



MINISTRY OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT,  
INDIGENISATION AND EMPOWERMENT

## National Youth Policy

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## Preface

The National Youth Policy has been developed as a framework to provide common aspirations and priorities for youth development across Zimbabwe. Through the National Youth Policy, the Government declares the importance of the active involvement of young people in national development, demonstrating the distinctive and complementary roles of all Government Ministries, the Non-Government Sector and Youth Groups in youth development by providing a framework with common goals for development and promoting a spirit of co-operation and co-ordination.

The Policy seeks to ensure that all young women and men are given meaningful opportunities to reach their full potential, both as individuals and as active participants in society. It addresses the major concerns and issues critical to young men and women and gives direction to youth programmes and services provided by government and non-government organisations. Zimbabwean society as a whole will benefit through the implementation of the National Youth Policy. By placing young people as central to all development initiatives, the National Youth Policy recognises and values young women and men as a key resource and national asset and highlights the importance of youth development to nation building and the creation of a democratic, productive and equitable society.

Young women and men are not only a major national resource and inheritors of Zimbabwe's future society, but they are also active contributors to the nature of society today. The National Youth Policy thus provides a foundation and mechanism for youth participation in socio-economic development whilst recognising that young people should be protagonists of their own development and not mere recipients of state support. It enables the Government to give priority to youth development and display its commitment to national youth development through the creation of appropriate policy implementation mechanisms and the allocation of sufficient resources. The Policy serves to sensitise Government institutions and civil society toward youth development and acknowledge the initiatives of young men and women.

At provincial and local levels, the National Youth Policy will ensure that government authorities work in a cooperative and harmonious manner when designing and delivering programmes and services which address youth

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development needs and opportunities. Furthermore, the Policy is intended to encourage an understanding amongst young men and women of the processes of governance and provides opportunities for their participation in provincial and local programmes, thus enabling young women and men to play a positive role in development.

Furthermore, the National Youth Policy provides a foundation and direction for a National Youth Action Plan. This Plan complements the Policy and describes the role of all agencies engaged in youth development and the programmes, services, facilities and activities they undertake to achieve the goals and objectives of the Policy.

It is my pleasure therefore to present this Revised National Youth Policy to the nation.

**R. G. Mugabe**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE**

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## Introductory Statement

The Revised National Youth Policy of Zimbabwe highlights the priorities and strategies to be adopted by Government and stakeholders to ensure the development and empowerment of our youth. This revised Policy underlines the desired need to see young people contribute positively to national development through the creation of an enabling environment which allows for youth to reach their full potential. The formulation of this revised Policy has seen my Ministry together with the Zimbabwe Youth Council actively engaging the youth and interested Parties with a view of soliciting ideas for inclusion in the Policy. If a Policy does not capture the needs of its clientele and is driven by such needs, it will fail to fulfil its purpose. This National Youth Policy therefore reflects the commitment by Government to meeting the needs and aspirations of young people as expressed by the youth themselves.

This Policy has been developed in order to mainstream young Zimbabweans by systematically integrating their issues into all development programmes and projects at all levels and within all sectors, and at both public and private institutions and to harness their talents and energies as well as to address the challenges being confronted by today's youth. This is a dynamic document which will be continuously reviewed in order to meet the realities on the ground. A number of Ministries and organizations are already working in various areas related to youth. This Policy aims at integrating their programmes and provides an overall sense of direction consistent with the needs of the country. Efforts have been made to build on the existing programmes and avoid the tendency to reinvent the wheel.

The Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment will essentially play a catalytic and coordinating role in the implementation of the Policy besides undertaking specific programmes and projects to supplement the overall efforts. The success of this Policy will depend upon the commitment and passion of all the stakeholders whether in the public or private sector. This is an investment which will see Zimbabwe benefit immeasurably and it is my hope that all stakeholders will rise to this immense opportunity. The Ministry is confident of the capabilities and the talents of the Zimbabwean Youth and expects that they will do their best to build a strong, prosperous, sustainable and vibrant Zimbabwe.

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**Honourable Saviour Kasukuwere (MP)**  
**MINISTER OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, INDIGENISATION AND**  
**EMPOWERMENT**

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## 1. Executive Summary

The National Youth Policy was developed in 2000 to provide an enabling framework for the development and empowerment of youth in a comprehensive, coordinated and multi-sectoral manner. The policy seeks to *‘empower the youth by creating an enabling environment and marshaling the resources necessary for undertaking programmes and projects to fully develop the youths’ mental, moral, social, economic, political, cultural, spiritual and physical potential in order to improve their quality of life’*.

However, since it was developed in 2000, some important developments have occurred at the national, regional and international levels that have necessitated the Government of Zimbabwe to review the Policy to determine that it becomes consistent with these developments and the current youth situation. In reviewing the policy, extensive consultations were held with youth organisations, sectoral groups as well as the young women and men themselves. In addition, the Zimbabwe Youth Council embarked on an extensive youth awareness and consultative process involving provincial as well as sectoral consultative meetings as well as launching electronic media programmes. Through these programmes and the participation of these groups in the policy formulation process, the revised National Youth Policy has been designed to address the major needs, challenges and opportunities of young men and women, accommodating provincial variations and specific sectoral issues. The Policy has also received contributions from a number of guiding frameworks that include the African Youth Charter (AYC), the United Nations World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) and the Global Political Agreement (GPA). It also incorporates aspects from the Nziramasanga Education and Training Commission Report.

