#NYP2030

# NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY
# 2020-2030
## DRAFT

A decade to accelerate positive youth development outcomes

women, youth &
persons with disabilities

Department:
Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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The 6th Administration is set apart by President Cyril Ramaphosa's pronouncement of a newly established Department in the Presidency 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 that leadership, one of the key department's mandate is to develop over-arching youth development policy and legislation.

In light of the above, the process of developing the National Youth Policy 2020-2030 started immediately early in 2020, came just after the conclusion of the 25-Year Review. As a newly appointed Minister, I immediately established a technical reference team (TRT) consisting of multi stakeholders from government, business, academic and other civil society institutions. This National Youth Policy had to take into account 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 in the midst of a ravaging Coronavirus (Covid 19) pandemic, which created chaos all over the world - threatening lives and livelihoods. The truth is that, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, policymaking had become very complex and tricky. We had to change the course of our direction, lower the base from which we plan, and all our baselines are largely now accommodating this new reality. As a result of this pandemic, Health has become our no. 1 priority. We have to cushion the general population, and in particular the majority of our people being young people, against the negative impact of this pandemic.

The truth is, even though our youth were already marginalized even prior to the pandemic, their situation has now further been worsened and made complicated. At the onset of the pandemic, their education got disrupted; they became socially isolated, anxious and depressed due to lockdown restrictions; the high prevalence of gender based violence and femicide increased; poor unhealthy eating habits due to stress; there was generally 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 loss of income/ employment which threatened young people's livelihoods.

Even worrying is that, the recent Supplementary Budget revealed that the country's economy will contract by 7.2% in 2020, which is the largest contraction in nearly 90 years. 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 to deal with the pandemic, including the R500 Billion in Covid-19 interventions announced by the President, to support vulnerable household, businesses and individuals who have been hit hard by the pandemic. This sets a positive baseline for the country to continue to prioritise the protection and development of women, youth and persons with disabilities.

We are happy to have stakeholders from across the country who participated in our journey of coming up with a new NYP for the period 2020-2030. I stated foremost that the process should be highly rigorous and consultative. Although there was an interruption of the consultations process by the COVID-19 pandemic, more stakeholders were reached and engaged to my satisfaction. 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 the multi-stakeholder TRT. The contribution of all youth formations, through the technical reference team is greatly acknowledged. Equally, the participation of government departments has ensured that the policy is balanced and responds to the gaps identified in our ongoing national programmes. The invaluable contribution made by the National Youth Development Coordinating Forum, the civil society organizations as our social partners, academia, research organisations, business, and the youth serving organizations is highly commendable. Their contributions have enriched this policy document, thus making it responsive to the needs and aspirations of young people. It is therefore our hope that this youth policy will serve as reference for all key youth development institutions, development partners, and any interested stakeholders in our collective effort to make youth development a reality, thereby providing a sound base for a prosperous South Africa and a better life for all.

It was important to have this broad consultation, because the NYP is not a government policy, BUT it is the state's commitment to youth development. In our consultation, stakeholders including young people reaffirmed the need to continue on a path towards holistic and positive youth development. In this regard, they proposed that the youth policy should prioritise the following policy pillars:

- ✓ Quality Education, Skills and Second Chances;
- ✓ Economic transformation, Entrepreneurship and Job creation;
- ✓ Physical and Mental Health Promotion including Covid 19;
- ✓ Social Cohesion and Nation Building; and
- ✓ Effective and responsive youth development machinery.

It is worthy to note that, the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has been identified as the cross-cutting theme across the above stated 5 policy pillars. This is because, technology is progressing at an unprecedented pace. The NYP pronounces on policy proposals to ensure that youth development imperatives are not stifled. As a country, we need to ensure creation of an inclusive, enabling environment, which benefits from the 4IR. We must change how we teach our children and youth, as new careers will arise, while other work may be redundant or taken up by technology.

As we adjust to this new normal, let us continue to make youth development a priority, by engaging the youth as equal and resourceful partners in seeking solutions. Through the NYP, we commit to continue to invest in youth, and we will support them by opening spaces so that they are part of decision making processes. We will also afford our young leaders with an opportunity to contribute towards policy development and implementation at domestic and international levels. Investment in young people is investment in the future of our country, our continent and the world. The world can only be a better place when young people have the autonomy to build their own trajectories.

Let us together ensure that the focus of the policy on issues of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) is realized. This generation must ensure the eradication of GBVF through attitude change and partnerships with young men, to ensure that women, girls and children are safe in their homes, communities and workplaces.

To conclude, I want to reiterate the importance of accelerating empowerment and development of youth, because young people do not only form a large cohort of the population, they are literally the leaders, parents, employers, employees, educators, consumers and voters of today, and indeed tomorrow. The youth are well versed with the technology, they are connected and are more willing to put themselves out there and have tough conversations. As has been stressed before, we need to think global, but act local.

We must continue to lift up youth voices, in a manner that would ensure resilience and recovery. I know that, if we amplify the voices of our youth and act on what they are saying, they will become part of the solution, in addressing their needs.

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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 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 is the highest jobless rate since 2008. More worryingly, the unemployment rate of youth aged 25-34 is more than double that of the age group 45-54 (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 stands at 59.0%, implying that there are almost 6 out of every ten young people 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 of ages between 15-24. 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 putting faces to all these numbers and 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 Coronavirus (COVID-19), which is threatening their livelihoods and survival.

