

they lack the capabilities to access economic opportunities. At present, there are limited programmes aimed at addressing the needs of these youth.

On the other hand, the Further Education and Training Colleges which could absorb these youth, receive less attention compared to universities in terms of research, policy and planning. The screening processes in these colleges continue to be inaccessible to ordinary unskilled and uneducated youth. There is a need to focus the country's efforts and give specific attention to the opportunities that provide unskilled and uneducated youth with second chance opportunities. Such interventions should be proactive rather than reactive in nature. This implies strengthening families and other primary socialization agencies and putting in place early intervention measures aimed at curbing the problem in its early stages. There should also be rehabilitation and after care measures for those youth who have already fallen prey. In the latter, these young people must be rehabilitated so that they are incorporated into the mainstream culture.

It would be crucial to institutionalise key programmes targeting such youth since their problems are multifaceted. The different role players (government, NGO, private and business sectors) targeting these youth should all collaborate and have joint plans and interventions where necessary. Of particular importance, is the identification of the coordinator of such programmes for the purposes of integration, maximization of impact and accountability.

## **12.5 Youth in rural areas**

Young women and men in rural areas face particular constraints with regard to both accessibility and availability of services and facilities, and this result in fewer opportunities and less information and employment than in urban areas. This concern requires that a research be conducted. There is also a great concern over the rural-urban migrants who are predominantly young. The fact that Gauteng Province has the highest proportion of youth population (22.7%) as compared to Eastern Cape (12,6%) and Limpopo (10,4%), could be a demonstration of a tendency of youth migrating from poor rural areas to the wealthier urban provinces (Statistics SA, 2007:62-67). This is in turn a function of a number of patterns including under-development of rural provinces, lack of opportunities and slow pace of land reform. As a result, young people are attracted by possibilities that urban areas can offer. In some cases, these youth, particularly if they are unskilled, end up being destitute and those who are educated and skilled leave their areas/ communities under-resourced in search of lucrative offers. This reproduces the cycle of rural impoverishment and exacerbates the urban bias with regard to current development initiatives.

Interventions should specifically address the situation of young people in rural areas in respect of access to services and creation of opportunities as well as employment. Government should invest in rural development, appropriately skill youth from these areas and create mechanisms of attracting and retaining them to be of service to their communities. This can only be possible if there is development of infrastructure in rural areas and provision of incentives to investors in rural areas.

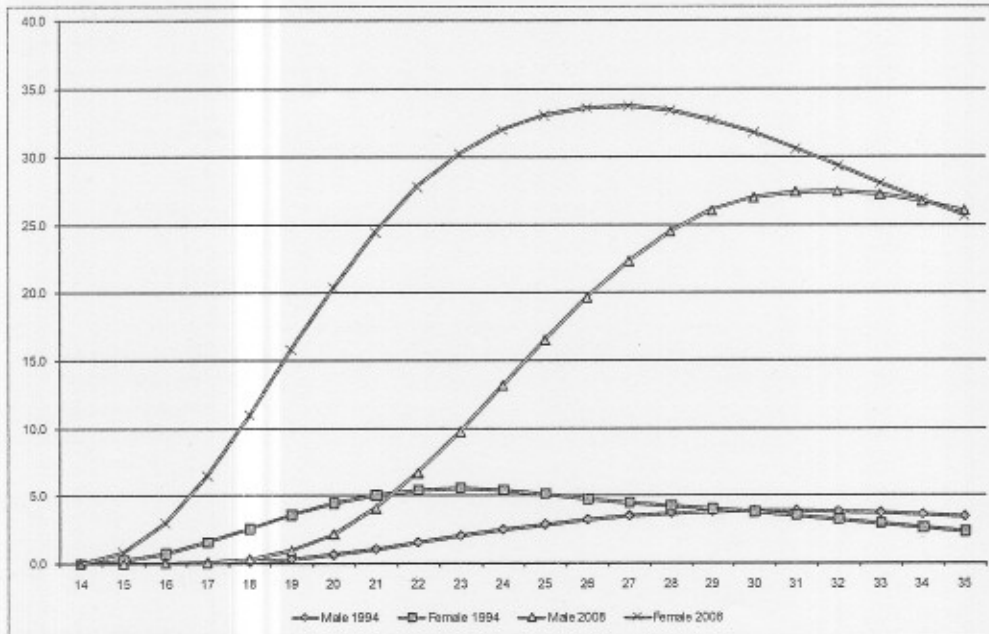
## **12.6 Youth at risk**

The NYP 2008 prioritises the following categories of youth at risk:

### **12.6.1 Youth living with HIV or AIDS**

According to the Fifteen Year Review youth input paper (Budlender, 2008), in 1994, the highest HIV and AIDS prevalence rate found among the 23-year old women was estimated at 5,6%. By 2008, the highest prevalence rate, of 33,7%, is predicted for 27-year old women. For both years, and both male and female, the youth age group encompasses the peak age, confirming youth as the population group most directly affected by HIV and AIDS pandemic.

Figure 1 below illustrates HIV and AIDS prevalence by age and gender and compares data for 1994 and 2008. For both years, women are more likely to be affected at a younger age than men. In the older age groups men start outnumbering women slightly, but overall women are more likely to be infected than their male counterparts.



Source: ASSA 2003

Budlender (2008) further presented indicators from the ASSA model that are relevant for youth, and concluded that the population estimates and the estimates of total infected people illustrate that although the total population will have grown at a slower rate, there will be ten times as many infected people in 2008 as they were in 1994.

