

YCoP Links
Issue 39, December 18, 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*: “Disability is not Inability”

The motto “Disability is not Inability” is what motivates the organizations in this *Links*. Each organization combines both advocacy and training in order to improve the quality of life of disabled persons, including youth. Amongst the links below are organizations that focus on specific disabilities, those which primarily target disabled youth, and those which act as a network for other disability organizations. The resources lead to a host of publications and useful websites that include everything from checklists to guidebooks to information on accessible internet software. Inspired by this month’s Disability Awareness Day, this *Links* offers proof that disability is far from being inability.

Announcements:

National Youth At-Risk 2009 Conference

<http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/conted/nationalyouthatrisk.html>

Hosted by Georgia Southern University just outside of Savannah, the National Youth At-Risk 2009 Conference brings together professionals who work on youth issues to learn about nationally- and internationally-recognized education programs, strategies, and best practices that address at-risk youth. The program has five key strands that will guide the presentations: Academic Achievement and School Leadership, Social and Emotional Skills, Safety and Violence Prevention, Mental and Physical Health, and Family and Community. Pre-conference workshops address issues such as youth relationships, girls’ empowerment, and the effect of the internet and technology on youth behaviors. The conference will be held March 1-4. Registration is currently open, with early bird rates available until February 9, 2009.

Projects and Initiatives

Europe and Eurasia (E&E) Region Social Legacy Program

<http://www.equip123.net/webarticles//anmviewer.asp?a=650&z=123>

One of the primary components of EQUIP3’s E&E Social Legacy Program (SLP) is the improvement of social services for disabled groups in Armenia and Georgia. SLP works on raising awareness and reducing stigma of disabled populations with the goal of decreasing rates of institutionalization. The project also focuses on strengthening and building the capacity of coalitions of NGOs dedicated to disability advocacy and services.

Sense International

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

Sense International began working with deafblind people, i.e., those with a combination of vision and hearing impairments, in India ten years ago. Today the organization helps deafblind people stimulate their remaining senses in nine additional developing countries around the world, from Asia to Latin America. According to Sense International's website, four out of five deafblind children born in a developing country die before their fifth birthday. The organization hopes to change that by providing specialized training and support to deafblind people and their families in these places. Check out the success stories on the organization's website and learn about deafblind youth who go on to become successful businessmen or who are able to re-enter the school system.

Kenya Disabled Action Network (KEDAN)

<http://www.kedan.or.ke/index.html>

KEDAN works specifically for and with disabled Kenyan youth. Working towards its mission of equalizing opportunities for disabled youth, KEDAN implements a number of programs ranging from economic empowerment to advocacy. Its job placement and livelihood project trains youth in entrepreneurship, life skills, and ICT and other job skills, and provides job search assistance. The organization's health and fitness program assists disabled youth in accessing health services and also conducts HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. Other initiatives include a capacity development program and a sports and recreation program.

Perspektiva, Russia

<http://eng.perspektiva-inva.ru/index.php>

This Russian organization of disabled persons runs education and employment programs for disabled people, particularly youth. For example, Perspektiva's International Network of Disabled Youth Activists Teams Promoting Equal Access to Education project empowers disabled youth and their parents across Russia and Central Asia to advocate for increased awareness of disability issues in their communities and increased access to schools. The organization's employment projects led to the development of a job placement model for disabled youth. Perspektiva also conducts public awareness and advocacy campaigns to re-educate a public misinformed about disability issues and publishes quarterly newsletters that facilitate information sharing between Russia's NGOs focusing on disabled issues.

Asian-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD)

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

APCD is an organization that was founded around the conclusion of the Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons 1993-2002, and endeavors to create a "barrier-free society" for disabled persons in the Asia-Pacific region. Based in Bangkok, the organization's primary activities include networking and collaboration, implementing training programs, and information support. APCD coordinates networking, collaboration, and information sharing between NGOs and government organizations. APCD's regularly-scheduled training programs work to empower young disabled leaders. Examples of training topics include: disability equality trainings, the expanding disability concept, community-based rehabilitation, and ICT for visually-impaired persons.

Resources for Practitioners

Handicap International UK Publications Page

http://www.handicap-international.org.uk/page_133.php

Handicap International has published a number of important documents related to disability and development. For example, *Fun Inclusive!* is a useful handbook that provides guidance on and ideas for organizing sports activities with and for disabled persons. Another publication promotes good practices for the economic inclusion of disabled persons in developing countries, and provides guidelines for accessing microcredit institutions and other funding mechanisms. Other publications address inclusion in developing countries, inclusion of people with disabilities in poverty reduction, and mainstreaming and disability checklists.

Network of Organizations Working for People With Disabilities Pakistan (NOWPDP)

<http://www.nowpdp.org/resources.aspx>

NOWPDP is a relatively new organization launched in May of this year that focuses on improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities living in Pakistan. The organization's web links page, however, is an incredibly comprehensive list of resources that can be helpful to disability organizations worldwide. The links are organized in an alphabetical list of specific disorders (e.g., autism, Bell's palsy), services (e.g., constructing accessible websites), conventions on disability, disability housing, disaster issues, education, employment, and additional supporting organizations. Although the organization is based in and focused on Pakistan, the links listed represent organizations and resources from around the world. The Downloads section under Publications also has some useful resources that are particularly related to disaster mitigation and disability.

Background Paper on Young People with Disabilities in the Europe and Central Asia Region

http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2007/08/27/000020953_20070827104838/Rendered/PDF/405970Youth1with1Disabilities01PUBLIC1.pdf

Published for the 2007 World Bank Conference in Rome, this background paper gives a brief overview of regional influences on disability in the Europe and Central Asia region. It gives examples of specific problems that need to be addressed with regard to education, access, and employment. The paper highlights priority areas for investment, such as working with youth on economic empowerment and goal setting. Finally, it offers examples and best practices of what is being done in the region to address disability issues.

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.