This National Youth Policy (NYP) 2030, proposes various policy imperatives to strengthen youth development both during and post Covid-19 era. It advocates for the need for key players within the state, 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 opportunities for them.

A key strategy of responding is to ensure institutional capacity to accelerate youth development issues across government, business and civil society sectors, partnering with young people. This is crucial as the country acts with speed to deal decisively with persistent challenges within 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 Disability 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.

The key purpose of the policy is to advocate for youth development mainstreaming to ensure that issues of youth are not over-shadowed nor do they become an afterthought to decision makers. This requires strengthening the youth development machinery by having youth focal points appointed at an appropriate level, skilled and their units adequately well resourced. Furthermore, there is a need to track implementation of the NYP 2030 through an M&E system which provides for high level indicators to be monitored across sectors. In this regard, the Department will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework immediately after approval on the NYP 2030. I, personally commit myself, to support of the DWYPD's Youth Development Branch to ensure that it discharges its M&E function appropriately. This would without doubt, ensure accountability of all key role players to the youth.

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 made by Dr R.Bernice Hlagala; Mr Emmanuel Kganakga; Mr Calvin Mkasi; Mr Rudzani Neshunzhi; Ms Aluwani Mudau; Ms Nhlanhla Manzini, 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 driver of this project – a Technical Reference Team, which was responsible for overseeing this project and ensuring consultations with the relevant stakeholders. In this regard, the representatives of organisations include: Ms Lato Mabaso (COGTA); Ms Laila Ncwana (DTI); Ms Pebetse Maleka (National Treasury); Ms Hanlie Nel and Mr Fanani Manungu (DPSA); Ms Rebecca Sikhosana (DHET); Ms Kgomotso Moalusi and Mr Surprise Mokgope (DWYPD); Ms Malebo Mekoa, Ms Sandisiwe Tsotetsi (NYDA); Mr Thembinkosi Josopu (SAYC); Sino Moabelo (BUSA); Mr Luvuyo Manyi and Mr Thobela Maponya (BBC); Dr KJN Karel (UNISA); Prof Arianne De Lanoy (UCT – SALDRU); and Dr Raymond Raselekoane (UNIVEN). The development of this youth policy would not have been possible without their support.

Credit is also given to the team from the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), led by Dr Mokhantsho Makoae, for their technical assistance and continued interactions with the project managers on quality assuring the NYP. The HSRC team collectively injected passion and a sense of urgency in completing the task, even during the world's outbreak of Covid 19. Based on their profound knowledge and rich experience of youth development, they structured and presented the information into a readable, timely and finally impactful document.

To ensure ownership and buy in, there were broad and extensive consultations sessions with youth focal points; national line function departments; Offices of the Premiers in nine provinces; municipalities; private sector; as well as youth themselves through both physical and virtual means. The draft was also presented to the National Youth Development Coordinating Forum – a strategic platform for youth machinery stakeholders in government, civil society and private sector. The vital role and contributions of all these key stakeholders in producing this policy are recognised, including the open and candid discussion which were particularly valuable as they brought to the table considerable insights into the issues affecting young men and women in South Africa. The Department counts on all stakeholders, individually and collectively, to continue sharing information and popularising this policy through the various platforms available to reach out to as many young people as possible.

In order to effectively implement the NYP 2030, the Department would develop an M&E system. The DWYPD counts on all stakeholder to come on board, in setting high level output, outcome, and impact indicators to track implementation of this youth policy. The Minister and Deputy Minister in the Presidency responsible for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, reaffirmed their commitment in providing political oversight to accelerate implementation of the NYP 2030, as an essential advocacy tool, which seeks to address the plight of young men and women as agents of change and development, including holding key players accountable.

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Director-General in The Presidency for Women,
Youth and Persons with Disabilities

## 1. WHY A 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 amongst young people at local, provincial and national levels in South Africa. It is developed collaboratively by multiple stakeholders in consultation with young people, for all young people in South Africa, with the intent to redress the wrongs and injustices of the past and to deal decisively with the persistent as well as new and emerging challenges of the country's diverse youth. The policy is being reviewed when the entire world is responding to COVID-19 pandemic which has negative psycho-socio-economic impacts on everyone including young people. At global and national levels, emergency plans have to be in place during and post-COVID-19 to mitigate its negative impact. The policy recognises that reprioritization of resources will incorporate youth development taking into consideration some of the unintended consequences of 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, and the 25 Year Review (1994-2019) recommendations. 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), SADC Business plan and strategy, Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment, and various other policies that are implemented by different sectors, aimed at integrating young people as contributing members of the society.

The NDP, adopted by Cabinet in 2012, 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. The NYP 2030 shares this vision, as 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 effective 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. It invests in enhancement of their capabilities to transform the economy and the country. As part of the implementation mechanism, the Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS), will be developed within six (6) months following the government's adoption of the policy and this strategic document will articulate in detail how the various identified interventions would be implemented. Furthermore, this policy can only be successful through planned and resourced programmatic efforts and coordination among different youth representative bodies, government and public bodies, civil society and the private sector. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, containing high level indicators will similarly be revised and adopted within four (4) months following government's adoption of the policy in order to improve reporting against the set indicators and accountability to young people. As the youth policy coordinating institution, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD) will ensure monitoring, evaluation and auditing of NYP 2020-2030 implementation by various role players within youth development space.

