



#NYP2030

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

2020-2030

DRAFT

A decade to accelerate positive youth development outcomes

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i. FOREWORD BY THE MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The 6th Administration is set apart by President Cyril Ramaphosa's pronouncement of a newly established Department for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. The Department is strategically placed to lead, support, coordinate, monitor and evaluate implementation of youth development across various sectors in all spheres of society. To provide this leadership, one of the department's key mandates is to develop an over-arching youth development policy and legislation.

In light of the above, the process of developing the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2020-2030, came just after the conclusion of the 25-Year Review. As a newly appointed Minister, I immediately established a multi-sectoral Technical Reference Team (TRT). The basis of having various sectors represented, is due to the fact that the NYP 2030 is not a government policy, it is the society's commitment to youth development. It had considered the findings of the 25 Year Review as well as the new national priorities of the 6th Administration.

It is worth noting that South Africa's NYP is being reviewed amidst our economy being downgraded, recession and a ravaging Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, which created chaos all over the world - threatening lives and livelihoods. Due to the pandemic, policymaking has become complex and tricky. We had to change the course of our direction, lower the base from which we plan, and all our baselines are now largely accommodating the pandemic reality. As a result of this pandemic, health has become our number one priority. We must cushion the general population, and in particular the important youth demographic, against the negative impact of this pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic the youth were already marginalized, but the pandemic has further exacerbated their dire situation. Their education was disrupted, many have become socially isolated, anxious, and depressed due to lockdown restrictions. The prevalence of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) also increased; poor nutrition dwindled availability of healthy foods; there was a general lack of access to sexual health and reproductive services; and those who were looking for jobs could no longer do so and were thus further locked out of the economy; whilst youth-owned businesses suffered income loss which threatened young people's livelihoods.

Even more concerning is that the 2020 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement revealed that the country's economy is expected to contract by 7.8% this year, with job losses being more severe. South Africa's economy is unlikely to go back to normal in the next two to three years. We welcome all health and socio-economic measures announced by the President to deal with the pandemic, including interventions within the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan. These will support vulnerable households, businesses and individuals who have been hit hard by the pandemic. Having been hit hard by the impact, our youth will also benefit.

To all stakeholders from across the country who participated in our journey of coming up with a new NYP for the period 2020-2030, your commitment is appreciated. Although there were interruptions of the consultations process by the pandemic, more stakeholders were engaged virtually. I would like to acknowledge the dedicated and tireless work of all those involved in coordinating this work, especially the National Youth Development Branch and all members of the TRT. The participation of government departments has ensured that the policy is balanced and responds to the gaps identified. The invaluable contribution made by the National Youth Development Coordinating Forum, the civil society organisations as our social partners, academia, research organisations, business, the youth serving and youth led organisations, as well as the youth formations and student organisations, is highly commendable. I hope that this youth policy will serve as reference for all young people and relevant stakeholders within the youth development space. Our collective effort in making youth development a reality, provides a sound base for a prosperous South Africa and a better life for all.

Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and
Persons with Disabilities

ii. FOREWORD BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In South Africa, the youth constitute more than a third of the population, with those within the age group of 15 to 34 constituting 34.7% of the population (2020 Statistics South Africa Mid-term Population Survey). Bearing this in mind, young people continue to face serious challenges, and key amongst them is the problem of structural unemployment. It is not an understatement that this challenge has reached crisis proportions – the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the first quarter of 2020 indicate that unemployment stood at 30.1%, which was the highest jobless rate since 2008. More worryingly, the unemployment rate of youth aged 25 to 34 was more than double that of the age group 45 to 54 (37.3% vs 17.5%). It gets worse when you look at the unemployment rate of the youth between 15 and 24 years, which now stood at 59.0% in Q1 of 2020, implying that for every 10 youth almost 6 were unemployed.

The above picture is gloomier, when we consider the staggering numbers of those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) at approximately 3.5 million in ages between 15 and 24. The unemployment rate is typically higher for young women, with youth in rural areas facing different challenges from those in urban areas. In addition, young people with disabilities continue to face enormous challenges in the labour market as they are more likely to be socially excluded and marginalized. These are not just statistics, start by putting faces to all these numbers, then the problem becomes more real. These are people with hopes, dreams, and capacities, who could be contributing to their communities and country. The situation of these youth has been made worse by the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020, which is threatening their livelihoods and survival, especially those youth with underlying morbidities. The context is more complex by taking into cognisance the sharp but hopefully short global recession which is underway.

This National Youth Policy (NYP) 2030, proposes various policy imperatives to strengthen development, empowerment, and resilience of our youth during and post the pandemic era. It advocates for the need for key players within society, namely: government, private and civil society sectors, to intensify their commitment in keeping youth development as a priority. Even as the different sectors respond to the pandemic, it is crucial that our work is focused on ensuring responsiveness and illustrating positive outcomes, results, and long-lasting impacts. We believe that by engaging young people as active role players, we will be on the right path to restore and accelerate their socio-economic empowerment. A key response and recovery strategy is to ensure institutional capacity to accelerate youth development and partnership between government, business, civil society and young people. This is crucial as the country acts with speed to deal decisively with persistent challenges facing the youth development space, in order to reap the benefits of increased youth population and thus take South Africa forward.

I am very pleased that the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities in reviewing the NYP, extensively consulted with the youth as well as youth-led and youth-serving organisations across sectors. Those consultations were done in the spirit of intergovernmental relations, and an endeavour to build a strong social compact that would ensure that the review of the NYP is a collaborative effort, built on inputs from all sectors of society. This, would without doubt, ensure accountability of all key role players to the youth. I personally commit myself, to support the DWYPD's National Youth Development Branch to ensure that it discharges the monitoring and evaluation function of tracking implementation of the NYP 2030 appropriately.

Deputy Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth
and Persons with Disabilities

iii. Acknowledgements by the Director-General

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD) is grateful for the leadership provided by National Youth Development branch in formulating the National Youth Policy 2020-2030. The enormous contribution of drafting the base document and quality assuring the document made by Dr R. Bernice Hlagala; Mr Emmanuel Kganakga; Mr Calvin Mkasi; Mr Rudzani Neshunzhi; Ms Aluwani Mudau; Ms Nhlanhla Manzini and Mr Nkululeko Mahlangu is acknowledged. The Department also appreciates the consistent partnership of the United Nations Population Fund Agency (UNFPA) under stewardship of the Country Director, Ms Beatrice Mutali, Ms Tlangelani Shilubane and Ms Precious Magogodi. A special thank you goes to the members of the Technical Reference Team, which was responsible for overseeing this project and ensuring consultations with the relevant stakeholders. The TRT representatives include: Ms Lato Mabaso (COGTA); Ms Laila Ncwana (DTIC); Ms Pebetse Maleka (National Treasury); Ms Hanlie Nel and Mr Fanani Manungu (DPSA); Ms Rebecca Sikhosana (DHET); Ms Kgomo Moalusi and Mr Surprise Mokgope (DWYPD); Ms Malebo Mekoa, Ms Sandisiwe Tsotetsi (NYDA); Mr Thembinkosi Josopu (SAYC); Ms Sino Moabalobelo (BUSA); Mr Luvuyo Mannyi and Mr Thobela Maponya (BBC); Dr KJN Karel (UNISA); Prof Arianne De Lanoy (UCT – SALDRU); and Dr Raymond Raselekoane (UNIVEN). The service providers from the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) - Drs Mokhantšo Makoe, Precious Tirivhanu, Mathias Fubah Alubafi and Ntombizodumo Mkwana, also worked tirelessly to draft and update this document.

To ensure ownership and buy in, there were broad and extensive consultations sessions with youth focal points in national line function departments; Offices of the Premiers in the nine provinces; municipalities; civil society and private sector organisations as well as youth themselves through both physical and virtual means. The open and candid discussion from many consultation platforms, culminated into vital contributions by all these key stakeholders, are acknowledged. They all brought to the table, considerable insights into the issues affecting young men and women in South Africa and enriched the policy document. The Department counts on all stakeholders, individually and collectively, to continue sharing information and popularising this policy, to reach out to as many young people as possible.

The NYP 2030 is underpinned by the following five policy pillars, with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) being identified as the cross-cutting theme across all these policy pillars:

- ✓ Quality Education, Skills and Second Chances;
- ✓ Economic Transformation, Entrepreneurship and Job Creation;
- ✓ Physical and Mental Health Promotion including mitigation against the pandemic/s;
- ✓ Social Cohesion and Nation Building; and
- ✓ Effective and Responsive Youth Development Machinery.

To effectively implement the NYP2030, the Department will develop an M&E system. We count on all stakeholders to come on board, in setting high level output, outcome, and impact indicators to track implementation of the NYP 2030. The Minister and Deputy Minister in the Presidency responsible for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, reaffirmed their commitment as political champions for youth development, to continue overseeing acceleration of implementation. Finally, we urge all stakeholders to continue prioritising empowerment of young people and use the NYP 2030 as an essential advocacy tool, which seeks to make positive sustainable change in the lives of our youth.

Director-General for the Department of Women,
Youth and Persons with Disabilities

1. WHY THE NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY FOR SOUTH AFRICA?

The National Youth Policy for 2020-2030 (NYP 2030) is a cross-sectoral policy aimed at effecting positive youth development outcomes for young people at local, provincial, and national levels in South Africa. It is developed by DWYPD collaborating with multiple stakeholders and young people. It is the policy for all the country's diverse youth, developed with the intention to redress the wrongs and injustices of the past and to deal decisively with the persistent as well as new and emerging challenges they are facing. The policy is being reviewed while the entire world is responding to Covid-19 pandemic which had negative psycho-socio-economic impacts on everyone including young people. The President announced the Economic Reconstruction Recovery Plan to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic. The policy recognises that reprioritization of resources will incorporate youth development taking into consideration some of the unintended consequences of the interventions for the pandemic on youth education, economic participation, physical and mental health.

This youth policy for 2020-2030 builds on South Africa's first and second NYPs, which covered the period 2009–2014 and 2015-2020, respectively. It improves upon and updates the previous policies by highlighting the current and new challenges that South Africa's youth face. It takes into cognisance the historical realities that the country face, mainly sluggish economic growth and the challenges of Africa and the rest of the developing world. The 2020-2030 NYP also identifies the potential human capital inherent in young people as an untapped potential that should be harnessed for the benefit of the whole society.

The National Youth Policy (2020-2030) is informed by various national and international policy and legislative frameworks. National frameworks include the South Africa's Constitution, the National Development Plan (NDP 2030), National Youth Service Framework (2002), National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) Act No. 54 of 2008, NYP 2009-2014, NYP 2015-2020, mid-term evaluation report on implementation of the NYP 2015-2020, 25 Year Review; and the Economic Reconstruction Recovery Plan. International frameworks include the African Youth Charter (2006), the United Nations World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and beyond (1995), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African Youth Charter (2006), SADC Business plan and strategy, Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment, and various other national and international instruments.

The NDP is anchored on the Constitution's vision of a prosperous, democratic, non-sexist, non-racist and equal society. By 2030, the plan seeks to create an inclusive society that builds on the capabilities of its active citizenry. It is built on the belief that South Africa's youth have the capacity to reduce poverty and inequality over the next decade. This requires a new approach –one that moves away from passive citizenry towards a socially and economically inclusive society in which people are active champions of their own development, supported by an enabling environment.

This policy proposes interventions that facilitate positive development, for young people as individuals and as members of families, communities, the South African society and the globe by recognising that if young people's innovative ability, skills, energy, knowledge, and expertise are well harnessed, South Africa can be lifted out of the persisting triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. In this context, the NYP 2030 invests in enhancement of young people's capabilities to transform the economy and the country.

As part of the implementation mechanism, an Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS) and the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework will be developed within four (4) months following approval of the policy. The IYDS will articulate in detail how the various role players will integrate their efforts in implementing identified interventions. The M&E framework, will provide a high level set of indicators to track implementation of the policy by implementing agents across sectors in all spheres of government. The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD) will perform its regulatory role of monitoring, evaluation and auditing the NYP 2030, thereby ensuring accountability to the youth.

To enable young people to develop and realise their potential, the policy avoids quick fixes that divert attention from the complex institutional and systemic issues. It should thus not be seen as a panacea for all youth development challenges, but rather as an advocacy tool that aims to ensure that across all levels of society, youth development is prioritised. In this case, the policy articulates the need to accelerate implementation by scaling up the various interventions that have high impact in order to reach many young South Africans. This is attained by introducing new interventions, strengthening existing ones, and partnering with key players in scaling and implementing. Tangible commitments, resourcing, action, and accountability by all stakeholders, working in partnership with young people continue to be vital.

2. DEFINITION AND THE PROFILE OF SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH

The NYPs 2009, 2015 and 2030 define young people as those aged between 14 and 35 years. Although much has changed for young people since the advent of democracy in 1994, the motivation for the age limit of 35 years has not yet changed due to the need to fully address historical imbalances in the country. This youth definition is consistent with the one contained in the African Youth Charter as those between 15 and 35 years (African Union Commission, 2006). According to Statistics South Africa (2019), youth aged between 15 and 34 years constitute over 37 % of the country's population (20 640 722).