The policy is consistent with the Constitution of Zimbabwe and major regional and international Conventions and Agreements that the Government of Zimbabwe is Party to. It is based on a set of eleven guiding principles and values that have influenced its design and direction. These principles and values lay the foundation on which the goals, objectives and strategies of the policy have been formulated.

By placing young people as central to all development initiatives, the revised National Youth Policy recognises and values young women and men as a key resource and national asset and highlights the importance of youth

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development to nation building and the creation of a democratic, productive and equitable society. At provincial and local levels, the National Youth Policy will ensure that government authorities work in a cooperative and harmonious manner when designing and delivering programmes and services that address youth development needs and opportunities. In addition, the Policy is intended to encourage an understanding amongst the youth of the processes of governance and provide opportunities for their participation in provincial and local programmes, thus enabling young women and men to play a positive role in national development.

The National Youth Policy seeks to achieve the following goals:

1. To empower youth to participate and contribute to the socio-economic development of the nation,
2. To develop a coordinated response and participation by all stakeholders in the development and empowerment of the youth,
3. To instill in youth a clear sense of national identity and respect for national principles and values, and
4. To promote the health of young people and develop youth oriented healthcare.

A number of strategies are outlined which comply with the multi-sectoral nature of the Youth Policy and relate to a range of programmes that should be implemented by a variety of institutions in order to achieve the stated policy goals and objectives. The strategies are grouped under twelve key strategic areas, namely:

- i) Education and Skills Development
- ii) Youth Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods
- iii) Youth Empowerment and Participation
- iv) Youth Migration
- v) Gender Equality and Equity
- vi) Information, Communication and Technology
- vii) Data and Research
- viii) Youth Coordination and Mainstreaming
- ix) Culture, Sport and Recreation
- x) National Youth Service
- xi) Youth Health
- xii) Youth and Environment

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The implementation of this policy depends on a sound institutional framework and active political, administrative and technical support for the translation of goals, objectives and strategies outlined in the policy into actual programmes at all levels of society. A concerted and coordinated effort is required by Government, non-government and private institutions, churches, youth groups and community organisations to address youth issues in a comprehensive way. This requires an identification and elaboration of the mechanisms for collaboration and coordination to implement a well-resourced and funded youth development agenda.

Immediately after the approval of the Policy, a comprehensive National Action Plan for its implementation will be developed with the involvement of key stakeholders. Deliberate efforts will be made to utilize existing structures of Government and civil society to implement the Policy in order to avoid creating additional institutional frameworks, unless they are absolutely necessary.

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## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Background

Young people have long been a priority of the Government of Zimbabwe since the attainment of independence in 1980. Recognizing the large numbers of youth who were denied opportunities for education and basic human rights, as well as their vast potential to collectively contribute to national development, the Government of Zimbabwe, at independence, created the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Recreation which was charged to address youth development issues. Thus, the Government introduced various programmes to advance the interests and welfare of youth in social and economic spheres.

In recognition of the demographic, socio-economic and political significance of the youth and to demonstrate its commitment to addressing their development and empowerment needs, the Government of Zimbabwe in 2000 developed the National Youth Policy. The policy seeks to empower the youth in a comprehensive, coordinated multi-sectoral manner, by *'creating an enabling environment and marshaling the resources necessary for undertaking programmes to fully develop the youths' mental, moral, social, economic, political, cultural and physical potential in order to improve their quality of life'*, (National Youth Policy, 2000).

The National Youth Policy represents a declaration of the priority areas for addressing youth issues and outlines strategic interventions that the government intends to provide for the development of young women and men. Furthermore, the policy provides a framework for the involvement of different organizations and sectors in supporting the development of young people in Zimbabwe.

In general, the youth policy priorities are based on an analysis of the situation of youth presented at the time of the development of the policy. Since the initial policy was developed in 2000 several developments have occurred at national, regional and international levels which have necessitated the Government of Zimbabwe to review the policy to determine that it is consistent with these developments and the current youth situation.

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## **2.2 Major Continental and International Developments**

As countries worldwide recognized the increasing high numbers of youth as victims of poverty, unemployment and disease the issues were prioritised on the agenda of regional, continental and international bodies for discussion and action. According to the United Nations observation, *'young people represent agents, beneficiaries and victims of major societal changes and are generally confronted by a paradox: to seek to be integrated into an existing order or to serve as a force to transform that order.'* In this regard, Zimbabwe's National Youth Policy has received contributions from three processes - the African Youth Charter (AYC) which was developed under the auspices of the African Union, , The World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) developed by the United Nations, and the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in Zimbabwe.

## **2.3 The National Youth Policy Review Process**

The review of the National Youth Policy was led by the Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment and received contributions from a broad sector of Zimbabweans. Extensive consultations were held with youth organisations, sectoral groups as well as young women and men themselves. In addition, the Zimbabwe Youth Council embarked on an extensive youth awareness and consultative process involving regional consultative meetings as well as launching electronic media programmes. Through these programmes and the participation of these groups in the policy formulation process, the National Youth Policy has been designed to address the major needs, challenges and opportunities of young men and women, accommodating provincial variations and specific sectoral issues.

## **2.4 Definition of Youth**

In Zimbabwe, youth are defined as persons between 15 and 35 years of age. This age range is stipulated in the Constitution of Zimbabwe and is also in line with the continental definition of youth as defined in the African Youth Charter (15 to 35).

