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 Professional Development in Africa*: For the more than 200 million youth across Africa, finding employment is a challenge: according to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, sub-Saharan Africa boasts a 21 percent youth unemployment rate, second only to the Middle East.,With more than 62% of Africa’s population under the age of 25 and continuing high fertility rates in most African countries, youth employment promises to remain a major challenge for many years to come. Finding a job can, however, help youth surmount the other obstacles that they face on the journey toward a better life for themselves, their families, and communities. This edition of *YCoP Links* focuses on projects and initiatives currently underway that seek to empower youth to find jobs in the private sector or provide them with the tools they need to start their own small enterprises.

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**Announcements:**

**Global Youth Enterprise and Livelihoods Development Conference – September 2010, Washington, DC**


The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) will host Making Cents International’s 2010 Global Youth Enterprise and Livelihoods Development Conference, September 15-16, in Washington, D.C. Practitioners, donors, educators, researchers, policymakers, youth entrepreneurs and other partners will convene at the IADB to network, share, explore and learn in the effort of investing in young people and in the innovations that help youth programs achieve greater impact, sustainability and scale. Further conference details, including registration information, are available at the link above.

**Projects and Initiatives:**

**Private Sector Initiative – West Africa**


The Youth Employment Network is currently working through its Private Sector Initiative (PSI) to strengthen the role that businesses in West Africa can play in providing employment opportunities and increasing the employability of youth. The Youth Employment Network’s PSI proceeds through a three-stage process, beginning with an assessment of existing business-sponsored youth programs in the region. In the second stage, PSI networks with these businesses, as well as NGOs and governments, to generate a consensus on priorities for youth education-for-employment in the private sector. Finally, PSI utilizes the knowledge and
network that has been created to find partners for new projects and additional partners for scaling-up pre-existing projects. These businesses, ranging from small to medium enterprises to big businesses in the cocoa and telecommunications industry, provide youth participants with on-the-job training through internships and apprenticeships that increase the employability of youth participants. In addition to this hands-on training, businesses in the Youth Employment Network also cooperate in assisting youth to establish or strengthen their own enterprises and providing technical and financial support. Information on current partners and other activities within the Private Sector Initiatives can be found at the link above.

CIYDA Youth Business Enterprise 2010 and CIYDA Knowledge Center, Zimbabwe
http://www.ciyda.org/upcomingevents.html
Contemporary Indigenous Youth Development Africa (CIYDA), a non-profit based in Harare, Zimbabwe, that seeks to develop and empower Zimbabwean youth, is sponsoring the Youth Business Enterprise 2010 competition. Through this project, CIYDA encourages youth to submit business proposals in the areas of arts, technology, and services or general business for the competition. CIYDA will choose the most promising ideas and help those who make it to this second stage develop a more detailed business plan. Youth who develop the best business plans will be eligible for continued support in developing their business and a $250 start-up bonus. In addition, CIYDA also encourages youth to write and submit articles in the areas of business development, youth mentoring, youth volunteering, and social and cultural integration. The top four most relevant and inspirational articles submitted will be published on the CIYDA website and the authors will be awarded $15 each. Information on the knowledge center and the competition is available at both links above.

Garissa Youth Project (G-Youth), Kenya
http://www.equip123.net/webarticles/annviewer.asp?a=636&z=123
http://www.g-youth.org/main/
In partnership with local NGOs, private sector companies, and higher education institutions, EQUIP3 is working to empower youth to make sound career and life decisions as they transition from high-school to the next phase of their lives. A series of interconnected interventions that build skills in work readiness, entrepreneurship, leadership and other areas are currently being implemented, and a Career Resource Center is scheduled to become operational this May. The G-Youth program also provides vocational training for youth in Garissa, as well as small grants to NGOs working to strengthen the livelihood and employment skills of 1,600 youth living in the Garissa area.

Centre for Youth Development, South Africa
Founded in 1995 by a group of concerned youth and students, The Center for Youth Development (CYD) seeks to train and develop entrepreneurial skills among youth, inculcate a spirit of pro-activeness in dealing with societal and personal problems, to provide career guidance and life skills training, and protect the interests of students and youth. CYD provides an array of youth programs in four different divisions including Counseling, Training and Development, Computer Skills, and Research. In the Training and Development Division, for example, CYD offers Job Preparation modules including dealing with unemployment, CV preparation, interview skills, professional behavior, and trainings on dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. The division also includes modules in the areas of entrepreneurship training, life skills, and sexual reproductive health. All services are free of charge, and youth and youth organizations can register for trainings and find more information on the CYD website.
Support Program for the Rural Microenterprise Poles and Regional Economies (PROSPERER), Madagascar

http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/madagascar/1401/project%20overview

The UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is currently implementing PROSPERER in five of Madagascar's poorest and most densely populated regions. PROSPERER is working to provide efficient business development services that respond to the needs of small and micro rural enterprises. The program helps small enterprises develop and utilize systematic, modern value chains that encourage long-term sustainability and increase the potential for success and market expansion. A major focus of the program is to support young adults who are entering the job market by providing training and apprenticeships, in the hope that these youth may eventually found their own enterprises. Youth will have access to the network of organizations involved in the PROSPERER program, allowing them to obtain financial and other services.

Resources for Practitioners:

Youth and Employment in Africa: The Potential, The Problem, The Promise

In 2009 the World Bank published this version of its Africa Development Indicators (ADI) report with a special essay on youth employment in Africa. The report finds that most African youth live in rural areas and that migration to urban areas is likely to increase, putting a strain on urban areas already struggling to provide adequate education, housing, infrastructure, and other public goods. In order to ease the difficulties placed on both urban and rural communities by youth migration, this report argues that youth development policies must bridge the urban/rural divide, as well as take into account the fact that many youth have come from violent backgrounds, and that youth who enter the workforce at an early age may be sacrificing an education that could help them find better work in the long run. In conclusion, the report argues that education and employment opportunities should be expanded in rural areas (where most youth still live) while efforts are made to create an environment more conducive to business in both urban and rural areas. Simultaneous efforts should also be made to improve access to skills formation opportunities and to reduce child labor.

Youth Employment Databank – West Africa

The Youth Employment Databank maintained by the Youth Employment Network offers detailed information on youth employment projects in 16 West African countries. The database is easy to use, with organizations listed by office location, organization, donor type, and gender approach, and projects categorized by country of operation, intervention area, and target group.

African Regional Youth Initiative (ARYI)
http://www.africaninitiative.org/af/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1&Itemid=2

Started in 2005, ARYI is an organizing network of over 500 youth and community organizations in Africa that seeks to bring together people and groups to develop joint projects, distribute resources, provide grants, and facilitate the development of long-term relationships. Additionally, ARYI provides technical assistance to local and national organizations and promotes multi-sectoral, transnational collaboration. Programs developed by teams created
under ARYI include a Poverty Reduction Strategy Program, Reproductive Health Policy Program, and several others. For information on ARYI and its activities, as well as information on how to sign-up for the ARYI listerv and get involved, see the link above.

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**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.