



YOUTH: A STRATEGIC RESOURCE FOR KYRGYZSTAN

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UNV-UNDP Youth Programme promotes the active participation of youth in the development of Kyrgyzstan, through the development and implementation of state youth policy, demonstrating the role of youth in the development of local communities through the youth capacity building, maintenance of the projects of Youth Initiative Groups and promotion of volunteer work and online volunteering. The Youth Programme works with 28 Youth Initiative Groups in all oblasts of the country.

More detailed information is available at: www.jashtar.kg

The analysis and recommendations, contained in the White Paper, does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme, its Executive Board or its Member States, the UN Volunteers and the UNV-UNDP Youth Programme. The White Paper is an independent publication under the auspices of the UNV-UNDP Youth Programme. This is the product of joint efforts by the team of eminent experts and consultants, as well as a preparatory team of the White Paper. The work was coordinated by the UNV-UNDP Youth Programme Manager Aigul Dogdurova.

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FASHIONELLE
BY GENESY



I want to complete my university studies, work in the area of my specialization and participate in my country's development.

Meergul Satinbaeva

FASHIONELLE



I want young people, as the recipients of public services, to have an opportunity to influence service providers, i.e., public institutions, so that youth could have provided feedback to those who deliver such services as education, health care, public assistance and the like.

Almaz Turdubaev



I want to mobilize young people to make young leaders and students able to achieve their potential in the future.

Ayperi Esenbekova



*I want to receive quality education
and then have an opportunity to
find a good job without struggling
to do both at once.*

Boris Sanamyants



*I want to see a
stable future for
myself, for my
relatives and my
friends.*

Anna Parpura



I want to graduate from the university with honors, and work in the area of my specialization. I want everything to be like in the past, when people lived in peace, friendship and happiness. I would also like to travel around the world, and to see that all people's dreams come true.

Emil Borubaev



I would like to graduate from the university.

Zumrat Abdylidaeva



I want to achieve my goals, and I will achieve them. I want to do many good things in this life, and I want Kyrgyzstan to enjoy national unity.

Azamat Gaparov



I want Kyrgyzstan to develop. And, most importantly, I would like youth to more actively participate in political, social and economic life of the country.

Akylay Karabaeva

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Introduction

The proposed analytical document (White Paper) covers the analysis of the present and future of youth policy in the Kyrgyz Republic and contains recommendations and new approaches for subsequent actions to be taken by decision-makers in this area.

The White Paper on Youth Policy focuses on presenting recommendations to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and setting out priority policies for youth development based on the results of an analysis of public youth policy in the Kyrgyz Republic, international experience and the opinions of various discussion groups (youth, policymakers, government employees and experts) expressed in the course of numerous consultations with them. This paper also proposes new approaches to involving young people in the country's development process both nationally and locally.

This document does not stipulate estimated costs of resources and alternative policy options. That falls within the competence of state bodies, branch ministries and agencies. The summarized document presents the results of consultations of all stakeholders on those policies and measures which can resolve the backlog of problems facing youth and can help realize stakeholders' hopes and expectations.

Recommendations have been developed based on the premise that youth is a potential active driving force of the country's development and a major asset for the country. Youth is capable of becoming the foundation of a new economic policy of the state, which in turn requires the emergence of a new generation of managers, experts and workers. The approach taken by the authors of this paper was based on a bilateral analysis of existing youth policy: from the perspective of state bodies and institutes on the one hand, and from the perspective of young people themselves, as expressed both by organized youth organizations and by individual young people in loose, informal social groups. The key focus throughout was on the analysis of existing youth policy from the point of view of youth.

This White Paper is not a statutory or legal document. Recommendations should be considered as an addition to other initiatives in the sphere of youth policy, and they should be supplemented with governance and local self- government reforms. However, it is anticipated that the Paper will provide a stimulus for the development and realization of a more effective national youth policy. The purpose of the White Paper is to draw the attention of discussion groups to the problems of young people and to ways in which they can be resolved, and to create a new attitude and new approaches to work with youth.

The authors of the White Paper would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to the UNV-UNDP Youth Programme, which has supported the preparation of this analytical document, and to everyone who contributed ideas and opinions and took part in the development of, this document.



Summary

1. The burden of social and economic transformation taking place in transition economies weighs heavily on the shoulders of young people. Problems of youth cannot be considered outside the context of the country's social and economic development. Practically all problems of society and the state in a transition period have impacts on youth, including unemployment, lack of access to education, vocational training, cultural activities, and health care services, as well as overall increase in poverty.
2. Numerous analyses confirm that in Kyrgyzstan there may be observed among young people a lowering of general knowledge, a decline in, educational and professional skills, a deterioration in their overall health, as well as a growth in criminality and youth offending. Over the last decade an almost six-fold increase in drug abuse was reported in Kyrgyzstan, while the average age of drug users has decreased to 14-15 years. During the past two or three years an enormous growth in HIV-infection rates among youths was reported in the Kyrgyz Republic. More than 60% of all registered crimes were committed by young people. Owing to the problems listed above, young people often struggle to compete in the job market and their labour is not in demand. As a result, employment and income levels of young people tend to be very low. (See more details in Annex 1).
3. At the same time it is necessary to realize that youth plays a special role in any country's development. In the 'World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond', approved by the UN General Assembly in 1995, it is emphasized that young people constitute the main human resource for development and represent a key force for social and economic changes and for the technological innovations in any country. The country which does not consider the needs of youth has no future as the youth forms part of its basic capital. Young people adapt quickly to changes since they tend to be more vigorous, mobile and may be less conservative. These qualities of youth are especially important at the time of social and economic reforms, which are currently taking place in Kyrgyzstan.
4. The need for youth policy formulation as a specific and separate direction of public policy arises from difficulties and ambiguities in the process of socialization of young people, which are most common when a country is undergoing major transition. In such cases it is necessary to implement specific policy measures to ensure young people do not get left behind or marginalized during the overall adaptation process, as when youth are marginalized there is a risk they will become a source of social destabilization and criminality.
5. In the Kyrgyz Republic youth policy has been implemented within the framework of individual spheres (education, social security, sports, employment), while an overall, comprehensive and systematic approach has been lacking. Analysis of implemented public youth policy leads to the conclusion that in our country state policy towards youth has focused on modernization but within the established Soviet structures and norms in terms of the role of youth in the national economy and labour market. There is an assumption of further progress along existing lines, with the future role of youth somehow predetermined in terms of continuing in the footsteps of the previous generation. This approach will fail to achieve significant outcomes in the current situation since the Soviet model was based on the assumption of huge financial and material subsidies from central government.
6. The state today attempts to apply administrative methods to continue to manage youth through state bodies, while also carrying out mostly cultural or sporting mass activities. Thus public youth policy is divided between a focus on specific purposes and programs and an acknowledgement of the need to depart from totalitarian ideology and start to stimulate youth towards self-organization and self-activation. In this connection, the issue of choice of the youth policy model and the role of the state remains topical and requires detailed definition.
7. The authorized state body for youth affairs changes its legal status practically after each structural reform thus indicating a lack of consensus among policymakers in relation to the goals and objectives of youth policy and functions of the state in this sphere.
8. There is a lack of demand on the part of the state and society for the regular reproduction of a new generation of citizens of the country and for the continuation of bearers of a specific system of values. Some social sectors of young people are becoming increasingly disconnected from political life. This is accompanied by a growth in social apathy, a decrease in civic spirit and civic engagement, and an increase in young people's dependency on others for their own livelihood. The state will need to signal clearly to society what kind of young citizens are in demand in the new Kyrgyzstan and to search for new mechanisms of youth involvement based to a greater degree on the interests of young people, thus raising their motivation to solve vital problems independently. Young people should choose their own development path, lifestyle, values and ideals. The role of the state would then be to focus on providing equal opportunities and equal access to resources.
9. The existing approaches of work with youth have become outdated and fail to meet the modern requirements of the market environment. Moreover, continuing these approaches has few prospects as the country lacks large resources for investing in its youth policy. The situation in Kyrgyzstan increasingly requires a specific focus on economic incentives and economic-related policy measures.
10. A specific feature of youth is that during this period of life the person finds him/herself in a period of transition from having no responsibilities to learning to hold responsibility, from dependence to independence. One part of young people (teenagers) cannot be subjects of policy as yet for objective reasons, and another part has not become such a subject because it is passive and amorphous. The objective of youth policy is to help youth make this transition with the support of special arrangements facilitating the formation of young people as persons.
11. Definitions of «youth» in terms of age are broad and varied. From the point of view of public policy development, a clear definition helps focus and target efforts. It is proposed to narrow the youth age definition to the accepted UN framework: 14-25 years of age. However, since 'youth' cannot be considered as a single, amorphous whole, and each different sub-group of youth requires special policy measures, approaches to youth policy should take into account the specific needs and situation of different groups of young people.
12. There exists, at least, three options for the development of youth policy, each of which has opportunities and risks. Firstly, due to limitation of resources the state can give up youth policy in general as a sphere of its activity and focus on the solution of overall social problems, rather than identifying the youth as a special social stratum. Secondly, the state may leave the situation as it is, i.e. to continue using a paternalistic approach to youth policy and to consider youth as an object to be managed. And thirdly, the most desirable option proposed by this panel of experts, is to regard youth as a strategic development resource, and to consider young people as the subject of policy by involving them in shared responsibility for the country's development. This will entail relying on those young people who are responsible and are willing to work and develop themselves and offering to such capable and energetic young people opportunities to advance themselves thereby maximizing their contribution to the national economy, while at the same time targeting programmes of social support at more vulnerable groups of youth.
13. The proposed policy approach is aimed, firstly, at an expansion of the opportunities for the involvement of youth and at the formulation of policy measures which will support young people in acquiring, improving and applying knowledge and skills and in defining a place for themselves in a constantly changing environment. Secondly, the policy should be directed at information dissemination and at the creation of various incentives, first of all, economic ones, facilitating independent decision-making by young people. Thirdly, the policy should incorporate the development of targeted youth programs aimed at rendering social support to vulnerable groups of youth in such a way as to help them integrate with and contribute to society in the future.
14. Such an approach will demand not only the recognition of public youth organizations and their leaders as primary actors and equal partners in youth policy formulation and implementation, but will also in general require the recognition of public initiatives alongside the activity of state bodies. This would herald the start of a new liberal model of social policy, in contrast to the paternalistic model in which the leading actors are power-holding structures and civil society actors are involved in the policy cycle only at the stage of implementing decisions already made. In line with the liberal model the leading role will be assigned to youth, with whom the authorities will be co-authors of the policy direction. The role of the authorities would also include, rendering support to public youth initiatives, including providing incentives for active youth and offering support to more vulnerable youth.
15. Social partnership between the state, society and youth should serve as the basis for this proposed approach. The partnership should determine the means necessary for achieving the youth policy objectives set and identify ways to integrate their implementation arrangements into the system of planning and implementation of the country's development policy. The identified policy objectives should then be reflected in branch programs of state bodies and be realized jointly by all stakeholders.



