6 to 10 members, and 43% have 5 members or less.

Child concerns in the family - 87% of families have experienced child behavior problems at home. The concerns disclosed were about the moodiness of the child and not following parents' instructions due to

preoccupation with social media, gaming or general playfulness. Seldom were the reasons for misbehavior attributed to mental health concerns.

56% of families have experienced academic challenges with their child. Reasons included difficulty adjusting to an online learning set-up due to poor internet connectivity and multiple users of cellphone in a household. The modular approach came with its own set of challenges for the students, which included difficulty in understanding the lessons and enforcing self-discipline in studying and completing assignments.

Only 3% of families disclosed that they experienced problems with their child in experimenting with substances. Smoking and alcohol drinking were mainly due to stress in their studies.

Health and nutrition concerns - 42% of the families felt that they do not have access to clean water. Many of the households are not connected to the water line and are forced to fetch water elsewhere.

48% of households have food sufficiency problems. Some mothers disclosed that they only eat twice a day, while others said that in order to stretch the budget, they had to be creative in the food they serve.

69% of families felt that they have insufficient access to medical services. Many of them resort to herbal medicine and self-medication. They go to the hospital as a last resort.

Other family stressors - 52% of families disclosed that they often experience financial difficulties because the money coming in is not sufficient to provide the basic necessities for the whole family. Most of them said the reasons for their financial instability were: having multiple children in school, lack of regular income, debt payments and lack of budgeting skills.

19% disclosed that they experienced anxiety, breakdown and/or sleepless nights due to juggling different responsibilities. 17% disclosed having household members that are smoking, drinking or using illegal drugs.

SOCIAL WORKERS HANDLED 63 CASES

Besides working closely with the families in Family Care, our Social Workers focus on the issues that our students face, whether related to issues in school, family or personal or medical issues.



social care & Family care

Throughout the years Young Focus has learned that educational programs cannot run or be effective without the help of the parents and the involvement of the Social Workers. Every year all our parents go through a monthly training program. Trained Parent Area Leaders support the staff by monitoring the teaching sessions and getting feedback from the parents. Of course, also because of the pandemic, most of the teaching was modular in 2021. However, face-to-face lessons were also conducted on a regular basis.

At the beginning of the year the parents were reminded about attending and submitting the modules as part of their life skills training. Parents could also choose which topic/s they wanted to learn about in the Family and Social Care program.

Other topics in 2021 included:

Theories in child behavior. In this module, the parents gained knowledge about the basic concepts of child development and behavior.

Myself as a person and as a parent. This addressed the identification of strengths and weaknesses of parents as individuals and how well they know themselves as a person. It also tackled the topic of personal worth and the importance of self-esteem as parents.

Family Health and Nutrition. The module explained the different food groups, the food pyramid and safe ways of preparing food for the family. The parents learned that it is their responsibility to provide nutritious meals for the family.

The Filipino Family. The module addressed the meaning of family, its importance, dynamics and responsibilities. The parents learned the importance of openness, respect and love for members of the family.

Challenges of Parenting - Part 1. The module expounded on the meaning of parenting, the primary needs of a child and the different responsibilities of a parent.

Challenges of Parenting - Part 2. This module discussed the strengthening of family relationships, particularly the dynamics between husband and wife, as well as parent and child.

Keeping Your Child Safe from Abuse. The module tackled the rights of the child and types of child abuse. The parents learned that although discipline is important in raising a child, they should not resort to physical, emotional or psychological harm.

Home Management. This module had 3 topics: time management, home budgeting and basic stress management techniques.

Reproductive Health. The module explained the Reproductive Health Law and expounded on the topic of family planning. According to majority of the participants, they learned many new things. One parent said that she discussed the things she read in the module with her husband. Another mother shared that she could advise not only her kids, but also other relatives on the different methods of family planning. She saw that there are girls in the community who are getting pregnant early: "In this difficult life nowadays we need to be careful, especially women. I will share this with others as soon as possible and make them aware of this issue."

