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 and Financial Services:** Research shows that most youth, even those not formally employed, are economically active in their households. In spite of this, 90% of children and youth do not have access to financial services. Many youth-serving organizations are responding with comprehensive financial programs that look beyond microcredit, using youth savings associations and financial literacy training to encourage planning and goal-setting among participants. With just under half of the world's youth population living on less than two dollars a day, such sustainable financial services can play an integral role in improving the long-term outlook for youth livelihoods. This issue of YCoP Links outlines research, resources, and responses to this movement toward comprehensive youth-tailored financial services.

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**Announcements:**

**2011 Global Youth Economic Opportunities Conference**
http://www.youtheconomicopportunities.org/
Making Cents' annual conference is the premier learning event for youth financial services. From September 7th through 9th, more than 400 professionals from over 60 countries will convene in Washington, DC to share lessons learned, promising practices, and innovative ideas in supporting youth to improve economic opportunities for young people. This year's theme, “Breakthroughs,” will focus on visionary methods emerging in the field.

**2011 African Micro Finance Conference**
http://www.aemfi-ethiopia.org/site/component/content/article/63-5th-african-micro-finance-conference.html
Hosted by the Association of Ethiopian Microfinance and the African Institutions Network, this biannual conference held from September 19th through 22nd in Addis Ababa will bring together practitioners, policy-makers, and other stakeholders to foster growth of African microfinance. This year's theme, “The Future of Inclusive Finance in Africa,” explores using innovative financial services to reach marginalized populations. While the conference addresses microfinance for various excluded populations, specific sessions will share findings and emerging guidelines to engage youth in microfinance.

**International Child and Youth Finance Financial Regulator's Meeting**
http://childfinanceinternational.org/pg/event_calendar/view/8696
This meeting will gather together financial regulators, senior representatives from central banks, ministries of finance, and other key policy makers from around the world to discuss ways to support youth financial activities at the country level.
Objectives for the conference include identifying methods to promote financial education, creating strategies for coordinating youth finance awareness events, and drafting frameworks for national-level activity implementation. The conference will take place September 12th and 13th in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

**Child and Youth Finance International**
http://childfinanceinternational.org/
Previously known as “ChildFinance,” Child and Youth Finance International is a newly-registered organization seeking to increase financial access and education for youth around the world. With a core supervisory board comprised of leading experts, Child and Youth Finance International sets strategic goals and structured solutions for bringing reliable savings opportunities and financial education to youth around the world. At [www.childfinanceinternational.org](http://www.childfinanceinternational.org), members of the youth finance movement can access expert opinions and share documents with other practitioners.

**Inclusion for Youth: Reaching the Next Generation**
http://microlinks.kdid.org/events/after-hours/financial-inclusion-youth-reaching-next-generation
This Microlinks After Hours seminar on September 1 from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm will highlight specific approaches to reaching the youth market with holistic financial services. Panelists from BRAC, Making Cents International, and the SEEP Network will share promising practices to empower youth through finance, create practical resources specifically geared towards youth, and reach scale. Participants can attend in person at the QED Center in Washington DC, or virtually through an online webinar.

**Projects and Initiatives:**
**Aflateen**
http://www.aflatoun.org/?curriculum
Aflatoun is a non-profit organization that has been using social and financial education to empower children to save their resources and begin their own microenterprise since 2005. In May 2011, with the support of the MasterCard Foundation, Aflatoun developed Aflateen, a social and financial education program geared toward youth aged 15 to 18. By delivering curriculum in out-of-school settings and via an online e-learning platform, Aflateen teaches youth through hands-on activities including savings clubs, enterprise creation, and community projects. The Aflateen curriculum anticipates implementation in 50 countries, reaching 250,000 youth globally.

**Panabo Multi-Purpose Cooperative (PMPC)**
http://panabocoop.org/
PMPC is a member-owned and operated financial service cooperative based in the Philippines and catering to the needs of 25,000 members. PMPC offers specific programs geared toward youth aged 13 to 18 through its Power Teen Savers Clubs. Participants are offered complementary financial counseling as well as bonuses and rewards to encourage greater savings. Using highly targeted marketing and tailored incentives designed to appeal to youth, PMPC has reached 2,300 “power teen savers” across its seven local branches.