Analysis of Youth Policy Implementation in the Kyrgyz Republic

16. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has repeatedly declared its concerns with regard to a broad range of youth-related issues, and, in a number of programme documents, has stated its intentions regarding actions to be taken in this area. According to official statements issued in the sphere of youth policy, the state's role should encompass the creation of legal, economic, organizational and other prerequisites and guarantees for self-realization of the young person's personality and the development of youth public organizations, movements and initiatives. However, it should be noted that existing national development programmes almost entirely overlook the youth agenda.
17. During the years since independence, the legal and statutory framework for the realization of youth policy has been developed. Laws of the Kyrgyz Republic «On fundamentals of the public youth policy», «On education», «On primary vocational training» and a number of other acts dealing with youth-related issues have been developed and adopted.
18. In Kyrgyzstan youth comprises almost half of the population of the country. The official category of «youth» includes citizens aged from 14 to 35 years, thus by this definition there are almost 2 million young people in Kyrgyzstan. This lends a greater importance to youth's role and value for our country. Such a broad definition of «youth» age encompasses not only teenagers and those of student age, but also young adults who have completed education and entered employment.
19. Presently, the responsibility of formulating and implementing policy relating to Kyrgyzstan's youth is assigned to an authorized state body (department) which is included in the structure of a state agency under the Government. The first State Committee on Youth Affairs was established in 1991 but existed for only 8 months, and since that period youth-related functions at the central level have been delegated from one agency to another. A similar process pertaining to work with youth has taken place at the local level. This lack of continuity in terms of the state agency dealing with youth policy is hindering progress in the sphere of youth policy.
20. The body responsible for the formulation of youth policy is specified in conceptual documents without being named. This has enabled frequent reorganizations and transfer of youth policy functions to various different agencies (Appendix 2). When mentioning the agencies responsible for implementation of certain policies, the state authorized body on youth affairs is practically always referred to alongside other governmental agencies and local government bodies, which makes it difficult to identify exactly which body has lead responsibility for which function or activity.
21. The question as to what are the specific responsibilities of the authorized state body on youth affairs, i.e. whom or what it is managing, also remains vague and unclear. Identified youth policy priorities are in many respects cross-cutting and fall under the responsibility of a range of line ministries and agencies.
22. Public financing of youth policy is carried out according to the so-called residual principle. Public finances are directed, first of all, towards the maintenance of the activities of major ministries and agencies (economic, power-holding bodies and so forth). The social sphere (including work with youth) is only then allocated remaining funds and so frequently lacks adequate financing. In political documents on youth it is underlined that bodies of executive power and local self-government bear the responsibility for the implementation of youth policy and shall take measures '...based on available resources'. The Republic's budget thus allocates rather limited funding, and the ability of local budgets to finance youth-related actions is also constrained. In practice, there is a persistent lack of resources for youth-related initiatives, with allocated resources covering only administrative costs, but not substantive activities. In addition, the issue of who delivers services to young people and how they shall be delivered is not precisely identified.
23. The content of public youth policy is based on an agenda which is repeated year after year and is composed of separate departmental or sectoral measures without any links between them. There is an impression that the authorized body has simply separated off youth, as a distinct sector of the population, and has reserved for itself the function of observing the work of other bodies of executive power.
24. Regional youth committees, along with some other state bodies at the oblast level, have been recently liquidated and therefore in many cases the question of who will perform the duties of work with youth at the local and provincial level remains open. And in places where these structures have been left, they are engaged more often in statistical work or are involved in rendering assistance to other divisions of local government as they lack their own well-defined terms of reference.
25. State bodies apply a paternalistic approach towards youth policy. Public policy in the youth area is built on the premise that the youth are incapable of organizing themselves, or making decisions independently, and, as a consequence, young people are considered as socially vulnerable layers of the population (alongside pensioners, the unemployed, children and so forth), and in need of care and tutelage from the state.
26. The majority of planned tasks and actions are not implemented and are rolled over from one programme to the following programme. In practice the authorized state bodies' activity can be characterized by fragmentation of actions and as lacking a comprehensive youth-oriented approach. Following stereotypes and outdated approaches, work with the youth is understood predominantly as the organization of sporting, cultural and recreational events. Such attitudes are particularly visible at the level of provincial government.
27. In spite of the fact that all these actions at the governmental level are said to be undertaken for the purpose of activating youth, in practice they are mostly limited to filling gaps and small steps to solve individual problems facing young citizens. The new public programme targeted at youth fails to clearly identify national priorities, and lacks institutional mechanisms and resources for ongoing sustained implementation.
28. The principal cause of the ineffectiveness of the existing youth policy is an insufficient consideration of basic issues: What are the general approaches to policy? What is the vision of the state in relation to the direction of youth development? What steps are necessary to develop youth? What role should the state agencies and the authorized body, NGOs and youth organizations perform? Who does what and who bears the main responsibility?, The formulated goals of the existing youth policy are not result-oriented, they describe the process only. The goal formulation frequently repeats the name of the youth policy priorities, with a lack of specific mechanisms and tools to achieve the goals set or indicators that would help define what successful youth policy implementation would entail.
29. In analyzing the state bodies' activity in working with youth, it may be stated that efficiency and productivity are lacking, first of all, due to a lack of well-defined goals and objectives of the state and society regarding youth and a new generation of adults. Ministries and agencies responsible for education, vocational training, employment, etc., address sector-specific problems and focus more on the process than on the achievement of results. In other words, one body cannot formulate the specific tasks for another state body, while others do not know how to act and do everything in their own way, proceeding from sector-based interests.
30. The state's youth policy does not take into account modern challenges and actions of new actors or subjects having an impact on the minds and opinions of young people (such as religious, nationalist and extremist organizations, criminal groups, etc.). These new groups carry out provocative policies with regard to youth, without taking into account the implications in terms of resulting turbulence and instability, emergence of new needs and promotion of new values among the youth. They make the best use of specific features of the youth stratum. Young people are attracted by the strong appeal to direct action of these groups; even those underpinned by negative or hostile values, and are thus drawn into the activities of various sectarian, extremist and even criminal organizations. These organizations understand that work with the youth is a key means to affect the future of the country, and find it much easier to work with those who have not yet identified their place in life.
31. Current state youth policy is based on reactive rather than proactive measures. The work on the analysis of youth-related issues and the forecasting of possible scenarios and, accordingly, policy and measures taken by the authorized body are carried out in an insufficient manner, and are not of preventive, but rather