Maintaining a Clean and Orderly Environment for the Children. The module explained the distinction between ecology and habitat and why it is important to protect both by keeping the environment clean. The participants learned the different methods of home-based waste management and tips on proper waste disposal.

Facts & FIGURES

STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM (SSP)

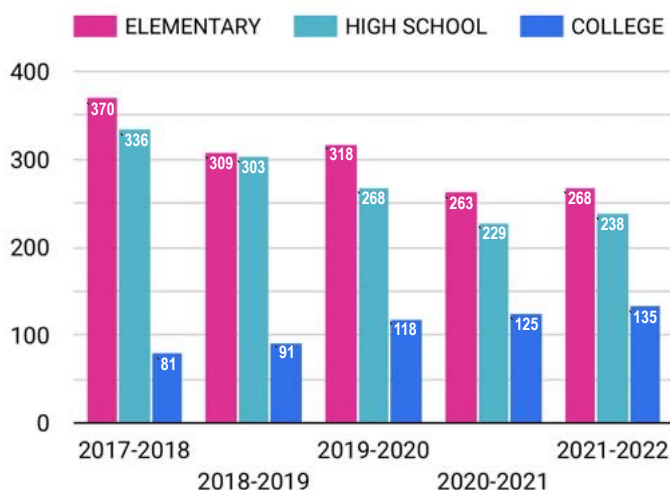
In the Student Support Program children and teenagers are supported through the local elementary and high schools, as well as Manila colleges and universities. 345 of the students have individual sponsors who donate regularly to Young Focus, covering the expenses of school materials, schoolbag, uniforms, school projects, books and tutorials, etc. The expenses of another 296 children are financed by undesigned donations and funds.

However, financial support is not the only thing needed... That is why Young Focus puts much time and effort into coaching and supplementing the education of the sponsored children. We have coaches/ teachers who monitor every single child in the program, operating from the Young Focus Sandigan Center in Tondo. (The work of our Family & Social Care program, which includes empowering the parents, is also based here.)

The pandemic has presented a huge challenge to the students trying to continue with their education. The schools have been closed since March 2020. That has been devastating and the national school dropout rate is high. Even though Young Focus's goal is a minimum attendance rate of 90%, this year we were at 88%. High school students in particular have been victims of the pandemic: their dropout rate was higher than in previous years.

The total number of enrolled students in the Student Support Program increased from 617 the previous school year to 641, which was an increase of about 3.5%. Over the coming years Young Focus wants to see an annual increase of 5%. Note that the number of college students grew from 81 in 2017 to 135 in 2021.

Total enrolled in 2021/2022



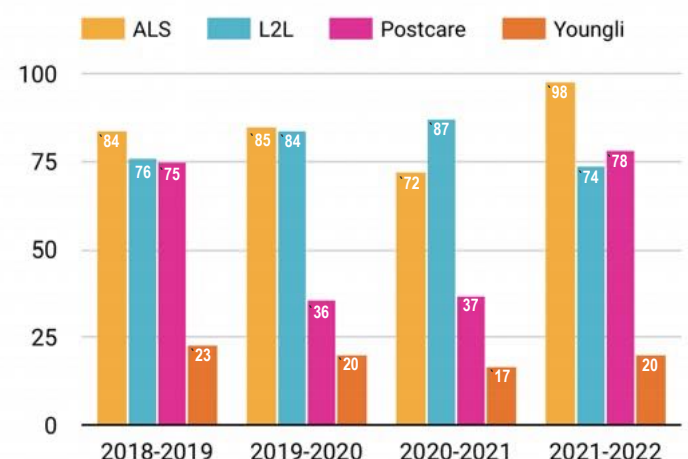
CATCH-UP PROGRAM

Young Focus' Catch-UP program is specifically designed for children and young people who have dropped out of school. The program has its own center located across the street from one of the communities we work in, called Temporary Housing/ Happy Land.