This policy places the youth as key players in their own development and in advancement of their communities, the nation, the continent and the globe. It recognises the skills, energy, knowledge and expertise, attitudes and capacities that, if invested in an well harnessed, can lift South Africa out of the persisting challenges of high unemployment, poverty, inequalities, negative education and health outcomes as well as consistent underdevelopment. South Africa needs to create opportunities and develop coherent, well planned and executed interventions that enable young people to develop and realise their potential. This 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 all levels of society, youth development is seen as key to the long term sustainable development of the country. Tangible commitments, resourcing, action and accountability by all

stakeholders working in partnership with young people continue to be vital. South Africa needs to develop young people's capabilities as part of a long-term solution to poverty, unemployment and inequality. This, will open opportunities for the youth to participate in and take advantage of what South Africa has to offer.

## 2. DEFINITION AND THE PROFILE OF SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH

The NYPs 2009, 2015 & 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 15-35 years (African Union Commission, 2006). According to Statistics South Africa (2019), youth aged 15-34 years constitute 37 % of the country's population (20 640 722).

Again, 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 side-line 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' 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 adopted 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 and an "adult youth".

## 3.  STRATEGIC THRUST

### 3.1.  Vision

The vision of the NYP 2030 is:

"*an integrated, holistic and sustainable youth development, conscious of the diversities, historical imbalances and current realities, in building capacities for young people, so that they can in turn contribute their full potential in building a better life for all.*"

### 3.2.  Goal

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

### 3.3.  Objectives

The objectives of the NYP 2030 are to:

a)  Integrate youth development into the mainstream of policies, programmes and the national budget;

b)  Promote positive youth development outcomes in addressing the needs of young people and building their assets;

c)  Support young people, particularly those outside the social, political and economic mainstream;

d)  Ensure responsiveness by linking young people with relevant service providers;

e)  Promote and advocate for young people's access to quality services as a means to facilitate their smooth transition into independence;

f)  Strengthen a culture of patriotic citizenship among young people to help them become responsible adults who care for their families and communities;

g)  Strengthen the capacity of key youth development institutions in delivery of coordinated package of services for the youth; and

h)  Facilitate young people's engagement in building a better South Africa, Africa and a better world.

### 3.4.  Desired policy outcome

The desired outcome is empowered young people who possess information, knowledge and skills that enable them to seize opportunities, play their roles and take responsibility in making a meaningful contribution to the development of a democratic and prosperous South Africa.

### 3.5  Values and principles

Youth development in South Africa has been shaped by the long history of struggle against the Apartheid system. 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:

#### 3.5.1  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 since they serve as essential support systems to young people's development and empowerment and are intentionally youth-focused in effectively addressing their needs.

• *Youth empowerment*. Interventions should empower young people as assets for national development, raising their confidence so that they can contribute meaningfully to their own development and that of the broader society.

### 3.5.2 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 recognise and 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 and ensure young women are equal partners to young men must be implemented to address gender-based disparities, from political to socio-economic and cultural settings.
- **Holistic**. the 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 against young people on the basis of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability or any other form of discrimination as enshrined in the Constitution.
- **Participation and inclusion**. **Participation and inclusion**. Service departments/ institutions must design policies, strategies and programmes with young people and share information, create opportunities and involve youth in decision-making as active participants in their own development and the development of the country. Young people should own the outcomes of the development process by being involved in the monitoring and evaluation of processes targeting youth development and fostering youth-led accountability in view of human rights as fundamental to development.
- **Redress**. It is important to recognise the different ways in which young people have been affected and continue to be affected by injustices and to address these injustices through equitable policies, programmes and resource allocation.
- **Resilience.** In every crisis there are opportunities. Youth development should be about aiding youth to recover from any shocks or difficulties by finding available opportunities.
- **Responsiveness.** All 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 fulfil their aspirations and make a positive societal and global impact.
- **Social cohesion**. Youth development interventions should promote inclusion of young people as 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 POLICY PRIORITIES

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 years[1]. 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, 983 698 students were enrolled at higher education institutions (universities and universities of technology) in 2013. By 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), 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 4IR demands that the youth be equipped with technological and digital skills. 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). The IPAP recommendations, which promoted digital growth and creating '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) that universal access to digital hardware and software becomes possible; and (iv) that 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 and Industry IPAP, 2018 p.101).

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

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[1] Department 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

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 33986[2] 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 per cent annually over the medium term. Sector education and training authorities 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 as a consequence 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.

In terms of entrepreneurship, there has been an increase in youth owned businesses, from 595 000 in 2015 to 641 000 in 2016. 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 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 'Khomanani'; (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

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[2] https://www.yes4youth.co.za/ (accessed on 18.03.2020)

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). In 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 institutionalized 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, monitor and evaluate (M & E) 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 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 and 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 drop-outs 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 11[3].

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 percent) 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), 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 qualification[4].
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. It has to 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 act as 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 encourage learners to leave school earlier than usual.