### 12.6.2 Youth heading household

These youth (including children) are vulnerable and at risk because they are living alone since their biological mother, father or both parents have died or unable to take care of them due to ill health or have abandoned them. These circumstances imply inability of parent/s to fulfil their role and responsibility of caring and protecting their children. As a result, youth in such circumstances may be forced to assume responsibility not only for themselves, but also for their younger siblings and or for their sick parents, thus consequently running households.

These youth are at greater risk of abuse, exploitation, and dropping out of school, thus being excluded from services, such as school feeding and school health programmes.

### 12.6.3 Youth in conflict with the law

The review of studies has shown that the rates of youth in conflict with the law are relatively high. For example, 36% of the prison population is under the age of 16 years, while 69% of people detained by the police are between the ages of 18-35 years (SYR, 2004). It is estimated that 15% of all criminal offences committed in South Africa are by children

younger than 18 years (Steyn, 2005). Further, there are strong indications that offending by youth is on the increase (Muntingh, 2003). This is worrying given the fact that youth constitute the largest percentage of the South African population (SSA 2006).

#### **12.6.4 Youth abusing dependency creating substances**

This category of youth is at risk owing to exposure to unhealthy lifestyle of abusing dependency creating substances. According to Budlender (2008), substance abuse poses risks to the individual's health and to society more generally. Although it is virtually impossible to collect reliable and comprehensive statistics on substance abuse given that use of many of the substances is illegal, and under-reporting will thus be common, Bhana et al (2007) in Budlender (2008) draw on the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use surveillance system which tracks patients accessing treatment at about four-fifths of facilities across the country. The system reveals that most patients seeking treatment are between 27-35 years of age, but patterns differ according to the type of drug. Alcohol abusers tend to be older, while abusers of cannabis, heroin or methamphetamine tend to be younger. In summary, the proportion of patients under 20 years of age has increased over time.

On the other hand, the DHS of 2003 found that 19,9% of boys and 10,2% of girls aged 15-19 years had at some point used tobacco. These figures were one to two percentage points higher than the rates reported in 1998. Overall, 3,1% of adolescents drank at harmful levels, with little difference between male and female adolescents (Department of Health, forthcoming).

The above clearly illustrate that there is a need to have interventions targeting youth who already have the problem of abusing dependency creating substances as well as having measures in place to reduce the likelihood of having youth falling prey of this problem.

The current Cabinet Committee also raised a concern on the perceived increase of risky behaviours including those mentioned above such as HIV and AIDS, crime, and substance. . This was further supported by an assertion of the worrying rate at which young people in schools are engaging in risky behavior such as carrying weapons, substance abuse etc. (Reddy et al, 2002 in Budlender; 2008: 58-59).

In response to that, an investigation of the current government interventions was conducted and the report revealed that although there are measures in place seeking to address the challenges facing these youth, there is poor coordination amongst implementers. There is also a problem of institutionalisation of interventions and this manifests itself in various ways e.g. no dedicated people to coordinate initiatives and or inadequate budget. Even in instances where resources exist, there is lack of sustainability and continuity of such programmes.

This policy argues strongly for strengthening these interventions in the interest of achieving scale and impact. Instituting an Inter-Cluster Task Team responsible for coordinating programmes addressing the needs of the targeted youth at risk would address the challenge of fragmentation and poor coordination that currently constrain service delivery.

### **13. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The policy acknowledges that all citizens of South Africa irrespective of age enjoy human rights as contained in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These rights are the cornerstones of our democracy and affirm the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. Although young people enjoy all these rights, this policy identifies and introduces the rights which are more

relevant to the development of youth and emphasizes the need to uphold these rights and to empower young people to fully understand them.

It is important to note that there are also responsibilities that accompany or are tied to those rights. Youths are expected to use information on rights and responsibilities to make informed decisions about issues that will affect the rest of their lives and to support them on their journey to becoming mature, responsible adults.

This approach therefore reaffirms that youth are not only recipients and beneficiaries of services, but they are also providers. Knowledge of one's own rights and responsibilities is as important as developing a respect for the rights of others, since actions seldom have isolated consequences. This policy promotes the rights of young people and encourages them to accept the accompanying responsibilities.

The policy therefore, confirms that different role players in the youth sector should inform, guide and advise youth on their rights and responsibilities. In addition to human rights stated in the Constitution, this policy further identifies youth rights, the accompanying responsibilities, and the need to create an enabling environment by providing opportunities that will enable young people to fulfil those responsibilities. These opportunities should nurture the talents of young people and develop their capabilities and enable youth to build a secure future for themselves.

All young women and men, irrespective of their age, gender, socio-economic status, and or any other defining factors, have the right to:

- enjoy the fruits of a free, democratic and prospering society;
- enjoy their youthfulness;
- protection and care;
- access youth development services;
- partake fully in citizenship duties including voting, decision-making processes and governance;
- participate in the planning and implementation of youth development by becoming the custodians of their own development;
- access information which is age appropriate;
- privacy;
- attain an educational level commensurate with their aspirations;
- career guidance;
- access employment opportunities equal to their abilities;
- cultural expression;
- own and inherit property;
- enjoy ownership of that property; and
- self determination.