Dropping out of school means falling behind in academic and social development. Catch-UP is all about helping these children and young adults catch up on their educational needs. Catch-UP consists of four different (sub)programs, set up for different ages or levels of academic and social development. One of these is called Love2Learn, which started way back in 2010! Children, aged from 8 to 13, receive daily lessons for one year, and are then re-enrolled in a regular (elementary) school. Some children may need 2 years, however, before they are ready to re-enroll. ALS (Alternative Learning System) is a similar program, but then for youth who dropped out of high school. Once they pass the official ALS exam, they can then go on to senior high school or do a vocational study. All Young Focus beneficiaries who have completed Love2Learn or ALS join our PostCare program. This involves a year of coaching and support, helping them adjust to their new level of education.

YoUNgLI (Young Unlimited) focusses on youth aged 13 and older who won't qualify yet for Love2Learn or ALS. They often need more coaching and life skills training to enable them to enter an educational program. Young Focus provides a hang-out place in the center and teaches them basic educational skills.

Total enrolled in 2021/2022



Highlights

Sherlyn is one of our students and has a serious hearing issue, which has certainly been an obstacle for her in her studies. But now, thanks to Careless Music Manila, she has been given a really high quality hearing aid set for both ears. This will make such a huge difference to Sherlyn's life!



Merit Bazaars have been a fun way for the students to learn the concept of saving. The other goal of these bazaars has been to help motivate the students to stay actively involved in their Young Focus tutorials and life skills sessions. The basic idea is that for each activity the students attend, they accumulate points. These points are then converted into so-called Pokus Money, which they can then use to 'buy' things at the bazaar, where a great variety of things are 'on sale' for the students, such as books, clothes, shoes, school supplies and toys.

Now, of course, there are all the pandemic restrictions to deal with, so the staff have gotten really creative and come up with an Online Merit Bazaar! It was tiring for the staff doing all the online 'selling', but they really enjoyed it too, and students and parents certainly enjoyed it as well!



PRESCHOOL GRADUATION

This year's Child Care PLUS graduation celebration was for the parents as well as the young preschool graduates! Their Moms and Dads were commended for their participation and commitment in attending meetings, collecting modules and worksheets, most especially for teaching their kids at home, with the support of Young Focus teachers.

The parents were so proud and glad to receive the certificates recognizing what they and their children have worked so hard for this last school year.



Hi, I'm Rominick. I'm 10 years old. We've been living in the GK Compound, Temporary Housing for five years. We keep moving places because we can't afford the house rent.

My father works as a truck driver, and my mother has just started working as a porter. Sadly, my father doesn't always stay with us because we're not his legal family. He gives a small part of his salary (1,000 PHP; \$ 20 USD) to my mother toward our budget. We can hardly live from this amount, and there are nights we have to skip dinner.

To help put food on the table, I ask people in the neighborhood to let me to join them in scavenging. Sometimes, I earn 50 PHP (\$ 1 USD) which I gladly give to my mother.

During first grade, I remember we couldn't buy school supplies, uniforms, school shoes, and others things needed for us to continue schooling. My siblings and I don't even have official birth certificates.

We really want to finish our studies, and when we learned about Young Focus, My younger brother and I begged our mother to allow us to enroll. This started our journey as Love2Learn students.

Young Focus helps us in many ways. We're getting more self-confidence are learning to take better care of ourselves. Aside from education, my family is thankful for the food we receive every time we pick up our modules from the center. There was even a time when Teacher Recca asked me how much food did I want to bring home. I asked if it was okay to get five packed meals, and to my surprise, she handed me the number of meals I asked for. I was so happy because I knew the food would make my siblings so happy.

I hope I can finish my education, and get a good job to help our parents, especially our mother who makes so many sacrifices just to make sure we're okay."

Rominick sometimes scavenges, but he also wants to study...



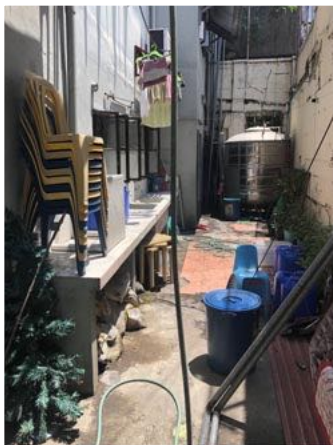
Rominick (left) with his brother Myfyneway both joined Love2Learn



6,000 prepaid internet cards

Young Focus started a PREPAID INTERNET CARDS campaign to raise funds for our students who need to go online every day to do their studies. To be online all the time is an extra financial burden on our beneficiaries and their families.