- of responsive, character. There is a lack of systematic data collection and processing, analysis and prioritization of revealed problems, forecasting of future trends, related policy formulation and coordination of work with line ministries and agencies.
32. Governmental bodies are frequently created in response to youth problems, for example, commissions on juvenile affairs deal with first time criminals and so are not engaged in preventive activities, and focus on trying to minimize the damage made to the society by the segment of youth which has chosen a criminal way of resolving its problems.
 33. Youth programmes contain many measures of an educational character, and a significant role in their implementation is placed on social institutions: the family, educational institutions and public youth organizations. With the disintegration of the USSR and the associated change in the economic and political environment, many social institutions that previously protected the interests of youth have ceased their activity, while new ones are in the process of development. Under the new conditions, previously socially attractive ideals – such as the comprehensive, harmonious development of each person - appeared extremely vague and unrealistic. Current institutions in the transition period are to a greater degree engaged in survival policy and are in search of sources of financing to enable them to survive, and as a result they have difficulties in coping with the problems of educating the young people that are assigned to them.
 34. At this juncture, there are no clear-cut goals as to what should be the result of education and training of a new generation of adults, what values and norms should the state and society systematically reproduce. What examples should be given to the youth in order to ensure that they grow up with a spirit of patriotism and love of their motherland? Very often patriotism is promoted from a national and ethnic perspective rather than through civilization and respect for rule of law.
 35. Processes of self-organizing among youth go slowly and unevenly, particularly in rural areas. In the youth sphere, there are few non-governmental organizations with a limited working experience with youth, donors, and public sector. The process of formation of youth-related political organizations is currently underway, in the form of the youth wings of existing political parties. These youth organizations are frequently created in a top-down way as branches of organizations led by and largely composed of adults, and, as a rule, they lack any communication with broader layers of youth.
 36. Youth policy measures taken by the state are not client-oriented in the sense that they do not define target groups. This untargeted approach and weak segmentation disregards the specific needs of young people.
 37. Young people in the Kyrgyz Republic remain an object (beneficiary) of youth policy, but not its subject. Attempts to solve the problems of young people may be found in various social programmes. Major problems of youth include spiritual impoverishment (in the context of orientation exclusively on material values), passivity, inability to integrate into social environment and incapacity to identify and plan their own lives. Young people are poorly guided in the modern economy and lack any orientation. This is because they wait for instructions from adults or rely on support from the State.
 38. The attitude of Kyrgyz youth towards the state is one largely of lack of trust and credibility. According to the results of one research study, carried out in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan, 64% of men and almost 50% of women participating in the survey consider current youth policy to be ineffective. There was a low level of expectation that youth policy will in the near future change for the better. Disappointment and alienation from public policy result in youth turning to criminal, radical and extremist movements which in turn creates a threat to national security.



Main Scenarios of State Youth Policy Development

39. The results of the consultation with interested parties indicate that there are three options for the development of state policies relating to youth affairs. Each of the options provides opportunities and involves certain risks.

Option 1. Owing to resource scarcity, youth policy is not treated as a separate state affair, therefore the focus is on social programmes that will benefit all citizens, including youth.

Advantages: This will allow part of the financial, capital and human resources previously spent on implementing youth policy to be freed up and channelled into other issues that might be considered higher priority.

Risks: There is a risk of losing all of the country's development prospects and of reduced capacity to deal with pressing issues that arise unexpectedly. The state will lose its influence and capacity to build a sense of values in the younger generation. The role of the state might be replaced by other social and political units. A portion of young people might join protest groups, while others might join various radical religious, criminal and other marginal groups, thus intensifying political and social tensions in the country and region. There is also a risk of losing competent, educated, and enthusiastic young people, who, having failed to utilize their own capacity and develop better prospects for the future, now emigrate to other, more successful countries; in which case the country's economy would have to import labour resources of lower quality.

Option 2. Proceed with implementing youth policy along current lines: preserve the paternalistic and sector-specific approach to youth problem-solving, consider youth as a controllable object, increase investment in the development of youth policy, strive to ensure equal access to public goods and services for all youth and implement specific youth programs, i.e. implement, in essence, a conventional social policy, but one that is more focused and better targeted.

Advantages: No changes are required at the general governance level, responsibility over policy implementation is on one authorized state body.

Risks: Resources are more likely to remain scarce as other groups within the population will, in any case, be

given a higher priority due to being in a greater need of support from the state (pensioners, children, handicapped people, etc.). Domination of the paternalistic approach to youth will lead, on one hand, to an increase in the number of young people with a 'wait-and-see', dependency attitude and, on the other, to increasing resentment and emigration of those who have the willingness to take the initiative and responsibility. As these individuals age, the state's obligations toward them will increase because of the need to provide retirement benefits to those who currently fall under the category of youth. In this context, considering the economic situation in the country, there is not much hope for resource inflow into the arena of youth policy in the nearest 3 to 5 years.

Option 3. Adopt a new set of approaches, objectives and priorities in youth policy. It is recommended to drop the traditional, sector-based approach to solving the problems of youth, which is more focused on process, and adopt an integrated and systemic approach resulting in a policy which will result in the increase in the proportion of active citizens in the country and more dynamic transition of youth from a position of dependence to one of independence, from an irresponsible attitude to a responsible one. This will require an approach based on treating the youth as a strategic development resource, willing to work, take responsibility and realize their full potential – capable and energetic youth will be offered economic incentives and market-based mechanisms, whereas vulnerable youth will receive targeted social assistance programs.

Advantages: Risks from implementation of the first and second options will be minimized. Self-organizing processes among the youth will be strengthened, thus allowing them to more actively adapt to all areas of life and more quickly determine their role in a constantly changing environment.

Risks: It might be difficult to ensure complete fairness and equality in implementation of this approach. More enthusiastic, more assertive young people will be advantaged as they use not only their brains, but their 'elbows' to push upwards in society. Therefore, under this option, special attention should be given to providing compensation to the less advantaged and undertaking efforts to take vulnerable young people's interests into account.