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

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

[4] 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.

grown significantly, they are still insufficient in number and quality to meet the intermediate skills needs of the economy. In 2018, only 780 000 million young South Africans to be enrolled at TVET colleges by 2030, but less than 800 000 students are currently registered. This is in comparison with the country's nearly 1 million university students and the big percentage of youth not attending any tertiary institutions. 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 vast majority of 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. 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: attending educational facilities, playing, being independent and active job seekers.

Policy for children with disabilities is the mandate of the Department of Basic Education and Department of Social Development. However, when these children reach the youth stage they seem to fall through cracks of the existing systems. Some of the disabilities including learning disorders are misunderstood culturally resulting in some youth being hidden in their homes and not attending special educational facilities that could empower them to be independent and to contribute to societal progress.

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."* Young people also submitted 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.

### 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. Youth 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 first quarter of 2020 released by Statistics South Africa, the official unemployment rate stood at 30.1%, which is the highest joblessness rate since 2008. In general, youth unemployment has remained stubbornly high. More worryingly, the unemployment rate of youth aged 25-34 was more than double that of the age group 45-54 (37.3% vs 17.5%). According to StatsSA, in the first quarter of 2020, the unemployment rate among the youth aged between 15 and 24 was 59.0%. 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.[5] 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 to many.

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 15–24 years who were NEET stood at to 34.1% in Q1 of 2020. This represents approximately 3.5 million young people aged 15 to 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 15–34 years who were NEET slightly increased by 1.1 of a percentage point from 38.9% to 41.7% in Q1 of 2020.[6] 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 than White and Indian young people.[7]

The youth with disabilities compete for the same jobs with 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 opportunity. The majority of job opportunities require a typed 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.

Various factors 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.
- Progress in economic development is hampered by poor implementation of economic policy, 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. Interest rates remain relatively high, government expenditure is not efficient, 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 fourth 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 labour market that has become more technology driven and high skills dependent. Youth unemployment further jeopardises skills development required to sustain economic growth.

According to Statistics SA, the majority of South Africa's youth often fall within one of three categories: uneducated, unemployed, and unemployable.[8] 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 industry would benefit from targeted interventions that are implemented early to facilitate on-the-job skill acquisition and entrepreneurial skills.

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[5] 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.

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

[7] 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.

[8] http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12362

Statistics show inter-provincial migration of youth aged between 15 to 29 to mainly cities in Gauteng and other provinces such KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape from mostly rural provinces in search for better economic opportunities, jobs and a better life. Migrant youth face risks of end up falling into the urban poverty trap due to lack of social support system therefore there has to be proactive interventions to address specific conditions, risks and vulnerabilities of young migrants. Young women in particular are at a disadvantage, as there appears to be correlation between educational level and the level of total early-stage entrepreneurial activity (TEA) – with 67.4% TEA rate for those who have completed secondary education and beyond; while the level of TEA for those young women without education is at 4.4% (NYDA, 2018). This contributes significantly to young males being more likely to be entrepreneurs than their female counterparts.

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 funding, due to red-tape and bulky requirements and unprecedented paperwork required which costs so much money to compile. This include 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 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 Fourth Industrial Revolution (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 affect us negatively*".
Submission by a national youth movement on 16 March 2020

The COVID-19 crisis has also exacerbated the youth unemployment situation in South Africa. The economy was already in negative growth territory, 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.

### 5.4    Poor physical and mental health outcomes, including the negative effect of COVID-19 pandemic

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 in itself can be the consequence of mental ill health or trauma. One of the key health concerns that is often ignored is pulmonary tuberculosis (TB), despite it being the 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 15-24 years' age group, accounting for 7,0% of the deaths. It was followed by the human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] disease (responsible for 5.7% deaths). Even though there are decreasing levels of teenage pregnancies alongside high HIV prevalence among teenagers in South Africa, they remain undesirably high. According to the United Nations Aids Agency, in 2018, new HIV infections among young women aged 15–24 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 males[9]. 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.

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[9] South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey, 2018

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 (2013-2017), as well as national campaigns such as 'Ke Moja' to prevent and reduce abuse of dependency-creating substances, 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. Furthermore, it is difficult to quantify the impact of the interventions, as a result 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. The Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act 70 of 2008 is being amended, and will promote prevention and early intervention. Implementation will require stakeholders such as the national and provincial liquor authority boards to invest in harm reduction programmes that draw 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 later violent behaviour and this violence negatively impact of society as a whole. This manifests in youth violence (physical fighting, gangsters, sexually coercive behaviour. GBV and femicide are a growing challenge and young people are both the victims and perpetrators of crime. The scourge of gender-based violence (GBV) is disproportionately affecting young women. According to the Minister of Policy, in March 2020, reported cases of GBV were 37% higher than was recorded in 2019. [10]

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. High suicide rates (including suicidal thoughts and attempted suicide) were reported at 12.8% per 100 000 in 2016[11].

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 ratios are higher in urban areas as young people migrate to cities in search of opportunities but find themselves without family networks to assist them. But it is also because some move to urban area and continue to face the problem of homelessness because they lack technical skills or an idea of what they want to do in the cities, hence when they arrive there it becomes a matter of struggling to understand what to do and gaining the skills that will assist them to do it. Moreover, the issue of broken homes mean that some young people even those born in the cities also find themselves homeless either because they were not born in a home or that they grew up as street kids. 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 home[12]. 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 sectors[13]. Various groups of vulnerable young people such as those without adequate housing

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

[11] 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/

[12] 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.