Concomitantly young people have the responsibilities to:

- promote and advance their rights as they relate to themselves, other young people and fellow South Africans in general;
- build and guarantee the democratic order through playing a positive developmental role in South Africa, the region and the continent;
- promote human dignity;
- respect sound families, community and societal values in the context of positive African values;
- show full respect for parents and elders, and assist them anytime in cases of need in the context of positive African values.
- work towards family, community and societal cohesion;
- promote patriotism towards and unity and cohesion of Africa.
- promote peace, security and development;

- promote tolerance, understanding, dialogue, consultation and respect for others regardless of age, race, ethnicity, colour, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, status or political affiliation;
- espouse an honest work ethics and reject and expose corruption.
- defend democracy, the rule of law and all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- promote, preserve and respect African traditions and cultural heritage in languages and in forms to which youth are able to create.
- promote positive and healthy lifestyles and behaviours;
- engage in peer to peer education to promote youth development in areas such as literacy, use of information and communication technology, HIV/AIDS prevention, violence prevention and peace building;
- encourage a culture of voluntarism and human rights protection;
- actively participate in civil activities and democratic processes of the country;
- participate in solidarity building with fellow youth of the African continent and the rest of the world;
- promote sustainable development and protection of the environment.

A specific responsibility exists for all citizens to strengthen relationships between parents and young people, and to create a safe and nurturing environment where young people will be able to exercise their responsibilities effectively. To this end, this policy values, understands and promotes the importance of creating an enabling environment that:

- allows young women and men to exercise responsibilities for themselves, but also acknowledge their responsibilities for others;
- supports the holistic development of young women and men;
- recognises young people's capabilities and assist them to reach their potential to the fullest;
- respects and accepts the contribution made through the talents, resources and ideas of young women and men in society; and
- encourages participation of young women and men in community life and development.

From the above, it is clear that whereas youth development is a voluntary process, certain compulsory interventions such as compulsory education attendance should be made in the interest of youth themselves. The policy will therefore support youth, their parents and or their guardians towards creation of an enabling environment which is conducive to positive development of youth.

## **14. POLICY IMPERATIVES AND PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS**

The following policy imperatives which contribute to development of youth have been identified and prioritised as the focus of this policy. These policy imperatives are necessary and should receive greater attention if development of young people is to take place. There are proposals for interventions for each policy imperative to address the gaps, where the needs of young people are not yet fully met. In some cases, the proposals are for strengthening, acceleration, intensification, and or prioritisation of existing plans and objectives. In others, new plans and objectives may have to be introduced in order to cater for emerging needs amongst the youth. Although the policy proposals have long-term benefits, they are also intended to have immediate, short, medium and long term effects. An implementation plan will specify the details in this regard.

The policy imperatives and proposed interventions for the National Youth Policy 2008-2013 are identified below:

### **14.1 Education**

Education remains a key to unlocking the future of South African youth. Although there is documented evidence of improved educational attainment, there are still challenges that need to be

addressed to rectify the imbalances in the education system. In the context of youth development, the growing demand for high school and tertiary education as a result of an increase in the youth population between the ages of 16 and 18, the quality and appropriateness of education, lack of access to educational options for young people who leave school prematurely, poor quality education, poorly resourced schools, and lack of schools are among key issues that need to be given more attention. Data gathered on the study on youth social mobility compiled by W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2007) further showed that education and experience are considered the most important factors that ensure employability; conversely, the lack of education and experience is viewed as a great hindrance to class mobility and improvement in the socio-economic condition. This policy advocate for the need for mobility of young people as well as improvement in their socio-economic conditions.

It is acknowledged that, whereas some of the problems are systemic, there are those which are caused by young people themselves. For example, it is documented that the participation rate of youth in the FET colleges is relatively small at 2.7 per cent (Moleke, 2006). It is further estimated that only half of these young people complete their studies, i.e. about 40 to 60 per cent of those who start primary education do not proceed to further education and training (Arends, 2006). Of grave concern, as illustrated in the table below, is that as before, there are lower rates of attendance for both males and females in 2006 than in 1995. In both years the female rate is lower than that for males for the younger group, and higher than that for males for the older age group.

Age group	1995			2006		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
14-24	68.3	64.6	66.4	60.8	55.2	58.0
25-35	7.3	8.1	7.7	3.3	3.7	3.5

Source: OHS 1994; GH 2005, Budlender 2008

All these factors are a cause for concern, given that they severely curtail the prospects of young people attaining their education, and constrain their chances of finding employment thus maturing into productive citizens. W.K. Kellogg Foundation report on youth social mobility revealed that although joblessness among the youth is a worrying factor, equally worrying is the impact that the current education system has on this problem, because poor quality education produces illiterate persons who are not employable, thus making transition from secondary school to tertiary institutions or to work difficult. The ILO study (2006) argues that the transition from school to work is the most significant for determining the economic (and social) well-being of the individual and, if taken collectively, for influencing the level of development of the country.

The South African Human Rights Commission public hearings report (2006), explores nine factors regarding education that continue to undermine the wide range of achievements, which are fully acknowledged by this policy. These include:

- The impact of poverty on education – impacting on accessibility, inability to pay fees and other hidden costs.
- HIV/AIDS – creating special needs of which the education system and teachers need to be aware.
- Violence and abuse – prevalent in society and spilling over into schools.
- Youth with disability – their needs are insufficiently addressed with specific reference to access to the education system.
- Lack of infrastructure – impacting on addressing the inequalities of the past.
- Teachers – adverse impact due to issues of level of qualification, punctuality and attendance, insufficient training in the new curriculum; using old teaching methods; being disconnected from the communities in which they teach.
- Governance and community participation – many school governing bodies were ineffective and inoperative.

It is within this context that this policy recognises the critical role being played by education in personal, psychological and social development and consequently views it as a tool that will aid young people in building their identity, positive social relations and prepare them for the world of work whilst developing them holistically.