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## 2.5 Guiding Principles of the National Youth Policy

The National Youth Policy is based on a series of essential principles and values which have influenced its design and direction. These principles and values lay the foundation on which the goals, objectives and strategies of the Policy have been formulated. The following are the key principles on which the National Youth Policy has been formulated:

- i) **Enhancement of Peace and National Unity:** Promotion of peace, national unity and support for the family unit;
- ii) **Equity and Diversity:** Recognition of the heterogeneity and diversity of the youth and the need to address their development needs through equitable policies, programmes and allocation of resources;
- iii) **Cultural and spiritual diversity:** Recognition of cultural and spiritual diversity as a basis for youth development and the important role tradition, spirituality and culture can play in the development of young men and women;
- iv) **Gender equity and equality:** Recognizing the special needs of both young men and young women in order to achieve a gender just society is a fundamental prerequisite for youth development and hence advancing gender equality and equity constitutes the cornerstone for the Youth Policy;
- v) **Youth Empowerment for sustainable livelihoods:** Promotion of a conducive environment that supports the continued life-long development of young men and women and their skills and capacities;
- vi) **Youth participation:** Promotion of young people's participation in national development, democratic and civic decision making processes;
- vii) **Youth-driven:** Youth development services and programmes should be youth-driven and youth-centred;
- viii) **Youth service:** Youth should be given opportunity to serve their communities whilst developing their own skills; this is essential to developing patriotism and a sense of civic duty
- ix) **Mainstreaming youth issues:** Whilst recognising the need for youth-driven and youth-centred development programmes and services, the needs, opportunities and challenges facing young women and men are the concerns of the whole society. Youth development should be recognized as an important mandate for all government agencies, non-government organisations and development institutions;

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- x) **Prioritizing youth issues:** Government should give the overall wellbeing of youth the highest priority;
  - xi) **Sustainable development:** The value of sustainability is promoted to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
  - xii) **Transparency and accessibility:** Institutions and organisations involved in youth development should operate in a transparent and accountable manner, whilst ensuring that they are accessible to youth.

## 2.6 Rights and Responsibilities of Young People

1. The Youth Policy should be consistent with the Constitution of Zimbabwe and major international conventions and agreements which Zimbabwe has subscribed to, in particular the rights and freedoms set forth in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. The Youth Policy should be an integral part of the overall development policies and programmes of the nation and hence should not be seen in isolation. In this regard, the Youth Policy acknowledges the importance of other sectoral policies and programmes and their linkages to the Youth Policy.
3. Government should give the overall wellbeing of youth the highest priority.
4. Everyone has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The youth have the right to be informed about all matters relating to their daily lives including the right to reproductive health information and services.
5. Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Equality of access to and attainment of educational qualification is necessary if more young people are to become agents of change.
6. Advancing gender equality and equity is a fundamental prerequisite for youth development and hence constitutes the cornerstone for the Youth Policy.
7. The Policy should promote national unity and support for the family unit.
8. The Policy recognizes the impact of religious and cultural beliefs and practices on youth issues and the need to maintain balance between them and individual rights.
9. The Policy recognizes a number of fundamental rights which the youth of Zimbabwe have/should have including freedom of expression and

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association; good parental care; protection from all forms of exploitation, discrimination and abuse; access to all benefits of citizenship such as education, training, employment (beyond the legal age of majority), health care, recreation; individual and collective ownership of property for those who have reached the legal age of majority.

10. The Policy also recognizes important responsibilities which the youth should understand and fulfill including: to participate in the social, cultural and economic development of the country; to develop, appreciate and respect national cultural norms and values; to take an active involvement in decision making at all levels affecting their lives; to promote and defend democracy and the rule of law; and to uphold as a priority the protection of the environment.
11. The Policy will be reviewed regularly so that it remains consistent with and relevant to the changing circumstances in youth work and the socioeconomic realities of the country.

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### 3. Policy Goals and Objectives

The National Youth Policy seeks to achieve the following goals and objectives:

**Goal 1: To empower youth to participate and contribute to the socio-economic development of the nation.**

#### **Objectives**

- a. To provide opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and decent work for all young men and women;
- b. To assist youth in attaining the knowledge, skills and experiences required to enable them to effectively participate in national development and society as a whole;
- c. To promote the rights and freedoms of all youths paying special attention to empowering previously marginalized sections such as young women and girls, youth with disabilities, youth living with HIV, out of school youth and youth living in rural areas;
- d. To involve youth at the planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation levels of all youth development programmes;
- e. To promote gender equality and equity among the youth, in particular, in education and training, socio-cultural, political, economic and legal spheres.

**Goal 2: To develop a coordinated response and participation by all stakeholders in the development and empowerment of the youth.**

#### **Objectives**

- a. To ensure adequate resources are directed towards youth development programmes and promote financial accountability and sustainability;
- b. To facilitate access to resources for development projects and activities by youth and youth development organisations;
- c. To make available reliable and up-to-date information on the youth development situation in the country in order to inform policy making and programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at all levels and in all sectors;

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- d. To systematically integrate youth issues into all policies, plans, programmes and strategies at all levels and within all sectors and institutions of government, NGOs and the private sector;
  - e. To build the capacity of youth development organisations and any other departments or institutions involved with youth affairs to effectively design, implement, manage and monitor youth development programmes and services;
  - f. To enhance and develop professional skills, standards, competencies and behaviours amongst youth workers;
  - g. To strengthen mechanisms for collaboration and cooperation amongst relevant government, non-government and community stakeholders;
  - h. To promote the harmonization of other policies, research, programmes and strategies oriented toward young men and women.