Because of many generous donors, we were able to buy 3,000 prepaid cards for the school year and another 3,000 cards for following school year!



We have renovated the back of our Road 10 Catch-UP center. The wall needed to be replaced, as well as a new floor, roof and kitchen constructed. These photos show the amazing before-and-after differences!

Jodilyn enrolled her 3-year-old daughter, Jashlyn, into our Child Care PLUS Program (preschool). As someone who was not able to finish her own high school education, Jodilyn wants to provide a better educational foundation for her daughter. However, she was ill-equipped to support her daughter when the sudden shift came - from teaching in a classroom set-up to remote learning at home. With the help of the Child Care PLUS teachers' weekly module distribution and consultation, Jodilyn was able to properly guide her daughter through her schoolwork at home. Jodilyn felt comfortable asking the teachers for help whenever there were things in the module she was unsure about. Both mother and daughter learned to enjoy the experience of a homeschool set-up, despite difficulties in internet connectivity and lack of adequate space for learning. Jodilyn is hoping that the schools will open up classes soon, so her daughter can interact with other children her age. Jashlyn shared that she's excited to go to school and see her teachers and meet her classmates. Jashlyn, who has been in the Child Care PLUS Program for 2 years under a remote learning approach, is ready to move up to kindergarten next school year.



Going online, even with preschoolers...



Because of the pandemic, we went online to teach our beneficiaries life skills and tutorials. Elementary children, as well as high school and college students had to learn how to concentrate and adapt to the online learning system in the Philippines. Our preschool children of 4 and 5 years old also learned how to adapt their learning. In 2021 we started having small groups of preschoolers online, which was an extra challenge for our preschool teachers! How to keep their attention and how to involve them in online lessons? Nevertheless, our teachers had great fun and used all their creativity to teach and entertain about 25% of the children who had access to internet. All of the other children received modules from their teachers through their mothers.



covid: also in 2021 a need for extra rice

In 2020 we had many months of rice and food distribution in our communities, but also in 2021 there was a need for such help. The continuation of lockdowns caused unemployment and an irregular flow of daily income for many people. We focussed on the distribution of rice, especially in the Cavite and Bulacan communities, where about 80 of our beneficiary families live.



"I was a sponsored student of Young Focus beginning in elementary school. Being a beneficiary was such a big help for me and my family. The support they gave me was unwavering, especially during the time my Mom died. I never felt I was alone, nor that finishing college was an impossible thing to achieve. One of the activities I enjoyed the most was when I became part of the 'Move it' dance club. It was memorable to me because of the friendships we built. I had fun during dance practices and joining contests. I'm thankful that Young Focus did not give up on me. Even though my Mom is already gone, I'm glad that I fulfilled her dream for me to finish my education. Our graduation ceremony was held online. It might not have been as exciting as doing it face-to-face, but I'm still thankful that I made it through."



Annalyn Esban-Bacsal

GRADUATED as Bachelor of science in Entrepreneurship

salomon dropped out of school...

Salomon was a school dropout before he entered the Young Focus Love2Learn program in 2016. He was 14 years old. Here is his story:

"I used to collect garbage in exchange for money. I stopped going to school because of family and financial issues. When I got into Young Focus, I can say that my perspective in life started to change.

I was introduced to Love2Learn and became part of it. It made me feel as if I was in a regular school. They prepared me mentally and emotionally. I, myself, noticed my development. I used to be a shy kid, but the activities boosted my confidence to interact with other people and discover my hidden skills. Whenever there were events and activities, I made sure to participate because it opened a door for me to grow and become stronger. I was able to go back to regular school and continue my studies despite the changes in the education system due to the pandemic. Reaching senior high school would have been just so impossible for me before, but with the support and guidance of the people who believe in me, I know I can finish this. I also believe that I'll be able to take the course in college I really want, which is Civil Engineering.

2021

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2016

'here we go' supports the best...

