

YCoP Links
Issue 38, December 4, 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*: Youth Leadership

The organizations and resources featured in this *Links* are a testament to the desire of youth to become leaders and the encouragement they receive along the way. Learn about the inaugural class of current and future African leaders at the African Leadership Academy. See if you identify with a RUWWAD youth's definition of leadership. Find out how you can help Central American youth debate their way into leadership positions within their communities and internationally. And explore the FreeChild Project's website to find out what youth find important and ways in which they are taking action.

Announcements:

17th International Youth Leadership Conference, Prague

<http://www.czechleadership.com/index.php>

Registration is still being accepted for the 17th International Youth Leadership Conference, to be held in Prague, Czech Republic from January 4-9, 2009. Civic Concepts International puts on the conference, which aims to develop participants' leadership skills and promote peace and cross-cultural exchange. Activities include a United Nations Security Council emergency meeting simulation, mock pre-trial of the International Criminal Court, model European Parliament sessions, visits to embassies, debates, and discussions. The conference accepts applicants between 18-24 years old, and participants can receive the equivalent of one academic credit.

Projects and Initiatives

African Leadership Academy

<http://www.africanleadershipacademy.org/site/index.html>

Located near Johannesburg, South Africa, the African Leadership Academy (not to be confused with Oprah's Leadership Academy for Girls), which is in its inaugural year, brings together young leaders aged 16-19 from across the continent. In addition to being in the top 10 percent of their class, the diverse group of young men and women must exhibit leadership potential, an entrepreneurial spirit, dedication to public service, and a passion for Africa to be admitted to the two-year program. Once there, they follow the British A-level system, but in addition to core courses such as math and English, they also study leadership, entrepreneurship, and African studies. To graduate, all students must complete a capstone Culminating Service Project. The school hopes to inspire new generations of African leaders

and entrepreneurs. The website includes profiles of current students, such as Malawian William Kwamkambwa, who, after being forced to drop out of school for monetary reasons, began to construct windmills in his village so that his family and others could have electricity.

Youth Leaders International

<http://www.leaders.edu/>

Based in the US, Youth Leaders International brings together young leaders from around the world for three international meetings per year. At the meetings, youth develop their leadership skills through team building exercises, discussions on “What is Leadership” and peace-building, cross-cultural activities, and career development activities. In between the meetings, youth return to their home communities and work with their local Youth Leaders International Chapter via monthly meetings, service projects, and recreational activities. Participants in the program also communicate with each other via internet blogs and discussion boards. Youth Leaders International currently has chapters in 14 different countries from Peru to Moldova to China.

Voices on the Border, El Salvador

<http://www.votb.org/projects/youthleadership.html>

Voices on the Border aims to promote sustainable development in El Salvador. Youth leadership is a primary focus. Voices supports small-scale, grassroots youth organizations, such as local youth groups and theatre troupes, that build participants’ leadership skills as they conduct projects in their communities. For example, the youth of Lower Lempa created a historical memory project, in which they first put together a documentary of community members’ experiences in the war, and then used the films to generate dialogue with their peers. Voices also runs a youth exchange project that allows Salvadoran youth whose families migrated to different regions of the country to learn more about their “root” communities.

RUWWAD, West Bank/Gaza

<http://www.ruwwad.org/index.htm>

EQUIP3’s RUWWAD project aims to support Palestinian youth as they develop into powerful leaders and change-makers. The project holds leadership trainings, facilitates internships, conducts summer camps, and supports youth-led activities, all of which empower youth to take on leadership roles within their communities. As RUWWAD youth conduct small community development projects, they receive training in community organizing, group decision-making, and communication. For example, as part of RUWWAD’s Youth Centers Development Project, Amal Diaf Allah received leadership training and was part of a group that implemented a local community project to assist disabled youth. After completing the project, Diaf Allah noted her belief that true leadership is “the ability to see the world around you and believe that you can actually change it for the better.”

The Riecken Foundation, Honduras and Guatemala

http://www.riecken.org/eng_whatwedo/develop.aspx

http://www.riecken.org/eng_pdfs/IDebate%20Magazine%20Article.pdf (in Spanish)

An organization that uses libraries and technology as a foundation for democracy building, leadership development and social justice, the Riecken Foundation has created a new youth debate program, with the goal of cultivating youth leadership and civic engagement. The young debaters build their research and public speaking skills as they plan for monthly debates in community libraries. These debates provide youth with an opportunity not only to have their voices heard, but also to influence local society as they expose audiences of community members to both sides of local and international issues. The Foundation also hosts inter-community and international debates via skype.

Resources for Practitioners

The FreeChild Project

<http://www.freechild.org/index.htm>

The FreeChild Project is a web resource that “provides tools and training to young people and adults that engage children and youth in social change.” The web site has a plethora of information divided into three primary categories: issues, actions, and resources. The issues section is a compilation of annotated bibliographies for various issues that FreeChild has identified, by asking youth themselves, as important to young people. The actions section covers areas in which youth are taking action to create social change. Examples of topics include 7 Steps to Getting the Resources You Need, and FireStarter Youth Empowerment Curriculum. Finally, the resources section has numerous links, including ones to a Youth Voice Toolkit, a FreeChild Reading List, and The FreeChild Library of free online publications.

Camp GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) Handbook

http://www.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/library/M0056_campglow.pdf

The “GLOW” in Camp GLOW stands for “Girls Leading Our World,” and the Camp GLOW handbook includes numerous activities that work to inspire girls’ empowerment and female leadership. The handbook, while originally intended to help Peace Corps volunteers implement girls’ leadership camps in their host countries, contains useful tips and guidance for planning local-level, grassroots leadership workshops. The handbook covers all aspects of planning an event, including finding local partners, choosing appropriate activities, and how to encourage event participants to continue to build their leadership skills after the event has ended. While the intent of Camp GLOW is to encourage female leadership, the ideas and information in the book can be adapted to young audiences in a variety of settings.

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.