**Goal 3:            To instill in youth a clear sense of national identity and respect for national principles and values.**

### **Objectives**

- a. To promote an awareness and understanding of the historical and cultural heritage of Zimbabwe;
- b. To promote an awareness of the content of the Constitution of Zimbabwe amongst young men and women, along with a knowledge of their rights and responsibilities;
- c. To advocate for the creation, in youth, of a sense of belonging, patriotism and responsible citizenship;
- d. To encourage young women and men to promote national unity by upholding the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, solidarity and tolerance;
- e. To design and implement programmes and services which promote opportunities for voluntarism amongst young men and women whilst promoting development of practical leadership and life skills;
- f. To promote participation of youth in culture, sport and recreation activities.

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**Goal 4: To promote the health of young people and develop youth oriented healthcare.**

**Objectives**

- a. To address the specific health problems faced by young people which inhibit their capacity to participate in society;
- b. To contribute to the reduction in the spread of STIs and HIV among the youth and mitigate their impact on the individual and society;
- c. To reduce alcohol and substance abuse, and pornography among the youth;
- d. To reduce the incidence of teenage and unwanted pregnancies, and the sequel of unsafe abortion;
- e. To promote environmental education and active participation in environmental conservation among the youth.

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## **4. Priority Target Groups**

The National Youth Policy recognises the inter-relatedness of challenges facing youth and provides for equal opportunities for all youth. Nonetheless, it affirms that youth are heterogeneous with diverse interests and diverse needs. Therefore, the policy identifies the following youth subgroups with particular and special interests for differentiated national responses and strategically targeted interventions:

1. Young women
2. Youth with disabilities
3. Pupils and students
4. Unemployed Youth
5. Out-of-school youths
6. Youth living with HIV
7. Youth in the Diaspora

### **4.1 Young Women**

Girls and young Zimbabwean women face specific challenges and issues. The most disadvantaged are those residing in rural areas, those with disabilities, orphaned, single parents and living on the streets. The youth policy recognises measures to correct gender imbalances and further provides for specific interventions targeting these girls and young women.

### **4.2 Youth with Disabilities**

It is estimated that 10% of the Zimbabwean population is living with disability. The youth policy approaches disability as a human rights and development issue and creates an enabling environment for youth with disabilities to realize their full development potential and contribute towards betterment of society, by mainstreaming disability issues at all levels and prioritizing issues affecting young people with disabilities.

### **4.3 Pupils and Students**

Pupils and students comprise the majority of young people in Zimbabwe. The youth policy provides specific measures for their full and integrated development.

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#### **4.4 Unemployed Youth**

The youth policy recognises that unemployment and limited access to economic and social resources are among the great challenges facing young people in Zimbabwe. The majority of young people, especially in the rural areas are unemployed or under-employed, unskilled and lack access to productive resources and are, therefore, socially and economically vulnerable to poverty and exploitation. The policy therefore provides mechanisms for public, private and non- state sectors to create an enabling environment for integrated development for young people.

#### **4.5 Out-of-School Youth**

There is a growing problem of youth who drop out of school. These young women and men are mostly unemployed, have no adult supervision, have poor level of welfare, and are vulnerable to drug, alcohol and substance abuse, and young females are vulnerable to high risky behavior, such as transactional sex, prostitution, rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. They are exposed to violence, exploitation, and are often in conflict with the law. At present, there are limited programs aimed at addressing the needs of these youth. The youth policy provides opportunities for out-of-school youth and mechanisms for their reintegration into society.

#### **4.6 Youth Living With HIV**

Although HIV prevalence rates in the country are on the decline, HIV and AIDS among youth is still one of the major health, social, economic, development and human rights problems in the country. Young people and notably girls and young women remain the biggest sector at risk of new infection and certainly most affected by HIV and AIDS with the attendant numerous social and developmental problems. The youth policy provides a framework for integration of HIV and AIDS, health, education, human rights, environment and other issues for the full and holistic development of young people.

#### **4.7 Youth in the Diaspora**

A sizeable number of Zimbabwean youth are living in the Diaspora, some irregularly. The youth policy provides measures to protect the rights of all young people living in the Diaspora and encourages them to participate in

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national, political, cultural, social and development programmes, and provides measures for their return and full reintegration into society.

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## **5. Strategic Priority Areas**

The National Youth Policy specifies the following strategic priority areas which reflect the multi-sectoral nature of youth development issues. The strategies relate to a range of programmes that should be implemented by a variety of institutions in order to achieve the above stated objectives. It should be noted that, although the strategies have been grouped under particular headings for ease of reference, the groups of strategies are linked because of their reciprocal impacts. For example, improved education will impact on health, gender equality, and employment and so on.

### **5.1 Education and Skills Development**

The National Youth Policy affirms that education and skills development are lifelong processes that are relevant to the holistic and integrated development of youth.