Young people represent a powerful resource for the country, provided they are supported and enabled to become active members of society. The NDP 2030 states that: "...having a relatively young population can be advantageous, provided the majority of working-age individuals are gainfully employed. The challenge is to convert this into a demographic dividend. This will only be possible if the number of working-age individuals can be employed in productive activities" (2012: 98). Yet socio-cultural, political and economic norms continue to sideline young South Africans, treating political and economic participation as the prerogative of older people, hence a continued need for policies and implementation frameworks that pay deliberate attention to youth's concerns.

In conceptualising/designing interventions for the youth, youth-targeted interventions are needed to enable all young South Africans to actively participate and engage in socio-cultural, economic, and political life of the society. Therefore, like the past NYPs, the NYP 2030 recognises that young people are not a homogenous group, and thus adopts a differentiated approach, advocating for targeted interventions according to age cohorts (e.g. adolescent vs. older youth), racial group, gender, disability status, geographical location, educational status, sexual orientation, vulnerability and risks. These specific youth groups within the broad age band of "youth" address their specific challenges and needs. Such a targeted approach will address specific needs for various groups, for example LGBTQI+ sexual orientation in youth may lead to barriers in economic and social exclusion related to structural inequality and social stigma (Nyeck, Shepherd, Sehoole, Ngcobozi & Conron, 2019). This differentiated approach makes it possible for the NYP to take other definitions stipulated in relevant legislation and policies into account, such as the definition of a child as a person up to the age of 18 years in the Children's Act (2005), adolescent and youth health policy framework, and the criminal justice system's reference to young offenders as those between the ages of 14 and 25 years as well as distinction between a young person and an "adult youth". While there are some barriers and policy measures that are broadly applicable to all youth groups, there is a need to vary the scales and nature of support for different youth target groups.

3. STRATEGIC THRUST

3.1. Vision

The vision of the NYP 2030 is:

“an integrated, holistic and sustainable youth development, conscious of historical imbalances, current realities, and diversities in building capacities for young people, so that they can in turn contribute to building a better life for all”.

3.2. Mission

Promote positive youth development outcomes in addressing the needs of young people;

3.3. Goal

The goal of the NYP 2030 is to enhance the capabilities of young people, so that they are responsible and contributing members of their communities and society.

3.4. Objectives

The objectives of the NYP 2030 are to:

- a) Integrate youth development into the mainstream of policies, programmes and the national budget;
- b) Accelerate young people’s access to quality social, political, and economic opportunities;
- c) Improve coherence and reach of youth development service providers;
- d) Facilitate young people’s smooth transition into independence;
- e) Inculcate and strengthen a culture of patriotism among young people;
- f) Strengthen youth development institutions in delivering coordinated packages of services; and
- g) Collaborate with youth in building a better South Africa, Africa, and a better world.

3.5. Desired policy outcome

The desired outcome is empowered youth equipped with information, knowledge and skills that enable them to seize opportunities and effectively take responsibility in making a meaningful contribution to the development of a democratic and prosperous South Africa.

3.6 Values and principles

Youth development in South Africa has been shaped by the long history of struggle against exclusion and discrimination. Throughout our history, young people have acted as a collective conscience and drivers of transformation, actively participating in the development of a socially inclusive and economically empowered society. Youth development is guided by the vision of a non-racial and non-sexist society that is being built through transformation, reconstruction, and development. This makes the following values and principles to be critical for our youth as espoused within the NYP 2030:

3.6.1 Values:

The youth policy promotes the following values:

- **Change agents.** Young people are instruments and agents of their own development. Young people should be considered as agents of change, not passive recipients of government services.
- **Inherent worth and dignity of youth.** The provision of services should reflect respect for the worth and dignity of young people. Young people should be supported to develop their inherent strengths and potential.
- **Moral regeneration.** The promotion of moral and spiritual regeneration in line with the values of *Ubuntu* and the ethic of care.
- **Social beings.** Young people are social beings who belong to a range of significant networks at local, national, regional, and global levels. It is critical that these networks are strengthened to become essential support systems to young people and are intentionally youth-focused in effectively addressing their needs.
- **Youth empowerment.** Interventions should empower young people as assets for national development by raising their confidence so that they can contribute meaningfully to their own development and that of the broader society.
- **Equality.** Interventions should redress imbalances across race, gender and disability and adopt youth lens.

3.6.2 Principles:

The policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Accessibility.** Young women and men of diverse backgrounds should have access to resources and services crucial to their holistic development.
- **Assets-based sustainable development.** Young people's assets, potential, capacity, and capability must be maximised so that they can respond effectively and efficiently to challenges, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- **Diversity.** Interventions must acknowledge the diverse backgrounds from which young people come and celebrate the roles played by different agents of socialisation, tradition, culture, and spirituality in developing young women and men.
- **Gender-responsiveness.** Specific actions that promote gender equality to ensure that young women are equal partners to young men must be implemented to address gender-based disparities in political, socio-economic, and cultural settings.
- **Holistic.** Coherence within the youth development sector needs to ensure that the various needs of a young person are met and that the experience of accessing the services they need, when they need them, is as seamless and comprehensive as possible, ensuring that they gain the necessary knowledge, skills and experience required to ensure a smooth transition into adult life.
- **Integration.** Various role players, such as government, civil society, and the private sector, need to coordinate their efforts to ensure greater impact in supporting the development of young people.
- **Non-discriminatory.** Youth development initiatives should not discriminate the youth based on age, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, or any other form of discrimination as enshrined in the Constitution.
- **Participation and inclusion.** Service departments/ institutions must design policies, strategies, and programmes with young people, share information, create opportunities, and involve them in decision-making as active participants in their own development and the development of the country.
- **Redress.** It is important to recognise the different ways in which young people have been affected and continue to be affected by injustices and must be addressed through equitable policies, programmes, and resource allocation.
- **Resilience.** Youth development should be about aiding youth to recover from any shocks or difficulties by finding available opportunities.
- **Responsiveness.** Youth development service providers should respond to the needs and concerns of young people and act primarily in their best interests, so that they can make positive societal and global impact.
- **Social cohesion.** Youth development interventions should promote inclusion of young people as a significant part of societal structures by involving them in democratic and nation-building activities.
- **Transparency.** Institutions and organisations involved in youth development should operate in a transparent and accountable manner.
- **Youth service.** Young people should be involved in meaningful activities which benefit communities, while developing their sense of patriotism and their abilities through learning and service.

4. PROGRESS MADE AGAINST THE PREVIOUS POLICIES

Youth development and empowerment forms a key focus of government's interventions. The 25-year review report highlights the major achievements in relation to the five (5) prioritised strategic focus areas of the 2009-2014 and 2015-2020 youth policies, namely: (i) Education, skills and second chances; (ii) Economic participation and transformation; (iii) Health and well-being; (iv) Social cohesion and nation building; and (v) Effective and responsive youth development machinery.

When assessing progress in the area of Education, Skills and Second chances, the intention is to improve access to quality education which unlocks the potential of young people by building their capabilities. South Africa made gains in promoting access to education and training. This is evidenced by educational attainment outcomes, which continue to improve. About 52% of 24-year-olds in the country have completed Grade 12, although this is still low compared to 70% in most developing countries. The national pass rate for the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination increased from 75.1% in 2017 to 78.2% in 2018, and a further 81,3% pass rate was attained in 2019, the highest pass percentage recorded in the last 25 years¹. From 1994 to 2016, there was an increase in the number of learners with post-school qualifications from 1.7 million to 3.6 million. Furthermore, between 1994 and 2016, enrolments in universities almost doubled, with an increase from 495 356 to 975 837. The 2013 General Household Survey further estimated that, 705 397 students were enrolled at TVET Colleges in 2016. By the end of 2018, the number of students enrolled in public Higher Education Institutions was 1 036 984 (Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa, 2017). There was also increased participation by historically disadvantaged youth groups in education at all levels over the past two decades, particularly in primary and lower secondary education. In addition, there is improved access to educational facilities and services as well as education opportunities for offenders, thus facilitating their re-integration into society. Overall, educational attainment continued to improve with increased participation in the basic education system attributed to various supporting policies that have been implemented over time, including implementation of the South African Schools Act of 1996 which made school compulsory from grade 1 to grade 9.

Government's increased financial support for poor learners, mainly through no-fee schools and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) for deserving students in need, addresses socio-economic inequalities often manifesting in racial terms, with black youth being the most disadvantaged. The #FeesMustFall movement, which demanded that decolonised education be made freely available to all students in public universities, also resulted in the government's announcement of an allocation of R57-billion over three years (2018/19-2020/21), to fund free education for students who come from poor or working-class families, with a combined annual income of up to R350 000.

The Government of South Africa has instituted a plethora of policies and legislation to provide access to ICT infrastructure and affordability, to promote the use of ICTs in educational institutions for the advancement of the youth. This progress is rapidly being changed and disrupted by the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution which consists of an environment in which a range of new innovations and technologies that blend the physical, digital and biological worlds across disciplines and geographies are used to organise how we live, work and relate. The 4IR demands that the youth be equipped with technological and digital skills as well as policy environment that enables youth participation in emerging digital innovation and economies including globalised blockchain-based economic and "Big Data" activities. According to Butler-Adam (2018), Artificial Intelligence will replace more jobs than it will create – with more than half of today's jobs becoming automated within the next 35 years. In this instance, digital inclusion of South Africa's youth is also one of the major success stories, showing effective implementation of the recommendations of the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) (2018/19/2020-21). In this instance, digital inclusion of South Africa's youth remains a key aspiration. There is progress on implementation of the recommendations of the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) (2018/19/2020-21). The IPAP recommendations, which promoted digital growth and creating a 'digital' society, were effective in ensuring that there was (i) an enabling framework to ensure digital growth; (ii) that the necessary infrastructure was created to host a 'digital' society; (iii) universal access to digital hardware and software became possible; and (iv) digital innovation is encouraged. The National E-Strategy published in 2017 was expected to build further on the successes of IPAP. The Plan further cautions that while the digital industrial revolution is a critical element of the South African industrial development policy, the former's skill requirements supersede the productivity of the education sector. Therefore, it "poses substantial challenges and offers perhaps rather fewer immediately cut-out opportunities for the domestic economy" (Department of Trade, Industry and Competition IPAP, 2018 p. 101).

¹Department of Basic Education (2020). Report on the 2019 National Senior Certificate Examination. Available at: <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2019%20NSC%20Examination%20Report.pdf?ver=2020-01-07-155811-230>

To ensure Economic Participation and Transformation, the government implemented several public employment programmes, which primarily targeted youth, including: Community Works Programme (CWP); Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP); National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC); youth cooperatives and youth entrepreneurs (e.g. NYDA funded); National Youth Service Programme, skills training (e.g. learnerships funded by SETAs); Jobs Fund; Employment Tax Incentive (ETI); and Youth Employment Service (YES). Some examples of socio-economic progress include opportunities created for youth through EPWP, YES and ETI, entrepreneurship and improvements in the health and wellbeing of young people. As of December 2018, of the 4.3 million EPWP work opportunities created, 2 million targeted the youth.

The Youth Employment Service (YES) is an initiative formed through partnership by public, private and civil society aimed at increasing youth employability. It focuses on previously disadvantaged youth between the ages 18 and 35 by providing work experience for one year, giving young people a chance to demonstrate their abilities. Its recorded achievement is 33986² work opportunities which were created from 662 businesses, which signed up with the programme by March 2020. There has also been progress, which is attributed to the ETI, which came into effect in 2014. The ETI has had a positive impact on youth employment numbers, supporting 645 973 youth jobs by March 2017. It is a promising policy initiative that can be used to advance youth employment. The ETI should enjoy greater profiling amongst employers to encourage uptake by young people. However, these programmes require M&E for scale-up and continuity.

The youth expressed positive sentiments about the prospects of reviewing curriculum to match new careers and the growing consensus that education and skills development should support youth's aspirations to contribute to societal goals and benefit from opportunities provided by the different sectors of the economy. Productive sectors including manufacturing, mining, oceans and state-owned entities do not have youth development plans and the private sector should be encouraged to participate in the ETI: *"More should be done to educate business on the tax incentive. We must have a "list" of courses that colleges must offer – this will ensure that training is not focussed on courses that are not relevant anymore to young people."*

The Industrial Development Corporation and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency have committed a combined R2.7 billion to finance youth-owned enterprises. The NYDA has also supported a range of youth-owned enterprises and cooperatives. Many youth-owned enterprises have benefited from procurement and enterprise development programmes of the state and the private sector. Measures undertaken by the public sector, such as investment in infrastructure, have boosted youth employment in construction. Spending from the skills development levy is projected to increase by 3.6 % annually over the medium term. Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) will fund skills programmes, learnerships, internships and apprenticeships, and workplace experience. Admittedly, the numbers lag behind the Youth Accord target of 5% of the total establishment, and absorption into permanent employment is still patchy. Young ex-offenders continue to face the double challenge of general unemployment and criminal records because of their conviction. Inadequate support is given to them to enable their absorption into the labour market and this often leads to re-offending behaviour, thus undermining the rehabilitation efforts of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services.