The Here We Go Project was an initiative to help our students access online learning materials needed for their education. They received donated items of flash drives, powerbanks, microphone headsets and Bluetooth mice.

A special event was held to distribute the items to the 'BEST of the BEST', in other words, students who had demonstrated hard work and perseverance in their studies during the pandemic. They were also consistent, active participants in their online Young Focus tutorials and truly deserved to be rewarded!

Throughout the year Young Focus had several awarding events for 'BEST STUDENTS' in order to encourage them to study online.



christmas 2021



Every year we campaign for donations for our Christmas Food distribution. It is always an exciting time as the people of the Philippines highly value this time of celebration and receiving gifts. It is also exciting for us as Young Focus since we do specific fundraising for the Christmas giving. It was therefore a tremendous blessing that we were able to give out 1000 bags with delicious goodies to all our beneficiary families, as well as to others in extreme need living close by, such as single parents, the elderly and handicapped people. It was so good that these families and individuals had something special to enjoy at Christmas!

John Niño Joined YF in Grade 4!

GRADUATED as Bachelor of Science
Business Administration major in Marketing
Management

"I was a sponsored student of Young Focus starting in Grade 4. I admit, before, I didn't know what education really meant. I didn't know which path I should take. There was even a point in my life when I got confused and wondered if I was still doing the right thing. I decided to stop attending classes in college because I was discouraged after receiving a failing grade. I thought it was the end for me. But Young Focus gave me a chance to prove myself once more. My YF coordinator helped me find and then transfer to a new college where I could continue my education. It was still challenging, but I can say that, as the days passed by, I realized how I should not take for granted the chance that was given to me, a chance that is not given to all young people.

Young Focus taught me how to fight for my dream, no matter how difficult the situation is. I will always be grateful for the training, especially for giving me the confidence that there is a future in education. I learned to consider also my family, and not only myself, before giving up too easily on something. I learned to value my family, my education, and my life, and with this I was able to graduate and find a job. Indeed, being part of this organization, this family, is a blessing from God to me. I hope that there will be many more students who are inspired to finish their education and pursue their dreams through Young Focus."



christopher wants to go back to school



I'm Christopher, 14 years old. I come from a family of nine. My mother and four siblings live in Bicol. The only ones staying with me in Manila are my brother and my youngest sibling.

I stopped going to school when my father died. I was only in Grade 3 when it happened. To earn a living, I scavenge and help direct traffic flow. I used to be a heavy solvent-sniffer because of my friends' influence.

Writing, drawing, English, and Math are the subjects they teach us. Learning the basics will help me not fall for people with deceptive schemes. Besides the classes, we have the opportunity to take a shower, watch movies, and dance using the TikTok app. We enjoy delicious meals and receive gifts from donors such as clothes and slippers. I'm always excited to learn, hoping the classes will be conducted on a regular basis soon.

I want to finish my studies and be a teacher one day. Reuniting my family and being able to live under the same roof will be a dream come true for me.

"I joined YoUNgLI when one of my friends invited me to enroll in the program. They handed me a flyer that Young Focus staff had distributed in the community."

school supplies distribution

Every school year bags with school supplies are distributed to the children of the Student Support Program. Besides the school bag, the students also get two sets of uniforms and shoes, as well as special items they might need for their education. A school bag's contents consist of notebooks, a ruler, scissors, markers, pencils and pens, sheets of paper, glue, crayons and other art materials.

464 schoolbags were distributed in september for the school year 2020/2021





Jennilyn finished ALS and continued to senior HIGH!!!

Hi, I'm Jennilyn. I'm the youngest in the family. Four of my brothers work as scavengers in the community.

We relocated to Bohol when the old Smokey Mountain dump site was closed, but we moved back to Manila again. Since then, we've been changing addresses, so that I had to enroll in the Grade 6 level twice. My schooling came to a halt at the age of 17 because of financial hardships.

I entered the ALS (Alternative Learning System) program in 2018, motivated by my friend who wanted to continue her studies. I was beaming with joy when I passed the accreditation test. I was the first and the only one in the family to receive a high school diploma.