[13] Mokomane, Z. & Makoae, 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

(the homeless and residents of informal settlements) require targeting with screening, testing and treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 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 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 creative industry as a whole. Many of them don't have workplace contracts, unemployment support, pensions and other support systems.

### 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 StatsSA'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 survey[14]. 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 national prevalence. However, there were not enough data to disaggregate different groupings. 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 is required, 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. The NYP 2030 will also provide a blueprint for state entities, civil society, private sector and youth in their youth development efforts including the strengthening of social cohesion 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. 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

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[14] http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0340/P03402019.pdf

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 for 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[15]. 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

According to the NDP, 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 South Africa's education vision that by 2030 South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality possible, producing 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.

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 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 the current 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 has improved in particular. There is visible progress in enrolment in technical and mid-level skills programmes such as artisanship.

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.

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[15]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.

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.

During the consultations, the youth expressed their views about the current education system which they described as lacking core curricula elements and excluding other groups of youth.

*Proposed Interventions:*

**6.1.1    Ensuring universal access to quality ECD and early learning programmes for all**
   a) Intensify and monitor compulsory access to Early Childhood Development (ECD) learning.
   b) Systematic improvements in quality across all public schools is required to bridge the gap between public and private schools.
   c) Schools should provide the resources and support necessary for learners with disabilities to participate in all elements of school life and learning.
   d) Sign Language and Braille must be introduced in our education system for all, starting at ECD level.
   e) Introduce school safety programme to ensure that teaching and learning is not impeded by any form of threat, harm or of violence.

**6.1.2    Teacher development and curriculum review to promote problem solving, employability, entrepreneurship and adaptation to the 4IR**
   a) Avoid rapid changes to the curriculum at basic education level.
   b) Education system and the examination framework should be reviewed 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 and recruit young people to the teaching profession.
   e) Implement and intensify skills training for young people in the areas of the 4IR such as: reverse engineering of smart cars; 3D printing; artificial intelligence; robotics; autonomous vehicles; nanotechnology; biotechnology; the internet of things; quantum computing; virtual network of choice; virtual broadcasting services; visual media and network etc. as required by industry.
   f) Adapt to the 4IR era by enhancing access to broadband and Wi-Fi for internet connectivity to enable teaching of computer literacy and use of internet including in remote rural schools, homes and communities.
   g) Every technology that is brought into the country must be customised to the SA environment to further enhance the available skills in the country
   h) Progressively introduce practical subjects such as entrepreneurship and e-commerce, agriculture, computing, financial trading and investment, green economy, technical skills and handwork (artisanship).
   i) All South African learners must learn history, critical thinking, coding, life skills, communication, and indigenous languages.
   j) 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.
   k) 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), acquisition of skills such as training for artisans and technicians is useful for growing the economy. The provision of these skills should be responsive to industry demands and developmental needs of the country.

**6.1.3    Implement inter-disciplinary early intervention programmes for healthy development of young people**
   a) The Department of Basic Education should scale-up interventions that are already in place such as peer education; Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) programmes to support struggling learners including safe and suitable transport facilities for rural schools and learners with disabilities.
   b) 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 to foster a sense of self-esteem, rights and responsibilities, while nurturing self-respect. The programmes should be delivered through sustained aftercare programmes that improve academic performance and combat substance abuse.

c) Many after-school programmes can be delivered by young people who have left school, often on a voluntary basis or through social enterprising. Activities offered could include tutoring, mentoring, life skills and leadership programmes, career guidance and expos, and arts, sports and recreation.

d) Introduce and promote entrepreneurship education and training in schools to help facilitate development of broader societal culture and ecosystem of entrepreneurship.

### 6.1.4 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.

### 6.1.5 Career guidance for technical, technology-based and productive sectors of the economy, and ongoing support for young job seekers

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, 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) Free daily data allocations and the zero-rating of educational websites must be provided as a matter of urgency by all internet service providers to help young people access learning and advancement opportunities.

### 6.1.6 Increase opportunities for quality post-school skills training for all

a) In each district there must be a Technical and Vocational Training high school.

b) Agricultural schools of excellence and colleges must be established in each province and agriculture faculties must be introduced and/or strengthened in universities and TVET colleges.

c) New, virtual-ready skills development academies that allow for short and dynamic skills programmes for youth must be established. Locality and social class must never be an obstacle to access by youth.

d) Government should progressively expand implementation of free education and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of National Student Financial Aid Scheme.

e) Information on funding opportunities should be available to students across all communities and education institutions through various media platforms.

f) The Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation needs to develop a comprehensive plan in respect of historic debt which is a challenge for many students.

g) All post-school institutions should be inclusive, to ensure that the learners with disabilities' rights to education are protected. TVET colleges in particular 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.

h) 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.

i) 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.

j) Young graduates from TVET colleges and all other Institutions of Higher Learning must be supported to find placements to perform experimental learning or internship.

k) Public service internship programme must be scaled up and aligned 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.

l) The role of state-owned enterprises in training artisans and technical professionals must be expanded. The National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) 2030 should be implemented, ensuring that the private sector provides training in the workplace

m) The NSDP must be implemented and partners' accountability should be monitored 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 hit. 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 not put on the sidelines as the country zooms into recovery from the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic.

