

## EVALUATING YOUTH POLICY REFORM IN KYRGYZSTAN USING SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

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**Abstract.** Youth organizations were important actors in color revolutions demanding more rights from incumbent governments in former Soviet societies. Kyrgyzstan is an example where numerous attempts to overthrow various governments took place. Since the youth is generally unemployed, underqualified, undereducated because of drastic implementation of free market policies immediately after the unexpected and unforeseen collapse of the Iron Curtain, they were the most vulnerable demographic for exploitation by extremist groups and criminal organizations. The study employed theories of complex adaptive systems and social network analysis concepts and tools in order to evaluate the actors, relations, interventions and policy results during and after mass mobilizations leading to political change.

**Keywords:** youth organizations, former Soviet societies, complex adaptive systems, social network analysis, youth policy framework, Kyrgyzstan, color revolution

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### 1. Introduction

A sound youth policy framework is of vital importance for building a constructive society promoting pluralistic thinking and multicultural values (Dawson and Prewitt 1968, Youniss and Levine 2009). In the absence of effective youth policy, young people can become a destabilizing force forming a destructive social capital in societies where there are no opportunities for educational, cultural, sportive or social activities, prospects for a successful employment, and incentives to contribute to the development of the society. Young people in many countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe have actively participated in political protests and violence (Goldstone 2002, Urdal 2006, Beber and Blattman 2013, Beissinger 2013, Weber 2013).

Kyrgyzstan is perhaps the best example of such a situation in post-Soviet Central Asia. The neglect of the youth during the past two decades has created a mass of young population that is vulnerable to manipulation of extremist politicians, organized crime groups and terrorist organizations. The role of the youth in violent regime transformations, ethnic clashes and fanatical organizations during the past decade has opened a window of opportunity for reform in Kyrgyzstan's youth policy. The goal of this paper is to promulgate the importance of youth policy in development of a post-Soviet society as well as to promote a broader understanding of it by the public and the decision-makers.

Kyrgyzstan became an independent country after the disintegration of the USSR in 1991. Since then the factories have been shut down, the political system became corrupt, and the education system underfunded and dysfunctional, causing many social problems and brain drain. Both blue-collar and white-collar jobs were deserted. The remaining population has been working in agricultural fields, mines and mostly in bazaars trading goods with Chinese and other Central Asian merchants. After the exodus of most of actively working population, the unemployment rate hit to a new high of 22% in 2006 (IRIN News 2007).

Over half of Kyrgyzstan's 5 million population are below the age of 25 and 32% of the population is between 15 and 25 (UNDP 2010). However, the government's youth policy and programs have been mostly on paper, not actively implemented. Recently developed legal frameworks via legislations named "On the Basis of State Youth Policy", "On Education", "On Elementary and Vocational Training" provided health care and social protection for the youth. In this framework, the government defined youth as ages between 14 and 28 (previously between 14 and 35), which is still broader than the UN definition of 14 and 25 (UNDP 2010). Within this framework, the government initiated two programs – Jashtyk and Kyrgyzstan Jashtary – and allocated 30 million Kyrgystani soms (USD 0.8 mln) between 2006 and 2008. However, only 6.5 million Kyrgystani soms, 21.6% of the allocated amount, were spent during the time and most of the funds were used for organizing mass sports and cultural events (UNDP 2010).

However, youth policy is not just a subset of social policy. Among the recipients of welfare as well as corrective programs, young people are central to the development of Kyrgyzstan in a broader sense. The youth policy should be tightly connected to the development policies and the allocation of the national budget. Moreover, youth policy is a political tool of citizenship building and even international cooperation. Young people need to be nurtured so that they can contribute to the society and problems associated with the youth such as gang violence, drug abuse, AIDS, and terrorism can be addressed (Wallace and Bendit 2009, Dawson and Prewitt 1968, Youniss and Levine 2009).