Currently, I am a Grade 11 student at the Timoteo Paez Integrated High School. I had a lot of apprehensions going back to a regular school because I had skipped several grade levels. Thankfully, I have adjusted and still manage to get good grades.

I was already satisfied studying for my high school diploma, but because of Young Focus, I'm even more inspired to pursue higher education. I dream of becoming a flight attendant someday and helping my parents build their dream house so they have their own place to stay.

This year
7 students
graduated from
college and
13 students
from senior
High school and
33 students
from elementary

18th DEBUT: Jazel got a special party in YOUNGLE!

Turning 18 means a lot for a girl in the Philippines, but in the midst of the pandemic it was almost impossible for a celebration. With her background a celebration like this would be impossible, but in Young Focus, we made it simple, safe and memorable for Jazel, one of our YoUNgLI students. The Catch-UP team gave her a makeover and invited some of her classmates. We made a simple cupcake tower and paper flowers for Jazel, plus a meal for everyone. And what made it extra special were the encouraging messages she received from her YoUNgLI classmates and staff.



Facts & FIGURES

CATCH-UP

RELEASED TEACHING MODULES:

Love2Learn	1720
Postcare	441
ALS	1598
YOUNGLE	492

STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

RELEASED TEACHING MODULES: **1160**

ONLINE TEACHING SESSIONS: **690**

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS THAT WERE ABLE TO GO ONLINE: **77.4%**





Renalyn's testimony... she kept fighting!

Renalyn is taking a Bachelor of Secondary Education majoring in English and is currently in her first year.

"In 2019 I went to places I'd never been to before. I took the chance to experience what other young people do. I lost the old me. I also experienced facing people to whom we owed huge debts. Almost every day we were being chased by these debts, until I decided to stop attending school and start working, which I thought was the best thing I could do. But each day became heavier than before. I regret giving up on my studies and rushing with things that should not be rushed. I disappointed a lot of people. Why is regret always at the end?

Another school year passed by, I was not able to go back to school because I gave birth and it was a cesarean delivery. I was almost on the verge of giving up. I wanted to tell my mother that I was really tired carrying the loads of problems we had. But I would hold back because I knew it was much more difficult for her. I did not have the right to complain for these were the consequences of my actions. I felt even more left out as time went by. I did not know if I could really go back to school, seeing how the education system shifted to distance learning. I was full of doubts and fears, but I also didn't want to make more decisions I would regret in the end.

I was not used to listening to people's advice, but I learned that in order to get back on your feet, you have to humble yourself and accept help from people who will lift you up. Young Focus helped me to go back to school, to stand on my feet again and reach for my dreams. My mother told me this is a brand new start for me. I have many regrets in life, but dwelling on them every day won't help me to move forward. All I can do now is never make those same mistakes again and give my 100% in everything I do.

It's difficult to be the eldest child, to be a sister, to be a mother, and at the same time a student, but I will strive hard to finish this race no matter what it takes. I told myself that having awards is just a bonus for me because I have bigger responsibilities now.

I'm thankful to Young Focus for helping me and for recognizing my hard work despite my failures in the past. The awards you are giving me have inspired me to keep going and that hardship pays off. To all the students who are struggling today, we can do it. Let's keep going. When you get tired, take a pause and breathe, then stand up and fight again."



Background information

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Legal Structures	Charitable organization: registered & licensed as social welfare and development agency to implement Community-Based Programs and Services for Disadvantaged Children, their Families and Communities by the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development - Reg. no. SWD-SB-A- 001358-2015 + Accredited by the DSWD
Board members	Michael Turvill: Chairman Marianna Yulo: Treasurer Elizabeth Yu: Corporate Secretary Sunil L Bharwani: Board Member Iris Gokeelao : Board Member Martin Fernando: Board Member
Management	Paul van Wijgerden: Managing Director Wabel Animoza: Assistant Director Manuel Manarang: Family Care Program Manager Karen Dechavez: Social Care OIC Cindy Villeneuve: Student Support Program Manager Jenny Joy Merto: Catch-UP Program Manager





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support Education**