#### **Recommended Policy Interventions:**

##### **14.1.1. Schools should provide the knowledge and skill for life and work while serving as sites where young people can feel they belong, develop their identity and build their self-esteem through personal discovery and social interaction.**

- a) The Department of Education in designing the school curriculum must provide young people with educational knowledge and life skills in order to ensure their smooth transition into the world of work and adulthood;
- b) The Department of Education must accelerate measures to improve the quality and relevance of education, particularly at secondary school to ensure that the youth are adequately prepared for post-school learning and training;
- c) Government and civil society organisations should provide young people with sufficient and accurate information about the choices, needs and constraints they are likely to face in life and in the workplace, and should provide them with information about programmes that address these;
- d) The Department of Education should create enclaves of excellence in previously disadvantaged communities as a mechanism of inculcating a culture of excellence in disadvantaged communities.

##### **14.1.2 Ensure that all young people attain their National Senior Certificate or equivalent qualification with practical and economically valuable skills.**

- a) Government should progressively make education and training accessible to all youth without discrimination.
- b) Government should reduce the number of youth at risk of premature exit from the education system prior to completing their National Senior Certificate. In instances where young people leave school prematurely, wider and flexible range out-of-school pathways such as Further Education and Training (FET) should be introduced to enable those youth to complete their secondary education and obtain their National Senior Certificate or equivalent qualification or to offer them second chance opportunities that will enable them to ultimately participate in the labour market;
- c) Department of Education and relevant partners should strengthen participation in science and technology education and training, and develop learner support material.
- d) Government should extend to secondary schools the roll-out of measures intended to increase effective learning of young people e.g. expansion of no-fee schools, nutrition programmes and transport subsidies;
- e) The Department of Education should increase the learner success rates by providing needed resources to poorly resourced schools, improving the quality of teaching, and providing supplementary support to learners performing poorly;
- f) Government in partnership with relevant partners should promote access to education through mobilising scholarships and bursary schemes for youth to enable them to access education.

##### **14.1.3 Provide out of school youth with second chances to complete education that would enable them to compete in the open labour market**

- a) The Department of Education should review Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) to ensure that it appeals to young people and better responds to the skills demand;
- b) Government and the private sector should introduce flexible, out-of-school pathways through which young people who left school prematurely can complete their secondary education and obtain their National Senior Certificate;

- c) Government should promote vocational training programmes as well as other initiatives such as the National Youth Service and Expanded Public Works Programmes as a basis for gaining further learning and work experience.

#### **14.1.4 Increase the prospects for further learning, personal development and employment**

- a) Government should increase the funding options available to support students who are academically successful at the post-secondary level, but who are unable to complete their study programmes owing to financial hardships;
- b) Government in partnership with civil society should promote young people's access to information.
- c) Department of Arts and Culture should invest in infrastructure for the construction of community arts and youth centres. This can take the form of building new structures or renovating existing premises that either have fallen into disrepair or are not being used constructively. Such centres should be used for as alternative to formal education.
- d) Departments of Social Development, Education, Arts and Culture in partnership with civil society organizations (particularly Faith Based Organizations) should design early intervention programmes targeting children and youth as a means to foster internalisation of rights, responsibility, and respect for self.
- e) Department of Education shall ensure provision of good quality education at different institutional levels and have a Quality Assurance Framework in that regard.

#### **14.1.5 Aid young people in their transition to adulthood by promoting a wider and more flexible range of learning pathways available to them and show how these can impact on their prospects for further learning, personal development and employment.**

- Government, the private sector and civil society should promote the value of Further Education and Training (FET) and FET opportunities as a route to personal development and employment;
- FET colleges need to target business skills, incubation and mentoring of budding entrepreneurs in high growth industries and future industries;
- Government should increase the diversity of post-secondary institutions for matriculants, focusing on a variety of career opportunities;
- Government should progressively introduce free education for the poor learners until undergraduate level and increase the funding options available to support students at the post-secondary level who are academically successful, but who are unable to complete their study programmes owing to financial hardships.

## **14.2. Economic participation**

Economic participation is an essential national process which engages citizens to contribute productively in an effort of eradicating poverty. This process is therefore equally important in holistic development of the youth. The challenge is to enable youth to contribute as productive citizens by shaping their talents and creative energies, equipping them with appropriate skills, and removing the barriers that may constrain their participation in the labour market.

The Labour Force Survey (Stats SA, 2005) reported that of the approximately 7 800 000 unemployed people in the country, the youth accounted for 73 per cent of the unemployed i.e. about 5 600 000. The Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) disaggregated youth unemployment in terms of age, thus revealing that those aged between 15 and 24 account for 51 percent of the youth who are unemployed, those aged between 25 and 34 account for 28 percent, (CASE, 2006). This is a worrying trend supported by ILO study (2006) which also specified that unemployment is one of the grave challenges facing the youth globally.

It is worth noting that, young people who are employed are concentrated in the service sector, and tend to work in temporary positions where they are paid poor wages and in terms of the Status of Youth Report (2005), a majority of these unemployed youth experience long-term unemployment. In



addition to being insecure, these youth are less likely than the older generation to find employment. This negatively affects their socio-economic status, which often remain unchanged.