Utilizing Kyrgyzstan as an example, the study aims to formulate key policy suggestions for developing countries. Considering that the developing countries have younger populations than the developed ones in general (DESA 2013), the youth can be both a threat and an opportunity. Unemployed and uneducated youth may result in a chaotic society while adequate care from the government agencies

can create an invaluable resource for all developing countries. Once evaluated scientifically, successful and failed reform movements for youth in Kyrgyzstan will provide lessons for the international context. Even though all policy attempts in the evaluated country will definitely bare the characteristics of her own, developing countries including especially ex-Soviet communities can benefit from study recommendations.

## **2. Historical background**

Kyrgyzstan should learn from its past mistakes. In the past two decades, it has experienced two unsuccessful reforms in youth policy framework. Up until 1991, Kyrgyzstan had a highly centralized and repressive youth policy system which purely aimed to produce a Soviet citizen indoctrinated by the state and communist ideology. The Communist Youth League called Komsomol was part of the Soviet 'cultural revolution' program. Active participation and leadership in Komsomol was a requirement to pursue any kind of career within the Soviet society. This form of top-down control collapsed as a result of Gorbachev's reforms in the name of greater transparency and openness (Azimova 1988, Solnick 1998). The Soviet youth policy created a somewhat productive society at the expense of individual liberties. The failure of homogenization policy was also marked by the mismatch of the skills taught to the youth in the labor market for the changing worldwide economy. Kyrgyz politicians and administrators tried but failed to use this method of control even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which led the students participate in demonstrations in support of sitting president or a candidate that is favored by the administration of a university or a school (Khamidov 2006).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union the state had neglected the youth completely and half-heartedly employed NGOs and civic society organizations for related affairs. Many international NGOs rushed in with various political agendas promoting foreign values with no understanding of local customs and institutions. Proselytizing groups from Western and Middle Eastern countries implemented their programs targeting the Kyrgyz youth. While politicians deployed young generations in massive demonstrations to topple unwanted political actors violently, organized crime groups, drug cartels and terrorist networks have recruited the unemployed youth riddled with identity crisis and social exclusion (ICG 2003). The failure of this policy was also manifested in uncoordinated educational and leadership training opportunities offered by various foreign institutions. They influenced Kyrgyz youth who were placed in key government positions upon completion of their training and affected Kyrgyz policies to their advantage.

A better approach seems to be a balanced one: a balance between centralized hierarchy and over-decentralized randomness or anarchy. In the former, silos prevent the effective flow of information to decision makers at the top while creating perverse incentives for unreported irresponsibility and mismanagement at

the bottom (Solnick 1998). It also impedes diversity and innovation. Once balanced, the system can provide effective mechanisms for information exchange, policy learning, horizontal collaboration and sustainable action in the long term.

In 2005, after the “color revolution” in Kyrgyzstan, the youth were promised more say in the policy process. However, the government merely relocated the Bureau of Youth Affairs from one ministry to another with no policy change. This insincere government response bred the perception amongst the youth that the ruling elite that were once the cadre of the communist party during the Soviet rule are to blame for corruption and dysfunctional economy. When the regime was overthrown again in April 2010, informal youth organizations were instrumental both in perpetrating violence and securing social order. Grassroots emergence of new youth organizations coupled with the existing youth organizations changed the rules of the game in favor of themselves. This time, the government was more responsive since the interim president and former chief-of-staff supported the youth based on their belief in the western model of liberal democracy. The result was the creation of a new cabinet-level representation for the youth in the Ministry for Youth Affairs and one of the leaders of violent protests was appointed as Minister (Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty 2010).

### **3. Theoretical framework**

This paper adopts a theoretical framework enriched by a diversity of concepts and theories. Above all, it is important to note that the youth policy of a given society is designed to address problems and create socially constructed opportunities for a specific category. Based on the definition of the category by the society, some citizens get to deserve and others are excluded from public goods and services (Ingram et al. 2007). The construction and design of the policy targeted at a youth category will surely have ramifications for other groups of people who are not included in that category such as senior citizens or children. Moreover, the category of youth is usually broken down into subcategories based on socially accepted problems or opportunities such as alternative educational programs for high school dropouts, early childhood interventions for children with disabilities, or sports programs for talented young students.