According to the 25-year review report, in terms of entrepreneurship, there has been an increase in youth owned businesses, from 595 000 in 2015 to 641 000 in 2016.³ Overall, youth owned businesses, have increased by 7.7%, with Gauteng accounting for approximately a quarter (26%) of all youth businesses in South Africa. Pertinent growth on age distribution of small businesses is also notable in the 20-24 (15.9%) and 30-34 (7.6%) age groups. Lastly, with regard to access to land, statistics show that between April 1994 to March 2018, 4 903 030 hectares were redistributed, through the Land Redistribution Programme and that 306 610 beneficiaries benefitted, of which 35 615 (just over 10%) were youth and 775 were people with disabilities.

There were several interventions aimed at improving the health and well-being of youth, inclusive of the following legislation, policies, initiatives and media campaigns: (i) Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act 70 of 2008; (ii) Products Control Act 83 of 1993 (with amendments and accompanying regulations); (iii) introduction of facility services through National Adolescent Friendly Clinic Initiative (NAFCI) in 1999 and adolescent and youth

² <https://www.yes4youth.co.za/> (accessed on 18.03.2020)

³ <https://www.dpme.gov.za/news/SiteAssets/Pages/25-Year-Review-Launch/Towards%20A%2025%20Year%20Review.pdf>

friendly health services approach; (iv) the Choice of Termination Pregnancy Act 92 of 1996; (v) introduction of school health services through Integrated School Health Policy (ISHP); (vi) Child Support Grants; (vii) the 'She Conquers Campaign'; (viii) national mass media campaigns such as 'Soul City', 'Love Life' and 'Khomani'; (ix) the National Drug Master Plan 2013-2017; (x) the 'Ke Moja' (I'm fine without drugs) campaign; (xi) National Adolescent and Youth Health Policy 2016-2020 and (xii) Thuthuzela Care Centres.

Adolescent and youth focused policies were developed focusing on innovative, youth-oriented programmes and technologies to promote the mental health and wellbeing of adolescents and youth; preventing violence and substance abuse; providing comprehensive, integrated sexual and reproductive health services; testing and treating young people for HIV and TB, and retaining patients in healthcare services through supporting better adherence to treatment; promoting healthy nutrition and reducing obesity and empowering adolescents and youth to engage with policy and programming on youth health. The health sector's B'WISE Mobisite, launched in 2017, is a social media platform that provides young people with information on a variety of health issues. This site is interactive, allowing young people to enquire about health issues and receive responses instantly. However, other campaigns addressing health related problems such as HIV infections, teenage pregnancy, sexual and gender-based violence and drug use have evidently had limited impact, given that many social challenges are still prevalent and continue to intensify.

The focus of social cohesion and nation building is on creating unity of purpose to overcome the obstacles preventing prosperity and equity. Youth participation and citizenship is predominantly conceptualised using the neo-liberal notion of the 'dutiful' and 'responsible' citizen who is involved in traditional politics such as political parties, voting and other government activities (Makoae et al., 2018). It was on that basis that the government conceptualised and implemented the National Youth Service (NYS) Programme in partnership with civil society organisations. The aim of the programme is to instil a culture of service and inculcate patriotic citizenship by engaging youth in community service activities to enhance service delivery, foster social cohesion and assist unemployed youth to acquire work-related skills while also developing character and leadership skills. For unemployed and unskilled youth, the programme provides participants with an opportunity to learn technical skills necessary to transition into the world of work, education, or business. Between 2016/17 and 2018/19, the programme reached more than 127 000 young people. To improve coordination, resourcing and increase reach of the NYS, a National Youth Service Framework was developed and approved by Cabinet.

Again, with regards to young people's participation in the elections, there has been an increase in voter registration across all youth age groups in the local government elections held between 2006 and 2016, and the general elections held between 2009 and 2014. Interestingly, the latest Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) figures recorded over 500 000 new registered voters, of which over 81% were under the age of 30 years. To make sure the youth takes leadership in the realisation of the Constitutional vision, the workbooks and booklets on the Bill of Responsibility; African Union (AU) flag; South African flag; and national symbols were produced and distributed to schools. The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture remains at the forefront of efforts to building a national identity and to foster unity. However, these remain limited notions of youth participation as they do not encompass other formal and informal spaces including the digital platforms through which young people claim their citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Youth development was institutionalised in line with the NDP's provision of well-run and effectively coordinated state institutions to ensure effective and responsive youth development machinery. In the youth sector, the dedicated institutions which primarily delivered services to young people in support of holistic, integrated and sustainable development, were established since 1994, namely: National Youth Commission (NYC) and Provincial Youth Commissions; the South African Youth Council (SAYC), which is an umbrella body of civil society organisations; Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF); Youth Unit in the DWYPD; National Youth Development Agency (NYDA); youth units/desks across the three spheres of government; and the Presidential Youth Working Group (PYWG). The DWYPD will be responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the NYP 2030.

The progress made by the established youth development institutions entails development of national and provincial youth policies and strategies, advocacy, lobbying, providing a platform for youth participation in development processes, job creation, skills development, monitoring and evaluating implementation of youth programmes, and joint planning. The key milestone was development of the National Youth Policies 2009-2014 and 2015-2020, which guided youth development stakeholders on policy priorities within the sector. Lastly, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework developed for tracking progress on the implementation of policy

provides for a set of measures used to assess if youth development activities are achieving the desired results and it requires proper synchronisation with policy implementation.

5. PERSISTENT CHALLENGES AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Due to historical and current psychosocial and socio-economic factors affecting majority of families in South Africa, many youths face a myriad of challenges which can be traced to Apartheid-linked intergenerational trauma, persistent systemic inequalities, poverty, sexism, and discrimination. These inequalities have a domino effect because each factor leads to the other. For example, parental poverty and stress lead to inadequate nutrition and poor access to early childhood development and care at home, resulting in poor cognitive and behavioural outcomes in children that affect performance at school and can lead to high rates of school drop-out. School dropouts cannot enrol in tertiary institutions and many lack the motivation to enrol in Community Education and Training (CET) colleges leading to low prospects of employment. Youth with disabilities face more institutional barriers to education and employment opportunities across the lifespan.

5.1 High drop-out rates and low transition from school to work

The major contributor to poverty, inequality, and unemployment amongst the youth in South Africa is the low levels of educational attainment and skills. Official government statistics show that dropout rates of learners increased from Grade 9 upwards, reaching almost 12% in both grades 10 and 11⁴.

The percentage of individuals aged 20 years and older who did not have any education decreased from 11,4% in 2002 to 4,5% in 2018, while those with at least a grade 12 qualification increased from 30,5% to 45,2% over the same period. Almost two-thirds (66.4 %) of these students were African, 22.3% were White; 6.7% were Coloured and 4.7% were Indian or Asian. African youth in particular are disadvantaged in the low skills sectors, not only because of a lack of the requisite skills and poor education, but also because they lack social capital that can connect them to vacancies.

Improved rates of participation in schooling are often offset by the poor quality of education and a mismatch between labour market demand and supply. The skills pipeline is riddled with obstacles that undermine equitable access to opportunities in the labour market. Literacy and numeracy skills at primary school level are well below the international average. Low uptake and pass rates for mathematics and science at Grade 12 level inhibit growth in higher education, particularly in engineering, science, and innovation.

About 52% of 24-year-olds in the country have completed Grade 12, however, poor-quality results in primary school lead to weak participation in other school levels. Large numbers of learners are dropping out of secondary school education without obtaining the National Senior Certificate (NSC) or Grade 12, a Further Education and Training (FET), or an Adult Based Education and Training (ABET) certificate. About 60% of South Africa's youth have either left school before Matric (Grade 12) or have failed their matric exam and are left without any kind of recognised educational qualification⁵. Over time only a small proportion of young people complete Grade 12 and pursue post-secondary education and training to acquire intermediary and professional skills. In 2011, only 31% of young people completed their Matric.

A multi-faceted approach is needed to strengthen basic education, reduce drop-out rates, and increase skills provision for students. One of the proposals young people also submitted was that more South Africans should learn in their first languages, as research has shown that learners are more comfortable and perform better when being taught in a language they are more familiar with, and these would include sign language for young people with disabilities. The approach must also create viable pathways for school-leavers to access post-school learning opportunities and ensure improved completion rates in skills training, while directly addressing the lack of skills and work experience among out-of-school youth and other vulnerable and at-risk youth. Diverse skills training opportunities and financial support for young people with low scholarly abilities and from low- and middle-income households is needed. Support to schools to deliver high quality education in a context that is conducive to teaching and learning is necessary.

The debate around the General Education Certificate (GEC) which would be a formal recognition of the completion of Grade 9 is crucial. Youth must be engaged as stakeholders to assess the possible impact of the certificate and how it might potentially encourage learners to leave school earlier than usual.

⁴<https://www.dpme.gov.za/news/SiteAssets/Pages/25-Year-Review-Launch/Towards%20A%2025%20Year%20Review.pdf>

⁵ Branson, N., De Lannoy, A., & Kahn, A. (2019). *Exploring the transitions and well-being of young people who leave school before completing secondary education in South Africa*. NIDS Discussion Paper 2019/11. Cape Town: National Income Dynamics Study, University of Cape Town.

The following inputs from public submissions on the NYP highlight some perceptions of important issues by various stakeholders:

“A great challenge associated with the demographic dividend (youth bulge) is that the number of young people entering the job market (e.g. 790,000 youth who wrote exams in 2019) continues to greatly outstrip the number of opportunities being created by the public and private sectors. This suggests that government should be considering interventions that reach hundreds of thousands rather than thousands or tens of thousands of youth” (Submission by a Civil Society Organisation)

5.2 Low skills levels and skills mismatch

In South Africa, completion of any post-schooling qualification significantly improves prospects in labour market participation, economic inclusion, and poverty reduction while intermediary skills reduce income inequalities. Only a small number of those who leave the schooling system enrol in technical vocational education and training (TVET) colleges or have access to any post-school training. And while participation rates in FET institutions have grown significantly, they are still insufficient in number and quality to meet the intermediate skills needs of the economy. In 2018, only 780 000 young South Africans was enrolled at TVET colleges and by 2030 policy interventions should increase enrolment in FET institutions.

Poor throughput in higher education affects the supply of high-level, skilled graduates. Access to post-school education and training is limited for school-leavers, and those who access these opportunities are often not sufficiently prepared for the workplace due to the poor quality of education and training provided. The challenge facing post-school education is to find ways to assist the many school-leavers who do not qualify for direct entry into higher education or employment to gain skills. These large numbers of young people who exited the education system prematurely, possess no professional or technical skills, making them effectively unemployable, hence about 60% of unemployed youth aged below 35 years have never worked. Without a targeted intervention, they will remain excluded from the economy.

Although the notion and practice of youth development is entrenched in South African human development discourse, little is known about youth with disabilities and how they make transitions from childhood into adulthood. From childhood, individuals with disabilities do not have equal access to education and therefore lag behind with skills development. The 2016 Community Survey found that 7.7% of South Africa’s population have a disability of some kind with disability prevalence lowest amongst young people (between 2.6% and 3.4% in the various youth age cohorts). The national disability prevalence thus increased slightly from 7.5% in 2011 to 7.7% in 2016. The policy for children with disabilities is the mandate of the Department of Basic Education and Department of Social Development. However, when they reach the youth stage they seem to fall through cracks. South Africa does not have a law on disability and youth with disabilities face discrimination and may not access basic education. Some of the disabilities including learning disorders are culturally misunderstood resulting in some youth being restricted to their homes and not fully participating in social life such as attending educational facilities, playing, and being independent and active job seekers.

Youth raised concerns about the exclusion of youth with disabilities in most development programmes and activities. They mentioned that *“Person with disabilities are not catered for in schools and universities;”* and there is a need to *“design programmes that involve youth with disabilities,”* as well as *“ensuring that they are included in all youth development and transformation programmes and opportunities.”*

5.3 Endemic and structural youth unemployment as well as low entrepreneurial spirit

Unemployment, specifically amongst the youth, has been declared a national crisis by the 6th Administration with the high rate of youth unemployment being explained by looking at both demand and supply. High levels of unemployment among the youth often lead to increased sense of exclusion and frustration with negative impacts on physical and mental health, which creates a vicious cycle (De Lannoy, Graham, Patel & Leibbrandt, 2018). For the country to bring about substantial and sustainable change, it needs to consider levers to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Being young is one of the crucial stages of life in which support can make these critical differences. Consistent political will is required to reduce youth unemployment through economic and other reforms, to ensure positive results in the short, medium, and long term.

According to the results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the second quarter of 2020 released by Statistics South Africa, the official unemployment rate stood at 23.3%, which was an improvement when compared with Q1, however this was largely due to the definition of unemployment. Generally, youth

unemployment has remained stubbornly high. The unemployment rate of youth aged between 25 and 34 was more than double that of the age group between 45 and 54 (37.3% vs 17.5%) in Q1 of 2020. During the same period, the unemployment rate among the youth aged between 15 and 24 was nearly 60%. Youth unemployment has reached crisis proportions in South Africa and remains one of the major challenges facing the country. Even though youth unemployment is not a uniquely South African problem, South African youth are more vulnerable compared to the rest of the world.⁶ A report by the Spectator Index ranks SA's youth unemployment rate as the highest in the world. Many have already experienced years of rejection in looking for jobs, and this leads to intense emotional and mental trauma.

