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: Urban Youth Development: With more than half of the global population under the age of 25, and a majority of those youth growing up in cities and slums, enhancing opportunities in education and employment for urban youth is more important than ever. Findings from a recent UN-HABITAT report indicate that urban youth in developing countries suffer from a disproportionate lack of basic services in education, employment and housing. Furthermore, the report finds that education is an essential determinant of whether or not urban youth have access to opportunities. Although the challenge of improving access to quality education for urban youth in developing countries is daunting, governments, NGOs, and private businesses are providing underprivileged urban youth with the training and resources they need to capitalize on their potential and increase their chances of success in life and work.

Projects and Initiatives:

Adobe Youth Voices
http://youthvoices.adobe.com/about/what/
Launched in 2006, Adobe Youth Voices delivers multimedia technology to underprivileged urban youth and helps them to use it to build creativity, communication, and collaboration skills that are essential for success in today’s economy. Using this technology and utilizing Youth Voices curricula, educators implementing the Youth Voices program advance and develop youth voice, youth personal development, media literacy, skill development, and civic engagement. Participating youth have developed in these areas by completing projects such as a documentary about gender disparity in science in Kampala, Uganda, or the impact of terrorism on Children in Delhi, India. The Youth Voices website includes a page where educators and practitioners can find a road map for creating, planning, and implementing innovative media projects with youth, as well as other resources. Since its inception, Youth Voices has engaged over 27,000 youth and 1,500 educators in schools and community programs in 32 countries.

The UN-Habitat Youth Fund
http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=7901&catid=637&typeid=24&subMenuId=0
Established in 2007, the UN-Habitat Youth Fund aims to mobilize young people through youth-led development projects that encourage youth to play a direct role in bettering their communities. Youth-led development projects funded by the Youth Fund give young people valuable skills, such as project management and teamwork skills, which boost their ability to
find jobs and participate actively in their communities. The Youth Fund provides grants ranging from $5,000 - $25,000 for organizations seeking to develop new ideas and solutions for job creation, good governance, adequate shelter and secure land tenure. To qualify, organizations must be led by young people aged 15-32 and be based in cities or towns in developing countries. The Fund targets disadvantaged youth living in urban slums and is currently supporting innovative and sustainable urban youth development projects in more than 30 countries.

**Market-Aligned Skills Training (MAST) Program for Urban Youth in India**
http://www.aifoundation.org/programs/signature/mast.htm
As India’s youth population continues to grow rapidly and an ever-greater proportion of Indians live in urban areas, the MAST program seeks to promote the economic productivity of urban youth by providing them with skill sets that are in-demand in the local or national labor market. Managed by the American India Foundation (AIF), the MAST program begins by conducting a market assessment to discover what skills are most in-demand. AIF then utilizes a standardized curriculum development process with quality standards to produce a specific curriculum for the target area. AIF collaborates with other civil society organizations conducting vocational training to engage with the government for effective implementation of the program. To date, MAST has trained 45,535 youth with a 71 percent job placement rate.

**The One Stop Youth Information Resource Center – Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania**
http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=5955&catid=531&typeid=13&subMenuId=0
City governments in Kampala, Uganda; Nairobi, Kenya; Kigali, Rwanda and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania are partnering through the Global Partnership Initiative for Urban Youth Development (GPI) to address the growing need to engage youth as full partners in urban development and governance issues. The One Stop Youth Information and Resource Centers being piloted in these four East African cities are designed to provide youth with safe spaces in urban settings where they can meet and take the lead in their own development, as well as that of their urban environment. The Nairobi Center, for example, offers courses in Basic IT skills and web design, has run a youth market day where youth showcased their products and ideas for potential investors and other young entrepreneurs, and has sponsored youth to youth talks and a street soccer tournament. Each Center will maintain its own website that will be linked from the UN-HABITAT link above.

**Resources for Practitioners:**

**State of the Urban Youth 2010-2011**
http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=2928
Based on data from a UN Habitat survey conducted in 2009 showing that pre-determined circumstances such as gender, location, and parents’ education and income influence social mobility and opportunities for youth, this report argues for implementing targeted policies and programs that seek to level the playing field for disadvantaged urban youth. With the data provided by surveys conducted in Mumbai, Rio de Janeiro, Lagos, Kingston, and Nairobi, the report offers specific criticisms of existing urban youth programs in some of the developing world’s biggest cities, as well as recommendations for improving policies and programs for urban youth in the developing world. Among the report’s recommendations are improving cross-sectoral coordination among national and local governments, communities and the private sector, increasing the quality of primary education in low income areas, and establishing an Education Fund to address income inequality. The full report is available for US$10.00.
Creating Problems for Africa’s Urban Youth: The Challenge of Marginalization
http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/cice/10-IMarcSommers.pdf

With the highest youth population growth rate of any world region, as well as the fastest urban growth rate in the world, Sub-Saharan Africa must support its poor and marginalized urban youth in order to foster the region’s political, social and economic stability and development. This academic paper is designed to help practitioners address this critical need by identifying the most pressing challenges, considering the programming context for Africa’s urban youth, outlines six principles to keep in mind when developing programs, provides insights from the field regarding monitoring, evaluation and assessment, and suggesting ways to enhance the inclusion of female youth in programs.

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.