While formally codified and socially constructed structures and rules are relatively easy to locate and analyze, one also needs to look at informal rules and norms that facilitate or constrain individual action with respect to youth policy. Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework provides valuable tools for capturing both formal and informal rules, monitoring systems and conflict resolution mechanisms that guide the processes of production, acquisition, appropriation and distribution of goods and services related to young people at multiple levels (Ostrom 2007). Ingram et al. (2007) use a constructivist approach to take into account ideas, beliefs, and perceptions of individuals, some theoretical concepts and tools of Ostrom (2007). IAD framework comes from theories that

focus on observable facts and their implications on individual behavior, in this case the behavior of young people. However, Ostrom (2007) is aware of this different approach (Ingram et al. 2007) and includes theories of social learning and deontic meanings to gain insights into sustainability of self-governing systems.

The IAD framework allows the use of social network analysis concepts and tools to understand the logic of actions including a diversity of participants interacting at multiple levels to produce the observed outcomes (Ostrom 2007). The framework thus facilitates the study of both formal and informal rules, norms, and enforcement mechanisms functioning at multiple levels to guide the action within Kyrgyz youth policy arena, identifying evaluative criteria via feedbacks into the system.

#### 4. Methodology

Guided by the theoretical framework composed of social constructivism, institutional analysis and development and social network analysis concepts and techniques, the study focuses on youth policy in Kyrgyzstan as a complex adaptive system. Focusing on a single case as a complex adaptive system allows a researcher to use various techniques for evaluating complex causal mechanisms that cannot be reduced to a number of variables without losing important pieces of the information about how systems function (Miller and Page 2007). For instance, the disproportionate number of young people in a society does not necessarily cause political violence; however, interaction of such a 'youth bulge' with other problems such as dwindling job opportunities in cities while many young people are moving from villages to cities and/or degradations in schools and manipulative techniques of ethnic entrepreneurs or organized crime leaders can bring about political violence and instability (Goldstone 2002, Urdal 2006, Weber 2013). Complex adaptive systems approach enables the researcher to combine social network analysis with institutional analysis, informed by social constructivist ideas of policy design.

Social network analysis allows coding qualitative data obtained from online newspaper articles, TV news report transcriptions and organizational policy analyses and program evaluation reports related to Kyrgyz youth policy. This type of data can be obtained by using Lexis Nexis program as well as search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Yandex, and Bing. The coded data can then be organized in a matrix format to analyze varieties of interactions between actors with various individual attributes using social network analysis techniques such as degree, centrality, betweenness, network density, clustering, and clique analysis using UCINET software (Borgatti et al. 2002). This type of social network analysis can also be done for each of action situations within youth policies. The study will offer exploratory ideas and a preliminary analysis.

The analysis will produce different centrality scores which indicate the density of quality relationships between policy network actors, or *nodes*. Since interpret-

ing the quality and direction of the connections should be objective, the research employed various mostly used online search engines. The top interacting agencies based on UCINET scores point out the organizations with the highest impact in a policy diagram. Therefore, the social network analysis will suggest which agencies have the most influence in youth policy frameworks and why (Borgatti et al. 2002).

## 5. Analysis and discussion

### 5.1. Action situation I: creation of the Ministry for Youth Affairs

The creation of the Ministry for Youth Affairs is an important event that is suitable for analyzing as an action situation within the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework (Ostrom 2007). The creation of new cabinet-level organizations for policy implementation usually marks an important governmental policy shift. For instance, enormous bureaucratic structure named the Department of Homeland Security was created in the United States after the terrorist events of September 11 as a response to heightened security concerns. Similarly, growing concerns about the youth unemployment and increasing participation of the youth in violent regime overthrows and pressure from the youth groups for more participation in government decision making processes have paved the way to the creation of the Ministry for Youth Affairs in Kyrgyzstan.

