

YCoP Links
Issue 35
October 9, 2008
YCoP: Youth Community of Practice

The Youth Community of Practice (YCoP) global listserv links professionals and practitioners at USAID and its partner organizations to effective youth development ideas, information and best practices to help:

- *Design more effective, sustainable youth programs, and
- *Better integrate youth participation in USAID development projects

In this *Links*. Regional Focus: Oceania

Our final regional focus issue brings us to some of the smallest nations on earth—the islands in the Pacific. Isolated by water, lacking abundant resources, and prone to environmental devastation, the South Pacific Islands recognize that their increasing youth populations can either help or hinder their survival. Still, as you will see in this *Links*, these Islands overcome their isolation and work together in creative ways to preserve their cultural traditions while at the same time generating innovative opportunities for their youth. The organizations included in this issue use everything from mural painting and sign language classes to canoe building and theatre production to reach their youth populations.

Announcements

Staples Youth Social Entrepreneur Competition, OCTOBER 15 DEADLINE!

<http://changemakers.net/en-us/competition/staplesyy>

Ashoka Youth Venture is putting on the Staples Youth Social Entrepreneur Competition in order to “identify and support innovative ways young people are making life easier for others.” Entrants must be between 12- and 24-years-old, and their ideas or projects are judged on innovation, social impact, and sustainability. Prizes include a trip to the USA for the next Youth Venture Conference, seed grants, and special awards for environment- and sports-related projects. **Youth with brilliant projects or ideas should enter the competition by the October 15 deadline.** Entry forms are online and are available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. Additionally, if you are interested in reading about and commenting on some of these ideas, Ashoka posts all entries on its website and encourages discussion about them.

RUKUSI 2008 Youth Anti-Racism and Activism Conference

<http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/ruckus/>

The RUKUSI 2008 Conference theme is “You Don’t Need a Sign to Protest.” This free conference, which will take place at the University of Toronto on November 28-29, is designed for high school-aged youth of color, their allies, and other concerned youth. It aims to challenge youth to find their own ways of being an activist and affecting social change. RUKUSI 2008 is still accepting workshop proposals, volunteer applications, and registration.

Projects and Initiatives

Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises N Development (FRIEND), Fiji

<http://www.fijifriend.com/index.html>

An award-winning NGO, FRIEND runs a variety of community-based programs that focus on reducing poverty, increasing income-generation activities, and empowering both individuals and communities. Two programs in particular target youth: their Youth Development Program (YDP) and their Youth Employment Network (YEN). The YDP uses a multitude of activities, such as debating, sign language classes, mural painting, and MDG awareness campaigns, to improve both the skills and the self-esteem of youth aged 15-30. Winner of the 2007 CIVICUS Nelson Mandela Graca Machel Innovation award, the YEN directs youth through a three-step process toward finding employment. The process includes training, internships, career counseling, and development of income-generating projects.

Waan Aelōñ in Majel, Marshall Islands

<http://www.wamprogram.org/index.html>

Waan Aelōñ in Majel (WAM) means Canoes of the Marshall Islands, and the Marshall Islands' canoes embody the spirit of the organization, since WAM attempts to weave the rich traditions of their canoe culture throughout their programs. The organization implements programs which train Marshall Island youth in vocational skills in canoe building, boat building, carpentry, and administrative skills. The programs target at-risk youth and also include life skills training. Finally, the program includes an outreach component that draws in schools and communities via cultural visits.

Wan Smolbag Theatre, Vanuatu

<http://www.wan-smolbag-theatre.org/index.html> (current website, slightly outdated)

<http://www.wansmolbag.org/> (upcoming website, should be operational in late October)

Wan Smolbag Theatre claims to be “More than Community Theatre.” Its purpose is to use theatre to engage community members in dialogues about topics ranging from saving turtles to dental hygiene to reproductive and sexual health. While the theatre group works with whole communities, some of its projects focus on youth. For example, Wan Smolbag Theatre has created a theatre troupe made up of out-of-school youth, called Wan Smolbag Kids. Following a series of instructional workshops in theatre, the Wan Smolbag Kids group formed and began performing social and health-related dramas at primary schools. Wan Smolbag Theatre has also implemented a youth drop-in center, where youth are able to come in for sexual and reproductive health services, prevention and support. Additional projects have included entire communities in a playmaking experience, from the eldest villager to a ten-year-old child. Via the Wan Smolbag website, practitioners can request theatre support for projects in the South Pacific and order previous educational videos and literature.

Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)

<http://www.fspi.org.fj/index.htm>

FSPI is a network of South Pacific NGOs that work together on regional development projects. Projects range from good governance to health to rural development. One of their primary projects focuses on youth and mental health, and they recently released a report that analyzes youth and mental health in the Solomon Islands. The organization attempts to involve youth in many of its community activities. For example, implementers of the People and Policy Project focus on youth participation to both empower youth participants and foster within them a sense of community governance and participation. Check out the latest newsletters posted on the organization's homepage for the most up-to-date information. To view the publication

“Youth and Mental Health in Solomon Islands: A Situational Analysis,” please click on the link below.

<http://www.fspi.org.fj/program/health/SIDT%20YMH%20Analysis%20Report%20Pages.pdf>

Resources for Practitioners

Pacifikayouth

<http://www.pacifikayouth.org/>

Pacifikayouth, formerly Youth for a Sustainable Future Pacifika, is a networking organization for Pacific Island youth that centers on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The site is an excellent resource for Pacific Island youth organizations, as well as other organizations that work in the area. It offers a comprehensive list of useful resources (e.g., Youth and the MDGs—a Pacific Toolkit, How to Run a Youth Summit), and it also has a Pacific Youth Policy and Advocacy section that provides links to the Pacific Youth Strategy 2010, declarations, country policies, and other helpful sites of major organizations that work with youth in the region. In addition to being an excellent resource, Pacifikayouth also implements a couple of projects: the Pacific Youth Media Development project, which is being piloted in Tonga and Papua New Guinea, and a World Bank research study on the role of youth participation in development, which covers six South Pacific nations.

Opportunities to Improve Social Services: Human Development in the Pacific Islands

http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2007/05/17/000310607_20070517100419/Rendered/PDF/397780EAP0P0791Development01PUBLIC1.pdf

This World Bank publication gives a broad overview of the problems facing the Pacific Islands, along with recommendations for addressing those problems. By focusing on social service delivery, the researchers have sought to answer the following question: “How well resourced are the social sectors in the Pacific and how could those resources be better managed and governed to deliver higher social outcomes?” Given the rapidly increasing population of young people in the region, youth figure prominently throughout the report. In particular, the report discusses the necessity of creating successful transitions for youth, e.g., from primary to secondary schools, from secondary to tertiary education, and from school to work.

Looking for YOUR input: We would like to hear from you! YCoP welcomes ideas, resources, and best practices on effective youth programs and youth participation. We would also like to encourage nominations of other youth practitioners or youth leaders to participate in the YCoP Links listserve. Hit “reply” to send information and feedback to YCoP Links.

To **unsubscribe** from the list, users should send an e-mail to listserv@info.usaid.gov with only “**unsubscribe youthcop**” in the body of the e-mail. (**No signatures please**).

Mission of YCoP: The Youth Community of Practice provides a forum for professionals and practitioners at USAID and its partner organizations to gather, consolidate, archive, disseminate and exchange information, knowledge, ideas and best practices, particularly related to the incorporation of youth participation in USAID development projects. The Youth Community of Practice is an informal body of volunteer members, reached through a global list serve and Washington-based chapter. Both the list serve and DC chapter forums include USAID staff, youth practitioners outside of the Agency, and youth themselves. It is jointly sponsored by the office of education in the bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade (EGAT) at USAID and the Education Quality Improvement Program3 (EQUIP3), and implemented by the Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC).

Disclaimer: The information and opinions expressed in the materials provided through YCoP Links or posted by listserv participants is not official U.S. Government information and does not necessarily represent the views or positions of the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Government or EQUIP3. For a copy of the guidelines and/or charter, put the request in the subject line of the email and send to: youthcop@lists.info.usaid.gov. Participants should be aware that the list is public and not private communication. When participants voluntarily disclose personal information on a list serve, that information can be collected and used by others and may result in unsolicited messages from other people.