Recommended Approaches, Objectives and Priorities of Youth Policy

40. An analysis of the existing state youth policy as well as numerous consultations with all of the interested parties suggests that the policy needs new approaches and targeting. The methodology for policy development needs to be changed, including, first of all, changing the subject of youth policy and its approach to defining problems.
41. Many young people who are under full legal age consider themselves to be adults and are inclined to exercise their rights rather than their duties. Modern youth of school and college age are more and more inclined to address and resolve their issues independently. However, young people do not know how to go about this, based on what principles and assumptions, what values and ideals. Still, they have some basic knowledge and skills.
42. While young people can address issues on their own, some stereotypes and myths perpetuated by adults and prevalent in Kyrgyz culture according to which young people are considered objects in need of support, care and control, restrain these self-organizing processes and prolong the period during which young people are still considered immature..
43. Young people do not comprise a single, monolithic social stratum and issues are different for different groups of youth. Hence, a segmented, individual approach towards youth policy needs to be taken. An important pre-requisite for an effective youth policy shall be a general consensus on the definition of youth¹ with a view to clearly defining the target group at which the state programme is aimed.
44. The existing state definition, according to which all people within the age range 14 through 35 are considered youth, contradicts the definition of youth that is generally accepted in the rest of the world. It is not based on universally understood principles and is not effective in terms of adequate differentiation of groups of youth and in terms of institutional arrangements
- for the implementation of targeted youth programs. It is recommended to narrow down the age-based definition of the youth to make it fit the UN framework: the age range 14-25, which is in line with international standards and consensus of opinion and is based on the stages of physical and psychological human development as well as established social practices. In terms of the development of state policy a broad age range dilutes the focus and diverts attention away from the specific purpose of a program.
45. Groups of youth differ in terms of their values, social position, degree of adaptation in terms of leadership and social skills, as well as various personal psychological peculiarities. and so they require differentiated approaches. Youth is a social and demographic group with different sex and age, ethnic, religious, geographical and other features. Youth policy should foresee opportunities for the participation of different youth groups in its development and implementation. There is a need to change approaches to youth, by changing the way of treating youth as objects by the authorities to understanding and perceiving youth as predominantly policy subjects.
- The youth policy measures shall focus on specific youth groups. While creating the conditions, it is necessary to remember that there is no such a thing as youth in general- each youth group requires special policy measures.
46. According to the expert opinion and research outcomes, the following three «types» of life aspirations and needs of the youth can be identified: 1) success and results-oriented; 2) survival-oriented and anchorless; 3) protest-oriented, including those of a criminal nature. The first type of youth requires more of a partnership, rather than a control-system, approach. The other two types need strict, authoritarian approaches.
47. For the purpose of analyzing the subject of youth policy, it is recommended to drop the traditional, sector-based approach to resolving youth-related
- problems, and instead adopt an integrated and systemic approach (covering education and upbringing, physical training and sports, health and employment, etc.), resulting in a policy which will **ensure stimulation of the active citizens of the country and a more dynamic transition of the youth from a position of dependence to independence, from an irresponsible attitude to a responsible one.** The state youth policy shall be an integrated system from the legal, organizational, financial, economic, scientific, educational and human resources standpoints, aimed at creating an adequate environment for young people to choose their life path.
48. It is necessary to move away from the paternalistic principle which is embedded in existing youth policy and strengthen the partnership aspect while adhering to the existing social assistance-oriented approach towards the narrow, vulnerable segments of the population (under-aged children, orphans, people with disabilities, etc.). Undoubtedly, young people need support in their efforts to become financially secure and independent and to find their social position, but this does not imply doing their job for them, but providing the necessary support. The responsibility for the young people's present and future is not so much on the family, educational institutions, state bodies as on the young people themselves. Following this principle, we will increase the level of independence in decision-making and accelerate the transition of youth from the position of dependency to the position that allows for stronger self-control over the present and future.
49. The proposed approach is based on compliance with the constitutional principle of providing equal rights and fair access to the public good, resources and state services to the entire population, be it children, adults, or pensioners, as well as youth. The state does not give privileges to youth, but improves the targeting of state policy measures, assesses the needs of the youth and singles out different segments of the youth accordingly. The potential criteria for differentiating youth include age group, geographical area of residence (rural or urban) employment and educational status.
50. The needs of each segment of the youth population shall be assessed with the participation of the beneficiaries, i.e. using the participatory public policy development approach. Targeted social assistance shall be provided to those entitled to benefits, in accordance with social protection provision (e.g.,
- for people with disabilities, orphans, children from families with multiple children) as well as to those in need of social rehabilitation (young offenders, drug addicts and other young people from so-called risk groups).
51. The new approach requires the implementation of activities based on the programme and purpose. The youth shall be coming up with initiatives, such as project proposals, while an authorized state body will be in charge of the monitoring and evaluation of the youth projects funded by the state. The state financing of youth initiatives shall be based on a competitive distribution of grants to various projects, which can be consolidated into a single programme with clear objectives and outcomes, resources, responsible executing agents as well as a monitoring and evaluation system.
52. As part of the strategic objective of state youth policy, it is recommended to focus on and push efforts to maintain constant equality and dialogue based on mutual advantage through the development of a horizontally, as well as vertically, integrated institute of social partnership. This partnership will include the state, local authorities and youth in order to ensure equal opportunity, transparency and coordination of activities. Moreover, the youth policy shall be actively promoting the secular status of the state, and it will address future challenges rather than limiting itself to responding to current threats.
53. A social partnership approach for youth policy shall require coordination by a high status national body. Given that youth issues are scattered all over the diverse sectors, it is worthwhile to establish a Coordination Unit under the leadership of the President or the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, to include representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture and Information, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, State Committee for Migration and Employment, State Committee for Vocational Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Internal Affairs, State Agency for Religious Affairs, Oblast Governors, Local Self-Governance and youth organizations.
54. The Coordination Unit would define the main objectives, priorities and strategies of youth policy. It is suggested that the executive body of the Coordination Unit be a new unit – The Department for Youth Affairs under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, which will be in charge of preparations for council meetings, and the monitoring of implemented

¹ A.Musabaeva: The Youth policy of Kyrgyzstan: obsolete approaches to the new generation

decisions. In order to accomplish this, the capacity of the Youth Department to undertake analysis and to develop methodologies shall need to be strengthened.

55. Socialization of youth shall be undertaken with the active participation of young people who will take responsibility for implementation of activities addressing their issues or exercising their opportunities and interests. For that, it is necessary to ensure conversion to programme and project-based financing and allocation of funds to participating youth organizations on a competitive basis, while providing for monitoring and performance evaluation of implemented activities.

56. It is recommended to strengthen management and coordination in the operations of the state, and in particular to:

- Develop a strategic plan for an authorized body in charge of youth affairs;
- Strengthen the analysis and forecasting capacity of the authorized body;
- Introduce issue and purpose-based approaches to resolving youth issues;
- Define and introduce mechanisms and areas of responsibility in the youth-related branches of line ministries;
- Develop a comprehensive information and communication programme for youth, including an information service portal.

57. It is necessary to introduce an investment and innovation-based approach to the operations of state bodies:

- Introduce innovative methods and technologies for working with youth, based on the methods of active involvement and participation and the use of economic incentives and motivations;
- Stimulate investments to finance youth-related initiatives (fundraising, establishing a Youth Initiatives and Projects Support Fund, etc.);
- Facilitate establishment of youth entrepreneurship.

58. There is a need for state support for development of young people's sense of civic pride and responsibility, including the fundamental elements of citizenship and respect for laws and principles. The following objectives can be set:

- Strengthen articulation of the values of the state and society through various institutions: mass media, universities, schools, etc.
 - Enhance understanding of a civic position linked to prioritizing citizens' rights and duties, preference for respect for the law rather above respect for ethnic and tribal traditions;
 - Stimulate self-organizing efforts of the youth with a view to having them participate in programmes and projects.
59. The state bodies need to focus on the implementation of the following youth policy priorities:
- Forming the values of the youth to ensure that they are in line with the moral values of the state and wider society.
 - Ensuring equal access and the youth's ability to exercise its rights with regard to participation in politics, labour, education and health (through the monitoring and evaluation of sector programs).
 - Supporting and stimulating youth initiatives aimed at societal development. Involving youth in community initiatives by means of economic incentives and motivations.
 - Developing and implementing targeted social assistance programs for vulnerable youth.
 - Providing relevant information and education, and communication regarding programmes and projects.

Recommended Tools:

- Establishing Youth Entrepreneurship Development and Youth Initiatives Funds
- Setting the standards for the provision of social services to the youth
- Stimulating the establishment of youth-focused social services and youth organizations
- Legal support to youth
- Information portal for youth on the Internet.

60. The proposed measures are not exhaustive, but represent priority activities for the purpose of developing and implementing a youth policy in the Kyrgyz Republic which would meet the demands of modern youth.

Conclusion

In 2008, those who were born after the Soviet period turned 17. No matter what memories, success stories and failures of past youth policy can be brought to light, we are reminded that the new generation needs new approaches. The Youth Policy White Paper is, in essence, the first experience of developing a policy in this context in our country. There have been no previous prominent publications with such a focus. The expert authors tried to honestly go through all stages of working on the White Paper, starting with a definition of its concept, discussions with all the interested parties, and ending with discussions of the final version of the paper with the expert community, hoping that this approach, based on the steadfast observance of openness and participation, will be the key to success of the recommended national

and state programmes. However, our endeavor has helped us identify an additional, possibly most important, factor, which is the importance of preserving the spirit of youth, of those who actually represent the Kyrgyzstan of tomorrow. The more discussions we held with the young citizens of our country about their issues and the possible ways of resolving them, the more we realized that every nation, every state, is as alive only to the extent to which the spirit of its youth is alive, in the form of the perpetual desire of youth to assert themselves and win. However, it is currently the older generation who has the responsibility and authority to decide whether this spirit could be used for the benefit of the country, and whether our state will be able to assert its strength and win.