In this action situation there are two different types of participants: political actors and various youth organizations. Political actors include the interim president Roza Otunbayeva who has served as an ambassador to the UK and the USA/Canada as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs to previous administrations. She is familiar with workings of the Western liberal tradition and democratic institutions. Becoming the president, Otunbayeva appointed Edil Baisalov as her chief-of-staff. Baisalov was the youngest of the former opposition leaders who became the youngest member of the interim cabinet. However, he resigned to become an opposition leader again and prepared his own party for parliamentary elections. Baisalov has an active knowledge and experience of Western-funded civil society organizations and he has also lived in Sweden for a while in exile as an opposition leader (Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty 2010).

There are numerous types of youth organizations in this action situation. Organizations funded by Western governments and donors mostly run a chapter of a bigger scale global or regional youth organization. There are various Western governments or donor-funded NGOs such as Open Society Institute, United Nations Development Program, Soros Fund Kyrgyzstan, Central Asian Free Market Institute, USAID, etc operating in Kyrgyzstan with local youth initiatives or projects (Hozyainova 2008). There are others emerging from grassroots movements either before or during the overthrow of the regime. These are Bishkek Business Club, Egemendik Association, April 7th, April Relief Fund, which raised donations to help the victims of the violence in April 2010.

So, while all interim government leaders were former opposition leaders who were products of the Soviet cadre development programs and who held various offices at various times during Akaev and Bakiev administrations before becoming dissidents, some of the youth organizations were already functioning mostly through western subsidies. Youth organizations were genuinely anxious about the situation of the country and motivated to contribute to the development policies. However, political actors might have been motivated by the issue of legitimacy of youth organizations. Until the referendum in June 27th, there was a power vacuum in the country and the interim government did not have legitimacy. Creating the Ministry and working with the youth was a political strategy to use them in their attempts to legitimize the government rule.

It is also important to mention the role of the youth who actively participated in violence mass protests that overthrew the government. The head of the new ministry Aliyasbek Alymkulov was one of the youth leaders who were heavily injured twice. He was declared a hero in the aftermath of the events, the participants became all heroes and the fallen were declared martyrs. These groups used informal associations such as local geography based social networks. Although they usually served functions like leisure or sport activities, self-organized groups established later became the People's Volunteer Patrols who protected neighborhoods, businesses, and government buildings when the police became dysfunctional as a result of the revolution. This group then formed a political party called Patriot whose leaders competed for office during the October 6 elections in 2010 (Ferghana.Ru 2010).

It therefore seems to have been an important strategy for the politicians to appeal to the youth during the election campaign process. The creation of the new ministry solidified the commitment of ex-Soviet politicians to include the youth input in public policy making. The youth organizations actively participated in the draft of the new constitutions which transformed Kyrgyzstan to a parliamentary regime by referendum in June 2010. Although the leverage of youth input in policy making is dubious the youth started to make demands from politicians to create participatory mechanisms and bring down the threshold of 35 years to become a president in the country (Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty 2010). The real input of the youth in terms of the development of the country seems to have had less priority in the eyes of politicians.

Multiple discussion forums organized by youth, civil society organizations and the government have become the medium of information exchange. Moreover, TV, newspapers and internet have been used to spread information about the aims of both sides. Politicians wanted the youth to vote for their party and support the interim government while the youth organizations pressed for more participatory role and transparency in governmental decision making. However, spread by word of mouth through local and informal channels seems to have played an important role in the election campaigns.

The youth were increasingly discontent due to high unemployment rates and corrupt schemes of the former government. That is why, when disparate opposi-

tion elements were motivated to overthrow the government, some youth groups were part of it. Even the ones who were actually not restless decided to get their share after the mass protests overthrew the government. The new ministry is a great opportunity for youth organizations to represent themselves in the cabinet and thereby influence the policy making. However, the budget of the ministry is still not set and the structure of the ministry is not well-articulated.