In addition, unemployment seems to be affecting different categories of young people differentially. There are still racial and gender differences wherein Africans compared to their counterparts in other racial groups as well women compared to men, continue to experience higher rate of unemployment. Similarly, youth with lower levels of education, are more likely to be unemployed as compared to those with higher levels of education. Thus, according to Budlender (2008), the rate of unemployment was found to rise most steeply for graduates between 1995 and 2002, from 6.4% to 15.4%, with educated African youth the worst affected. Those with diplomas and certificates (13%) were more likely to be unemployed than those with degrees (8%).

The other categories of young people who are hit hard by unemployment are those with some secondary education, or those who drop out of school before completing secondary education. According to Moleke (2006), the unemployment rate of young people who drop out of secondary school before completing senior secondary education and those with some secondary school education is at 58.5 percent and 50 percent respectively. The former represents 40.3 percent of the unemployed youth of South Africa. This is the highest of any education exit group and illustrates extremely poor labour market prospects for this category of youth. It is further an illustration that securing employment is indeed a problem for the majority of youth.

The challenges of youth economic participation are centred on finding and keeping quality employment that will help to improve the individual's socio-economic circumstances. The South African government came up with several initiatives that seek to ensure participation of young people in the mainstream of economy. It is however important that these are strengthened as well as introducing new more appropriate interventions. For example, among employers there is discontent about learnerships and there is confusion about the future of apprenticeships in view of introduction of learnerships. It is on record that, the absorption capacity and throughput rates of the learnerships are insufficient to meet demand from industry or to absorb the supply of young people requiring training. This contributes to the problem of preparing our youth for economic participation. On the other hand, self-employment and entrepreneurship are challenging strategies, because only a small proportion of the youth are self-employed and engaged in entrepreneurial activities. A variety of barriers, such as a lack of appropriate education and limited access to capital, lack of social networks, prevent entrepreneurship from becoming a solution to youth unemployment. It is evident that, appropriate qualifications and support are amongst the factors that could help address these challenges. If attended to, these could enable young people to make meaningful contributions to the South African society.

In recognition of the fact that young people require assistance to secure and accumulate assets, the proposed policy directions focus on four key areas that prohibit participation of young people in economy: **Lack of work experience** and the **lack of information**, both of which constrain young people from responding to labour market demands, and embracing opportunities such as **work placement** and **entrepreneurial activities**. The research findings on youth social mobility compiled by W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2007) suggest that the youth only understand the value of education in so far as it affords them preparation for the job market.

The policy recommendations proposals below should as a result focus on two major groups: youth with a National Senior Certificate and post-secondary education, and young people who are still to complete their schooling. Within the latter group, it is important to distinguish between young people who are still in the education system (pre-employed) and those who are no longer in education, but have not moved into employment. It is also important to mention that when implementing these recommendations, where appropriate and possible, the youth population should be disaggregated by age and race, and the needs of the prioritised targeted youth groups should be addressed.

## **Recommended Policy Interventions:**

### **14.2.1 Enhance participation of youth in economy**

- a) Government should work progressively towards realization of full, productive and decent employment for all young people.
- b) Government and relevant partners should develop a National Action plan on youth employment.
- c) Government and private sector should strengthen youth employment networks at national, regional and international level.
- d) Government should ensure that government-wide anti poverty policies and strategies reflect and fully integrate youth employment creation and youth focused poverty reduction.
- e) Government should promote provision of second chance opportunities to unskilled youth to ensure their participation in open labour market.
- f) Government should develop preferential policies for recruitment and employment of young people and encourage employment agencies in other sectors to also implement.
- g) Government should influence positively the regulation of youth participation in the informal economic sector to assure standardisation, quality control and the protection of said youth participants.

### **14.2.2 Enhance the employability of young people by familiarising them with the expectations and requirements of the world of work by the time they leave the education system.**

- a) The Departments of Education, Labour, and Trade and Industry should increase the opportunities for career guidance, job search and work-related life skill by targeting youth in and out of school, as a means of providing career choices, enhancing their employability, and familiarising them with the world of work;
- b) There must be structured programmes in place to encourage young people to gain work experience at an early stage – For example, part-time work while at school (for youth in grade ten and above), work during weekends and holidays, encouraging participation in the National Youth Service etc. All these are geared towards introducing youth to the world of work. Employers should be encouraged to provide such opportunities and government is also encouraged to scale up its internship programme within the public service;
- c) Government in partnership with the private sector should facilitate access of young people to markets.
- d) The Youth Development Forum should strengthen relations with private sector to widen and strengthen the social networks for young people. Government in consultation with the private sector should facilitate institutionalization of this structure to ensure continuity.

### **14.2.3 Make skills development programmes should be made to be more inclusive so that all young people could benefit from economic growth and job creation.**

- a) Government, private sector players and civil society organisations should work closely and ensure that skills development programmes have exit strategies linking young people to employment, further learning or self-employment post participation in such programme/s. For example, the Expanded Public Works Programme and the National Youth Service curricula should be refocused in order to ensure that qualifying youth completing the programme are awarded full vocational certificates;
- b) Government should re-establish apprenticeships and introduce incentives as a key mode of imparting technical and other job specific skills, and must promote trades as attractive occupations for young people;
- c) Government should simplify and extend the learnerships programme in an effort to significantly increase the involvement of emerging employers and the participation of young people;
- d) The Sector Education and Training Authorities have an important role to play in structuring learning pathways for out-of-school youth. This includes linking them with accredited service providers to plan and implement learnership programmes as well as offering them second chance opportunities to enable them to complete their National Senior Certificate;

#### **14.2.4 Develop future entrepreneurial generations by scaling up the country's focus on youth entrepreneurship and encouraging the development and success of young entrepreneurs.**

