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 Employment Policy:** In an effort to identify and promote successful youth employment policies and programs, the Youth Employment Network (YEN) — a partnership of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, and the World Bank — has produced its first report, Benchmarks for Youth Employment 2011 (link below). According to the ILO, government investment in youth employment can boost savings and aggregate demand, and ensure stability of social security systems, a finding that argues for the cost-effectiveness of positive youth employment policies. To commemorate the release of the YEN document, this issue of YCoP Links highlights events, initiatives, and resources that address the importance of government policies in promoting positive youth employment.

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**Announcements:**

**Making Cents International Hosting Youth-Inclusive Financial Services Training and Training of Trainers in Ghana**
During this eight-day course, Making Cents will facilitate a practical hands-on capacity building program for organizations looking to more effectively serve as a provider or a link to providers of youth-inclusive financial services. This course is designed for mid-level to senior staff from financial services providers and youth-serving organizations that would like to learn more about what it takes to provide youth market segments with financial services. Details on course objectives and costs are available at the link above. The course will be held June 28 to July 7 in Accra, Ghana.

**United Nations High-Level Meeting on Youth**
http://esango.un.org/irene/?page=viewContent&nr=14742&type=8&section=8
As part of the International Youth Year, the General Assembly will hold a high-level meeting on youth on July 25–26, 2011. The overarching theme is “Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding.” The high-level meeting will comprise two consecutive informal interactive round tables on July 25, and two plenary meetings on July 26. The round tables will be chaired by Member States at the invitation of the President of the General Assembly. The deadline for registration applications is April 30 for non-ECOSOC-accredited organizations, and May 31 for ECOSOC-accredited organizations.
IFAD: Latin America and the Caribbean Division’s Meeting on Youth Entrepreneurship and Rural Micro Enterprising
http://www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/lac/brochure_e.pdf

With the goal of broadening the International Fund for Agricultural Development’s (IFAD) support to rural youth involved in microenterprises and agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean — and across the globe — this well-attended Meeting on Youth Entrepreneurship and Rural Micro enterprising brought five emerging rural youth leaders from across the region to IFAD, where they discussed the challenges and opportunities facing young rural entrepreneurs across the region. The event was a continuation of IFAD’s ongoing dialogue with young farmers and entrepreneurs in Latin America and the Caribbean. The conversation centered on finding solutions to the main challenges facing rural youth in Latin America, with the young panelists providing their recommendations and reflections on everything from venture capital and risk to asset creation and education.

Projects and Initiatives:

ILO: New ILO funds available for youth employment through COOPAFRICA facility
The ILO Cooperative Facility for Africa (COOPAFRICA) has been supporting youth employment through the promotion of cooperatives in East and Southern Africa for over three years. While focusing on the formulation and implementation of policies supporting the promotion of employment for young people through self-help, the programme aims at strengthening the capacity of service providers in offering youth-tailored cooperative services. For instance, cooperative colleges in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda received support in upgrading their entrepreneurship and innovation curricula. Moreover, the programme co-financed a Challenge Fund targeting projects which directly contribute to boosting youth employment. As an example, the Wider Opportunities for Women and Youth Services Savings and Credit Cooperative in Uganda received support to offer young women workers in the sex industry an alternative and safer means of making a living through cooperative poultry farming. For more information, please visit www.ilo.org/coopafrica or www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/ent/coop/africa/download/wowoya.pdf.

Global Partnership to Promote Youth Employment & Employability
http://www.iyfnet.org/program/1054
The Partnership to Promote Youth Employment & Employability was created in 2008 by the International Youth Foundation (IYF), in partnership with the Youth Employment Network (YEN), the Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI), and the Understanding Children’s Work Project (UCW), and with support from the World Bank. The goal of the initiative is to build and disseminate evidence on effective programs and approaches to help address the challenges facing young people in their transition to work. A major component of the initiative is informing policymakers on youth employment issues. To date, partners have launched a range of youth employment programs, research initiatives, and learning events in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

The partnership supports:
- Studies on youth employment issues and policies to inform policymakers;
- Impact evaluations of partner-supported youth employability programs;
- Tools and workshops to promote effective monitoring and evaluation of programs;
- Local government programs serving disadvantaged youth in the Middle East;
- Events to promote evidence-based policy dialogue on youth employment issues;
Longer-term outcomes include a broader evidence base for youth employability programs through better evaluation and improvements in the design of youth employment policies and programs.

**Promoting Youth Employment in the Philippines: Policy and Action**

This initiative, implemented by ILO and partners from 2005 to 2007, sought to improve the national youth employment policy and action agenda in the Philippines; strengthen the capability of institutional partners to provide employment services to youth, especially women; broaden the range of effective models of providing youth employment support services; and enhance the knowledge base on youth employment through improved documentation and adoption of best practices in the delivery of youth employment support services. Some of the benefits of the program were enhancing the employability of a number of young workers; increasing enthusiasm among trainees; and demonstrating programs that involve training of young workers.

**Resources for Practitioners:**

**Benchmarks for Youth Employment 2011 (ILO)**

In order to identify benchmarks for successful youth employment policies and programs, the Youth Employment Network (YEN) produced its first report of “Benchmarks for Youth Employment.” Based on quantitative youth labor market indicators and an overview of new employment initiatives, the report analyses the situation of youth labor markets in developing countries, as well as measures taken to improve the situation of youth. The ultimate objective of the report, which will be issued regularly, is to promote a culture of results measurement and evidence-based policymaking.

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 listserve 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.