For political actors, there are both benefits and costs associated with working with youth organizations. On the one hand, they can use youth organizations in deploying during protests and demonstrations, as a base for legitimacy of the government and political consumers during election seasons. On the other hand, the involvement of youth organization in the policy process will push for more transparency in governmental decision making and allocation of resources for the youth that might undermine corrupt politicians efforts of personal profit maximization, clientelism, and patronage.

Competitive elections and efforts to build coalitions and reach consensus to govern the country might lead to a more participatory and transparent governance system. It is therefore important to approach the youth problem from multi-level governance system perspective through which the youth policy arena is consisted of multiple actors acting at multiple levels based on multiple rules, norms, and strategies that shape their behaviors. This perspective can not only account for capturing interdependent action interventions and the feedback that contexts bear on those action interventions, but also create opportunities for the development state with minimal capacity to convene multiple actors and stakeholders.

### *5.2. Action situation II: mobilization against OSCE deployment*

This section is about the mobilization of youth organizations against the decision of the interim government to request a deployment of police advisory mission by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Action situation II will uncover the patterns of interactions among the participants and for evaluating the impacts of the pattern, durations, content, and type of interaction on the process of policy learning and changes within the youth policy system.

The governance of young people is crucial especially at times of political uncertainty and instability. The Ministry for Youth Affairs is a lesson learnt for the Kyrgyz Government. Evaluating Kyrgyz youth policy as a complex adaptive system will clarify how policy action influences and is influenced by different intervening factors during the process of policy learning and policy changes at multiple levels (Miller and Page 2007). Employing concepts and measurement tools of networks will enhance understanding of the impact of the structural positions of actors in the network of communication on the policy change outcomes (Jackson 2008).

In a six-week time duration one month prior to the October 6 Elections in Kyrgyzstan, many youth organizations came together under the umbrella of Ak Kyzmat Youth Federation (AKYF) for a collective action: to challenge the interim

government decision to bring in international police force units. As it is seen from media reports, this organization was emergent and temporary; its leader announced that it will be suspended once its mission is accomplished (Carnegie Endowment, 2010). During the zenith of the conflict on the North-South fault line in Kyrgyz politics, the youth organizations have declared that they had no political goal.

Lack of response from international organizations and outside powers during the conflict in June has bred deep distrust among the Kyrgyz youth against international institutions and governments. Kyrgyz interim government has asked for help of the Russian government and Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) – a counterpart of NATO in the former-Soviet bloc, as well as the UN and OSCE in quelling violence in the south. However, no organizations or governments were there when it was most needed. On top of this let-down, bitter discourse and rhetoric on national media has repeatedly pointed to the case of Kosovo, which produced strong reactions in the Kyrgyz youth opposition against foreign police seemingly intending to encroach upon sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kyrgyzstan, as North-South divide has already become very acute.

Ak Kyzmat Youth Federation (AKYF) claimed to have 26 youth organizations under its umbrella in the south of the country, but there is no information about the identities, missions, and activities of those organizations. AKYF also declared that it had its national headquarters in the capital city Bishkek. Its main activities included collecting 35,000 signatures against the interim government decision to bring in the OSCE police force, sending a letter of appeal to the interim government, organizing protest rallies in the center of the city of Osh in the south and in Bishkek in the north. It opened tents in the center of Osh and Bishkek, and promised that the youth would remain there protesting every day until the decision was repealed. They also sent an ultimatum to the government that if the president did not revoke the decision by September 10, they would start blocking strategic highways and seizing airports. AKYF announced suspension of its activities on September 12 after the interim government announced postponement of its decision to bring in OSCE consultative police force to advise Kyrgyz police in the south (BBC 2010).