- a) The Department of Education, supported particularly by the Department of Trade and Industry and business, should ensure that schools provide young people with the knowledge and skills that foster an entrepreneurial culture in South Africa;
- b) Government should encourage the development and expansion of entrepreneurship-related learnerships, such as the New Venture Creation Learnership, ensuring that clear entry requirements are developed to position this learnership as an exit point for other programmes in which learners have acquired the technical skills they require to run a business. Further, clear exit strategies for these learnerships should be developed so that young participants can receive additional support (e.g. through incubator programmes) to ensure that the new businesses can actually be established.
- c) Government should strengthen entrepreneurship-related learnerships, such as the New Venture Creation Learnership by ensuring that clear entry requirements are developed so as to position this learnership as a building block for entry into other programmes where learners would be equipped with technical skills to run a business. Further, clear exit strategies for such learnerships should be put in place;
- d) Government and the private sector should provide business development support services to young entrepreneurs and actively develop business linkages with youth-owned small businesses through strategies such as preferential procurement, ring-fencing government funds to provide opportunities to youth and youth-owned businesses, or making adjustments to BEE codes in favour of youth;
- e) Government should promote agriculture and related professions (e.g. veterinary science, horticulture, forestry and nature conservation) as attractive career opportunities and support the formation of cooperatives to enable young people to have access to employment and self-employment in commercial agriculture;
- f) The 2010 Soccer World Cup should be targeted as an opportunity through which young entrepreneurs can establish business linkages with larger enterprises and as a means of positioning their fledgling businesses for longer-term, sustainable growth;

#### **14.2.5 Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of existing and future youth-focussed programmes.**

- a) Government in partnership with relevant role players should increase opportunities for economic participation among young people by ensuring that institutions such as the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), Micro Agricultural Institute of South Africa (Mafisa), South African Micro-finance Apex Fund (SAMAF) and Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF), and programmes such as the National Youth Service (NYS) and Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), operate at full capacity and exceed allocated targets;
- b) Government, private sector and civil society should launch effective communication campaigns to inform young people on the opportunities for economic development and participation, increase the uptake of youth in existing programmes and promote access to achieve high usage levels.

### **14.3 Health and wellbeing**

There are several challenges regarding youth wellbeing that need to be addressed. Firstly, the burden of disease among South African youth has taken a particular character. There are key health challenges facing young people and affecting their well being. These include maternal mortality, reproductive and sexual health, HIV and AIDS, and non communicable diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and hypertension. Although the health sector and other relevant key stakeholders have tackled these challenges, the campaigns for sexuality education have not had the desired effect and instead, a youth sub-culture of risky sexual behaviour has continued. Budlender (2008)

reported that in 2008 there will be ten times as many infected people as there were in 1994. This is despite the fact that the total population will have grown at a slower rate i.e. 3% of all youth aged 15-24 are likely to become newly infected during 2008.

Anecdotally the other health risky behaviour such as abuse of dependency creating substances, teenage pregnancies can also lead to health problems. This is accounted for by an increased proportion of patients abusing substances under 20 years of age over time (Budlender, 2008). Thirdly mental health problems (including mental disorders) also affect the well being and could end up being health hazards. The National Injury Mortality Surveillance System records that in 2001 nearly 47% of all recorded suicides involve young people between the ages of 20 and 34 years (Morrow et al, 2005: 24).

Taking the above into cognisance, this policy views health from a socio-economic and life cycle perspective. This will encourage us to address issues of livelihoods and social circumstances of young people thus ensuring that their health remains a priority. If we are to change behaviour around HIV/AIDS, for example, we must ensure that young people have the capacity required to make responsible choices and function in an environment in which they can exercise those choices.

#### **Recommended Policy Interventions:**

Against the above stated background that the following policy recommendations are made:

##### **14.3.1 Improve access to youth-friendly health related programmes and services**

- a) Government in partnership with relevant stakeholders should increase youth-friendly clinics and extend their coverage, particularly to rural areas;
- a) Department of Health and Social Development should expand school health services, to be accessed by youth in schools for the purposes of accessing amongst others counselling services, contraceptives, antenatal services, mental health services etc.
- b) The Department of Health should provide information on sexuality, reproductive health and risky behaviour and further provide age-appropriate information packages to the targeted youth,
- c) Information on HIV and AIDS should not only target young people up to the age of 22 and those living in poor areas, it must also target older youths;
- d) The Department of Education should ensure that education around HIV/AIDS and sexuality forms part of the life skills curriculum from an early age;
- e) Government should engage civil society organisation in rendering youth development services with particular reference to sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- f) The Department of Health and Social Development should ensure that young people are able to access voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) services through clinics and youth organisations;
- g) The Department of Health should develop a comprehensive intercluster health plan in consultation with relevant role players.

##### **14.3.2 Capacitate staff and improve access to youth-friendly information and services on mental health and well-being.**

- a) Department of Health and Social Development should strengthen the capacity of health and social service professionals to enable them to render services effectively to the young people;

##### **14.3.3 Ensure that young people are brought up and live in environments conducive to making healthy choices.**

- a) The Department of Social Development should provide support for vulnerable young people infected and or affected by HIV and AIDS;
- b) The Department of Health and Social Development should provide young people with relevant information that seek to reduce the likelihood of having them involved in risky behaviour such as substance abuse, violence etc;

- c) Government should render services to young women who require support and protection in the face of sexual violence and domestic abuse;
- d) Government and civil society should ensure that all young people, particularly those with children, are able to access basic services in order to live healthy lives;
- e) The Department of Health should ensure that family planning programmes are extended and relevant, and address key issues of how to bring up a healthy child in a healthy environment;
- f) The Department of Health and civil society organisations should ensure that young people affected by HIV and other preventable diseases are able to access programmes that will build their capacity in terms of life skills and accessing livelihood opportunities.