Most young people are discouraged with the labour market and are also not building on their skills base through education and training – they are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). The percentage of young persons aged between 15 and 24 years who were in NEET stood at 34.1% in Q1 of 2020. This represents approximately 3.5 million young people aged between 15 and 24. Furthermore, there is a worrying gender dynamic in the NEET rate, which is higher for females than that of young males. Compared to Q4 of 2019, the percentage of young persons aged between 15 and 24 years who were NEET slightly increased by 1.1%, that is, from 38.9% to 41.7% in Q1 of 2020.⁷ Overall, highest unemployment rates are seen among the 20-24-year-olds who are making the initial transition from education to the labour market entrants, young women more than young men, as well as African and Coloured youth more affected than White and Indian young people.⁸

Youth with disabilities compete for the same jobs as youth without disabilities and there is no enforceable mechanism to support implementation of the quota system in relation to designated groups as envisaged by the Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998. Employment opportunities are usually advertised in the mainstream media and do not take into consideration those having hearing or visual impairments. Since disability is not mainstreamed in workplaces including in the public sector, some young people with visual, hearing, and physical impairments cannot compete for available employment opportunities. Many job opportunities require a typed Curriculum Vitae (CV) without considering those who cannot use their hands to type. Implementation of measures that enable youth with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life should be prioritised.

The following are factors that have contributed to young people's low participation in the mainstream economy in South Africa:

- The SA economy has been experiencing an economic slowdown since 2014, with year-on-year economic growth rate remaining below 2%. This slowdown can be largely attributed to the end of the commodity boom in 2011; slowdown in public spending and investment as well as allegations of corruption in key government institutions which continue to impact negatively on investor confidence. The recent down grade of SA's economy by credit rating agencies makes the picture gloomier.
- Progress in economic development is hampered by poor implementation of economic policy, poor performance of statutory agencies established to accelerate socioeconomic development, and lack of coherence and coordination of the existing policy framework. For example, the macroeconomic framework has not been supportive of sustained growth and employment creation. Other challenges are that government debt has been rising steadily, and savings by both the private and public sectors remain devastatingly low, thus inhibiting growth.
- The rapid pace of technological advancement has had a negative impact on employment, particularly in the productive sectors of the South African economy owing to mechanisation and automation. The current wave of the 4IR present an opportunity and a challenge as it has the potential to disrupt almost every industry through large-scale automation, requiring adjustments to labour market structures. Many young people do not have skills that match the structure of the labour market that has become more technology driven and high skills dependent. Youth unemployment further jeopardises skills development required to sustain economic growth.

⁶ International Labour Organisation. (2019). Labour Market Access-a persistent challenge around the work. A study based on ILO's global estimates for youth labour market indicators.

⁷ Statistics South Africa. (2019). Quarterly Labour Force Survey Quarter 4: 2019. Available at: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12948>

⁸ Graham, L. & Mlatsheni, C. (2015) Youth unemployment in South Africa: Understanding the challenge and working on solutions. In De Lannoy, A., Swartz, S. Lake, L. & Smith C. (eds) *South African Child Gauge 2015*. Cape Town: Children's Institute.

According to Statistics SA, the majority of South Africa's youth often fall within one of three categories: uneducated, unemployed, and unemployable.⁹ Even young people with more years of schooling are less likely to be employed than adults due to lack of relevant work experience. Notable is that young people with a tertiary qualification have a significantly better chance of finding employment provided their education and skills match labour market demand. Considering the level of social investment in basic education and tertiary education, young South Africans who exit the education system without skills and those who possess skills not needed in high numbers in the economy and industries would benefit from targeted interventions that are implemented early to facilitate on-the-job skill acquisition and entrepreneurial skills. Statistics show inter-provincial migration of youth aged between 15 and 29 mainly to cities in Gauteng and other provinces such KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape from mostly rural areas in search for better economic opportunities, jobs and a better life. Migrant youth face risks of falling into the urban poverty trap due to lack of social support system during their transitions; therefore, there must be proactive and multi-pronged interventions to address specific conditions, risks and vulnerabilities of young migrants. Young women and girls are at a disadvantage, as they constitute for the majority of victims of human trafficking for economic and sexual exploitation.

The following inputs from public submissions on the NYP highlight some perceptions of important issues by various stakeholders:

Unfortunately, young people and the general SMME fraternity has always struggled to access SEFA [Small enterprise Finance Agency] funding, due to red-tape and bulky requirements and unprecedented paperwork required which costs so much money to compile. This includes access to accountants to draft financial projections and produce sound and bankable projects. Therefore, the requirements and criteria for applications must be amended". (Submission by a Municipality, 16 March 2020).

In addition, the current wave of the 4IR has implications on the future of work for the youth, educational systems employment, and industrial policies. While there are predictions of major disruptions to the traditional work structure and the obsolescence of educational systems, there is scope for employment creation. Therefore, there is also the need to build the 4IR capabilities among youth in line with the 'Industrial Internet of Things' to harness the benefits of the 4IR. The following input from public submissions on the NYP highlight some perceptions of important issues by various stakeholders:

"The advancements and developments classified as the 4IR are taking away jobs and although we support technological and other developments, as youth we can question development that affects us negatively". Submission by a national youth movement on 16 March 2020.

It also presents new opportunities. Big data is said to be the new gold or new oil. Data is the key enabler to innovation and the development of fit-for-purpose solutions for individuals and communities. It also becomes critical that it be accessible to potential innovations, shared and made accessible on open access principles.

The COVID-19 crisis has also exacerbated the youth unemployment situation in South Africa. The economy was already in negative growth trajectory, and the lockdown, coupled with credit ratings downgrades, were likely to constrain the creation of jobs and the sustainability of especially small and micro businesses. By June 2020, many companies had announced plans to retrench staff including state own businesses, aviation to construction companies, entertainment, leisure, and hospitality industries. In other cases, businesses are closing permanently. Small businesses whose turnover has been wiped out will be even harder hit.

It is important not to assume that young men and women entrepreneurs, or even different racial groups face similar challenges and strengths as each other. In a society where mainly, black women remain largely excluded through societal, cultural, and traditional norms, special efforts need to be made to ensure inclusivity that go above and beyond providing the same opportunities for young men and women.

5.4 Poor physical and mental health outcomes

Healthy young people are likely to be productive and contribute to economic growth of the country. In South Africa, it is crucial to address the persistent youth health and wellbeing challenges including communicable diseases; sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and negative sexual and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes; mental health problems and functional impairment due to substance and drug abuse, poverty, deprivation and abuse; and also violence and injuries. What is often true is that substance and drug abuse can be the consequence of mental ill health or trauma. One of the key health concerns that is often ignored is pulmonary tuberculosis (TB),

⁹ <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12362>

despite it being one of the leading communicable diseases that cause death among the youth. According to Statistics South Africa (2018:40), in 2016, tuberculosis was the leading cause of death in the 15 to 24 years age group, accounting for 7,0% of deaths. It was followed by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) disease (responsible for 5.7% of deaths). Even though there are decreasing levels of teenage pregnancies alongside high HIV prevalence among teenagers in South Africa, teenage pregnancy rates remain undesirably high. According to the United Nations Aids Agency, in 2018, new HIV infections among young women aged 15 to 24 years were more than double those among young men (69 000 new infections among young women, compared to 25 000 among young men). Generally, females had higher rates of HIV prevalence than males¹⁰. HIV prevalence among adults aged 15 to 49 years in South Africa was at 20.6%, 26.3% among females and 14.8% among males in 2018. The disparity in HIV prevalence by sex was more pronounced among young adults aged 20 to 24 years and was three times higher among females than males. The breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic exposes young people living with HIV to unprecedented burden of morbidity.

Evidence from assessments of the current state of the physical, psychological, and mental well-being of youth shows that there is excessive abuse of dependency-creating substances: drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, with alcohol being the most abused substance in South Africa. The Department of Social Development introduced a National Drug Master Plan, as well as national campaigns such as 'Ke Moja' to prevent and reduce abuse of dependency-creating substances, but these interventions have had limited impact. The Cabinet-approved 2019-2024 Drug Master Plan has promised radical change and improved coordination to stem the tide of drug and substance abuse by youth. The problem of insufficient treatment facilities, only ten (10) operational public treatment centres countrywide, suggests that adolescents involved in substance-abuse remain untreated and may transition to adulthood with long-term and irreversible effects of substance abuse. There is also poor implementation of the Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act 70 of 2008, particularly with regards to the provision to curb unregistered substance abuse treatment facilities. The Act is being amended and will promote prevention and early intervention. Furthermore, it is difficult to quantify the impact of the interventions, because of a lack of monitoring and evaluation that is based on age-disaggregated data. There are reportedly new and emerging challenges such as use of new illicit drugs, increased cyber bullying and sexual exploitation by online perpetrators due to an increase in online activity by the youth. Implementation will require stakeholders such as the Department of Social Development, Central Drug Authority, Department of Health, Department of Higher Education and Training and national and provincial liquor authority boards to invest in public health oriented, rights-based and harm reduction programmes. Considering the multiple structural drivers of exposure and risk to alcohol and drug use and drawing lessons from existing interventions including those introduced under the Covid-19 national response.

Substance abuse puts young people's health at risk and may result in social ills such as violence, crime, and family disintegration with young people as victims and perpetrators of violence. Many young people experience violence across childhood into adolescence in the form of adverse childhood experiences affecting them in various settings. Adverse childhood experiences often lead to violent behaviour later in life and this violence has a negative impact on society. This manifests in youth violence (physical fighting, gangsters, and sexually coercive behaviour). GBV and Femicide are a growing challenge that is disproportionately affecting young women. According to the Minister of Police, in March 2020, reported cases of GBV were 37% higher than was recorded in 2019.¹¹

The increasing GBV and substance abuse rate is made worse by the COVID 19 situation. As the country applied restrictive measures to curb the spread of the virus, there were closure of schools, disruptions of income-generating activities and essential services. All these exposed women and girls to sexual exploitation, rape, and intimate partner violence. There could also be high rates of common mental health illnesses such as depression, anxiety, and low levels of self-esteem but they tend to be poorly understood and help is not readily available. In 2019 the World Health Organisation reported high suicide rates (including suicidal thoughts and attempted suicide) at 12.8 per 100 000 in 2016 with South African males at higher risk of committing suicide than females¹².

Homeless youth, often referred to as 'street children' also pose a rising concern that is closely linked to home environments that do not support child wellbeing. It is notable that this phenomenon is more prevalent in the cities, compared to rural areas, where social norms of community and Ubuntu remain largely entrenched. Homeless youth proportions are higher in urban areas as young people migrate to cities in search of opportunities

¹⁰ South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey, 2018

¹¹ <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-04-09-is-gender-based-violence-not-a-serious-and-violent-crime-minister-cele/#gsc.tab=0>

¹² <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/health/2019-09-09-sa-men-four-times-more-likely-to-commit-suicide-than-women-who-report-finds/>

without family networks to assist them. Studies on homelessness have found a remarkably high prevalence of adverse experiences during childhood primarily histories of not growing up at home or running away from home¹³. One way of dealing with this issue is bringing such homeless youth together and trying to rehabilitate and capacitate them. The policy framework mandates the Department of Social Development to develop and facilitate the implementation of relevant inter-sectoral protocols related to poverty reduction, family strengthening, child protection and youth development, to ensure that prevention and early intervention programmes are implemented across sectors¹⁴. Various groups of vulnerable young people such as those without adequate housing (the homeless and residents of informal settlements) require targeting with screening, testing, and treatment during the pandemics.

5.5 Untapped cultural and creative industries

Sport and cultural activities can create healthy, active citizens, instil a sense of national pride, and thus contribute to social cohesion and socio-economic change. These sectors have the potential to contribute to economic growth in South Africa and they are particularly appealing to the South African youth. There is a need to focus on deriving the maximum benefit from existing and planned sport, recreation, arts and culture programmes and initiatives. These sectors have the potential to develop and grow skills, provide employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, and contribute to nation-building among young people. The sport and creative sectors should focus on mass participation and target the needs of the youth, particularly in education and skills development, creating employment opportunities and promoting health outcomes throughout the country. The role of culture, heritage development and promotion in social cohesion and creative industries is detailed on the policy priority areas.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed many challenges for artists and the entire creative industry. Many of them do not have workplace contracts, unemployment support, pensions, and other support systems. Proactive pandemic responses and legislative instruments need to be in place to assist artists and prevent exploitation.

5.6 Eroding social fibre and active citizenry

Young people in South Africa develop identity within a complex milieu comprising of the remnants of institutionalised discrimination and inequality on the one hand, and the post-democracy society in which they are expected to exercise citizenship rights on the other. According to Stats SA's Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey 2018/19 just more than eight out of every ten people are either proud or very proud to be South African, with almost half of the population being very proud to be South African (Statistics South Africa, 2019). The public clearly recognises the importance of a range of core democratic principles, including free and fair elections, the right of assembly and demonstration, deliberative democracy, electoral accountability, freedom of expression, and political tolerance. Free and fair elections remain the highest rated democratic ideal. However, young people feel excluded, largely due to high unemployment rates and their inability to participate economically. The Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey shows that approximately 13% of the South African population had experienced discrimination two years prior to the survey¹⁵. Racial discrimination was experienced by most at 6.8% whilst discrimination because of sexual orientation was experienced by the least percentage at 0.1%. It is important to note that the percentage could be higher at specific geographical areas compared to the national prevalence. Youth-focused and youth-serving state institutions and civil society organisations are required to contribute to social cohesion by integrating the National Action Plan to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance into their programmes for implementation. In general, young people express very low levels of trust in government and in government provided services.

