

Young People Reluctant to Move to Country

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Appealing to the patriotic spirit of young people in Kazakhstan to work in rural rather than urban areas the countryside will have little effect unless the government can offer them real financial incentives as well.

During a conference on agriculture on March 5, President Nursultan Nazarbaev called on university graduates to go and work in rural areas and “help their people”.

The president proposed setting up a popular movement called “Help the Villages”, and instructed local authorities to provide housing on preferential terms for doctors and teachers who decide to work in rural areas after graduating.

Observers say the focus should be on financial incentives, rather than Soviet-style sloganeering.

“The days when people went to open up the Virgin Lands and were moved by slogans have long gone. Now society is more individualised. Young people are pragmatic and don’t see any altruism in this society,” said Zinaida Savina, an education expert.

Savina suggests that rural areas short of professionals could pay their own young people to go and study, on condition they come back and work there.

Human rights activist Rozlana Taukina believes incentives should be designed to make working in rural areas even more attractive than urban life.

“Young qualified professionals should be paid four times what their urban counterparts receive. They should get comfortable accommodation... This alone will encourage them to work in the country rather than search for a job in town even if it is not related to their qualification,” she said.

(News Briefing Central Asia draws comment and analysis from a broad range of political observers across the region.)

Location: [Kazakhstan](#)

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