#### **14.4 Social cohesion and civic participation**

In the context of this policy, social cohesion is referred to as the process through which individuals or groups are included to participate fully in the society in which they live. Firstly, in youth development social cohesion allows young people to participate and engage in activities that build their social capital, networks and strengthen the relations that bind people together. These interactions with others strengthen young people's identity, build their self-esteem, develop a sense of belonging, close intergenerational gaps, and contribute to building a better life for all. This connectedness fosters a sense of belonging that will propel young people to reach their personal goals and develop their full capacity. In essence, social cohesion helps young people to become aware of themselves, their rights and responsibilities. Secondly, social cohesion has to do with nurturing a shared value system based on the tenets of our Constitution that speaks to respect and dignity for self and others.

As a consequence of carefully orchestrated segregationist policies of the past, space for creative expression among disadvantaged youth was deliberately kept to a bare minimum. The legacy of apartheid led to lack of adequate facilities, infrastructure and opportunities for arts, culture and heritage training of youth. There was systematic obliteration of places for creative arts, culture and heritage training, with preference for producing subservient factory workers. Creative arts were seen as a threat to the apartheid regime, in that they could mobilise the masses into action.

Since 1994, attempts to redress all these as part of the creation of integrated human settlements have not been successful. This mostly affected the youth from disadvantaged areas and backgrounds and prohibited them from claiming their own space for creative expression. In advancing this imperative, youth development needs to address a full range of issues that inhibit youth from fully participating in social, cultural, economic, educational, and political activities that seek to strengthen social cohesion.

This policy recognises that young people who become actively engaged in social cohesion activities such as community service, civic participation and volunteering, are less likely to engage in risky or self-destructive behaviour, because these activities inculcate a clear sense of purpose and a desire for them to reach their set goals. For example, statistics related to substance abuse, and youth in conflict with the law indicate that the full integration of young people into the mainstream still remains a challenge. Actions of disengagement and alienation tend to be linked to social and economic factors such as long-term unemployment and lack of livelihoods. This is further exacerbated by the fact that young people often view these engagements very narrowly and do not see them as opportunities for their self-advancement or for general civic improvement.

Further, a critical challenge facing youth is the declining level of their participation in civil society processes which affects their lives and development. Youth organisations had been the most vocal component of society on oppressive government policies in the past and since the advent of democracy and the attainment of several achievements for the youth, there has been a marked decline in the participation of youth in civil society activities. The proliferation of societal goals and challenges has brought to the fore an individualistic approach to society and development at large.

As a result, the level of political and electoral participation among South African youth has declined compared to the previous decade (especially among youth between the ages of 18 and 25 who account for only 44,5% of registered voters, the older youth category is reportedly more politically engaged than was previously the case. The Independent Electoral Commission recorded a decrease in the percentage of eligible voters under 35 years registered from 73,7% in 1999 to 64,9% in 2004 for national and provincial elections. However, the registration rate for this age group remained more or less constant at 68-69% for local elections in 1999 and 2004. This pattern is consistent with the international trends (PCAS, 2007: 50).

Social cohesion efforts do not only target the poor and the unemployed. All South African youth – black and white, rural and urban, educated and uneducated – should participate in activities that keep society together and advance the wellbeing of the fellow citizens. Access to the programmes that seek to make realization of social cohesion a reality should be broadened through full and enthusiastic integration into the wide range of programmes and activities of government departments.

The following policy gaps indicate the nature of the challenges that National Youth Policy 2008-2013 needs to address to foster social cohesion:

- *Social and economic inclusion* - When young people enter a cycle of poverty it furthers their alienation, marginalisation and exclusion. This in turn may lead to premature school exit, unemployment, possible incorporation into alternative or anti-social behaviours and criminal activity. This vicious cycle of impoverishment is reinforced and reproduced by the lack of adequate training and development opportunities, the lack of gainful employment opportunities and the lack of access to a basic subsistence which reinforces the vicious poverty cycle that youth find themselves in.
- *Rapid expansion of the National Youth Service Programme (NYSP)* – This programme has a significant role to play in the strengthening of social cohesion. Access to the programme will be broadened through encouraging youth to participate in it, providing incentives for programme participants, integrating it into a wide range of government programmes, and providing financial support to non-government organizations engaging youth in this programme.
- *Reintegrating youth into their communities* - A large proportion of young people who are in conflict with the law are excluded from society since they are incarcerated. This results in recurring patterns of conflict with the law since they are not part of the mainstream society. It is essential that such youth are reintegrated back to society through programmes such as restorative justice, and NYS.
- *Promoting recreation among young people and constructive use of leisure time* - There is a need to engage youth in recreational activities that enhance social cohesion. This includes development of community based infrastructure promoting arts, culture, sport and overall entertainment of youth. The need for such facilities which should offer a range of activities, far outweighs the supply. Such facilities should also be provided in rural areas.
- *Promoting cultural diversity and respect* - There is a crucial need to channel and redirect young people's energies towards positive direction by creating an environment that will enable them to reclaim their space for creative cultural expression. This will inculcate in youth a sense of belonging, self-worth and self-identity. This can be achieved through active mobilization and engagement of youth on issues affecting their lives, such as: HIV and AIDS, substance abuse, nationhood, patriotism as well as respect, understanding and tolerance of fellow human beings irrespective of their culture and religion.