This policy calls first and foremost for economic reform measures that will ensure a more inclusive macro-economic direction. All measures to revive the economy must place youth in 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 muted catalytic infrastructure projects in water, transportation, energy, digital infrastructure, human settlements and agriculture, both at conceptual, project management, supplier and labour aspects. The policy also calls for the private sector partners to create jobs initiatives to help address this chronic youth unemployment.

In his 2020 State of the Nation Address (SONA 2020), the President reiterated government's commitment to reducing youth unemployment through implementation of the **Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI)** – consisting of six priority actions over the next five years. This is the largest and most comprehensive plan to address youth unemployment in South Africa's democratic history. The PYEI should therefore ensure holistic development for young people, as well as meaningful opportunities.

*Proposed Interventions:*

### 6.2.1. Implement the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative Pillars for holistic youth development

a) A national pathway management network must be created to provide work seekers with access to a basic package of support and work-readiness training to better match them to economic opportunities. This must be done through marketing young people's skills to potential employers, supporting them to deal with factors that keep them out of the labour market, including childcare, taking care of ill family members, costs for applying, including printing and transport costs.

b) Young people must be equipped 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 youth entrepreneurship 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) Implement grant funding and business support by the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the Department of Small Business Development 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. Given the number of socioeconomic challenges facing the country, advancing the employability of young people through volunteer jobs in the social and care sector is a win-win. The PYSP should comprise of mentorship, as a bridge to future venturing into education, work or business start-ups.

### 6.2.2 Introduce Basic Universal Income for Unemployed Youth

a) Young people's efforts to enter the labour market should be supported and young discouraged job-seekers rates should be reduced through responsive HR interventions, social assistance and incentives. An incentive similar to the

COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress grant should be implemented to support youth to transition into employment or entrepreneurship.

b) The Department of Labour and Employment, working with business, should come up with proposals to protect jobs that are vulnerable due to the 4IR.

### 6.2.3    Implement set-asides for youth across sectors

a)  Government must 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.

b) The requirement for experience for entry level jobs should be abolished and implementation monitored to enable youth to enter the labour market.

c) Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship needs to be elevated as a key priority with deliberate minimal public employment and procurement youth set-asides at National, Provincial and Local Government.

d) Government, must use state procurement and implement and monitor a minimum requirement of 30% youth set-aside 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 report on the percentage of their procurement awarded to youth owned enterprises.

e) 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 employ illegal foreign nationals, as this is usually a precursor to exploitation of the employees.

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

a) Gradually increase youth participation in Expanded Public Works Programme and the Community Works Programme to above 50 percent. This will ensure that the majority of opportunities go to young people (including NEET, young women and youth with disabilities) and that young people are mobilised to help communities, while earning an income and gaining valuable work experience.

b) The Jobs Fund's work on improving collaborations between the private and public sectors as well as civic organisations to create jobs must be promoted and better profiled. The fund is targeting to leverage an additional R13.3 billion from its partners to create 259 250 permanent jobs, 56 930 short term jobs, 26 695 internships and train 306 702 beneficiaries by 2025.

### 6.2.5    Rural development and land reform for young people

a) A youth-centric approach to rural development should be undertaken to support young people including young agro-entrepreneurs who are participating in the agricultural value chain through providing access to land, financial and social infrastructure.

b) Young people must be attracted, recruited and retained 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.

c) The private sector must be mobilised 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

d) The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development must improve small-scale and commercial agriculture by expanding irrigated agriculture, providing extension officers, and subsidising farming implements and helping the youth to identify and grow products that are labour-intensive and have high potential and market linkages, such as dried grapes, pecan nuts and oilseeds.

e) Young farmers must be linked to a programme of farmer-to-farmer skills transfer, agricultural extension and training by the state in partnership with the industry.

### 6.2.6   Cross-cutting interventions for economic transformation and job creation

a) Township and rural economy must be supported by creating inclusive markets in opportunity areas such as the food economy, the green economy, health, and education.

b) Data-light work-readiness courses should be expanded and made accessible through mobile phone. In fact, data prices overall must fall in South Africa, and 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 next to their homes.

c) The state, through the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, must ensure that South Africans are able to benefit directly from the country's natural resources. A Sovereign Wealth Fund as muted by the Minister of Finance is supported.

d) The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture working with economic sector departments must 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.

e) 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.

f) The Department of Employment and Labour, working with relevant stakeholders must develop an Integrated Comprehensive Youth Employment Strategy.

g) Universal access should be promoted, in the form of the removal of 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.

h) Universal access is the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable 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:
- ✓ The public broadcaster should have a Deaf TV channel, thus creating jobs for the persons with disabilities
- ✓ It should be mandatory for all buildings to have wheelchair ramps including health and educational facilities and places
- ✓ Sign language (posters) must be included in all public notices
- ✓ Public rehabilitation centres be made available to provide psycho-social support for those who were not born with disabilities and their families
- ✓ Employers 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 Development and support of youth-owned businesses and cooperatives (Spurring Entrepreneurship)

a) The Department of Small Business Development must produce consolidated quarterly report on supported youth-owned enterprises and created a youth enterprise sustainability Barometer to enable availability of relevant information.

b) All economic sectors and industries must 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.

c) A proposal to relax taxes for youth start-ups should be explored as an avenue to improve their sustainability.

d) Career guidance programmes must include enterprise development and promotion by successful entrepreneurs to ensure mass appeal and motivation for youngsters. This should be complemented by the following:
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Adopt 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.
- ✓ Catalyse 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 to open opportunities for enterprise development for young people in state-owned companies.

e) 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.

f) Government should 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.