#### **5.1.1 Strategies for Education and Skills Development**

- a. Periodically review and revise the education and training curricula to place increased emphasis on practical/vocational training to prepare and empower the youth for their roles in society and contributions to both formal and informal sectors;
- b. Expand educational and skills development facilities and equipment to ensure equitable distribution in rural and urban areas in order to accommodate the ever-increasing number and changing needs of young people;
- c. Expand family life and health education programmes;
- d. Capacitate and increase career guidance and counseling services;
- e. Strengthen civic education programmes for the youth;
- f. Promote industrial exposure to students;
- g. Expand youth skills training centers paying special attention to entrepreneurship skills development, relevant farming and industrial incubation, and attachment options in every district along with information technology centers;
- h. Provide educational and skills development system instructions in appropriate languages including vernacular and sign languages;

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- i. Increase access and full utilization of available education and skills training facilities for the benefit of the community and other youth development activities;
  - j. Strengthen family and community based support programmes for all;
  - k. Identify and establish adequate and valid linkages between education and skills development, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, culture, sport and recreation activities;
  - l. Encourage participatory partnership between the educators, students and the community;
  - m. Take appropriate measures to support disadvantaged youth at all levels of education and skills development through social protection, loans, grants, cadetship, scholarships and other appropriate measures;
  - n. Disseminate widely information on available financial support schemes in education and skills development.

## **5.2 Youth Empowerment and Participation**

Youth empowerment is the creation of an enabling environment for the youth to have the freedom to choose, to participate in and take decisions in matters affecting them and be ready to accept the consequences of their decisions. Empowerment enables the youth to be active participants in both the process and product of development. It has a democratizing impact.

The National Youth Policy affirms the right of youth to involve and meaningfully and peacefully participate in national political, economic and social processes.

### **5.2.1 Strategies for Youth Empowerment and Participation**

- a. Ensure meaningful youth participation during the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of youth programmes and projects;
- b. Facilitate establishment and funding of youth groups and youth Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), led and headed by the youth themselves and ensure their participation in decision-making processes at all levels;
- c. Promote the creation of a National Youth Forum for all youth and youth organizations;

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- d. Provide young people with the necessary education, information and skills for their effective participation;
  - e. Ensure that Government approves a 25% quota of all economic indigenization and empowerment facilities in agriculture, mining, commercial, tourism, and industrial economic activity is reserved and available for youth, paying particular attention to the empowerment of young women and young people with disabilities;
  - f. Provide adequate information in appropriate mediums on economic empowerment and indigenization to all youth and notably youth with disabilities and youth in rural areas;
  - g. Facilitate the participation of youth in parliament and other decision making bodies in accordance with prescribed laws;
  - h. Strengthen the capacity of youth organizations in peace building, conflict prevention, and conflict resolution through intercultural learning, civic education, human rights education and democracy, mutual respect for cultural, ethnic, religious and political diversity;
  - i. Provide technical and financial support to build institutional capacity of youth organizations and in particular those with programmes involving female, rural, disabled and other marginalized youth;
  - j. Include youth representatives as part of delegations to national, regional and international youth development meetings and sessions;
  - k. Give priority to policies and programmes including youth advocacy and peer-to-peer programmes for marginalized young people, such as out-of-school and out-of-work young people, young women, young people living with disabilities, to offer them the opportunity to re-integrate into the mainstream society.;
  - l. Take appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of victims and perpetrators of violence and former prisoners by providing access to education and skills development, and access to economic and social opportunities.

### **5.3 Youth Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods**

The National Youth Policy recognizes that decent employment and participation in agricultural, industrial, commercial and services sector provides sustenance and sustainable livelihood to the majority of youth.

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### 5.3.1 Strategies for Youth Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods

- a. Ensure that development strategies and programmes incorporate youth employment concerns;
- b. Encourage and develop specific youth-oriented programmes that improve the skills, productivity and experiences of young people through a range of institutions, including schools, vocational training centres, community organizations and NGOs;
- c. Encourage equal employment opportunities for the youth that have attained the age of majority, with particular attention to reducing gender inequities and inequalities;
- d. Establish a Youth Fund and other institutional funds as well as remove barriers to ensure access to capital by youth;
- e. Promote career guidance and counseling in both public and private sectors, to assist young people more efficiently in finding employment;
- f. Encourage enterprises to play an active role in the provision of continuous training to young employees. Institute an incentive scheme for employers to invest in skills development for young people;
- g. Establish/encourage training programmes for promoting self-employment activities;
- h. Advocate for representation of youth in tripartite bodies and tripartite consultations;
- i. Make available and accessible accurate data disaggregated according to gender, disability, and rural versus urban area on youth employment, unemployment and underemployment to facilitate prioritization of issues in development programmes;
- j. Promote youth entrepreneurship by including entrepreneurship training in the school curricula, providing access to credit, business, development skills training, mentorship opportunities and better information on market opportunities;
- k. Develop job creation strategies for youth particularly for young women, young people with disabilities and young people living in rural areas;
- l. Regulate the informal economy to prevent unfair labour practices and exploitation of youth;
- m. Foster greater linkages between the labour market, entrepreneurship opportunities, and education and skills development to ensure youth realize their full development and potential.

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## **5.4 Youth Health**

Health is a fundamental and cross cutting issue which has important bearing on youth's wellbeing and capacity to partake in education, skills development, poverty eradication, and participation in the national economic, political and social processes.

