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: Young Parenthood: With five years left until the deadline to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), world leaders will convene this month in New York for a high-level plenary meeting of the U.N. General Assembly on the MDGs. The issue of young pregnancy and parenthood cuts across several of the eight goals, including Maternal Health, Gender Equality, and Child Health. This issue of YCoP Links highlights various programs, projects and resources that aim to address the issues surrounding young parenthood in developing countries, including adolescent pregnancy, reproductive health, child marriage and more.

Announcements:

Global Launch of the International Year of Youth
http://social.un.org/youthyear
The International Year of Youth was kicked off August 12th with events and activities all over the world, organized by United Nations agencies, NGOs, national governments, youth councils, and civil society organizations. At the U.N. headquarters in New York City, a global launch was organized by the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development. With nearly 500 people in attendance, the event brought 27 heads of U.N. entities together in a joint statement that declared their commitment to make youth a priority in their organization's work. The Heads of UN entities also called on the international community to support their efforts and to recognize the central role of young people in the achievement of internationally agreed upon development goals and peace and security.

World Summit Youth Award Winners Announced
www.youthaward.org
The World Summit Youth Award honors designers, developers, journalists, and writers who have created digital content or applications that address the UN Millennium Development Goals. Entrants must be younger than 30 and be from any of the UN member states. The winning projects of the World Summit Youth Award will be presented in New York City on September 18th to 22nd. Eighteen winning teams in six categories will be honored with a certificate and trophy in front of government dignitaries, business leaders, and United Nations officials. The event will also feature workshops, exhibitions, project presentations, and interactive sessions.

World Bank “Ideas for Action Competition”
www.responsiblebiz.info/events/ideas-for-action-competition
The World Bank Institute, Belgian Government and partners have announced the Ideas for Action Competition, which solicits ideas on contributing to economic development by integrating responsible business and good governance practices into corporate strategies and the mandates of public and international institutions across sectors. The competition offers young professionals an opportunity to develop leadership skills, meet global leaders, and network with other young professionals. Young professionals and students aged 18 - 35 are eligible to apply. Travel arrangements, accommodation, and conference fees will be covered by the World Bank Institute and its partners. Submissions are due September 20, 2010.

Projects and Initiatives:

**Improving the Well-Being of Married Adolescent Girls in Ethiopia**
The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and CARE Ethiopia have partnered to address the vulnerability of young married women in Ethiopia’s Amhara region, where almost half of girls are married by the age of 15. The project aims to combine health programs with economic empowerment interventions to reach 5,000 married girls in Ethiopia. ICRW will then evaluate the intervention and track the behaviors of the program participants.

**Schooling, Livelihoods, and Marriage**
This Population Council project in Bangladesh is designed to improve girls’ opportunities and delay marriage through two large-scale interventions: a secondary school scholarship scheme and a pilot scheme to impart livelihood skills to adolescent girls. The goal of the interventions is to empower young people to gain greater control over important decisions such as schooling and marriage.

**Health Child’s Save the Mother to Save the Child Campaign**
Health Child is a community-based organization in Uganda that aims to reduce child mortality in the country by engaging and educating young mothers and fathers. Health Child has embarked on a recent integration of ICT services into its projects to allow young parents to access material online and to digitally share stories and advice. The organization has partnered with Text to Change to implement an SMS text survey that used mobile technology to fill in the gaps in maternal health delivery. The survey revealed that mobile technology offers an opportunity to effectively reach a wider audience at a reduced cost.

**Local Development Agency on Reproductive and Maternal Health (LODARMAH)**
[http://lodarmah.webs.com](http://lodarmah.webs.com)
LODARMAH is a local organization working to advance reproductive and maternal health in Ghana. Through community participation, the organization designs, implements and evaluates programs in areas such as adolescent pregnancy, family counseling, maternal nutrition, and others. Programs involve the community by
approaching community members about specific needs, and by soliciting assistance with projects such as the provision of ambulances, maternity homes, and youth centers.

**Resources for Practitioners**

**Young People, From Vulnerability to Resistance (2010)**

This report from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) reveals lessons learned from three projects focusing on parenthood, family life and reproductive health in young people. The projects, implemented in Bangladesh, Tunisia, and Ethiopia, were designed to empower young people and their communities to better protect and advance the rights of young men and women and to enable them to make choices to improve their lives. Among the findings were levels and causes of vulnerability of the particular populations in each project; needs of the communities beyond reproductive health services; and the strength of the rights-based approach to increase the resilience of young people.

**Youth Guide to Action on Maternal Health (2010)**

This guide, published by maternal health advocacy group Women Deliver, is a resource for young activists working to improve maternal health. The guide was designed to support the 2010 Women Deliver Youth Symposium Workshop (held in June), the goal of which was to equip young people with the resources and knowledge they need to advocate for maternal health.

**Facts on the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Adolescent Women in the Developing World (April 2010)**

This Guttmacher Institute/IPPF fact sheet provides an overview of the state of young marriage and pregnancy in developing countries (for women ages 15-19). The sheet offers information on adolescent marriage, adolescent childbearing, contraceptive use, and other related topics. One key finding was that in order to attain the full benefit of longer schooling, gain productive experience in the labor market before marriage, and develop a readiness for parenthood, girls must have access to reproductive health services.

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.