### 6.3. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION INCLUDING COVID 19

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 COVID-19 pandemic, young South African need to be a visible part of the solution, and to actively contribute to efforts to reduce the spread of the virus and mitigate its 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. COVID-19 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 crashes, 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 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 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
*The general physical and mental health of youth should be promoted to prevent and combat diseases, whilst encouraging healthy living.*
   a) Physical education must be compulsory 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) The Department of Social Development must support training, recruitment, employment and retention of social workers and also lobby other Departments to do same to ensure provision of psycho-social services, to address increasing social ills.
   c) 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.
   d) Community and institution-based young professionals, such as psychologists, social workers, youth workers, early childhood practitioners, and community-based workers must be employed to strengthen and intensify psycho-social support including provision of family strengthening and mental health services.
   e) The basic package of support within the Presidential Youth Intervention should offer psychosocial and healthcare assistance to young people.

#### 6.3.2 Mitigate the impact of COVID 19 pandemic
   a) 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.
   b) Promote access to the new ways of learning (online and distance education).
   c) Provide social relief of distress to families whose income has been negatively affected by the pandemic.
   d) Support youth owned businesses including by providing tax relief.
   e) Facilitate the communities' access to water and sanitation.

f) Involve youth as Ambassadors in promoting basic hygiene practices such as washing hands regularly and using sanitisers.

g) Ensure young people's participation in decision-making processes, to strengthen their agency and voice.

h) Scale up youth innovation in response to COVID-19.

Consistently monitor the impact of COVID-19 on youth, including through direct engagements, dialogues, research etc.

### 6.3.3 Combat substance abuse among youth

*To deal with the challenge of substance abuse, different role players should implement effective substance abuse prevention programmes.*

a) The National Drug Master Plan should be fully implemented.

b) The South African Police Service should prioritise reducing the availability of illegal drugs including increasing the age limit to 25 years.

c) Alcohol should not be sold in proximity to schools and other facilities frequented by young people.

d) Young people should participate in local anti-crime structures (CPF) and be active against corruption that hampers drug-fighting efforts.

e) 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.

f) The Department of Health should develop and implement protocols and practices for integrated diagnosis and treatment of substance dependence and co-occurring disorders.

g) 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.

h) Laws and policies that facilitate effective governance of alcohol and drug supply chain need to be harmonised and enforced.

i) Municipality by-laws dealing with restricting access to alcohol should be strictly enforced.

j) Jobs relating to combating substance abuse should be created.

### 6.3.4  Promote Mental health amongst youth

a) Increased awareness is critical regarding counselling services for children, adolescents and youth, including for youth in disadvantaged and rural communities. These include ISHP services, community-based psychiatric services provided by NGOs, Childline and the South African Depression Action Group (SADAG).

b) Community-based mental health institutions must be established by the DoH, working with NGO's. Facilities that provide these services should be given names that do not attract stigma to patients.

c) There must be 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 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 COVID-19 lockdown and should be expanded, rolled out and implemented beyond COVID-19 pandemic.

d) All role players must view the mental health issue broadly, 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.

e) Programmes and services must be extended to support parents and guardians of affected child(ren) and youth.

### 6.3.5  Promote sexual and reproductive health and rights

*The sexual and reproductive health and rights of youth should be supported by both schools and families to enable youth to have access to necessary information, to seek health care when necessary, and to practice positive behaviours.*

a) Values against gender stereotyping and prejudices should be instilled in young people to foster a sense of inner-belief, self-respect and mutual respect, along with a deepened understanding 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) Access to adolescent and youth-friendly health services and information related to sexual and reproductive health and rights needs to be availed and expanded 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) Child Protection legal frameworks should be implemented in health facilities, on issues of rape cases and all other forms of sexual abuse.

d) Barriers (self-imposed and contextual) must be broken down to 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. This includes during the COVID-19 pandemic and other future outbreaks.

e) Young people need to be protected from sexual and gender-based violence, sexually transmitted infections, substance abuse and teenage pregnancies. Cultural practices that abuse their human rights need to be better dealt with, and social determinants of health challenges should be addressed.

f) Interventions that provide information and challenge taboos, myths, misperceptions, stereotyping and discrimination related to sexuality should be implemented.

g) The skills and capacity of families and communities should be built, so they can talk to adolescents about sexual and reproductive health freely and confidently using their home language.

## 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, Trevor Noah's programme was in 2020 watched daily by millions of fans across the globe. South Africa has produced a number of Miss World and the 2020 Miss Universe was South African Zozibini Tunzi. 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. 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. The country also won the Rugby World Cup in 2020, to cap the spirit of triumph through collective efforts. 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 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 A multi-pronged approach to 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 and exports market development

b) The creative industry must embrace and exploit benefits from the 4IR. For example, utilisation of Blockchain can redefine how artists are remunerated by acting as 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 are also among the fastest growing sectors of the Creative and Cultural Industries and need a lot of government support.

e) Young people must be encouraged to take the lead in realising the constitutional dream of a united, non-sexist, non-racial, democratic, prosperous and equal society.

f) 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.

g) A legislative framework for NYS should be prioritised. 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.

h) Opportunities for inter and intra-continental collaboration between local South African youth and youths from other parts of the African continent and the world are required and must be created and promoted. This can be through artistic and cultural heritage festivals, school exchange programmes and related activities that can foster understanding of African values, but that can also allow South African youth to learn how youth in other parts of the world create opportunities for themselves in these areas.