### **5.4.1 Strategies for Youth Health**

- a. Involve youth in identifying their reproductive and health needs and designing programmes that respond to these needs with special attention to vulnerable and disadvantaged young people;
- b. Establish/strengthen youth-friendly health services, including reproductive health and youth counseling services and life-skills teaching/education in every district;
- c. Promote increased involvement of the private sector and NGOs in education on abstinence, deferment of sexual debut and provision of family planning and STI information and services, including life skills education;
- d. Expand and create access to health services by young people;
- e. Encourage communities, policy and decision-makers as well as health service providers toward removal of barriers to youth access to sexual and reproductive health information and services;
- f. Integrate and expand HIV and AIDS programming in all youth activities;
- g. Allocate adequate financial, human and other resources to youth health;
- h. Institute comprehensive preventative measures and curative programmes to control consumption of tobacco, alcohol, drug and substance abuse;
- i. Provide technical and financial support to build institutional capacity of youth organizations addressing public health concerns especially for young people with disabilities, young people in rural areas, and young people married at an early age;
- j. Strengthen education programmes engaging young people as peer educators and information deliverers on health issues including HIV and AIDS, STIs, Malaria, early pregnancy, illegal abortion, alcohol and substance abuse;
- k. Harmonize health, education and other youth policies on health matters;
- l. Empower teachers, parents, students, out of school youth and health service providers with necessary information and skills regarding youth,

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sexuality and sexual education through training workshops, meetings and distribution of information, education and communication (IEC) materials;

- m. Promote norms for family planning, responsible sexual behaviour and equal involvement of both males and females in sexual and reproductive health;
- n. Translate important health information into vernacular languages and Braille.

## **5.5 Gender Equity and Equality**

The National Youth Policy acknowledges the desirability to eliminate discrimination against all young people, and protect and promote gender equality and equity.

### **5.5.1 Strategies for Gender Equity and Equality**

- a. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against girls and young women and protect their fundamental rights and freedoms, and protect girls and young women from violence, abuse, genital mutilation, rape, sexual abuse and exploitation, trafficking, prostitution, and pornography;
- b. Advocate for gender equality and equity from childhood;
- c. Make gender mainstreaming a requirement for all youth programmes and projects.
- d. Remove obstacles which militate against gender equality and equity, establish/continue affirmative programmes until such a time when gender equality and equity are achieved;
- e. Provide appropriate programmes aimed at improving the opportunities for girls in order to achieve gender equity in education; provide for young women to continue with their education after they fall pregnant;
- f. Intensify programmes including behaviour change interventions to reduce the vulnerability of young people to early and unwanted sexual activity, sexual violence and sexually transmitted diseases;
- g. Repeal laws, policies and customary practices which hinder progress in gender equality and equity among the youth and advocate for change and enact laws that are fully empowering and create effective enforcement mechanisms;

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- h. Ensure that girls and young women are able to participate meaningfully, equally and effectively at all levels of social, educational, scientific, economic, political, cultural, civic life, leadership and governance levels;
  - i. Provide for the special interests of young people who live with disabilities; live in rural areas and marginal poor urban areas; out of school and live on the streets; orphaned and single parents;
  - j. Provide information and programmes to make girls and young women aware of their rights and opportunities to participate as equals in national issues;
  - k. Guarantee universal and equal access to primary education, equal access to secondary, tertiary and vocational education and skills development;
  - l. Institute empowerment mechanisms and affirmative action to promote girls and young women's access to science and math education, skills and entrepreneurship skills development, economic and political opportunities;
  - m. Promote and strengthen the role of the family and community in improving the status of young women and men;
  - n. Provide support for NGOs, particularly youth NGOs, in their efforts to promote the equality and participation of young people in society;
  - o. Promote the participation of young women and young men in decision making processes in political, social and economic activities and the elimination of barriers that limit their full contribution to society;
  - p. Strengthen mechanisms to reintegrate young people who have been subjected to any form of abuse, exploitation, violence and former prisoners and detainees.

## **5.6 National Youth Service**

The National Youth Service programme seeks to nurture youth to become responsible citizens who accept realities of life and facilitate their participation in national development and peace building while at the same time achieving personal growth.

### **5.6.1 Strategies for National Youth Service**

- a. Mobilise youth socially and economically in national development and peace building;
- b. Strengthen the capacity of young people and youth organisations in Peace- building, conflict prevention and conflict resolution through the

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promotion of intercultural learning, civic education, tolerance, human rights education and democracy, mutual respect for cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, the importance of dialogue and cooperation, responsibility, solidarity and international cooperation;

- c. Institute education to promote a culture of peace and dialogue in all schools and training centres at all levels;
- d. Provide openly and publicly information on the objectives, programs, recruiting process and intended impact of specific national youth training programmes including but not limited to the national youth service;
- e. Provide for meaningful participation of the different youth target groups, particularly young females, young people with disabilities and young people in rural areas in the planning, designing, implementation, evaluation and review of the national youth training programmes;
- f. Impart productive work culture through on the job experiences and meaningful exposure to the world of work;
- g. Facilitate direct participation and involvement of youth in national issues at all levels of governance;
- h. Promote volunteerism among the youth and establish a National Youth Volunteer Corps;
- i. Promote youth participation in voluntary community development and public works programmes;
- j. Develop and implement clear funding mechanisms for the national youth training programmes in collaboration with appropriate private sector and international community;
- k. Develop a holistic curriculum for the National Youth Service Training Programme that promotes learning and skills development for the youths which are linked to the personal development of the youth and needs of industry, commerce and public service;
- l. Establish an independent body to monitor and evaluate the National Youth Training Programme in order to determine its impact and to periodically review the mandate, nature and form of the service.

## **5.7 Culture, Art, Sport and Recreation**

The National Youth Policy affirms the fundamental importance of culture, sport and recreation for the full and integrated development and wellbeing of youth.