To deal with the above challenges, a comprehensive youth-specific policy that recognises diversity of youth; focuses on improving the education system; increases the skills and economic opportunities including employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for young people; protects youth who are vulnerable including those with disabilities, not in education, employment and training; promotes healthy lifestyles that prevent obesity, communicable and non-communicable diseases and mental health problems; and ensures access to sexual and reproductive health information and services that are gender non-discriminatory, is required. The NYP 2030 will also provide a blueprint for state entities, civil society, private sector, and youth in their youth

¹³ Herman, DB, Susser, ES, Struening, EL & Link, BL, 1997. Adverse childhood experiences: Are they risk factors for adult homelessness? American Journal of Public Health 87(2), 249–55.

www.ajph.org/cgi/reprint/87/2/249.

¹⁴ Mokomane, Z. & Makoe, M. 2015. An overview of programmes offered by shelters for street children in South Africa. Child & Family Social Work.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12251>

¹⁵ <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0340/P03402019.pdf>

development efforts including the strengthening of social cohesion, moral regeneration, and integration into society.

Citizens' trust in various institutions that contribute to accountability, transparency, participation in a democracy and access to justice remains an important element of a democratic society in which members support government policies and contribute to building their country, including through volunteering. While public loss of trust in national governments is a growing phenomenon globally, it is concerning that in South Africa trust in the political system continues to decline too. This can be linked to both real and perceived failures by the state, including the slow pace in dealing with corruption within the state. Perceived lack of transparency and accountability contribute to youth apathy and disengagement.

5.7 Inadequately resourced youth development and poorly coordinated services

Youth consultations have identified numerous challenges in the youth development space. These include a disconnect between youth development structures, lack of clear mandates, and a lack of distinction between the political and administrative parts of youth development work. There is also inadequate resourcing for youth development, from a financial and human resource perspective. However, youth work is primarily focused on challenging the view that young people are an impediment to national progress. In this regard, the youth work field focuses on the holistic development of a young person by supporting them to meet their needs and reach their potential irrespective of challenges they face across their age span.

Even though young people's capabilities are built through youth work practice, this field remain unknown and unrecognised, despite being facilitated under the pillar on effective and responsive youth development machinery. Youth work is defined as activities that intentionally seek to impact young people for the purpose of aiding and enhancing their personal and social development through their voluntary participation, and which complements their formal, academic, or vocational education and training; and is provided primarily by youth work organisations. The absence of a legislative framework for youth work is also a critical gap given the myriad challenges faced by young people across the lifespan at individual, family, community, and societal levels. A study by Hlagala (2012), relates the emergence of youth work to responses to social problems that are caused by complex socio-political circumstances. In this regard, worker-youth relationships require deep understanding of social contexts and multidisciplinary approaches with a primary focus on translating that understanding into resolution of young peoples' social problems.

All these have resulted in high turn-over and many practitioners with wealth of experience and passion have subsequently left the practice in search of better opportunities. This has resulted in unattended youth problems such as school drop-out, substance use, crime perpetration and homelessness. Young people are required to develop skills that enable them to make successful and fulfilling transitions through adolescence into adulthood within their social and economic contexts and as provided for by existing policy and institutional arrangements. The 1997 White Paper for Social Welfare envisages the developmental state social welfare system in which various social development workers including youth workers would implement a variety of services at different levels of intervention to address social problems that could offset economic development efforts.¹⁶ In South Africa, the process of professionalising youth work started in the late 1980s, and youth work was included in the NYP 2015-2020 as an integral element of approaches to positive youth development.

6. POLICY PRIORITY AREAS

6.1. QUALITY EDUCATION, SKILLS AND SECOND CHANCES

Investing in human resources is the single most important investment any country can make. No country has successfully made the transition from developing to developed without an educated population (NDP, 2012). Education should allow young people to build capabilities and reach their potential. The NDP outlines that South Africa's education vision by 2030 South Africans should promote access to education and training of the highest quality possible attained through significantly improved learning outcomes. The performance of South African learners in international standardised tests should be comparable to the performance of learners from countries of a similar level of development. The education system should cater for different groups and produce highly skilled individuals relevant to the labour market demands.

¹⁶ Dutschke, M. (2008) Developmental social welfare policies and children's right to social services. *South African Child Gauge – 2007/2008*. Children's Institute. University of Cape Town.

The graduates of South Africa's universities and colleges should have the skills and knowledge to meet the present and future needs of the country as well as global economic trends, including labour market shifts resulting from the 4IR. Such skills should encompass workforce readiness, soft, technical, and entrepreneurial skills. The education system will play a greater role in building an inclusive society, providing equal opportunities and nurturing all young South Africans to realise their full potential, in particular those previously disadvantaged by Apartheid policies, namely black people, women and people with disabilities. Targets set for this vision include a TVET sector covering about 25% of the age-relevant youth, implying an increase from 705 397 in 2016 (Department of Higher Education & Training, 2018) to 2.5 million young South Africans by 2030. Higher education and further education intake have improved.

South Africa needs a skilled labour force to increase economic growth. These skills include engineers, health professionals in different occupational classes to deliver quality health care, researchers and innovators to play a critical role in creating new products, new jobs and new ways of producing existing products cheaply and more efficiently, including the delivery of public services. A foundation in education and learning is a significant protective factor against negative outcomes and is essential for young people to reach economic empowerment. Young people, no matter their circumstances, must be supported to acquire quality education, and skills to succeed in the global economy.

To realise these objectives, the early childhood development and education, basic education, post-school education and training sector should improve equity in access and quality of education and training outcomes as well as collaborate with social development and justice sectors in providing effective second chance programmes for at risk youth. All government departments including municipalities should have learnership and internship programmes, which should be monitored in terms of numbers, inclusivity, and quality. The transition from learning to earning must be smooth, so that the demographic dividend can be reaped by the country.

Proposed Interventions:

6.1.1 Ensure universal access to quality ECD and early learning programmes for all

- a) Restore, intensify, and monitor provision compulsory access to Early Childhood Development (ECD) learning.
- b) Systematically improve quality across all public schools to bridge the gap between public and private schools.
- c) Provide the resources and support to learners with disabilities to participate in all elements of school life and learning.
- d) Introduce sign language and braille within the education system for all, starting at ECD level.

6.1.2 Developing safe learning environments

- a) Ensure violence free and safe learning and conducive spaces for students.
- b) Introduce a school safety programme to ensure that teaching and learning is not impeded by any form of threat, or violent harm.
- c) The Departments of Basic Education, and Higher Education and Training should work closely with SAPS and civil society to jointly, with student leaders, implement in-school activities against violence and gender-based violence

6.1.3 Develop teachers and review curriculum to promote problem solving, employability, entrepreneurship and adaptation to the 4IR

- a) Avoid rapid changes to the curriculum at basic education level.
- b) Review the education system and the examination framework to incorporate the curriculum that meets international standards, includes 4IR and has practical utility to contribute to the economic needs of the country.
- c) Train teachers in modern, technology-based teaching methods.
- d) Attract, recruit, and retain young people to the teaching profession.
- e) Adapt to the 4IR era by enhancing access to broadband and Wi-Fi for internet connectivity to enable teaching of computer literacy and the use of internet including in remote rural schools, homes, and communities.
- f) Harness the benefits from the drone industry as one of the enablers of the creative industries to create employment opportunities for the youth.
- g) Customise every technology that is brought into the country to the SA environment to further enhance the available skills in the country.
- h) Support and foster a culture that values innovation, experimentation, and entrepreneurial thinking to help young people become active participants and leaders in the digital economy.
- i) Implement and intensify skills training of young people in the areas of the 4IR such as: reverse engineering of smart cars; 3D printing; artificial intelligence; robotics; autonomous vehicles; nanotechnology; biotechnology; big data; the internet of things; quantum computing; virtual network of choice; virtual broadcasting services; visual media and network etc. as required by industry.

- j) Progressively introduce practical subjects such as entrepreneurship and e-commerce, agriculture, computing, financial trading and investment, green economy, technical skills, and handwork (artisanship) across the education value chain.
- k) All South African learners must learn history, creative and critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, coding and robotics, life skills, communication, and indigenous languages.
- l) Schools in rural areas must use local farming land for practical or experiential learning in the agriculture value chain, with local farmers serving as mentors.
- m) TVET and Community Education and Training (CET) colleges must offer more occupational programmes in line with, amongst others, the Continental Strategy for Technical, Vocational Education and Training to Foster Youth Employment (African Union, 2018). The provision of these skills should be responsive to industry demands and developmental needs of the country.
- n) Youth must play a critical role in 4IR and circular economy and ambassadorial roles across all spheres of government.

6.1.4 Implement inter-disciplinary early intervention programmes for healthy development of young people

- a) The Department of Basic Education to scale-up interventions such as peer education; Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) programmes to support learners with psychosocial needs including safe and suitable transport facilities for rural schools and learners with disabilities.
- b) Offer after-school programmes including Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) Certification courses already in the mainstream of the economy. These could be similar to Microsoft programmes which can be introduced early in partnership with the private sector.
- c) The Departments of Social Development, Basic Education, and Sports, Arts and Culture, should, in partnership with civil society and faith-based organisations design and implement early intervention programmes for children and youth in fostering a sense of self-esteem, rights and responsibilities, while nurturing self-respect.
- d) Sustained after care programmes that improve academic performance and address social ills can be delivered by youth development practitioners through social enterprising. Activities could include tutoring, mentoring, life skills and leadership programmes, career guidance and expos, and arts, sports, and recreation.
- e) Introduce and promote entrepreneurship education and training in schools to help facilitate development of broader societal culture and ecosystem of entrepreneurship.

6.1.5 Provide second chances to facilitate completion and re-engagement with educational institutions

- a) The Department of Basic Education, in partnership with private providers and civil society (particularly youth-led organisations), should support learners who need a second chance to pass Matric. Matric rewrite projects should be supported and publicised so that young people in all communities are aware that they can obtain qualifications through community colleges and adult education training centres.
- b) The Departments of Higher Education, Science and Innovation should provide young people who have left further education institutions due to non-academic reasons, the opportunity to complete their education to enable them to compete in the open labour market.
- c) All young people must have access to multiple pathways that support multiple exit points towards technical training, enterprise development and further education. The relevant stakeholders (DBE & DHSI) should develop a policy to ensure clear articulation between schools, adult education and training centres, community colleges, TVET colleges, universities and other providers of education and training. This will allow for different, non-traditional but accredited pathways for attaining training.
- d) Young people, in particular young girls to be mentored to learn the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and or mathematics) with an environmental focus.
- e) The Department of Basic Education must setup an online zero-rated platform suitable for matric second chance, and for pupils who cannot afford or access Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and private education. Such a platform can normalise online education at high school level and can have a wider reach to remote communities.

6.1.6 Provide ongoing career guidance for technical, technology-based, and productive sectors of the economy

- a) The Departments of Basic Education, Employment and Labour and Higher Education, Science and Innovation, and the NYDA must ensure that all learners have access to quality career information and adequate career guidance. Career exhibitions should provide information on training opportunities particularly for skills needed in the productive sectors of the economy (agriculture, creative arts, ICT, entrepreneurship, manufacturing, tourism) and linkages with the evolving job market should be mapped.
- b) Career guidance should start early and mainstream disabilities so that young people are able to make correct subject choices linked to their chosen careers.

- c) All internet service providers must provide free daily data allocations and zero-rate educational websites to deserving youth as a matter of urgency to help young people access learning and advancement opportunities.

6.1.7 Increase opportunities for quality post-school skills training for all

- a) In each education district there must be a Technical and Vocational Training high school and TVET roadshows to promote these institutions.
- b) After an audit, the Departments responsible for education must establish agricultural schools of excellence and colleges in each province and strengthen existing agriculture faculties.
- c) Introduce suitable bridging programmes for students who enrol in TVET colleges with no matric qualification or have attended lower quintile schools.
- d) Establish new, virtual-ready skills development academies that allow for short and dynamic skills programmes for youth. Locality and social class must never be an obstacle to access by youth.
- e) Government should progressively expand implementation of free education and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of National Student Financial Aid Scheme.
- f) Avail information on funding opportunities to students across all communities and education institutions through various media platforms.
- g) The Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation to develop a comprehensive plan in respect of historic debt which is a challenge for many students.
- h) All post-school institutions should be inclusive, to ensure that the learners with disabilities' rights to education are protected. TVET colleges should be made accessible to people with disabilities. Tuition and reading material in post-school institutions should cater for visually and audio impaired students, including library material.
- i) The Department of Basic Education should accelerate implementation of the White Paper on Special Needs Education to ensure equal and sustained access to education for youth with disabilities.
- j) A relationship between colleges and business must be built to ensure an efficient transition for students moving from a learning institution to the workplace for work or course completion.
- k) Young graduates from TVET colleges and all other institutions of higher learning must be supported in finding placements to perform experimental learning or internship must be intensified by government and the private sector.
- l) Scale up public service internship programme and align these to labour market demands. Government departments, provinces and municipalities should be required to link the internship programmes to their human resource development strategies and to create an updated database of a talent pool from which to recruit when vacancies are available. Municipalities and state-owned companies or agencies should also develop internships and graduate programmes as part of their overall youth empowerment strategies.
- m) Expand training of young people as artisans and technicians useful for growing the economy. The National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030 should be implemented to ensure that private sector provides training in the workplace.
- n) Implement the NSDP and monitor the partners' accountability to ensure increased youth employability and to enhance economic productivity.