## **Recommended Policy Interventions**

### **14.4.1 Extend and deepen opportunities for young people by engaging them in political and civic activities**

- a) Government should strengthen its relations with civil society organisations involved in youth development and ensure that they are profiled and supported so that they can become accessible to all young people.
- b) Local government should encourage young people to be active by increasing access to sports and recreational opportunities, investing in arts and culture opportunities for youth, increasing youth access to ICT and increasing young people's awareness of environmental issues.
- c) Government should link a variety of opportunities for young people with incentives as a means to get them to participate in national building activities which promote social cohesion.
- d) Government and relevant role players should rapidly expand the NYSP.
- e) Government should institutionalise the moral regeneration programme.

### **14.4.2 Ensure that young people access basic social services so that they can reach their full potential.**

- a) Government should ensure that young people are targeted in social development programmes such as EPWP, sustainable livelihoods, social protection, social assistance and welfare services;
- b) Government and civil society organisations should assist vulnerable young people to access basic social services and provide them with second chance opportunities that will widen their social networks;
- c) Department of Arts and Culture should provide places for cultural development to that can be used as an alternative to engaging youth in constructive leisure activities;

### **14.4.3 Recognise that young people have diverse needs and design specialised interventions to address their unique needs**

- a) Youth with disabilities are assets to their communities and should be offered with opportunities that will enable them to utilise their skills and talents.
- b) Government, civil society and the private sector should raise awareness about the circumstances of young people living with disabilities, and celebrate their potential.
- c) Government, civil society and private sector should provide the necessary infrastructure needed by youth living in rural areas to advance their development.
- d) SAYC should ensure that youth development and youth civil society organisations are accessible to young people with disabilities as well as those living in rural areas.

### **14.4.4 Design interventions that reduce the risk of youth becoming victims of crime and address the needs of youth in conflict with the law.**

- a) The Department of Education should increase the number of Schools of Industry so that young offenders can be given second chance opportunities for education and training and be reintegrated into society.
- b) Departments of Justice, Correctional Services and Social Development should ensure that young people who are awaiting trial are reintegrated quickly and effectively into society through restorative justice, diversion and home supervision programmes that can alleviate overcrowding and give the youth second chances to improve their lives. This will require expanding the reach of these programmes to cover the majority of young awaiting-trial prisoners between the ages of 18 and 24.
- c) The Department of Safety and Security should ensure that Community Police Forums and South African Police Services offices are aware of the needs of young people, and are accessible to and involve young people.
- d) The Department of Education should ensure that life skills programmes that include education about gender relations and empowerment are imparted and highlight young men and women's rights and responsibilities as individuals and partners.

- e) The Departments of Education and Social Development should ensure that schools and community centres are accessible and are safe places for young people throughout the day to reduce the risk of young people being victimised.

**14.4.5 Strengthen policy and programmes of government, civil society organisations and the private sector by promoting the prevention and eradication of substance abuse in order to ensure that young people are productive and engaged in society.**

- a) The Department of Education should ensure that the life skills curriculum addresses substance abuse in a way that is relevant to all young people, and gives young people the skills to avoid substance abuse.
- b) The Departments of Health and Social Development should ensure that in-patient and out-patient facilities as well as youth development organisations and schools are equipped to identify and deal with the problem of substance abuse.
- c) Local government should promote awareness programmes and make communities aware of early intervention programmes as well as enable them to access treatment facilities.
- d) Department of Arts and Culture should encourage, support and formally recognise youth generating income through cultural expression in the informal sector.
- e) Department of Arts and Culture should facilitate and support further training and skills development for youth engaged in income-generating activities in informal, SMME arts, culture, and heritage sectors, including creative and design industries.

**14.4.6 Strengthen social cohesion through developing the youth sector's capacity to design and implement effective integrated youth development programmes which foster social cohesion.**

- a) Government through the Youth Development Forum should facilitate social dialogue through partnerships between government, the private sector, and civil society organizations to contribute to strong collective efforts for youth development.
- b) Government through the Youth Development Forum should build the capacity of youth focused organizations
- c) Youth Development Forum to profile and market youth development organisations and mobilise financial support for implementation of youth development initiatives.
- d) SAYC to profile and market youth development organisations to young people to ensure that young people know about and are able to access appropriate programmes and opportunities.
- e) Department of Social Development in partnership with civil society organizations should develop programmes that renew and restores intergenerational solidarity.
- f) Department of Social Development should in partnership with civil society organizations should develop programmes that strengthen families and foster intergenerational relations.
- g) Department of Social Development in partnership with civil society organizations should develop parenthood programmes that encourage responsible parenthood.
- h) Department of Social Development and Arts and Culture in partnership with civil society organizations should develop moral regeneration programmes.
- i) Government should progressively facilitate inclusion of youth representatives in national structures that seeks to develop them and their communities as well as in sessions of the AU and UN.
- j) Government in partnership with civil society organizations should promote the rights and responsibilities of young people as espoused in this policy.
- k) The Departments of Arts and Culture should promote continuous active cultural participation of youth.
- l) Department of Sports and Recreation should facilitate development of community based facilities and encourage participation of young people in sports and recreational activities within and outside school premises.
- m) Government should facilitate national, regional, continental and international cooperation
- n) Department of Social Development in partnership with relevant partners should develop programmes that facilitate social inclusion and reintegrates youth (e.g. out of school