Based on news reports, AKYF had interacted with the youth wings of four major political parties – Ak Shumkar, Ar Namys, Ata Jurt, and Communist Party. There were also indications that athletic and sports organizations had mobilized during the protest events. Moreover, there were civil society organizations in the form of NGOs which usually have initiatives on the youth, in addition to their core programs. UCINET software (Borgatti et al. 2002) was deployed to figure out the most interacting agents during the events based on media reports. The software produced a list of eight organizations that had the top centrality scores. Centrality means to have the most meaningful relationships within a selected environment. The complete list of organizations UCINET is in Table 1.

**Table 1. Organizations with top degree of centrality.**

AKYF	Ak Kyzmat Youth Federation
ANYW	Ar Namys Part Youth Wing
ASYW	Ak Shumkar Party Youth Wing
AJYW	Ata Jurt Party Youth Wing
CPYW	Communist Party Youth Wing
IG	Interim Government
PGK	Prosecutor General of Kyrgyzstan
NGOs	Other Civil Society Organizations

In this network, actors have presumably interacted to support a common cause. There is no data in news reports about a specific exchange of resources and information among various organizations because of the highly politicized environment. However, some newspapers briefly and implicitly mention the role of political parties and their leaders being actively involved in organizing the collective action. The prosecutor general of Kyrgyzstan also opposed OSCE deployment that if stating Kyrgyzstan may have to conduct a referendum on this matter. When it comes to the interaction between the youth organizations and the government, the content of exchange of information in this network was about national unity and sovereignty of Kyrgyzstan.

The means of communication included letters of appeal, demanding appearance and address to the youth by mayors, governors and the president in front of mass protest rallies. The demands of mobilized youth organizations in the form of ultimatum were successful. Political parties reached out to young people and communicated their positions using the youth wings of their parties. While political youth party wings were still active, Ak Kyzmat Youth Federation has suspended its activities, so that it was not used for political campaigning, as its leader claimed, during the run-up to the parliamentary elections (BBC, 2010).

A major lesson from this action situation for the policy change within the youth policy system is perhaps the unexpected dynamism level of youth mobilization for collective action. The Kyrgyz Ministry for Youth Affairs should channel the energy of the youth into constructive and participatory projects to solve problems in Kyrgyz society. It is also important in parts of the society where the unemployed youth has become part of organized crime groups in the form of sports clubs. Positive and constructive projects organized by various actors in the youth policy governance system guided by the ministry can attract the youth away from destructive activities to positively contributing to the society.

The new ministry was only a nominal, cosmetic touch with no real substantive implications. It has only organized national and regional youth congresses in four provinces in addition to organizing sports and cultural events financed by international donors (OSCE 2010). Many youth organizations have already started complaining about the government's neglect of the youth in participation in governance.

## **6. Collaborative youth policy mechanism**

To address these issues policy mechanisms should be considered under the approach of multi-level governance in which the Ministry of Youth Affairs plays the role of a convener while varieties of societal actors play important roles in the collaborative implementation of the policy (Eliassen and Sitter, 2008). At the local level, the local government needs to set up a youth committee that is made up of representatives from the local government, youth wings of the local political party branches, schools and universities, local religious and civil society organizations including youth organizations themselves and local businesses. Similar youth committees need to be set up at the province level to represent various local youth committees and province-level organizations, from civil society, government and business sectors.

These all come together at the national level with the ministry playing the role of the convener, while guiding the policy with a well-established, unified national framework. A team of representatives from the ministry needs to participate in international youth policy coordination and harmonization initiatives set up by the organizations such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Additional policy coordination mechanisms at the level of Central Asia as well as Ferghana Valley would definitely advance goals in deradicalizing the youth and nurturing them into positive force in closely knit communities of the divided region. Lessons can be learned from the European Commission and the Council of Europe in their projects to increase intercultural collaboration and exchange, which is the key for creating productive citizens and harmonious societies (Wallace and Bendit 2009).

