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Youth in the North Caucasus: From Risk to Opportunity

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North Caucasus: the Poorest Region in the Russian Federation

- 40% poverty in Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria and Dagestan
- 21% Youth in Southern District and 36% in Ingushetia
- Highest rate of youth idleness in the country
- Numerous security risks

Youth Idleness in the North Caucasus

Region	Russian Federation	Chechnya	Dagestan	Ingushetia	Kabardino-Balkaria	North Ossetia	Stavropol Kray
Estimated % of 15–24-year-olds who neither work nor study	10.3	54.9	40.7	70.5	35.1	21.4	21.0

Source: Agranovich et al (2005)



***“What would I like to see
changed about my education?
Absolutely everything.”***

-- 22-year-old university graduate,
North Ossetia



“Our republic is a labor-rich, job-poor region...Every year, they graduate young people that are useless in the labor market.”

-- State Placement Service Official,
Dagestan



School-to-Work Transition

- Mismatch between education and the job market
- Irrelevance of and dissatisfaction with education
- Bribes, unofficial payments
- Lack of contacts and money – greatest obstacle to jobs
- Eagerness to pursue self-employment
- Few young people registered with unemployment agencies



***“How do young people find out
about health problems?
Accidentally.”***

-- Pediatrician, Dagestan



Healthy Lifestyles

- Cigarettes, drugs and alcohol
- Malnutrition in Ingushetia
- Lack of youth-friendly health facilities
- Young people need tailored information on health issues
- Television and mass media



“There is a youth affairs committee, but I don’t know what they do....I have only heard negative things about them.”

-- 22-year-old, North Ossetia



Youth Participation

- Lack of knowledge on existing youth organizations
- Opportunities not available in the North Caucasus
- Lack of participation in local decision making and politics
- Islam perceived as a value system to counteract corruption
- But radical Islam is perceived as a real threat to security



“The main threat to security is corruption of police and terrorism, which are closely interrelated.”

-- 24-year-old woman in Nalchik,
Kabardino-Balkaria



Security and Conflict

- Majority find their peers generally tolerant
- Majority feel safe in their communities
- Most commonly cited threats to security:
 - *Terrorism*
 - *Corruption*
 - *War/actions of the Russian Military, potential for war, presence of weapons, spread of conflict, drugs*

Efficiently Investing More Resources





Only \$12 million currently
allocated by federal authorities
for youth programs



What to Invest in

- Targeted investments in Secondary/Tertiary education
- Non-formal learning
- Active labor market programs targeted at young people
- Youth participation in decision-making
- Security and Conflict Prevention



Education and Non-Formal Learning

- Targeting education investments to NC Republics
- General education as well as VT and apprenticeships
- Reducing corruption in education via student participation
- Development of non-formal learning opportunities



Active Labor Market Programs

- First-employment programs for young job-seekers
- Improved access to free job counseling and business training
- Training for business development
- Seed capital for small business start-ups



Youth Participation

- Clear legal, administrative and financial mechanisms
- Support to sustainable local youth organizations
- Establishment of umbrella youth structures
- Making citizenship education more appealing



Security and Conflict Prevention

- Peace and tolerance programs
- Intercultural and interfaith dialogue
- Dialogue between youth and police
- Restorative Justice programs



Challenges Ahead

Engaging the Federal and Local Levels
and International Partners