6.2 ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND JOB CREATION

Youth unemployment was high even before the Covid-19 pandemic. The 2020: Q1 GDP data and the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for the same period, indicated that the pandemic further worsened the unemployment crisis. The President of South Africa wrote in June 2020 that, "there are tough times ahead. There are no quick fixes and we have to be realistic about our prospects, especially about the time it will take for our economy to recover." The measures proposed below aim to ensure that youth development is a policy priority as the country embarks on recovery based on principles of equality and justice from the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic.

All young people deserve access to decent employment. Considering the severe economic hardship, due to economic stagnation for the past decade and exacerbation thereof by the pandemic, efforts to tackle the historical structural inequalities, unemployment and poverty especially among youth have been unsuccessful. In line with what the President said, that "*We are determined not merely to return our economy to where it was before the coronavirus, but to forge a new economy in a new global reality,*" this policy supports economic reform to ensure a more inclusive macro-economic direction. All measures to revive the economy must place youth at the centre, including the mass-scale infrastructure drive that aims to create jobs at scale. Young people are ready and able to participate in the proposed catalytic infrastructure projects in water, transportation, energy, digital infrastructure, human

settlements, and agriculture, both for conceptual, project management, supplier, and labour aspects. Every young person should access opportunities that increase their chances of finding meaningful employment. The policy also calls for the private sector partners to create job initiatives to help address the chronic youth unemployment in the country. The last two phases of South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan builds a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive economy through Reconstruction and Transformation measures.

Proposed Interventions:

6.2.1 Implement the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative and Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan

- a) Create the national pathway management network to provide work seekers with access to a basic package of support and work-readiness training to better match them to economic opportunities.
- b) Equip young people with skills in the key growth sectors to access opportunities such as the green, waste and food economies and advocate for development a catch-up strategy for those who have been left behind due to dropping out of the school system.
- c) Introduce innovative ways to support young entrepreneurs in a manner that prioritises removing barriers and creating spaces to help businesses thrive by making data affordable and targeting sectors that are ripe for innovation.
- d) National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the Department of Small Business Development to implement grant funding and business support for 100 000 young entrepreneurs in the next three years.
- e) Offer practical experience to young people through scaling up the Youth Employment Service (YES), which is a business-led partnership with government and labour to assist young people to gain work experience to progress into the job market.
- f) Implement the Presidential Youth Service Programme (PYSP) to expand on the National Youth Service programme and promote work opportunities for young people who are willing to give back to their communities, including in social and care sector. The PYSP would serve as a bridge to future venturing into education, work, or business start-ups.
- g) Create quality and meaningful jobs for youth, so that they are at the centre of all job creation interventions.
- h) Abolish the requirement for experience for entry level jobs to enable more youth to enter the labour market and gain experience on the job.

6.2.2 Introduce Basic Universal Income Grant for Unemployed Youth

- a) Support young people and young discouraged job-seekers' efforts to enter the labour market by introducing a Basic Universal Income Grant - an incentive similar to the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress grant primarily to support youth to transition into employment or entrepreneurship.

6.2.3 Implement the set-asides for youth across sectors

- a) Implement and monitor 30% set-asides for employment of youth in targeted prioritised sectors with high absorption potential, such as: Agriculture, Manufacturing, Tourism, Oceans Economy, Creative Economy, Green Economy, and Waste Economy. 50% participation of young women, and 7% participation of youth with disabilities in these sectors must be incentivised.
- b) Youth employment and entrepreneurship need to be elevated as key priorities with public employment and procurement youth set-asides at national, provincial, and local government.
- c) Government must use state procurement and implement and monitor a minimum requirement of 30% youth set-aside for sub-contracting "exempted micro enterprises" (EMS) as part of the Framework for Preferential Procurement to advance the development of youth owned enterprises. All national and provincial departments, as well as municipalities must regularly report on the percentage of their procurement awarded or sub-contracted to youth owned enterprises.
- d) Monitor implementation of South Africa's labour laws, which state that South Africans should be given preference for job opportunities. As such, practices by sectors that break such laws should be dealt with including by prosecuting employers who illegally employ undocumented foreign nationals.

6.2.4 Implement improved public employment schemes that provide meaningful work opportunities for the youth

- a) Increase youth participation in public employment schemes including amongst others, Expanded Public Works Programme, Community Works Programme, infrastructure maintenance, rural roads maintenance and upgrading programme to above 50%. Most opportunities must go to young people (including NEET, young women, and youth with disabilities) and these youth must be mobilised to help communities, whilst earning an income and gaining valuable work experience.
- b) Improve collaborations between the private and public sectors as well as civic organisations for mass employment creation purposes.

6.2.5 Involve youth in land reform, rural development, and agriculture value chain

- a) The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to improve the situation of small-scale and commercial farmers by expanding irrigated agriculture, hiring extension officers, subsidising farming implements and helping the youth to identify areas that are labour-intensive, and have high potential and market linkages, such as dried grapes, pecan nuts and oilseeds.
- b) Utilise a youth-centric approach to rural development in supporting young people including young agro-entrepreneurs who are participating in the agricultural value chain through providing access to land, financial and social infrastructure.
- c) Attract, recruit and retain young people to pursue careers in the agriculture sector value chain (e.g. as crop scientists, livestock managers, agricultural engineers, agricultural technologists, veterinary scientists, veterinarians, veterinary technicians) including providing scholarships (to study locally and abroad) and ensuring support to their business endeavours or placement in internships/ jobs upon graduation.
- d) Mobilise the private sector to complement government's funding in support of land acquisition primarily for agricultural purposes. Young agricultural entrepreneurs must also be supported and twinned with established farmers for mentorship.
- e) Link young farmers to a programme of farmer-to-farmer skills transfer, agricultural extension and ensure that their training is in partnership with the industry.

6.2.6 Support township and rural economies for economic transformation, job creation, and employment in high absorption capacity

- a) The Department of Employment and Labour, working with relevant stakeholders to develop an Integrated Comprehensive Youth Employment Strategy.
- b) The Department of Labour and Employment, working with businesses to protect jobs that are vulnerable due to the 4IR.
- c) Expand data-light work-readiness courses and make it accessible through mobile phone. In fact, data prices overall must fall in South Africa, and Information Technology infrastructure should be expanded to bridge the rural-urban divide in terms of access to virtual opportunities. All youth should be able to access Wi-Fi in their homes.
- d) Support township and rural economy by creating inclusive markets in opportunity areas such as the food economy, the green economy, health, and education. Government (through public procurement) and big business have an important role to play here.
- e) The state, through the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, to ensure direct benefit from the country's natural resources. Planned establishment of a Sovereign Wealth Fund as announced by the Minister of Finance in the Budget Speech 2020 is supported.
- f) The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture working with economic sector departments to develop and strengthen strategies for youth participation in the creative industries, tourism and sports and recreation. These could be built on existing strategies such as the Mzansi Golden Economy.
- g) National Treasury, the NYDA and the Department of Employment and Labour to ensure that the Employment Tax Incentive (ETI) initiative does not exclude start-ups and youth owned business for the benefit of larger established enterprises.
- h) Promote universal access by removing cultural, physical, social and other barriers that prevent people with disabilities from accessing, using or benefiting from the various systems of society that are available to other citizens since it is the only way in which individuals with disabilities can enjoy equal opportunities and benefits, and join mainstream society. It is the key to exercising civil, political, economic, social, religious, and cultural rights in society.
- i) Promote universal access in the design of products, environments, programmes and services by all persons to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialised design, including assistive devices and technologies for particular groups of persons with disabilities where these are needed. The following additional interventions are required to ensure youth with disabilities are not excluded:
 - (i) The public broadcaster should have a Deaf TV channel, thus creating jobs for the persons with disabilities.
 - (ii) It should be mandatory for all buildings to have wheelchair ramps including health and educational facilities and places.
 - (iii) Sign language must be included in all public notices.
 - (iv) Public rehabilitation centres to be established for provision of psycho-social support for those who were not born with disabilities and their families.
 - (v) Employers to consider that not everyone can type their CVs, but also cater for those who can upload MP3 and pitch their CVs in audio recordings.

6.2.7 Develop and support youth-owned businesses and cooperatives (spurring Entrepreneurship)

- a) The Department of Small Business Development to produce a consolidated quarterly report on supported youth-owned enterprises and created a youth enterprise sustainability Barometer to track progress. It is important for youth to have raised awareness on available support services/systems by government or the private sector. These include, among others, provision of business development support, government contracts, financial support etc.
- b) Relevant institutions and departments to provide access to seed finance and early stage growth finance to young people starting and growing their own business. A transitional path for early stage micro-businesses, with a combination of flexible financial products designed to enable young people to evolve to a stage where they are more able to access business finance to expand their businesses is required.
- c) Create and support youth and women-owned businesses within the sectors that are dominated by women such as beauty care, social services, tourism, primary agriculture, food, and retail.
- d) All economic sectors and industries to do more to improve participation of black people, youth, and women, and to support youth-owned businesses through procurement and enterprise development. Where relevant beneficiation should be applied as a tool for creating future industrialists.
- e) The Department of Small Business Development to facilitate formalisation within the micro-business sector by addressing the challenges that are faced by young entrepreneurs.
- f) Tax relief for youth start-ups should be explored as an avenue to improve their sustainability.
- g) Career guidance programmes must include enterprise and cooperative development and promotion by successful entrepreneurs to ensure mass appeal and motivation for youngsters. This should be complemented by the following:
 - (i) Connecting youth enterprises to the funding opportunities provided by the state and private sector by accelerating the take-up rate of the funds established to support youth enterprises and cooperatives.
 - (ii) Adopting a sectoral approach to connect young entrepreneurs to opportunities in different sectors of the economy and various programmes, such as the infrastructure building programme and general public procurement. Special attention should be paid to youth in rural areas and sector-based incubators should be explored and developed. Support to young entrepreneur networks and business incubators must be enhanced.
 - (iii) Catalysing market linkages to promote demand for products produced by young entrepreneurs. In this vein, a strategy on leveraging public and private procurement to support youth-owned businesses should be developed. The Department of Public Enterprises should coordinate efforts and open opportunities for enterprise development for young people in state-owned companies.
 - (iv) Capacitating youth with skills and competences such as opportunity recognition, business planning and running pilot businesses, including soft skills such as sense of initiative, creativity etc.
- h) Young ex-offenders who face the double challenge of general unemployment and criminal records as a consequence of their conviction, must be supported by reintegrating them into communities and facilitate their absorption into the labour market, thus preventing re-offending whilst promoting rehabilitation efforts.
- i) Government to promote the universal use of code, applications and technology that is built and owned by South African young people and these entrepreneurs should be provided with financial support and protection from negative effects from the global markets.
- j) Where access to business infrastructure is an impediment, local government to provide business support through facilitation of infrastructure support measures.
- k) Promote strategic localisation, reindustrialization, export promotion, and integration of youth owned businesses into the economies within the African continent.

6.3. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION

To ensure that South Africa realises the health goals for the population, young people need to be supported with information, skills and services that help them prevent non-communicable and communicable diseases including pandemics, as well as mental health disorders. Health should be viewed holistically, incorporating emotional and spiritual components. To deal with the pandemics, young South Africans need to be a visible part of the solution, and to actively contribute to efforts to reduce the spread of the viruses and mitigate their impact.

In relation to mental health in particular, South Africa should address the SDG Target 3.5 to “strengthen prevention and treatment of substance abuse (indicators: coverage of treatment interventions for substance-use disorders; harmful use of alcohol” and addressing interventions for adolescents and youth will reduce the burden of ill-health). Information on the effects of substance abuse should be made available by appropriate service providers. Children and adolescents are affected by multiple stressors including the effects of HIV on the family, parental substance and drug misuse, domestic violence and child abuse and neglect, poverty and family breakdown, poor peer relationships and academic pressures that expose young people to mental illness along the life course. Pandemic related job losses, business foreclosures and

loss of loved ones were expected to lead to additional emotional stressors for many youths. During transition into adulthood, problems such as academic failure, alcohol use, vehicle accidents, interpersonal violence, discrimination, and joblessness may negatively affect the sense of self and diminish young people's quality of life. Very often, stigma hampers utilisation of available mental health and support resources by young people.