There are also numerous systemic obstacles to this process of policy change. Low government capacity and lack of political support will constitute serious challenges. However, with serious activism from the demand side, this problem can be solved. Similarly, government corruption and the recent involvement of organized crime groups in politics are major concerns. Scarcity of resources and the corrupt system of government will be a substantial hurdle. The effect of corrupt system can perhaps be mitigated by ascribing symbolic value to the ministry as a locomotive for social progress and thus increase its public visibility and get more funding and legitimacy. The support of the cabinet and the Prime Minister will be imperative. This would also be helpful in tying the youth policy to the overall development policy of Kyrgyzstan.

This cannot be achieved without investing in renovating schools, curriculum and building libraries and multicultural centers. International donors could provide some assistance to build the infrastructure. But more importantly, an inclusive national ideology within which the youth would strive to become a contributing part of the society is a must. Divisionary and tribal features of Kyrgyz people should be de-emphasized in the history curriculum and more inclusive and pluralist ideas must be emphasized. Without such framework, it is difficult to guide the emotions and ideas of the youth.

The ongoing urbanization and labor migrations have been creating obstacles for the survival of customary organizations. Interpersonal trust and participation in neighborhood associations seem to have declined as people have become more materialistic and urbanized. This also seems to have affected master-apprentice relationships, and labor migration has diminished the size of these kinds of organizations. There seems to be an opportunity for a change in youth policy in Kyrgyzstan after the destructive events of April-June 2010. The study challenged perspectives of government and civil society groups on their assumptions of viable youth policy in Kyrgyzstan, while providing alternative approaches within the current corrupt political system.

### **7. Conclusions and recommendations**

The primary goal of this paper is to communicate the importance of youth policy in the development of Kyrgyz society and promote a broader understanding of it by the policymakers as well as the general public. Kyrgyz leaders have made several mistakes in the past, and learning from those mistakes can be the key to successful transformation. First, it is very important to tie the youth policy to the national budget. Youth organizations as well as partner organizations need to organize themselves in the collective action of lobbying for a specific allocation of resources in the national budget, with a corollary of creating an effective watchdog mechanism for the open and transparent use of the allocated resources.

These resources need to be used both for major national level programs and specific programs targeted at especially vulnerable subgroups. The latter kinds of programs need to focus on identifying and disrupting youth gangs, deradicalizing the youth participating in organized crime and terrorist organizations and helping them find jobs in collaboration with local businesses. Targeting interventions at important groups with respect to their degree, centrality and betweenness measures can prove more effective results.

Second, a major educational program needs to be established to prepare civil servants with the ethos of professional public administration. A good example is Kazakhstan's Bolashak program which sends 3,000 students annually to the world's top 500 universities. If the state budget does not allow this kind of a major initiative, it should at least coordinate the existing small initiatives of foreign governments. Establishing a transparent decision making process for selecting students to send abroad through the existing foreign government-sponsored programs needs to be established. Moreover, engineering and other technical skill-based programs must be preferred instead of law, economics, and politics. Most of the unemployed youth in Kyrgyzstan hold useless degrees from those fields.

Third, investment in infrastructure is vital for the future of the young people. The creation of Youth Centers for training and counseling as well as libraries and resource centers especially in disadvantaged communities is crucial. Lessons can be learned from the Nigerian case (UN Habitat 2010). Collaboration with the local

businesses is the key in training the youth and finding them jobs in their communities. Some initiatives furthering entrepreneurial spirit among the youth as well as career day initiatives with businesses can be useful. In addition, next year can be announced by the president as a Year of the Youth in Kyrgyzstan to raise awareness of the importance of investing in the youth for the development of Kyrgyz society, as did neighboring Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan Times 2008).

In sum, the study utilized a quantitative technique to explain a chaotic revolution atmosphere and its large-scale actors. Complex adaptive systems theory mixed with social network software is a good choice understanding similar situations. Youth organizations played an important role in studied events and will continue to do so in the upcoming incidents in Kyrgyzstan and other former Soviet countries. The studies in the future should put forward more apparent relationships with clearer cause and effect correlations. Analyzing and adopting more effective youth policies will contribute to development at national and global scales.

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