### 6.4.2 Youth should be exposed to positive constitutional values that promote a South African identity based on unity, freedom and equality

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 to the Constitution 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 structures that are geared toward nation-building and social cohesion such as the national art festivals and sporting activities.

g) All structures should confront discrimination and systemic racism in order to contribute to nation-building, dialogue and healing. Ills such as racial prejudice, a breakdown in values, inequality in the allocation of resources and opportunities, as well as competition for scarce resources helps to fuel racism and xenophobia. Moreover, discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, and homophobic violence are also major problem that need attention.

### 6.4.3    Young South Africans need to confront systemic racism within society.

a) A National Action Plan to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance should be implemented by the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, alongside different state institutions, civic organisations and youth themselves.

b) Campaigns focusing on raising awareness and changing attitudes and behaviour in relation to racist and xenophobic tendencies should be implemented. They 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) The arts should be promoted by government and its partners including the business sector by providing financial and ICT support to young artists to enable them to create work that expresses nation-building and creates platforms for debates; Creating incentives for commercial distribution networks to distribute art and host artistic events; developing and implementing practical interventions to support the arts and culture curriculum in school; and promoting the arts as careers of choice.

### 6.4.4    Fostering leadership and active citizenry

a) Youth leadership development needs to be actively supported. 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.

b) Innovative, interactive and mobile community engagement tools must be adopted by all sectors of government to promote youth participation in the matters of government. 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.

c) Municipal councils, must in line with their mandate, promote civic education, 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.

d) Traditional Councils must protect and preserve their respective cultures by promoting pride in African identities, through the promotion of indigenous knowledge, languages and practices.

### 6.4.5   Expansion of compulsory school and community sports that is adequately resourced.

a) Government must ensure that there are adequate, well-maintained community recreational and sports facilities for the majority of the population.

b) The youth should 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 Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs; Sport, Arts and Culture and Public Works and Infrastructure must introduce diversion programmes in communities for youth.

### 6.4.6   The 4th Industrial Revolution, Social Cohesion, and Nation building

a) The key driver of the 4IR is access to free and or affordable data.

b) Advocate for access to broadband infrastructure in underserved and mostly rural areas of South Africa.

c) Support young people's access to information and connectivity.

### 6.5.   EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MACHINERY

The following institutions are essential to the implementation of this policy:

✓ *The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disability (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 though 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 and 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, business and organised labour.

✓ *The Parliamentary Portfolio Committees 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.

✓ *Nongovernment 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 revive the functioning of a Youth Development Forum – a coordinating structure for youth development made up of private sector, public sector and civil society stakeholders.

✓ T*he youth affairs divisions of multilateral organisations* also play an important role, in the United Nations, African Union, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Southern African Development Community. These structures commits member countries to have approved national youth policies and a national youth councils and or relevant body that serves as a voice for young people.

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 able to tackle social problems and act on opportunities, must be created.

### 6.5.1 *Proposed Interventions:*
*Institutional arrangements for South Africa's Youth Machinery ought to be strengthened to ensure effectiveness and responsiveness*

a) There must be transparent and adequate resourcing for Youth Development, as well as strong accountability measures on how the resources are ultimately utilised.

b) The policy advocates for mainstreaming of youth development across sectoral policies and programmes to ensure responsiveness.

c) Youth development programmes and projects must be conceptualized and implemented by government, civil society and business sectors.

d) The national youth development branch within the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities must be strengthened with adequate human and financial resources to discharge its mandate of overseeing youth development policy implementation effectively.

e) Amendment of the National Youth Development Act should be expedited and finalised as a matter of urgency.

f) The policy advocates for the strengthening of structures that help coordinate youth development at all various levels. These include a National Youth Development Coordinating Forum; Provincial Youth Development Youth Development Forums, and Local Government Youth Development Forums. The purpose of these forums is to bring together stakeholders in the youth development space for effective and joint planning, learning, collaboration and evaluation among other imperatives.

g) All sectors in all spheres must champion youth development through the use of youth focal points within the youth units.

h) The framework legislation for youth development in South Africa (South African Youth Development Act) should be developed and sent to Parliament for consideration.

i) 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 access quality services and programmes irrespective of their locality.

### 6.5.2 Youth Work must be recognised as a professional field of practice

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 would entail: workers as primary providers of services remain imperative. In this regard, there is a need to:

a) Facilitate recognition of youth development practice/ 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 work and introduce licensing system 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 professionalization;
i) Strengthen the youth machinery at national, provincial and local levels; and
j) Put in place the reporting systems that are fit for purpose, and that ensures 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 Youth Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing (YRPBMEA) 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). It will be subject to capacity building to develop in-house monitoring and evaluation capabilities for all stakeholders and implementing agents. 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 taking into account 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, BUT 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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