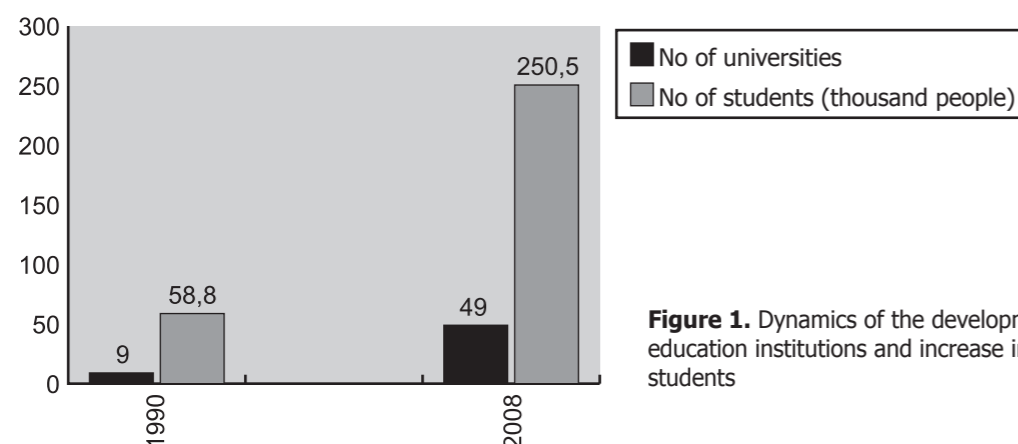


Annex 1

Standing of the Youth of Kyrgyzstan: Education, Employment, Quality of Life

Introduction

In accordance with the Kyrgyz legislation, citizens in the age group 14 through 35 are categorized as youth. According to the official statistics, by 2008, the number of youth reached 2 million 487 thousand people or 48% of the country's population¹. Presently, this particular segment of the population suffers, to a greater degree, from a decrease in the level of education and loss of educational and professional skills, which have led to



Education

Having gained independence, Kyrgyzstan launched reforms to its education system, in particular, involving the decentralization of management functions, the emergence of private educational institutions, the introduction of amendments to the educational programs and standards and the introduction of informational technologies in the education process. These reforms ensured the provision of a multitude of educational institutions and educational programs and improved access to higher education for the country's citizens.

Presently, about 7 types of educational institutions operate in the higher education system of Kyrgyzstan:

academies, universities, institutes, colleges, educational centers, etc. While in 1990 the number of higher education institutions was 9 comprising the total number of 58.8 thousand students, at present the number of such institutions is 6 times greater, thus amounting to 49 higher education institutions by early 2008, of which 31 are state-owned, 15 are private institutions and 3 are branches of other CIS educational institutions (Figure 1). The total number of students

the flagrant inadequacy in meeting the employment requirements as well as low incomes and employment. Survey results indicate that this issue is of concern to 40 % of the youth of Kyrgyzstan.²

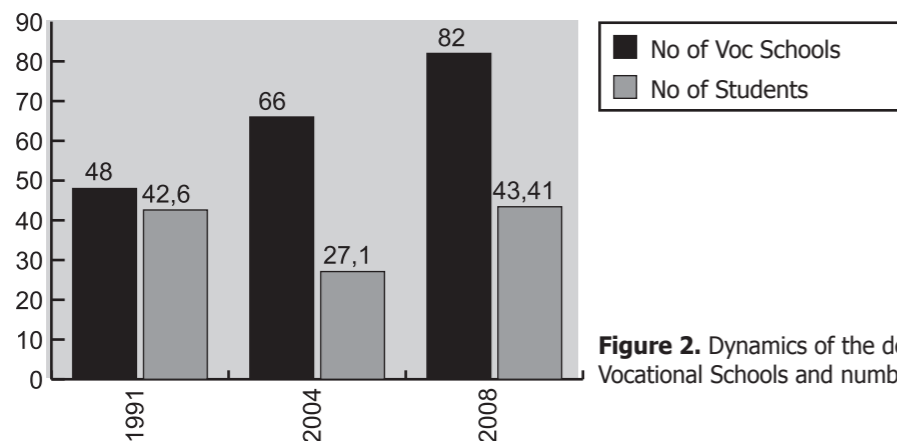


Figure 2. Dynamics of the development of Vocational Schools and number of students

attending the above institutions is 250,000 students. To date, bachelor's degree programs are offered in 22 higher education institutions, whereas 9 such institutions offer master's degree programs.

In addition, a steady growth in the number of vocational training institutions has been witnessed in recent years, thus leading to a 60% increase in the number of vocational training schools between 1991 and early 2008. However, a drastic decline (of 36%) in the number of students has occurred in 2004 and further on, there is an increase in the number of students admitted to the vocational training schools accounting for 63% growth (Figure 2).

The number of youth among those pursuing education and obtaining diplomas is growing. However, a number of issues remain:

- There is a critical situation with regard to finding employment for the graduates of higher education and vocational institutions. This is due to the low quality of the education provided. Hence, as a result of knowledge check-ups undertaken in the health institutions, 9 higher education institutions were given an average score of 2-2.6 points (out of max 5), law major provided by 24 institutions – 2.5-3.4 points, economics - in 50 higher education institutions rated at 2-3.5 points.¹
- The graduates, having obtained theoretical knowledge only, and lacking practical experience and skills, cannot compete with the more experienced employees. For example: the share of employed youth in the age group 16 - 35 among the applicants to the Employment Services of the Republic is 43%, including the share of employed graduates of all educational institutions 38%².
- Student surveys show that the education system in many of the higher education institutions is based on obsolete programs and materials and is not in line with current market demands and employers' requirements.³
- At the same time, some of the young people (from poor rural families) have more difficult access to the higher and vocational education, and the unemployment rate is growing accordingly. Therefore, most (45.2 thousand people or 66.6%) of the young people do not possess adequate skills and qualifications to participate in the labor market.

- A significant decline in financing of educational facilities from the Republican budget, especially in the oblasts, constrains the development of a professional education system. Due to budgetary weaknesses, the local authorities do not have adequate funding to provide for the educational system to the extent that is required. Therefore, the young people without vocational education are particularly uncompetitive on the labor market. For example, about 60% of the youth do not possess adequate qualifications to participate in the labor market.⁴

Various institutions including both elementary and vocational schools (e.g. technical vocational schools, colleges, vocational lyceums, specialized vocational schools) are dissociated as they are governed by different Ministries or agencies, or graduate schools, while often implementing similar sets of academic programs. Many colleges or universities in a pursuit of non-budget resources show surplus numbers of graduated people for some particular fields of study (e.g. law, economics) due to the chaotic introduction of new majors (that were previously minors) into academic programs⁵. For instance, the number of major fields offered for students has been doubled when compared to the pre-reform period (currently over 200 subjects). The distribution of students in terms of major field of study turned out to be inconsistent with (labor) demand for some particular sectors: a shortage has been revealed for professionals capable of working in manufacture, building, power engineering, etc.

Unemployment and labor migration

Level of unemployment and migration is an important indicator of youth's social standing.

- Official statistics show that the number of jobless in 2006 accounted for 424.4 thousand people or 16.8 % of the total population number aged 15 and older. The highest unemployment level has been revealed in oblasts with large mountainous areas (such as Jalalabat -26.7% and Naryn – 21%). A substantial difference in the level of unemployment has been observed for males (13.5%) and females (20.7%). The situation is worse in urban areas (20.2%) than in rural ones⁶.

¹ National Statistics Committee of the KR. Data requested by UNV – UNDP as of early 2008

² Public Opinion Survey Center supported by K Adenauer Foundation

¹ The Ministry of Education, Science and Youth Policy. Outcomes of comprehensive inspections of the higher educational institutions for compliance with the license requirements. July 2006.

² Public Opinion Survey Center supported by K. Adenauer Foundation

³ Report on the social survey conducted by «Eurasia» Foundation in Central Asia and «Expert» agency: eight universities of Bishkek and Osh participated in the survey (926 students and professors). Bishkek, 2006

⁴ Public Opinion Survey Center supported by K. Adenauer Foundation

⁵ See: the Report by the Minister of Education, March 2006

⁶ KR National Statistics Committee. The outcome of the one-time exploration of employment with the population, July 2006. Special issue: Employment, unemployment, labor migration, Bishkek 2007

- The majority of the unemployed (up to 98%) are young people up to the age of 30. Almost a quarter of the unemployed are graduates or have qualifications. The share can be significantly larger in particular geographic areas. For example, it amounts to more than half for Bishkek city, and around one third for Issyk-Kul and Chui oblasts. The above analysis of the age breakdown of the unemployed in relation to education has shown that more than a quarter of people younger than 25 are graduates of colleges or universities, and that around three-quarters have not completed their tertiary level academic studies¹. In addition, the average period of unemployment keeps growing: the level of long-term unemployment (greater than one year) accounted for 16.8% at the end of the year 2005².
- An overall decline in the level of employment has led to massive labor migration among Kyrgyzstanis. This phenomenon has still not been properly examined, and the scope of it has not been reliably evaluated. Unofficial estimates of the number of emigrants from the Kyrgyz Republic vary from 100 to 700 thousand people. In 2006, officers of the State Committee on Employment and Migration held a large-scale investigation into the level of unemployment and the situation in the labor market of Kyrgyzstan. International migration during the period 1999-2005 totalled more than 219 thousand people.
- Independent experts' evaluations³ revealed that the overwhelming majority of labor migrants are young people aged between 20 and 35. More than 23% of them are graduates of colleges, universities or vocational colleges, and more than 75% have finished elementary schools and high schools.
- The reason for the above is that rural youngsters in Kyrgyzstan do not relate their future to their proper place of living, i.e. to the territory of current inhabitation of young people. They consider themselves as⁴, being ignored by the development programs in their geographic areas and are strongly aimed to leave the country in search of a living. Lack of local demand for young labor, (while the local market is not spread) as the result of the low level of education, does not provide further prospects for rural life nor promotion to succeed in cities.