**Catholic Relief Services—Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC)**
SILC is a savings-led microfinance methodology providing financial services to marginalized communities, including youth. SILC creates a safe savings system and a community social insurance fund, keeping community money in the community and fostering cooperative approaches to improving livelihoods and addressing emergencies. The SILC savings model provides the basis of CRS’s microfinance programming, and has been used with youth in Rwanda and Zimbabwe. Evaluations of SILC programs in both Zimbabwe and Rwanda have proven the effectiveness of savings-led microfinance in the case of orphans, out-of-school youth, and other vulnerable youth groups.

**XacBank and Women's World Banking (WWB)’s program for Mongolian youth**

[http://www.swwb.org/content/microfinance-insights-youth-frontier-microfinance-savings-financial-education-girls-mongolia](http://www.swwb.org/content/microfinance-insights-youth-frontier-microfinance-savings-financial-education-girls-mongolia)

WWB is a global network of 39 microfinance institutions typically targeting adult women. Through a partnership with XacBank, a Mongolian microfinance institution offering customized services to specific demographic groups, WWB now offers Mongolian adolescent girls and young women a savings and financial education program geared specifically toward them. Since 2008, XacBank has reached more than 2,000 female youth with a financial curriculum intended to empower young women to effect change in both their families and communities.

**Resources for Practitioners:**

**Youth Savings Accounts: A Financial Services Perspective**


This 2009 literature and program review from USAID draws on data from existing youth savings literature as well as interviews with practitioners, researchers, and donors from projects spanning Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The report analyzes youth savings from a financial service—rather than social service—perspective, examining demand for youth savings services and the specific barriers to providing these services. It offers recommendations on addressing these elements unique to the youth market, and concludes that savings accounts can be one piece of a promising comprehensive packing of financial services to boost youth livelihood and economic opportunities.

**Integrating Financial Education and Savings Opportunities into Health Interventions for Adolescent Girls in the Kibera Slum of Nairobi, Kenya.**


This study integrates data from on evaluation of financial education within health-based programming and a baseline study for group-based savings accounts in Kibera, Kenya. The Binti Pamoja Center program for adolescent girls aged 10 to 22 initially focused on HIV and reproductive health. After market research that found that girls engaged in transactional sexual relationships in times of economic need and believed safe saving spaces could support career and family planning, the Center expanded to include savings groups and financial mentoring. The conclusions of this study highlight the complementary relationship between health and economic livelihood, and the importance of financial skills and savings opportunities in improving the health of young women worldwide.

**YouthSave**

YouthSave is a consortium project launched by Save the Children with the support of the Mastercard Foundation and Washington University's Center for Social Development. Working with partners in Colombia, Ghana, Kenya, and Nepal, the Consortium's homepage is a clearinghouse of lessons learned, toolkits, multimedia research, and case studies to support the development of youth savings services for low-income youth.

**Youth-Inclusive Financial Services Linkage Portal**

www.yfslink.org

Making Cents International’s Youth-Inclusive Financial Services Linkage Program (YSF-Link) is a three-year initiative designed to strengthen the capacity of financial service providers and youth-serving organizations to work together to serve the youth population. YFSLINK.ORG serves as a portal for professionals to connect in order to share ideas, experiences and tools to increase youth access to finance. The site offers frequently asked questions, online discussions, and the latest youth financial service news to facilitate on-going learning among practitioners and policy-makers.

**Children, Youth and Economic Strengthening (CYES) Network and Portal**

http://www.cyesnetwork.org/

The CYES Network and Learning Platform is designed to foster partnerships between organizations, link practitioners and initiatives, and showcase effective programs. Through the learning portal, members can submit organizational profiles, project documents, contribute to a global event calendar, and subscribe to CYES Network newsletters. Recent content includes blog entries on monitoring and evaluating savings schemes, job postings for financial advisors, and adaptable frameworks for financial services programs.

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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 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.