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### 5.7.1 Strategies Culture, Art, Sport and Recreation

- a. Inculcate among the youth cultural values of “ubuntu/unhu hwedu”;
- b. Promote cultural values which are helpful for development and discourage those that hinder progress;
- c. Incorporate into the school curriculum, traditional dances, games, playing of musical instruments both traditional and foreign;
- d. Encourage the teaching of arts and crafts among all categories of the youth;
- e. Promote youth participation in cultural activities thereby preserving culture for posterity;
- f. Empower families in promoting cultural values thereby protecting it for posterity;
- g. Integrate education, health, sport, arts, culture and recreational programmes and activities and promote youth participation in the integrated programmes thereby protecting it for posterity;
- h. Involve youth in the planning and implementation of culture, sport and recreation programmes and activities;
- i. Integrate marginalized and disadvantaged youth such as those with disabilities, girls and young women in rural area and marginal areas, indigenous languages and culture in national sporting, cultural and recreation programmes;
- j. Provide substantial national support and funding for youth participation in culture, sport and recreation for leisure and professional development and motivate and encourage NGOs, private sector, communities, families and individuals to support such programmes and activities;
- k. Encourage diverse culture, sport and recreation and promote traditional dances, cultural practices and sport in all areas and to all youth;
- l. Protect all youth and in particular girls and young women from harmful cultural, religious and traditional practices;
- m. Make available cultural, recreational and sporting facilities, resources and information for and to youth with disability;
- n. Strengthen links between youth and the media to give voice to youth concerns and perspectives and to promote programmes on Zimbabwean cultures;

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- o. Harness the creativity of youth to promote indigenous cultural values and traditions by representing them in a format acceptable to youth and in languages and forms in which youth are able to relate;
  - p. Promote inter-cultural awareness by organizing exchange programmes between young people and youth organisations at the national, regional, continental and international level;
  - q. Put in place adequate infrastructure and services in rural and urban areas for youth to participate in sport, physical education, cultural, artistic, and recreational and leisure activities.

## **5.8 Information and Communication Technology**

The National Youth Policy recognizes the centrality of Information and communication technology to the full development of youth in Zimbabwe.

### **5.8.1 Strategies for Information and Communication Technology**

- a. Develop and strengthen the use of all vehicles of communication and notably modern Information and Communication Technology in all areas notably in rural areas and poor urban areas for youth;
- b. Promote all language dialects taking cognizance of the languages of young people with disability in policy documents and the dissemination of information to youth;
- c. Develop and capacitate the use of information and communication technology among the youth;
- d. Promote ICT education and skills development among youths;
- e. Create an economic and social environment that promotes innovation in the area of ICT;
- f. Foster an environment that mobilizes youth creative potential to use and develop technological innovations;
- g. Modify education and social systems to meet the new challenges of the ICT age;
- h. Promote universal access to telecommunication, information and communication technology;
- i. Support youth, and their organizations and institutions to continuously use and update ICT, and adapt it to suit their local conditions;
- j. Stimulate youth entrepreneurships in ICT and foster technology based startup business;

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- k. Promote State, Private Sector and NGO partnerships and interaction to develop and promote ICT among youth;
  - l. Providing adequate financial and technical support to marginalized youth to access ICT;
  - m. Integrate information, education, and communication strategies into all relevant youth programmes and issues.

## **5.9 Youth and Protection of the Environment**

The National Youth Policy affirms that the deterioration of the natural environment is one of the principal concerns of young people worldwide as it has direct implications for their well-being at present and in the future.

### **5.9.1 Strategies for Youth and Protection of the Environment**

- a. Integrate environmental education and training into education and training programmes. Emphasis should be given in school curricula to environmental education;
- b. Encourage and assist youth organizations to initiate and develop youth-to-youth contacts through town-twinning and similar programmes in order to share the experience gained in different countries;
- c. Strengthen participation of youth in the protection, preservation and improvement of the environment;
- d. Promote youth participation in tree planting, forestry, combating of desert creep, waste reduction, recycling and other sound environmental practices;
- e. Involve young people in designing and implementing appropriate environmental policies and programmes;
- f. The media and advertising agencies should develop programmes aimed at the widespread dissemination of information on environmental issues.

## **5.10 Youth Migration**

The National Youth Policy recognizes that youth migration is a complex phenomenon which affects youth in many ways.

### **5.10.1 Strategies for Youth Migration**

- a. Provide information to young people on and opportunities for safe and regular migration;

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- b. Promote safe migration and sensitize youth on the benefits of safe migration and the risk of irregular migration such as human trafficking;
  - c. Promote the return of migrant youth to enjoy their full rights in the country and take measures to attract Diaspora participation in national affairs and investment of remittances in the country;
  - d. Promote an environment for decent work for all especially young people;
  - e. Take measures to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers including right to equal treatment, equality of opportunity and non - discrimination;
  - f. Negotiate bilateral agreements with sending and destination countries spelling out shared responsibilities and obligations with regards to migration;
  - g. Promote, implement and sensitize youth of the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in the SADC;
  - h. Identify potential benefits of and promote circular migration, cross fertilization of skills and technology exchange;
  - i. Take measures to minimize the loss of critical skills (brain drain) especially in health and education and to maximize the benefits of migration to youth;
  - j. Formulate and implement migration policies and strategies that are gender-sensitive, and conducive to the interests of youth including youth with disabilities;
  - k. Adopt and enforce international standards on migrations.

## **5.11 Data and Research**

The National Youth Policy recognizes the primacy of research, data and information dissemination to comprehensive development, empowerment of young people and their full integration in national affairs.