Indices of life quality for youngsters in Kyrgyzstan

A sharp differentiation of population in terms of income has led to multiple pecuniary and psychological concerns that young people face, such as health deterioration, etc. which negatively impacts on the current standing and expectations for the future.

It is obvious that young people facing a lot of problems that they have been unable to resolve, and having no assistance from State authorities and society, form a negative view of reality, become embittered, and substitute their values and life guidelines for negative ones. According to data provided by youth organizations working in the area of sexual and reproductive health, young people start smoking earlier, the teenage addicts grow in number and youngsters often resort to violence⁵. Representatives of the above organizations have stressed that in the local community the number of young people with health condition which is related to (drug) addiction/dependence keeps growing; the conduct of young males, propelled by a desire to comply with an image of «macho» seems particularly disturbing, because it often results in violence and hooliganism. It involves an increased consumption of alcohol and tobacco (including «nasvay») among youngsters aged from 9 to 17, that is 24% of boys and 20% of girls⁶.

Wide-spread aberrant behavior and moral decay could be seen as the main negative after-effects, as they correlate with the adolescent crime wave, alcoholism, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS diseases, etc., given that:

- 51.7% of the total number of people having committed a crime in Kyrgyzstan are aged up to 30 and 7% are minors⁷. Theft, hooliganism and crime related to illegal drug circulation⁸ prevail in the structure of crime⁹. More than a half of the total number of people having committed crimes in 2006-2007 and convicted are young people. The majority of crimes are committed in the poor over-populated Fergana Valley, where juvenile gangs represent an easy target for radical religious movements promising benefits in exchange for participation in their actions¹⁰.
- Over the last decade an almost six fold increase in drug addiction has been

registered, with the number of those being followed up in addiction clinics in 2007 amounting to approx. 9 thousand people aged from 15 to 35¹. In recent years the trend has been revealed in Kyrgyzstan for the average drug addicted person to become younger - up to 13-14.

- During the last two or three years there has been a sharp increase nationwide of people infected with HIV. According to official statistics, the number of those living with HIV/AIDS in Kyrgyzstan amounted to 1054 people as of December 2006², however, according to UNAIDS estimations³, the real number is at least 10 times greater. The World Health Organisation (WHO) noted that 910 people are officially registered in Kyrgyzstan as infected with HIV, half of them living in Osh Oblast. HIV-infection developed in connection with an increase in drug use is extremely dangerous⁴. According to estimates by UNODC⁵ 2.3% of the total population (aged from 15 to 64) consumes drugs, and the majority of these «consumers» are adolescents aged up to 30⁶. The first use of drugs tends to happen between 10 and 12 years of age⁷. According to several information sources, intravenous injection of drugs is the main means of HIV/AIDS transfer in Central Asia.
- According to the «State Program of HIV/AIDS epidemic prevention for 2006 to 2010 years», the main means of HIV transfer in the country is intravenous drug injection, and 51% of infected people are young people aged up to 25. The youth risk behavior (aged from 15 to 24) leads to increase in number of sexually transmitted diseases, such as gonorrhoea (642 cases) and syphilis (640 cases), adolescent unwanted pregnancy with girls minor than 18 (800 deliveries a year) and virtually the same number of registered number of abortions (25% of recurrent pregnancies end in such a way)⁸.
- According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s data, over 4000 Kyrgyzstani female citizens annually become victims of human trafficking in various

countries of the world, the major portion of these being young people including under-age adolescents (10%). Kyrgyzstan becomes a country of origin, of transit and recently a destination for victims of human trafficking. Data provided by the Internal Ministry reveal a growing trend: while in 2003 7 cases of human traffic have been recorded with criminal cases brought up, in 2006 already more than 30 cases have been recorded.

¹ Ibid.

² Findings of monitoring by the State Committee on Employment and Migration (end of the year 2005)

³ Youngsters of Kyrgyzstan: social standing, needs, perspectives of youth policy development, UNFPA 2008

⁴ Findings by focus-group among youngsters in the process of writing the White Book

⁵ Youth of Kyrgyzstan: social standing, needs, prospects of youth policy development. UNFPA, 2008

⁶ <http://www.who.int/tobacco/media/en/Kyrgyzstan.pdf>

⁷ National Report Medium-Term Assessment of Achievements for Goals «Education For All» (EFA MDA)

⁸ Men and Women in KR, P. 121

⁹ Youth of Kyrgyzstan: social standing, needs, prospects of youth policy development. UNFPA, 2008

¹⁰ <http://www.irinnews.org/pdf/in-depth/Youth-in-crisis-IRIN-In-Depth.pdf>

¹ National Statistic Committee of the KR. The outcome of the one-time exploration of employment with the population, July 2006. Special issue: Employment, unemployment, labor migration, Bishkek 2007

² According to records by National Center «AIDS»

³ Joint UN Programme OOH on HIV/AIDS

⁴ Ibid

⁵ UN Direction on narcotics and crime

⁶ <http://www.unaids.kg/members/unodc>

⁷ State Program of HIV/AIDS epidemic prevention and social and economic after-effects in KR for the period 2006 2010, P.32

⁸ State Program of HIV/AIDS epidemic prevention and social and economic after-effects in KR for the period 2006 2010, P.32



Annex 2

Youth life patterns, sexuality and family formation

According to research undertaken by the World Bank, young people are not covered with State-provided medical and sanitation services¹. The National Program of Health Reform «Manas-Taalimi» (1996-2010) is mainly targeted on mother and child health care. In 2006 the «National Strategy of Reproductive Health Protection for the KR Population up to 2015» was adopted, with the aim of improving reproductive and sexual health care for the country's population, with priority being given to youth. However, the situation in the domain of sexual and reproductive health, as well as advice on reproductive health, still has not met the needs of the country's youth population. Insufficient provision of material assets and the problem of training and upgrading medical professionals who render specific services for youth may be pointed out as one of the contributing factors. In the Kyrgyz Republic the majority of the population live in poverty and many remote villages are located in mountainous areas; the situation is complicated with a rather poor quality of health services for young people, and reproductive health care services in particular, and in several cases such services fail to be rendered. Taking into consideration the underdeveloped infrastructure, poor condition of roads and inadequate transportation fleet, there are areas where access to medical services that are provided in other areas of the country is simply impossible².

In consideration of the fact that adolescents amount to approximately 7% of the total population, the issue of their reproductive and sexual health became one of the priorities set up by the programs of international organizations, for the purpose of consideration of needs for this class of youth. NGO and youth groups working for reproductive and sexual health, under the training programs «equal-to-equal», and programs of raising awareness in schools and communities, have received support for networking and capacity building. Though when speaking about rural youth, these actions are usually not available for them. Notwithstanding the fact that the number of actions carried on by youngsters has increased, access to information and medical services for young people remains restricted. The urgent need for complex training on issues of reproductive and sexual health and youth friendly services (YFS) is still insufficiently recognised and implemented.

¹ Exploration of medical services and health care system: Published by World Bank, 2005

² http://www.unfpa.org/stronger_voices/kyrgyzstan.htm

Ethnic and social patterns impede complex training programs on reproductive and sexual health to be carried on for young people, as, for example, a prohibition on using condoms is still alive for the Kyrgyzstani community.