The National Gender-based Violence and Femicide Strategic Plan (NSP) (2020-2030) was developed through a multi-stakeholder consultative process that involved young people. The NSP provides renewed multi-sectoral efforts by the government and civil society to realise a South Africa free from gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF). It recognises all violence against women (across age, location, disability, sexual orientation, sexual and gender identity, nationality, and other diversities) as well as violence against children. The NSP provides a programming framework that will guide youth related interventions for urgently responding to victims and survivors of GBV, broadening access to justice for survivors, changing social norms and behaviour through high-level awareness raising and prevention campaigns, strengthening existing architecture that is responsive to GBVF and promoting accountability, and creation of more economic opportunities for young women who are vulnerable to abuse due to poverty (DWYPD, 2020).

The 4IR brings prospects for new business opportunities and care delivery models that can improve delivery of physical and mental health care, aided by digital technologies that may enhance affordable, accessible, high quality health care for all. For example, mobile technology has become a platform for improving medical data and service delivery. In addition, illness detection and pharmaceutical production have most immediately benefited from digitisation. Various organisations and institutions that interface with youth should integrate mental health screening, referral, and monitoring into their programmes.

To conclude, the National Health Insurance (NHI) is well on track to be implemented. This is a health financing system designed to pool funds to provide access to quality affordable personal health services for all South Africans based on their health needs, irrespective of their socio-economic status. The policy advocates for inclusion of youth not just as beneficiaries of the system, but as able contributors to its design and roll out. The NHI funding model will give effect to the three key principles of the NHI: universal provision of quality health care, social solidarity through cross-subsidisation, and equity.

Proposed Interventions

6.3.1 Support healthy lifestyles through physical and mental health promotion

- a) Introduce compulsory physical education in every school, university, and prison to combat lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. Furthermore, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture and municipalities must ensure provision of recreational facilities, including gyms and sporting facilities in communities.
- b) Public and private schools as well as institutions of higher learning must have onsite provision of psycho-social services to address challenges such as mental health, bullying, gender based-violence, rape etc.
- c) The Department of Social Development to support training, recruitment, employment, and retention of social workers and to also lobby other departments to do the same to ensure provision of psycho-social services, to address increasing social ills.
- d) Community and institution-based young professionals, such as psychologists, social workers, youth development practitioners, early childhood practitioners, and community-health workers must be employed to strengthen and intensify psycho-social support including provision of family and mental health services.
- e) The basic package of support within the Presidential Youth Intervention should offer psycho-social and healthcare assistance to young people.
- f) Department of Health should establish a youth structure within the NHI to ensure that youth are prioritized and involved during the implementation phase.

6.3.2 Promote mental health amongst the youth

- a) Increase awareness on counselling services for children, adolescents, and youth, including for youth in disadvantaged and rural communities. These include ISHP services, community-based mental health services provided by NGOs, Childline and the South African Depression Action Group (SADAG).
- b) Department of Health to establish community-based mental health institutions for provision of these services and they should be given names that do not attract stigma to patients.
- c) Introduce a dedicated 24/7 confidential service toll-free numbers accessible to youth seeking counselling services. Chat services with lay counsellors, youth workers, psychologists, mental health therapists or professional counsellors on platforms such as WhatsApp/ Messenger are useful and can be linked to a geographic information system (GIS) to identify the location of the user and offer immediate response in case a person has suicidal ideation

or other mental health challenges. Such services were advertised widely during pandemic lockdown and should be expanded, rolled out and implemented beyond the pandemic.

- d) All role players must view the mental health issue broadly using the public health lens, and deal with the root causes of challenges facing youth, such as high levels of gender-based violence, drug-abuse, suicide, crime, experiences of racism or other discrimination, and the psyche of unemployed young people.

Programmes and services must be extended to support parents and guardians of affected children and youth.

6.3.3 Combat substance abuse among youth

- a) Fully implement the National Drug Master Plan.
- b) The South African Police Service to prioritise reducing the availability of illegal drugs including increasing the legal age of alcohol use to 21.
- c) The Department of Health to develop and implement protocols and practices for integrated diagnosis and treatment of substance dependence and co-occurring disorders.
- d) Laws and policies that facilitate effective governance of alcohol and drug supply chain need to be harmonised and enforced.
- e) Alcohol should not be sold in proximity to schools and other facilities frequented by young people.
- f) Young people should participate in local anti-crime structures or community policing forums (CPF) and be active against corruption that hampers drug-fighting efforts.
- g) Information on the adverse effects of substance use and risks of addiction should accompany alcohol adverts on television. Total banning of alcohol adverts should be considered by the state.
- h) To address limited access to rehabilitation centres, the Department of Social Development must roll-out and expand harm-reduction and rehabilitation programmes for young people who are struggling with substance abuse across the country.
- i) Municipality by-laws dealing with restricting access to alcohol should be strictly enforced.
- j) Jobs relating to combating substance abuse should be created.
- k) The Department of Social Development to expand and roll out harm-reduction and rehabilitation programmes for young people who are struggling with substance abuse.

6.3.4 Combat Gender Based Violence and Femicide

- a) Implement the National Gender-based Violence and Femicide Strategic Plan (NSP) (2020-2030). Strengthen the current legislation dealing with gender-based violence by amending the three key legislations, namely the Domestic Violence Act; the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act; and the Criminal and Related Matters Act.
- b) Implement prevention and early interventions services for childhood and adulthood violence victims and perpetrators.

6.3.5 Promote sexual and reproductive health and rights

- a) Instil values against gender stereotyping and prejudices in young people to foster a sense of inner-belief, self-respect and mutual respect, along with a deepened understanding of human sexuality. Youth, especially young women, should be taught to be assertive when making decisions about sexual and reproductive health and rights, and to report violations of these rights. This is a core focus of comprehensive sex education and a responsibility of schools and families.
- b) Promote access to adolescent and youth-friendly health services and information related to sexual and reproductive health and rights and expand that through mobile clinics, in public and private health facilities, as well as in schools, and other venues. Young people should be able to make their own decisions about their health care guided by non-judgmental and empathetic health, social and community workers.
- c) Implement child protection legal frameworks in health facilities, on issues of rape cases and all other forms of sexual abuse.
- d) Allow young people to utilise health care services, including through mobile health clinics to leverage health promotion and disease prevention campaigns; HIV counselling and testing and take an interest in personal health and also breaking down self-imposed barriers and contextual barriers during pandemics and other future outbreaks.
- e) Protect young people from sexual and gender-based violence, sexually transmitted infections, substance abuse and teenage pregnancies. We need to effectively deal with cultural practices that abuse their human rights and address the social determinants of health challenges.
- f) Implement interventions that provide information and challenge taboos, myths, misperceptions, stereotyping, and discrimination related to sexuality.

- g) Capacitate families and communities with skills to enable them to talk to adolescents about sexual and reproductive health freely and confidently using their home language.

6.3.6 Mitigate against the impact of pandemics

- a) Provide comprehensive response to cushion citizens, in particular young people against the impact of the pandemic, while controlling the risks.
- b) Reduce the social and economic impact of the pandemic and cushion those vulnerable, by ensuring that both social and economic interventions target 40% youth as beneficiaries.
- c) Promote access to the new ways of learning (online and distance education).
- d) Provide social relief of distress to families whose income has been negatively affected by the pandemic.
- e) Support youth owned businesses by providing tax relief.
- f) Facilitate the communities' access to water and sanitation.
- g) Involve youth as ambassadors in promoting basic hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and using sanitisers.
- h) Ensure young people's participation in decision-making processes, to strengthen their agency and voice.
- i) Scale up youth innovation in response to pandemics.
- (i) Consistently monitor the impact of pandemics on youth, including through direct engagements, dialogues, research etc.

6.4. SOCIAL COHESION AND NATION-BUILDING

The NDP envisions that in 2030 South Africans will live in a more cohesive society that shuns the divisions of race, gender, and class, and is more accepting of peoples' multiple identities. Nation-building and social cohesion create unity of purpose, which is needed to overcome the obstacles preventing prosperity and equality. South African youth have proven repeatedly that they can compete at all levels of the creative and cultural industries both locally and globally and their example should be emulated by others. For example, in 2020 Trevor Noah's Daily Show programme broadcast from New York was watched daily by millions of fans across the globe. South Africa has produced a few winners of the Miss Universe pageant in recent years including Demi-Leigh Nel-Petersen in 2017, Zozibini Tunzi in 2019 and Tamaryn Green who was the first runner-up of the Miss Universe pageant in 2018. The country also won the Rugby World Cup in 2019, to cap the spirit of triumph through collective efforts. As such, young people must take the lead in realising the constitutional vision of a united, non-sexist, non-racial, democratic, prosperous, and equal society. Sport and the arts have a strong ability to support nation building as shown by unity when South Africans participate or win in competitive sport such as athletics, soccer, swimming, and rugby. Government, through the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture and its agencies identify the arts, culture and heritage sector's role to "contribute to sustainable economic development and enhance job creation by preserving, protecting and developing South African arts, culture and heritage to sustain a socially cohesive and democratic nation" (Department of Arts and Culture, 2017).

The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture developed the "Mzansi Golden Strategy" in 2012, with its primary goal as skills development and creating sustainable job opportunities for artists. The strategy facilitates an annual funding programme for arts, culture and the heritage sector that is charged with providing funding to young artists, curators, heritage practitioners, young organisations, research institutions and the general public. Department of Sports, Arts and Culture agencies such as the National Arts Council, and the National Heritage Council also provide funding towards job creation. Additionally, the National Lotteries also has an ongoing funding programme for arts, culture and heritage projects and their targeted beneficiaries are predominantly young people. While statistics on the number of jobs created by the arts, culture and heritage sector are not available, the sector has enormous potential for job creation for young people and must be nurtured. Any programme aimed at creating job opportunities for young people and helping them to be independent should mainstream arts and culture promotion and development and heritage preservation. Young South Africans should also stand against injustice both in South Africa and around the world and should contribute to causes that call for systemic changes. These include movements such as the #DataMustFall; #BlackLivesMatter; #LGBTQILivesMatter; and others that may emerge in the future.

Proposed Interventions:

6.4.1 Use multi-pronged approach in entrenching social cohesion and nation building

- a) The government and its social partners must establish infrastructure projects such as community libraries, maintaining world-class heritage sites to boost tourism and create job opportunities.
- b) The creative industry must embrace and exploit benefits from the 4IR. For example, utilisation of Blockchain can redefine how artists are remunerated by becoming a platform for creators of intellectual property to receive value

for their work (WEF, 2017). This minimises exploitation by intermediaries who insert themselves into the value chain between artists and their audiences.

- c) Entrepreneurship goes side by side with the creative and cultural industries and must be nurtured and promoted as a way of creating job opportunities for young people.
- d) Music, drama, film and cinema production, media, photography, fashion houses, stage plays, and comedy and related performing arts must be supported as the fastest growing sectors of the creative and cultural industries.
- e) Local government and the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture must create opportunities for young people to interact across social class and racial lines and the programmes must be included in integrated development plans.
- f) The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture working with other departments and civil society organisations to actively participate in building young people's moral value system to insure their lifelong commitment to personal integrity and moral social action within the fabric of society. Ideally, this should develop sound moral reasoning to be able to face the ethical realities and make personal choices based on integrity including ability to resist corruption.

6.4.2 Adequately resource and scale up the National Youth Service Programme

- a) Government, private and civil society sectors must promote, revitalise, and adequately resource the National Youth Service (NYS) and expand its reach. This is in line with many African countries such as Namibia, Kenya, Tanzania, where the Department of Defence is supporting NYS programme, to support the skills revolution in the identified priority areas and inculcate discipline and patriotism. To achieve this, 50% of the identified training areas should be supported by the SANDF with ring-fenced SETA funding.
- b) Prioritise having in place a legislation for a compulsory NYS programme. Stakeholders in government, business and civil society should provide a link between NYS opportunities and an exit opportunity which pipelines young people into the youth work sector and other sectors.
- c) Create and promote opportunities for inter- and intra-continental collaboration between local South African youth and youths from other parts of the African continent and the world such as artistic and cultural heritage festivals, school exchange programmes and related activities that can foster understanding of African values.
- d) Allow South African youth to learn how youth in other parts of the world create opportunities for themselves in these areas.

6.4.3 Expose youth to positive constitutional values that promote South African identity

- a) Young people should learn, internalise, and practice the preamble to the Constitution, as it embodies what it means to be South African. The NDP proposal for the preamble of the Constitution to be recited at all school gatherings, followed by the singing of the national anthem is already being implemented in schools, and should be the norm across all schools.
- b) All young people must familiarise themselves with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and live the values contained in these. The Bill of Responsibilities urges young people to "accept the call to responsibility that comes with the many rights and freedoms that they have been privileged to inherit from the sacrifice and suffering of those who came before".
- c) Student representative councils must push for transformation in schools and institutions of higher learning and ensure that their institutions develop and implement strategies to build a non-racial and inclusive culture, ethos, and curriculum.
- d) The media and producers must promote the ideals of non-racial, non-sexist, and democratic South Africa in all their reporting and give sufficient airtime to stories that facilitate healing, nation-building, and dialogue.
- e) The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture must continue to make national symbols readily available in schools and institutions of learning. National symbols should also be prominently displayed in government buildings and where possible in private companies, in honour of the value of a united South Africa.
- f) The Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation must continue to strengthen and preserve programmes that are geared towards nation-building and social cohesion such as the national art festivals and sporting activities.

