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: Street Kids
As youth migrate from rural to urban areas in search of work, the number of street youth grows. Many youth are unable to create livelihoods beyond shoeshining and hustling, and they find themselves stuck in ever desperate conditions of poverty and hopelessness. This issue of YCoP Links looks at organizations that have developed groundbreaking and creative tactics for helping street kids transition off of the street, from cooking programs in Vietnam to photography workshops in Haiti. The resources section exposes YCoP readers to the reality of the streets through young people’s eyes, in addition to providing links to toolkits, organizations, and other useful materials.

Announcements:

2nd Annual International Youth Symposium for Biodiversity
http://biodiversitymatters.org/index.html
The 2nd Annual International Youth Symposium for Biodiversity brings together youth delegates from across the globe, all of whom work on biodiversity issues in their own communities. At the symposium, delegates share their lessons learned, in addition to continuing to work on the Global Youth Accord for Biodiversity, which was drafted during the first symposium in Mexico in 2005. The symposium will take place in Ottawa, Canada, from July 5-9, 2009.

Projects and Initiatives:

Casa Alianza
http://www.casa-alianza.org.uk/
Established in Guatemala in 1981, Casa Alianza is a comprehensive street outreach program that has now expanded into the surrounding countries of Mexico, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Casa Alianza programs follow five phases: (1) street outreach, (2) pre-community service, (3) crisis centers, (4) transition homes, and (5) group homes. Both the street outreach and the pre-community services phases work with children and youth who are still living on the streets and include emergency medical care, counseling, and drug rehabilitation. The crisis centers allow the youth a place to sleep and continued support with pre-community services, in addition to informal education opportunities. Transition homes prepare youth for a more secure and structured “family” life in group homes, by helping them develop long-term goals and enter into either formal education or vocational training programs. Casa Alianza also runs a number of other programs, including their LUNA HIV/AIDS program, a legal aid program, a “Mothers and Babies” program for street girls, and a family reintegration program.
Zanmi Lakay
http://www.zanmilakay.org/
Zanmi Lakay, or “Friend’s Home,” works with street youth in Haiti, using a combination of photography classes and outreach services. In the photography workshops, youth aged 12 to 25 gain technical skills and interact with professional photojournalists, in addition to learning about the history and importance of photography. Zanmi Lakay’s outreach services include everything from distributing care bags with basic supplies (e.g., toothbrushes, soap) to paying for medical services, such as visits to the dentist or doctor. The Teens in Transitions Program supports youth who have outgrown children’s programs by providing scholarships and living expenses so that they can attend school. Zanmi Lakay’s future plans include a center where street children can take care of basic needs, in addition to developing work readiness and technical skills.

Koto
Located in Hanoi, Vietnam, KOTO is both restaurant and training program. Begun in the late 1990s by Australian-Vietnamese Jimmy Phan, KOTO recruits youth aged 16 to 22 off the streets to enter a two-year intensive training program, where they learn life skills, English, and hospitality and tourism skills. Youth accepted into the program also receive housing and a small stipend so that they will focus on their studies and still have some money to send home to their families. Graduates of the program receive an internationally recognized certificate and qualification. KOTO’s guiding philosophy is “Know One, Teach One,” meaning that all graduates are expected to identify someone who reminds them of themselves – to “Know” someone – and, in turn, to share their newfound knowledge, to “Teach.”.

Catholic Action for Street Children and Street Girls AID
http://www.cas-ghana.com/
http://www.said-ghana.com/
Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS) and Street Girls AID (S.AID) are two organizations working with street children in the Accra metropolitan area in Ghana. Both CAS and S.AID are under the umbrella NGO RESPONSE. Begun in 1993, CAS approaches its work with street children from a variety of angles. CAS manages a Refuge that acts as a drop-in center where street children and youth can receive education, medical care or other assistance, with the exception of food and accommodation. CAS fieldworkers and street corner facilitators work with street children in their own environment – the street, developing friendships and bringing the other work of CAS (education, medical care) directly to their clients in Mini Refuges, which are intended “to create more opportunities for street children to receive counselling and advice.” A sponsorship program helps street youth transition off the street and into formal education or vocational training programs. Finally, CAS runs Hopeland Training Center, which “provides a sort of half way house for street children who want to leave the streets and be educated.”

When CAS staff members realized that the problems of street girls often differed from those of street boys, they decided to create S.AID, which, in its infancy, was a day refuge for street girls and young women, many of whom were either pregnant or already young mothers. Contrary to CAS’s Refuge, S.AID decided to offer shelter to pregnant and nursing teenage mothers so that they would also be able to receive prenatal and postnatal care. S.AID also provides street girls with daycare (if necessary), education, and/or training, with the hope that they will be able to transition off of the street. Both CAS and S.AID also help street children and youth reunite with their families, when possible.
**Resources for Practitioners:**

**Street Kids International**  
[http://www.streetkids.org/index.htm](http://www.streetkids.org/index.htm)  
Street Kids International is an award-winning organization that uses animated videos to teach street children and youth about topics such as HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, and livelihoods. For example, its street health program focuses on prevention and teaches children and youth how to make positive, informed choices regarding health issues such as sexuality and drug use. Its street work programs teach youth about banking and conducting a small business. The “Resources” page offers links to numerous publications and toolkits related to street children. Street Kids International has implemented its programs in 60 countries and is considered to be a global leader in street children issues.

**Children Underground**  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Nu2djDQKIk&hl=en](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Nu2djDQKIk&hl=en)  
Although *Children Underground* first debuted in 2001, it remains the seminal work documenting the life of street children. For one year, the film follows five Romanian street children, aged 8 to 16 years old, whose primary residence is the underground subway station. Difficult to watch, the film portrays the reality of the protagonists’ daily regimes of paint-huffing, begging, and violence.

**Shine A Light**  
The primary purpose of Shine a Light (SAL) is to help existing organizations improve their services to street children. SAL accomplishes this purpose by “[using] digital technology to democratize this invaluable intellectual capital, connecting community based programs with each other so that no one need reinvent the wheel.” On its website, SAL has established a digital library that contains descriptive essays of more than 200 Latin American organizations working with street children, lessons learned essays that describe each country’s successes and failures regarding street children initiatives, and a number of other articles, interviews, radio commentaries, and concept papers related to street children in Latin America. Finally, the highlight of SAL’s website is the plethora of films and documentaries made by the street children and youth who have participated in SAL’s Digital Workshops. The Digital Workshops provide children and youth with filmmaking skills and empower them “to teach adults – their parents, social workers, policy professionals, others – what they have learned as they have made their way in an unjust world.”

**Consortium for Street Children**  
[http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/resources/details/?type=theme&Reg<br%20/>Region=&country=&key_theme=&theme=125&other=&publication](http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/resources/details/?type=theme&Reg<br%20/>Region=&country=&key_theme=&theme=125&other=&publication)  
(Toolkits)  
The Consortium for Street Children is a worldwide network that aims to support organizations that work with street children through advocacy, information sharing of lessons learned, and a Small Grants Scheme that builds the capacities of grassroots organizations. Their resources page allows access to a digital library of publications on street children and related issues. It can be searched by region, country, key themes, and other areas of interest. The “Toolkits for Working with Street Children” page (see above) is an annotated bibliography that offers more than 10 links to numerous toolkits that range in topic from street work programming to designing a center for street children.

**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 listserv. 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.