The youth of Kyrgyzstan represent a rather heterogeneous and often «hidden» part of the society. The living patterns of youngsters vary from traditional patterns, especially in rural areas, to the rhythms of hi-tech society characterized by mobility and individual initiative, and his/her wish to change the country in order for it to have a better future. It is worthy to note that academic or sociological research has not been undertaken on the determination of values, beliefs and hopes specific for youth in the changing environment of the new Kyrgyzstan. The meetings with youth organisations, NGOs, international agencies and young individuals provided some important details. A conclusion can be made that a majority of young Kyrgyzstanis follow traditional values, which exist in the community, and thus are reproduced. In general a certain pattern could be outlined, according to which a young individual is regarded as «insufficiently clever», «not skilled», «incapable of resolving his/her problems». This negative image particularly prevails in rural communities, where the lives of youngsters are entirely dependent on decisions made by their parents³. Young people experience care deficiency in relation to their needs and expectations and, restricted in their access to information, they live as being isolated from other communities, and are disappointed in their lives. All of these factors lead to a pattern in the community's vision, in which youth is regarded as only a cause of problems. When speaking about expectations for the future, the majority of pupils from secondary schools, for instance, expect to continue their studies in colleges and universities. According to data provided by the Youth human rights group, a considerable part of young people believe in the future of their home country, although their personal future with regard to social and economic standing is-regarded in bleak prospects. They do not see much prospect for their personal development and feel that their home country does not need them or does not care about them. Many youngsters also point out the lack of interest shown by authorities. They think the government will not keep promises, and will not pay attention to their needs.

Having been disappointed, having gone out of depth, they tend to resort to risky behavior or join radical religious groups.

Both urban and rural youth constantly migrate to the cities and other countries. The young people

³ Meeting with the Youth Human Rights Group, August 2007

who choose to stay in the Kyrgyz Republic are mainly those oriented toward the patriarchal family life, which is becoming more and more popular among people¹. Overall, urban youth is noted to be more active, especially students, and keen to stay attuned to the country's developments and to be interested in participating in the ongoing activities aimed at changing the existing social and economic situation.

On the other hand, it is not clear to what extent the Kyrgyz youth is influenced by the modern life style and values of the globalizing society and how much these values and life style contradict the traditional views of the young Kyrgyz people. Of course, some differences between the urban and rural residents, people with different levels of education, girls and boys in their senses of values can be forecast beforehand. The mindset, endeavors, dreams and aspirations of the youth of Kyrgyzstan remain unexplored.

Annex 3

International experience related to work with young people

Youth Policy

Experience in youth policy in other countries could be of no small importance for youth policy development in our country, without ignorance of peculiarities set up in local culture and frame of mind.

Youth policy in the developed countries became nowadays a separate field of actions by the State, which are implemented within the framework of management and coordination institutions; the weaker any grass-root organisations' activity, the larger the interference of the State. Youth programs' implementation may be efficient provided that interests, needs and wishes of youngsters have been taken into consideration, as well as their demands of customization for quality of education, employment assistance, leisure, services sector.

European countries proceed from overwhelming integrated and centralized nationwide programs aimed to all youngsters to the local targeted and flexible projects. While implementation shall be put on efforts made by local authorities (the district governments), as they are close to individual consumers and take into account population particulars, social, economic and political features of a specific geographic area where the youth policy is generated and carried out.

¹ The same

For instance, implementation of youth policy in the United Kingdom is coordinated by the Young People Directorate under the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and in Sweden by the Ministry of Culture. While there is no commission on youth issues within the Parliament, in Sweden the State Council on Youth operates jointly with youth councils at municipal levels. Non-governmental organizations could be significant as well; in Sweden they involve into their operation around three quarters of young people.

In France the Ministry on Youth Affairs, Sports and public organizations is engaged into youth policy development. The National Council of Youth (headed by the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports), joining representatives of young political, civil, trade union structures, having the authority to take initiative on actual youth issues. Youth councils operate both on departmental level and within many municipal structures. They regulate a range of Ministry' projects in the domain of culture, such as creation of specialized information centers for young people providing information and advice, providing access to sports for young people, particularly from low-income families, etc.

Analysis of contemporary institutional forms of youth support and development in post-Soviet countries with similar ideologies related to disintegration of Soviet life' patterns shall be very valuable.

For instance, in the Russian Federation the State youth policy is based on following principles:

- Involvement of young citizens into exact participation in drawing up policy frameworks and implementation of programs relating to youth and the community in the whole;
- Providing legal and social protection for young citizens, which is required for recouping restrictions in their social status due to age;
- Providing young citizens with the minimal set of social services secured by the State concerning education and proper upbringing for spiritual and body development, health care, vocational training and job placement, with volume, kinds and quality capable of providing personal development required for being prepared for independent life:

A new Youth Policy Strategy has been developed in the Russian Federation for a period covering the upcoming ten years. The strategy is aimed at involving the youth in the modern societal processes, creating incentives for comprehensive development and providing reliable social protection

to the young generations. For the first time, non-profit organizations, NPOs, have been involved in the strategy development. Having obtained extensive experience in implementing youth programs effectively, the NPOs had the opportunity to participate in choosing the most important strategic directions of the state youth policy.

Some of the members of the Federation started to apply the new method – social projects for the youth, which help find the most feasible ways to addressing the youth issues. These efforts are applied in a variety of directions.

- Civic and patriotic upbringing of youth
- Youth employment, youth entrepreneurship
- Building the legal and political culture among youth
- Support to young families. Main focus, here, is put on creating conditions and establishing mechanisms for the young families' housing conditions improvement. The endeavor is undertaken within the framework of the oblast level program «A House for Young Family for 2003-2010»

Special attention is paid to the issue of establishing an informational environment for the youth. Thus, coverage of the youth policy is provided through the system of mailing press-releases and conducting press-conferences for mass media to cover the most important and interesting topics for the youth and to create awareness of the work done with the youth involvement.

In Belarus, the President A. Lukashenko has clearly defined one of the major objectives of the state youth policy: upbringing of a patriot – citizen, inspired by the ideals of good will and social justice, capable of creating and building for the sake of the Fatherland. Main support areas for the youth are: enhancing the prestige and improving the opportunities for obtaining a quality education, upbringing of a patriot – citizen, operational support to children's and youth organizations and initiatives, development of youth employment systems, advocating healthy life style, protection of young people from the criminal settings, alcoholism, drug addiction, human trafficking, youth tourism development, international youth cooperation, youth housing construction, etc. There is a Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus «On providing privileged loans to the citizens for house construction (reconstruction) or purchase», owing to which young people have an additional chance to construct a relatively cheap house.

Youth Affairs Bodies ¹

- As a rule, youth affairs are not brought under oversight of one special body. The functions of the bodies are different, but have such commonalities as: development of a common structure of issues pertinent to youth and policy formulation, stimulation of coordination, interactions, protection of interests, science research, technical assistance and monitoring.
- Sometimes, the agencies support special programs implemented outside the traditional ministerial framework and aimed at addressing the youth issues at the national and local levels. They can also maintain contacts and have connections with the young people and youth organizations.
- The role played by youth support agencies is, to a certain extent, an indicator of how far a country has gone with developing and implementing policies aimed at addressing the issues faced by the youth.
- In many member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which have a process of youth policy formulation established over past decades, duties of such agencies comprise, mainly, policy development, coordination and monitoring.
- In many other developing countries, which have recently embarked on the development of consecutive policies related to youth issues, more attention is paid to protection of the interests of youth and development of recommendations.

¹ Excerpts from the World Bank report for 2007

Annex 4 Interest Groups Opinion Review

Interest Groups	Assessment of the Current Policy and the Need for a New One	The Object of Policy	The Subject of Policy	Policy Objective	Policy Focus
Legislative power representatives	Overall, there should be a country specific ideological program. The ideology shall take care of the work with youth. The policy is needed but it shall be developed once the status and role of the youth is defined. It should be given a priority in the country and be in line with the general state policy aimed at the country development. Youth is a capital asset, which will pay back in the future. The existing policy needs to be corrected after the real life assessment of the youth capacity and analysis of the current situation	There is a need for defining the social status of the youth. Its social enthusiasm shall be exploited, as the youth represent the most active segment of our society. It shall be defined what youth is from the point of view of the state and the leaders formulating the policy.	The major role is the one of the State	Expanding economic opportunities for the youth and their upbringing Building market-oriented youth. Restoration and development of the system of orders once effective among the agencies. The role of the state in the given context is a major one. The policy shall include measures in line with the youth interests, and take the world wide changes into account in order to help the youth better settle down in the future world.	Ideology/upbringing, Healthcare and health, Employment, Training, Economic and Social ideological tendencies (employment, family building, provision of housing, ideology). Providing access to quality education.
Legislative power representatives	It is given a priority in the country. Ineffectiveness of the current policy is due to lack of financing. But it does not mean nothing is accomplished. The youth issues are closely connected to the overall context of the country issues, first of all: the economic and social issues. The youth is a control object	In order to effectively address the youth issues, general economic issues shall be addressed first. There are highest priority issues aimed at strengthening the country economy and our efforts shall be concentrated on the latter.	The major role is the one of the State	Main objective is to provide employment to the youth, job creation, creation of such conditions, which will give opportunities for the youth to choose.	Improve competitiveness of the youth on the labour market, Provide high quality primary vocational education, housing provision programs, revision of the savings funds, etc.