### **5.11.1 Strategies for Data and Research**

- a. Promote the collection, analysis, dissemination and use of socio-economic and demographic data on youth development, in particular data pertinent to the implementation of this Policy;
- b. Ensure that data collected and analyzed on youth issues are disaggregated by age, sex, geographical area and other attributes;
- c. Promote relevant policy-oriented research on key youth issues;

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- d. Establish and continuously update statistical database and information system on youth development at both national sub-national levels;
  - e. Meaningfully involve all youths and in particular youths with disabilities, young women and young people in rural areas in the planning, generation and dissemination of data;
  - f. Promote a culture of reading and seeking information among youth;
  - g. Promote the exchange of ideas and information on regional and international youth issues.

## **5.12 Youth Coordination and Mainstreaming**

The National Youth Policy recognizes the demographic significance of youth and the need to integrate the youth voice at all levels. Youth mainstreaming entails youth concerns and experiences are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that youth benefit equally.

### **5.12.1 Strategies for Youth Coordination and Mainstreaming**

- a. Make provision for the appointment of youth representatives or focal persons in all government departments to ensure that youth issues are mainstreamed in all facets of development;
- b. Strengthen Youth Development coordination structures at all levels;
- c. Build youth analysis/planning expertise in the different sectors in government, to influence sector plans.

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## **6. Implementation and Coordination Mechanisms**

The effective implementation of the National Youth Policy depends on a sound institutional framework and active political, administrative and technical support for the translation of goals, objectives and strategies into actual programmes at all levels of society and taking into consideration that addressing youth concerns requires a multi-sectoral approach. Therefore, a concerted and coordinated effort is required by government, non-government, and private institutions, churches, youth groups and community organizations to address youth issues in a comprehensive way. As the basic unit of society, the family will have an important role to play in implementing the policy.

After the approval of the Youth Policy, a comprehensive Action Plan for the implementation of the National Youth Policy will be prepared with the involvement of key stakeholders. The Action Plan will provide details on implementation and coordination mechanisms. Deliberate efforts will be made to utilize existing structures of government and civil society to implement the policy in order to avoid creating additional institutional frameworks, unless they are absolutely necessary. Some reorientation of functions and the establishment and/or strengthening of operational linkages will, however, be necessary. In brief, the following key institutions could be mentioned.

### **6.1 Ministry Responsible for Youth Development**

The Ministry responsible for Youth Development will be responsible for the coordination of youth affairs and shall oversee the implementation of the Youth Policy. The major functions of the Ministry through its Youth Development and Empowerment Departments are:

- a. Development and coordination of implementation of the National Youth Policy;
- b. Establishment and supervision of the Zimbabwe Youth Council;
- c. Support of youth groups embarking on income-generating projects and provision of extension services;
- d. Marketing of youth programmes and activities;
- e. Facilitation of youth exchange programmes;
- f. Research, monitoring and evaluation of youth activities;
- g. Entrepreneurship skills training and development;

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- h. Leadership development and advocacy through the Children's Parliament and other programmes.
  - i. Promote the full participation and involvement of youth in decision making at all levels including communities at local, district, provincial and at national level.
  - j. Co-ordination of the National Youth Service Programme.

The functions and responsibilities of sectoral ministries in the implementation of the Youth Policy will be clearly defined during the preparation of Action Plan.

## **6.2 The Zimbabwe Youth Council**

The functions and responsibilities of the Council are spelt out in the Zimbabwe Youth Council Amendment Act No.16 of 1997 as follows:

### **6.2.1 Functions**

- a. To co-ordinate, supervise and foster the activities of youth clubs, associations or organizations from grassroots to national level;
- b. To facilitate youth participation in key national and international events;
- c. To advise the government on the needs of youth;
- d. To be the interface between the Government and the youth;
- e. With the approval of the Minister, to undertake projects designed to create employment for young people, including fund raising, marketing and trading activities;
- f. To be the sole register of all Youth Associations;
- g. To manage the children's parliament as leadership development and advocacy arm on children's rights.

### **6.2.2 Responsibilities (In relation to Registered National Associations)**

- a. Approving the annual estimates of such associations and receiving their audited annual accounts;
- b. Advising such associations of Government policy and the manner in which they can assist the Government in carrying out that policy;
- c. Generally advising, assisting and supervising such associations.

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### **6.3 Mobilization of Resources**

- a. The attainment of the goals and objectives of this Policy hinges on the effective mobilization of resources, for the implementation of policy related programmes. It is envisaged that these resources will come from the following sources;
- b. The Government will be responsible for the provision of adequate resources for its implementation;
- c. Government shall mobilize adequate human and material resources to the programme for implementing the Policy;
- d. Government shall also mobilize community support, as well as support in cash and kind from private organizations in the country;
- e. External support shall also be mobilized, including technical and financial inputs, to ensure the successful implementation of the Youth Policy.

### **6.4 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are the means of assessing the implementation of the goals, objectives and strategies of the Youth Policy. Timely and periodic monitoring and evaluation shall be undertaken by the Ministry. In consultation with the Zimbabwe Youth Council, the Ministry shall develop monitoring and evaluation guidelines to be used for implementing the Youth Policy and programmes. In addition, participating institutions in implementing the Youth Policy shall be encouraged to develop in-house monitoring and evaluation capabilities.

### **6.5 Policy Review Clause**

The National Youth Policy shall be reviewed every ten (10) years or as and when necessary in order for it to remain relevant to changes in the situation of youth and their related strategic priorities.