

LIDER: Youth Advocacy and Social Networks Program

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In the Russian Far East (RFE), economic, health, and social problems stemming from the political transition of the 1990s prevent youth from becoming productive and active members of society. High levels of unemployment, chronic disease, substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS infection contribute to increased crime and outward migration. Youth do not have incentives to build livelihoods or contribute in a meaningful way to the development of their communities. However, recent legislation expanding local self-governance and establishing a program of economic and social development for the RFE has presented an opportunity to address these issues. Leveraging this momentum, Winrock International's LIDER program will strive to link young people more directly with the communities in which they live and boost their participation in local governance and advocacy. LIDER will focus on promoting youth health and economic well-being, piloting effective methods for engaging and serving youth, and replicating successful models. At the heart of the program are the values expressed in the Russian acronym LIDER: Leadership, Initiative, Action, Unity, and Results.



The Winrock LIDER team will facilitate new and strengthen existing partnerships between youth NGOs, government, and the private sector. Winrock will mobilize and mentor young leaders, empowering them with networking skills and ensuring support from respected government and community leaders. A Youth Advisory Council (YAC) in each krai will lead the program, inspiring its evolution and sustaining its outcomes in RFE communities. YACs will work alongside youth NGOs and other LIDER partners to gain insight on youth issues, youth-pertinent legislation, available resources, and gaps in youth activism.

LIDER will focus on improving health and social services through a solutions-based, three-fold approach: strengthening NGOs in organizational and technical areas; encouraging partnerships between NGOs, government, and the private sector to help youth advocate for changes in legislation and policy; and replicating successful programs and services that engage and serve RFE youth. Twenty grants will be competitively awarded to NGOs to support these multi-sector partnerships, encourage civil society activism and services targeted to youth at the community level, and promote programs that encourage youth to lead active and healthy lives. LIDER will also include a pilot short-film contest to promote health and well-being and a pilot internship program to build employment skills. Throughout these efforts, LIDER will focus on building the capacity of youth-led NGOs, drawing on more than six years of Winrock experience building NGO and trainer capacity in the RFE and utilizing Winrock's extensive pool of Russian expert trainers.

Winrock's implementing partner, the Far Eastern Scientific Center for Local Self-Governance, will organize and conduct advocacy training and coordinate community-based advocacy activities with grantees. Youth leadership exchanges will support the professional development of young activists and the provision of services to youth, as will stipends awarded for their community programs. Innovations, creativity, and volunteerism will be specifically encouraged. Over the life of the program, LIDER activities will engage at least 20,000 youth ages 14-20, creating eight multi-sector partnerships, strengthening 16 local NGOs, introducing five changes to youth policies, initiating 20 new NGO programs or activities through leadership exchange participants, involving 2,000 youth in stipend-recipients' local programs, and supporting ten new active and health life programs.

Implemented by:



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