Legislative and Executive Power

Interest Groups	Assessment of the Current Policy and the Need for a New One	The Object of Policy	The Subject of Policy	Policy Objective	Policy Focus
Regions					
Local Self-Governance Bodies	National programs do not work at the local level, because clear implementation mechanisms have not been established, funding sources have not been defined as to who will pay for the implementation. High level of labor migration, active youth is almost all gone. No alternative solutions are available for the youth at the local level. Lack of resources and capacity to work on the new needs of the youth.	Rural youth	State, local government, NGOs	Policies shall be aimed at keeping the youth at the local level and creating equal opportunities and conditions for their development.	There is a need to change the top-down approach in working with youth. Increase the number of employees at the village level. Youth employment. Mortgage lending for youth. Youth entrepreneurship. There is a need to activate the existing and create new mechanisms. Upbringing of youth shall be strengthened, ideology is needed. Involving youth in decision making effecting their lives and addressing their issues, stimulating initiatives
NGO and civil society representatives	There are national youth programs in place but not operational, because clear implementation mechanisms have not been established, funding sources have not been defined as to who will pay for the implementation. Youth is not involved in policy making.	Youth – able-bodied, active segment of the population, which has certain objectives to reach, is enthusiastic and ambitious. Youth will not work just because of presence of enthusiasm, but because certain demands are met.	State, local government, NGOs	Ensure youth involvement in the implementation of national programs	Create awareness of the state activities among the local youth. Eliminate communication gaps between the youth at the local level and national and local governments. Building trust in the government among youth by increased representation of the youth in the government. HR policy improvements. Each youth group defines its own policy measures Youth Party establishment.

Interest Groups	The Need for Policy	The Object of Policy	The Subject of Policy	The Policy Objectives	The Direction of Policy
Independent Experts					
Experts	The youth policy is needed with differentiation. This is because of the level of psychological abilities and vital competence. That is why the youth policy should be formed towards specific age-related and social group. The youth policy should be based on the needs of society in whole and realities of changing world. The youth policy should remain to the extent necessary for young people. The youth policy should be based on the interest of the young people..	It should be clearly ascertained the vulnerability of young people towards other groups and whether it exists. The excessive care of the youth is not required. The sector approach should be used in youth policy: the young people, education, religion and young people, poverty and young people, etc. In other words, all depend on if the problem is an issue at stake.	The influence of the government should be minimal. The role of government is to create the conditions necessary to mitigate the negative effects created by certain institutions and the risks should be minimal. Sectors and institution should be self-regulated, but the role of the government should be limited to minimization of risks and encouragement of self-regulation.	Diffusiveness of values and principles hinders the institutions to determine the existing priorities. And this function of the government / society is to ascertain the needs of the society.	The country development main Goal should be communicated. The measures should be taken in order to create an ideology based on our own culture and values. Promotion of leadership functions, improvement of country leaders' responsibilities and elite. Generation of ideas and values. Mechanisms, such as promotion of successful experience, encouragement in mobilization of the young people, in organization of clubs/groups of interests etc.



Review of youth problems (from the perspective of young people)

- The government does not pay much attention to the problems of youth, self-government is a slow to support the pro-active young people, the separate department at the ministerial level dealing with the young people does not exist,
- The huge amount of funds spent for development of government programs, but not for implementation of the programs, because the programs are not based on actual mechanisms, while implementation of the program end on a half way in order to start to develop a new program.
- The programs are developed without taking into consideration of opinions and interests of the groups of young people.
- The tribalism exists in the process of selection/hiring of young people
- The young people is rather object but not the subject of actions
- The youth does not see the vector of development of the country and signals of the society, what are the priorities in development
- The young people has no choice, directions in education, the elders decide for the youth the employment opportunities
- The youth is inactive, pessimistic, (especially in rural areas), used to live as dependants; the youth should be awoken
- No cooperation among organizations working with the youth
- The social protection of young people-migrants is not implemented;
- The low quality of students' education at universities, compared with the graduates of 6-month short courses which are more skilled
- Lack of information: no web-sites for the youth, no publication agencies for the youth, no TV special programs, no magazines.
- The government does not pay much attention to rural young people
- Migration and deficit of personal, no control over the children from young families the parents of which immigrated to the neighbouring countries
- Language barrier of the rural youth while the urban youth speaks Russian.
- No gyms
- Low feeling of justice, especially among the school children, the legal education is given

one hour per week for 9-11 grades

- Media does not cover the problems of young people who have the civil position, actively participating in the life of communities.
- Increase of social diseases among the young people (prostitution, drug addiction etc), increased number of abandoned children
- No concrete proposals form the young people on how to solve their problems, the youth is unable to lobby their interests, the youth is losing its moral values, the youth is not interested to participate in round tables, workshops, even if the youth propose the ideas, no one wants to implement it, the youth is not interested and not willing in working agriculture
- no leadership skills and abilities to find a job, few leaders

Proposals and Recommendation of Youth:

- arrangement of large-scale programs aimed at development of the youth, financial support of development of the youth; the national program contains too many directions, therefore it is necessary to determine the strategic priorities, to focus on them, for instance, to sort out 5 priorities for five years and to finance only these 5 priorities (no one specified these priorities); do not conduct a one-time actions for the youth but to focus on more continuous and sustainable
- to establish under the President's office a separate department (committee, agency), without sport and education components, which will be dealing with the youth; to establish the separate youth committees not only on oblast levels, but also on local (raion) levels; in working with the youth of local communities to follow the experience of program «Children's Independent Republic» of the Central Asian Water Alliance;
- to establish the coordinative council for the youth
- to raise the status of youth committees at government and self-government levels, to open the youth canthers for the discussions and these centers will be oriented on intelligent young people
- the national programs should also address the youth problems, to reinforce informing of youth
- to promote the knowledge about the nation, state language, national culture
- to create the conditions for the works of

youth in rural areas (residential construction, salaries);

- the government plan for preparation of professionals where the educational institution upon request of the certain organizations should prepare the professionals in short period of time, and the government should control the process;
- the government should encourage the companies to support the youth (by providing incentives, benefits);
- the must be liability for the officers of state and private organizations hiring personnel based on tribalism principle;
- to establish a fund for support of the youth initiatives to finance the youth organization of competitive basis
- to open a web-site for the youth, its problems and how to solve such problems, containing information on business consultation, donors, the youth programs; to prepare the programs on TV and mass media on the youth actively involved in the lives of community;
- to strengthen the professional development of the youth migrating to the neighbouring countries, the youth loses its professional skills;
- to raise the legal awareness of the youth starting from the earlier ages, e.g. 9-11 grades;
- to establish a communication bridge between donor organizations and rural youth initiative groups;
- to use and follow best experience of neighbouring countries working with the youth (Tajikistan, Kazakhstan), but not the other countries' experience due to the similarities of mentalities;
- study and use the most vital parts of previous youth programs;
- the must be a censorship in advertisement in mass media (ban for adds of alcohol, cigarettes in a particular time), 30% of broadcasting time in state TV channels should be devoted to the youth;
- to disclose and reconsider the results of the program «21st century human resources»;
- after graduation the universities should assist in finding employment;
- to establish a clear limitation for the involvement of the youth in legislative and judicial comprising at least 30% of all parliament members and judges;
- to reconsider the lending of youth, to establish a communication with banks; the establish

a «Youth Bank» which will finance the youth initiatives on competitive basis (irrespective of legal status) focused on social, political and other problems; to establish the youth banks with the government support, to establish a youth departments in banks providing the preferential terms for the youth, to establish micro lending institutions; the government agencies should provide with trainings for the youth on funds distribution;

- to disseminate via media the best experience of working with the youth;
- promotion and development of pilot youth groups providing incentives for the youth;
- re-introduction of evening classes at universities, schools, and vocational training schools in order to create the professional growth, to introduce in high schools the professional training classes;
- to conduct the fairs for the youth with the donor organizations for the purposes of solving the youth's problems;
- to inform the 11 grade students of secondary schools on the system of existing universities, vocational training schools and how they work;
- the last grade students of universities should be involved in the paid internship;
- to establish business incubators in rural areas for the youth with the partnership of urban youth which will allow to build a bridge between the rural and urban youth;
- to establish a network of cooperation organizations aimed at working with youth.



