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 Women Leaders: U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama recently concluded a tour of Southern Africa, where she called on young people to be “the generation that brings opportunity and prosperity to forgotten corners of the world.” She spoke in particular about women’s rights in Africa, including the right to education and to freedom from domestic violence. To this end, she attended the Young African Women Leaders Forum in South Africa, where she addressed 76 young women leaders from 23 African continents. This issue of YCoP Links highlights organizations and publications that encourage leadership in young women in developing countries.

Announcements:

Northern Ghana Model United Nations Conference
http://www.noghamun.org/
The 1st Northern Ghana Model United Nations Conference (NOGHAMUN) will be held August 12th, 2011. The conference is a project of Youth Drive International as a participant in the annual United Nations Association of USA model conference. The theme for the conference is “Climate Change and its Effect on Food Security in Northern Ghana: Our Role as Students.” In Model UN, students make speeches, prepare draft resolutions, negotiate with allies and adversaries, resolve conflicts, and navigate the conference rules of procedure—all in the interest of mobilizing international cooperation to resolve problems that affect countries all over the world. This one-day event will bring together participants from senior high schools in Northern Ghana to discuss issues on the United Nations agenda for 2011.

Call for Submissions: Project Inspire, 5 Minutes to Change the World
www.5minutestochangetheworld.org/
A joint initiative by the UN Women’s National Committee in Singapore and MasterCard, Project Inspire: 5 Minutes to Change the World is a grant competition that aims to assist tomorrow’s leaders in realizing their visions of a better world for women and children, and in doing so inspire others. Project Inspire targets 18 to 35-year-olds and offers them a five-minute platform to pitch their inspired idea to the world to win a $25,000 grant (USD). This grant will go towards the winner/winning team to implement their proposal aimed at empowering disadvantaged women or girls in Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa through education, skills training, financial inclusion or social entrepreneurship. In addition, special recognition will be given to the best Financial Literacy/Livelihood proposal, which will be awarded a $10,000 start-up grant. Ten finalists will get the opportunity to attend a workshop on sustainable social entrepreneurship and hone their presentation skills through a training session in Singapore. Those interested can visit the website to submit a five-minute video or
written pitch articulating their inspirational idea and how they will use the grant to implement it. The call for applications closes on June 30th, 2011.

**Conference on Political Participation Brings Together Armenian Women Leaders**
http://www.ndi.org/Armenian-women-set-priorities
More than 300 Armenian women from different political parties, civic organizations, government agencies and geographic regions came together for a two-day conference in Yerevan last month to discuss policy solutions to the challenges they all face. The “Women in Politics” conference, hosted by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), with support from USAID, produced a draft policy platform that women’s groups and political parties can use as a blueprint for change. In addition, all but a few conference participants signed a letter to the president of Armenia requesting a 30 percent quota for women on political party electoral lists. They also asked that women be placed on the lists at regular intervals.

**Projects and Initiatives:**

**Empowering Women’s Leadership in Civic Leadership and Journalism**
USAID’s Office of Women in Development supports women’s leadership through media in Senegal with a two-year project implemented by World Education and its Senegalese partners. The project will increase the voices and views of women and girls presented on radio programs; ensure that key gender issues are mainstreamed into radio programming; increase the role that women play in radio programming and management; increase the visibility and public awareness of gender inequalities; improve attitudes of the public toward women as content experts; and engage civic activism and advocacy for social change around gender issues.

**Giving Leadership Opportunities to Young Women**
www.mercycorps.org
This MercyCorps program supported by the Nike Foundation works to increase access to education for young women and girls in rural Sichuan Province in southwest China. Project GLOW aims to empower adolescent girls of the Yi ethnic group in particular by providing them with literacy, health, life skills, and vocational training. The project runs a training center with a curriculum that includes such subjects as Mandarin language, math, Yi language, health and life skills, agriculture skills, sports and physical education, recreational activities, and lectures about job skills.

**Young Women Leaders Academy (Doha, Qatar)**
http://ywla.org/
The Young Women Leaders Academy (YWLA), a project of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), empowers young women from the Middle East to improve their communities through political or civic activism. Young women, ages 20 to 28, are selected based on their track records in political activism and a demonstrated interest in a career in politics, government or civil society. Emerging women leaders attend a year-long program that involves an intensive academy, practicum and advanced leadership retreat. Participants then utilize their newly-acquired political, advocacy and leadership skills to implement independent projects that aim to increase young women’s local political participation. Program graduates from across the Middle East and North Africa have formed a network for political activism in the Arab world.
Resources for Practitioners:

**Empowering Young Women to Lead Change (2006)**

This publication from World YWCA is a training tool for developing effective young women leaders and is available in English, French, and Spanish. A resource group of women leaders and activists under age 30 from nine countries was established to guide the production of this publication. Through consultation, seven key issues were identified as having a crucial impact on young women: HIV and AIDS; sexual and reproductive health and rights; self-esteem and body image; violence against women; human rights; economic justice; and peace. Focusing on these issues, the manual provides young women with information and tools to gain insights into the issues; facilitate training to educate and mobilize peers to collaborate on the issues and; develop advocacy skills and take concrete action on the issues. The manual has been tested in Belarus, Jamaica, El Salvador, Lebanon, Zambia and the Philippines to ensure it is a practical and youth friendly resource in diverse cultural settings.

**Democracy: With Women, For Women (2010)**

This publication presents an overview and brief analysis of a first round of grants issued by the United Nations Democracy Fund in partnership with the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women, formerly UNIFEM). Both organizations are engaged in advancing gender equality and democratic governance around the world. The report shows, what was achieved through seven grants to improve women’s political participation in a diverse set of countries and regions. A series of project profiles, drawn from reports and independent evaluations, summarizes objectives and activities, results, challenges, lessons and ideas for future work. Collectively and individually, the profiles shed light on effective strategies in implementing gender and governance programs.

**Confidence, Capacity, Connections: A Young Woman’s Guide to Leadership (2010)**

This publication from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) aims to equip the next generation of young women leaders with the knowledge and tools to create change. The guidebook aims to help young women with all aspects of leadership—from balancing personal and professional responsibilities to planning and carrying out advocacy projects. Among other things, it consolidates advice and lessons learned from 25 young alumni of NDI’s Youth of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow program, but its advice is applicable in many contexts. The book combines ideas and strategies from the Institute’s Youth of Today program with best practices and recommendations from NDI’s work with women leaders around the world.

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.