6.4.4 Support young South Africans in confronting all forms of discrimination including systemic racism

- a) The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, alongside different state institutions, local government, civic organisations and youth themselves to implement the National Action Plan to combat systemic Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and related intolerances including discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, and homophobic violence.
- b) Implement campaigns focusing on raising awareness and changing attitudes and behaviour in relation to racist and xenophobic tendencies. These should include familiarising young people with the National Action Plan for combating racism, hate crimes, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance and the Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill as well as related programmes.

- c) Government and its partners including the business sector to promote the arts by providing financial and ICT support to young artists to enable them to create work that expresses nation-building and create platforms for debates.

6.4.5 Foster leadership and active citizenry amongst the youth

- d) Actively support youth leadership development in the context of Intergovernmental Relations. All members of society must be responsible for creating an environment that is conducive to the development of the next generation of leaders. Youth should be provided with opportunities to learn and refine leadership capabilities. There should be a target percentage of youth representation in decision-making structures at all levels of government, civil society, and the private sector. Young academics should also be nurtured and supported.
- e) Adopt innovative, interactive, and mobile community engagement tools such as GovChat, LetsChat and similar innovation that seek the views or action of young people on government must be mandatory. Municipalities should utilise local young people to do community action research and to collect ward-based data to improve municipal planning and development.
- f) Municipal councils to promote civic education and implement innovative programmes annually to teach young people about their civic duties, as well as rights and responsibilities as citizens. This can be done cost effectively through community radio, municipal billboards, print media and municipal social media pages.
- g) Traditional councils must protect and preserve their respective cultures by promoting pride in African identities, through the promotion of indigenous knowledge, languages, and practices.

6.4.6 Expand and adequately resource compulsory school and community sports

- a) Government must ensure that adequate, well-maintained community recreational and sports facilities for the majority of the population are in place.
- b) The youth must organise themselves into community clubs so that they can continue to play sports. This will make it easier for sport federations and government to help with equipment where necessary.
- c) The Departments of Sport, Arts and Culture and Public Works and Infrastructure, working with businesses and municipalities, must introduce active lifestyle programmes in communities for youth.

6.4.7 Utilise the 4th Industrial Revolution in fostering Social Cohesion, and Nation building

- a) Expand connectivity and ensure free access to and/or affordable data.
- b) Provide access to broadband infrastructure in underserved and mostly rural areas of South Africa.
- c) Support young people's access to information.

6.5. EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MACHINERY

In line with the NDP's goal of creating a capable state through professionalising the public service, in the youth sector, building capacity for the youth sector entails strengthening key institutions dedicated to deliver services to the youth and ensuring that youth development practitioners as primary providers of services are adequately skilled and competent. In this regard, the following institutions are essential to the implementation of this policy:

- ✓ *The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD)* is the custodian for policy development, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation. Its other key responsibilities include conducting cross cutting key youth research, advocacy, mainstreaming, and stakeholder engagement and support. Through the Ministry and the national youth development branch, the Department will develop a framework and advocate for youth responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and auditing (YRPBMEA) across all sectors in all spheres of society to ensure seamless integration and coordinated response to youth development. At provincial level, this concurrent function will be performed by the Premiers supported by the youth units in the Offices of the Premiers.
- ✓ Furthermore, there are *youth units across sectoral departments in all spheres of governments*. They have been established to develop sector specific policies/ strategies, mainstream youth development within their policies and programmes, and to lead in conceptualisation and implementation of sectoral programmes and projects. At local level, there are Youth Offices charged with the responsibility of direct delivery of services to young people and ensuring that they are prioritised within the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). The local Youth Offices should work with Local Economic Development (LED) departments to support youth with information and capacity to respond to available opportunities. All these structures will ensure implementation of the policy.
- ✓ To further intensify implementation of youth interventions, *the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)* was established through the National Youth Development Agency Act No. 54 of 2008. In terms of this Act, the agency is mandated to integrate youth into the economy, whilst promoting their interests. Important to note is that the NYDA's current mandate is broad and difficult to implement, particularly given the resource constraints. The NYDA Act is being amended to enhance its operational efficiency and expand its reach.

- ✓ *The South African Youth Council (SAYC)* – was established in South Africa in 1997 to represent the interests of young people. The SAYC has a wide range of member organisations. One of its focus areas is ensuring that youth organisations participate in broader social issues. Of relevance to this policy is that even though the SAYC’s role of being a “voice for the youth” is acknowledged, this organisation is not formally recognised and continues to face challenges, including lack of financial and human resources. These problems are pressing because they most directly affect the mobilisation of the youth sector. It is therefore imperative to have the SAYC formally recognised as an apex body for young people in South Africa. Its human and financial resources must also be strengthened to enable it to discharge effectively on its mandate. The SAYC is in turn be expected to strengthen the capacity of its member organisations to actively engage the youth into active citizens.
- ✓ *The Presidential Working Group on Youth (PYWG)* provides political oversight on implementation of the NYP 2030. Led and chaired by the President, the PYWG serves as a strategic platform for joint planning and reporting of progress. It facilitates accountability of different role players to the youth. It is attended by key stakeholders and young people across government, civil society, businesses, and organised labour.
- ✓ *The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities* provides oversight over the Executive and the NYDA as a public entity. It continues to hold the parties accountable for youth development and empowerment.
- ✓ *Nongovernmental youth led and youth serving organisations* operate independently of government and deliver direct and indirect youth development services. They operate internationally, nationally, and locally with some being community or faith based. This policy acknowledges the critical role played by these organisations in providing youth development services.
- ✓ The commitment of *the private sector* to youth development remains crucial, especially because youth employment is a key challenge for the sector. The private sector should prioritise the economic inclusion of youth by, for example, ensuring responsiveness of BBBEE codes to youth and by entrenching YRPBMEA. Joint planning and service provision with the private sector is also important. The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities should strengthen the functioning of a Youth Development Machinery/ Forum – a coordinating structure for youth development made up of private sector, public sector, and civil society stakeholders.
- ✓ *The youth affairs divisions of multilateral organisations* also play an important role, in the United Nations, African Union, BRICS, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Southern African Development Community.

It is worth noting that, in order to deliver impactful services and programmes, South Africa continues to use its adopted two-pronged approach to youth development, namely: mainstreaming youth development across various sectors; and providing dedicated and youth focused specialised programmes and services. This requires a collaborative and coordinated effort from key role players in youth development, as part of a social compact, hence the need for optimising intergovernmental relations between national, provincial and local government to ensure collaboration among all spheres of government alongside the youth. In this regard, young people must be involved in planning and decision making; building connections; and challenging stereotypes that depict them as “social problems.” Instead, an enabling environment that channels their energy, develops their leadership, and inculcate fresh perspectives which promote them as active citizens, able to tackle social problems and act on opportunities, must be created. Partnerships are crucial, as well as service delivery models that ensure institutional support and contribute to forming more solid investments in youth programmes are required cross society.

Proposed Interventions:

6.5.1 Strengthen Youth Institutions and structures to ensure effectiveness and responsiveness

- a) There must be transparent and adequate resourcing for youth development institutions, as well as strong accountability measures on how the resources are ultimately utilised.
- b) DWYPD to advocate for and introduce systematic interventions ensure coordination of the various institutions and eliminating silo operations to promote proper coordination of youth development programmes and to avoid fragmentation, duplication and wastage.
- c) All wings of the State must mainstream youth development across sectoral policies and programmes to ensure responsiveness.
- d) Properly conceptualise youth development programmes and projects to be implemented by government, civil society, and business sectors.
- e) Strengthen the National Youth Development branch within the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities with adequate human and financial resources to discharge its mandate of overseeing youth development policy implementation effectively.
- f) The DWYPD should expedite and finalise amendment of the National Youth Development Act.
- g) Strengthen the youth development institutions and structures at national, provincial, and local levels. These would include a National Youth Development Forum, Provincial Youth Development Fora, and Local Youth Development

Fora. The purpose of these fora is to bring together stakeholders in the youth development space for effective and joint planning, learning, collaboration, and evaluation among other imperatives.

- h) Government must introduce gender, age, and disability disaggregated measurements across all youth programmes so that the design of interventions for these groups is evidence based.
- i) All sectors in all spheres must champion youth development using of youth focal points within the youth units.
- j) The framework legislation for youth development in South Africa (South African Youth Development Act) should be developed and sent to Parliament for consideration.
- k) Establish and/or strengthen Youth Parliaments.

6.5.2 Coordinate service delivery for high impact service provision

- a) The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities should coordinate the development and implementation of minimum norms and standards for youth development, to ensure that youth have access to quality services and programmes irrespective of their locality.
- b) Youth development strategies should be adopted at all levels by all three spheres of government. Municipalities should ensure institutionalisation of youth development within their processes, as they are the sphere of government closest to the youth.
- c) The DWYPD, COGTA and OTPs should support municipalities to develop comprehensive, consulted youth development strategies (that are aligned to the NYP 2030 and to local realities), which can be adopted and funded by Municipal Councils.
- d) Municipalities must establish Local Youth Development Machinery Fora to coordinate service delivery at local level. Traditional councils should also follow the same process and in addition ensure that the issues affecting youth in traditional councils are integrated in the municipality's youth development strategy.
- e) Implement the District-Based Development Model to ensure better impact of youth policies, strategies, and programmes.
- f) Facilitate establishment of high-level engagements on youth development led by the private sector.

6.5.3 Facilitate recognition of youth development practice as a profession

- a) Facilitate recognition of youth development practice/ youth work as a distinct profession;
- b) Facilitate recognition of youth development as a specialised professional field of various sectors;
- c) Develop legislative framework for professional youth development practice;
- d) Encourage development of a body of knowledge to underpin youth development practice;
- e) Establish a professional association to promote professional identity and the sharing of best practices;
- f) Develop occupational unit standards relating to youth development practice and introduce licensing systems for youth workers based on their professional qualification status;
- g) Conceptualise youth programmes with specified intended impact;
- h) Facilitate recognition of prior learning as a core part of professionalisation; and
- i) Put in place the reporting systems that are fit for purpose, and that ensure accountability.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS

Implementation of the National Youth Policy over the period 2020-2030, will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, partnering with the relevant sectors and stakeholders across all levels. The department will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework with high level output, outcome and impact M&E indicators on each of the policy imperatives. The framework will be guided by the 2018 approved M&E Framework for the NYP 2020 as well as the Government Wide M&E Framework and the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) that reinforces the South African government's commitment to the principles of inclusiveness and the cross-implementation of different Monitoring and Evaluation approaches which promote inclusivity (DPME, 2019:6). The proposed M&E framework will clearly provide measurable indicators as well as data collection and tools for tracking implementation.

The framework will track NYP implementation by all sectors and relevant service providers to ensure that success is not based on intervention outputs (e.g. number beneficiaries) only, but also focuses on mid to long-term intervention outcomes (e.g. how beneficiaries' lives may have changed as a result of the policy interventions). There will be creation of in-house monitoring and evaluation capacity building for all key stakeholders and implementing agents. These will include targeting young people to own the outcomes of the development process by being involved in the monitoring and evaluation thus fostering youth-led accountability in view of human rights as fundamental to development. Experience from the previous NYP points aspects of implementation failures to late development and approval of M&E

framework. Such limitations are dealt with proactively to avoid wastage of resources and fragmented services. An online data management system is also being considered to help promote the ease of reporting and to improve accountability.

Furthermore, an Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS) will be developed by the National Youth Development Agency to give effect to the youth policy implementation. Notably, an independent formative evaluation on policy implementation will be conducted in 2025 to inform possible amendments to the IYDS, while an independent summative evaluation at the end would be conducted to assess the overall impact of the policy and the benefits which accrued for young people, the youth sector and the wider society. Young people will be mobilised to be involved in YRPBMEA as end users/ service recipients/ beneficiaries.

8. CONCLUSION

Lessons emerging from implementation of the National Youth Policy 2020 suggested that there is a need to respond to complex, increasing and changing needs of the youth. These responses must be implemented in an accelerated and integrated manner considering that youth is a critical developmental stage, and all young people deserve to be empowered so that they can transition smoothly into adulthood. The National Youth Policy 2030 is aimed at addressing the challenges faced by South African youth, and to create an environment that will enable them to fulfil their potential. Therefore, having a monitoring and evaluation framework to track implementation of the youth policy outcomes and output at an early stage is critical. The NYP 2030 aims to have youth development programmes in place that respond to the challenges faced by the youth of South Africa through the IYDS to enable young people to have agency and take charge of their future.

This youth policy is being developed in the era of the 4th Industrial Revolution. As such, to accelerate the NYP 2030's policy priorities, suggested measures include quality education and skills revolution; economic participation; efforts to improve labour absorption in the economy; improved mental and physical health as well as well functioning efficient youth development structures. All these must be supported in practical terms, by adequate resourcing and coordinated delivery efforts that have previously blunted effectiveness. It is fully appreciated that resources are limited, and government must juggle competing priorities, however investment in youth is investment in broader development of the South African society. Implementing these interventions in the next ten years will bring us closer to a South Africa in which young people and youth-serving organisations achieve their full potential in the social, economic and political spheres of life, and recognise and develop their responsibilities to build a better life for all.

#NYP2030

#YouthPower

#DecadeForPositiveYouthDevelopment

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