

# **NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY**

**The final DRAFT prepared by  
The Committee appointed by the  
Hon. Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs**

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## ABSTRACT

### **Main Features of the National Youth Policy**

- There has not been a NYP prepared earlier
- All available documents and recommendations of relevant committees and occasional guidelines issued by the recognised international agencies on youth has been considered in preparing the present policy
- Multi-sectoral participation is encouraged and ensured in the proposed NYP to facilitate effective and efficient delivery
- Youth is defined as those belonging to 15 to 29 years of age
- Five goals or aims have been drawn up to achieve the vision of the NYP
- The rights and responsibilities are recognised within the NYP and it has also ensured the rightful place for youth whilst strengthening the obligation of the state towards youth.
- Eight key strategic areas have been identified for easy implementation of the NYP

Several formal agencies have been created and also some existing structures are identified in order to implement the NYP; the National Youth Commission, National Youth Action Plan and Inter-ministerial Executive Committee on Youth Affairs are few examples for the newly formed agencies.

## **PART I**

### **1 Preamble**

The National Youth Policy (NYP) is intended to allow youth to become fully functioning citizens of an independent and pluralistic society within Sri Lanka. It is also intended to be an effective authenticated document focusing on all aspects of Sri Lankan youth. Nevertheless, it will not be an instrument that supports the manipulation, alignment or channelling of the potentials of the Sri Lankan youth to suit any political or global agenda.

The NYP is formulated in the spirit that the state and provincial authorities are among many other entities that support and facilitate the growth, education and maturation of the young individual, especially during the period when s/he is vulnerable and unable to fend for her/himself for a variety of reasons. The NYP will be appropriately operationalized through the machinery of the state and provincial authorities, primarily, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and its official arms.

The NYP and its manifestations will be operational in relation to any person only to the extent that s/he is willing and amenable to avail of the interventions, support and facilities afforded within its scope. The services to youth under NYP will be provided on the understanding that there will be no agreement or contract, either manifest or implied, to the effect that the state is under obligation to provide employment and financial support to an individual except under circumstances that are normally provided for under the existing legal framework.

The General Education system that enrolls the Sri Lankan child from primary up to the post-secondary stage has the resources and infrastructure to serve the needs of all children of school-going age. Thus, the schools could be one of the prime catchment areas for supporting the needs of the children and youth below the age of 18 years. The Ministry of Youth Affairs (MYA) will work in partnership with other ministries and institutions that offer programmes that are intended to induct the youth to the world of work. The NYP will also allow for the

identification and implementation of programmes that prepare youth to play responsible and constructive roles as citizens and family members.

The NYP will also enable the strengthening and enhancement of existing, broad-based and time-honoured organizations within the country that play supportive, competence-building and awareness-raising roles in relation to the youth, irrespective of regional, ethnic and denominational alignments. In this regard the NYP will be committed to inculcate and safeguard a value system based on the premise that every person has her/his cultural identity that is deeply rooted in their mother tongue and a freely chosen belief system.

The NYP will not duplicate any programs that are already provided by other agencies for Vocational Training and Skills Development for employment. On the other hand, the MYA is expected to play the role of a catalyst and promoter of activities targeted on youth in the public and private sectors. This task will be carried out through the maintenance of an up-to-date and comprehensive database on youth and undertaking strategic studies of youth needs and aspirations.

The structures and programmes coming under the purview of NYP will specifically fill organizational gaps in relation to the needs and aspirations of the youth. They are personality development, promotion of health, provide opportunities for dialogue and wholesome interaction across age groups, mixing of youth drawn from different ethnic and denominational groups, and healthy competition among youth in areas not covered by sports and performing arts for which there are established venues for display of prowess.

## **2 Introduction**

### Background

Young people aged between 15 – 29 years, clearly comprise a substantial proportion of (nearly 30%) the Sri Lankan population. However, due to the previous policies, a significant number of young women and men have not been afforded the opportunities to develop and make use of their full potentials. They have experienced limited and ethnically biased access to education and training, poor housing conditions, limited employment opportunities, high rates of crime and violence and a general disintegration of social networks and communities.

In addition, there were no specifically focused programmes to address the needs of young men and women.

The NYP represents a major historical milestone in youth development and is an expression of the commitment of the state to the full development of young women and men. Through this policy, an environment will be created wherein all stakeholders in youth development can work towards common goals and a better Sri Lanka for all.

In the past while preparing the NYP, from time to time several policy formulation committees were appointed. Such committees at various stages have deliberated with youth organizations, sectoral groups, provinces, districts as well as young men and women themselves. As a result of such interactions with the key stakeholders in the policy formulation process in the past and the committee was able to address the major needs, challenges and opportunities of young women and men, accommodating provincial and specific sectoral issues.

There have been reports of youth hearings conducted in several districts. These hearings provided opportunities for young women and men to come together and discuss the major issues, challenges and needs they face which should be addressed through a NYP. Over 3500 young men and women participated in 24 youth hearings held in rural and urban settings across the country.

The previously appointed committees also conducted sectoral workshops and focus group discussions, key interviews that were specifically designed to consider the various strategy areas of the NYP. From 1980 – 2000 six workshops and focus group interviews of this type were held along with a number of direct consultations between the Ministry of Youth Affairs (MYA), National Youth Service Council (NYSC) and other relevant departments of the central government.

In addition to the above consultations, the committees received 14 written submissions from groups and individuals across the country, proposing a wide variety of concepts, programmes and opportunities for youth development. Nevertheless, the present committee had perused and studied all available documents related to a range of research and consultations that had been previously undertaken by research organizations

In adopting Sri Lanka's first National Youth Policy after the two decades, the Government of Sri Lanka acknowledges the value and significance of its young people. Furthermore, in formulating this policy, the recommendation made by international organizations such as the UNESCO and the Commonwealth has been considered. Thus this final policy is an attempt considering holistic approach on issues related to youth facilitating multi-sectoral participation.

## **2.2 Purposes and Rationale**

The National Youth Policy is a framework for youth development across the country. It endeavours to ensure that all young women and men are provided with opportunities to reach their full potentials, both as individuals and active participants in society. The policy addresses major concerns and issues critical to young men and women and gives direction to youth programmes and services provided by state and non-state organizations.

Through the NYP, the government declares the importance of the active involvement of young people in national development, demonstrating distinctive and complementary roles of all government ministries, the non-state sector and youth groups in youth development; providing a solid framework with common goals for development and promoting a spirit of co-operation and co-ordination.

All segments of Sri Lankan society are expected to benefit from the National Youth Policy. By placing young women and men in the broader context of reconstruction and development, the NYP highlights the importance of youth development for national development and the creation of a democratic, productive and equitable society.

The NYP shall ensure that district and local level government institutions work in a cooperative and harmonious manner when designing and delivering programmes and services that address youth needs and opportunities. Furthermore, the Policy shall promote understanding amongst young women and men of the processes of governance and provide opportunities for their participation in district and local level programmes, facilitating to play a positive role in development.

The NYP provides the framework and direction for a National Youth Action Plan (NYAP). This plan shall complement the Policy and will describe the role of all agencies engaged in youth development and the programmes, services, facilities and interventions they undertake to achieve the goals and objectives of the Policy.

### **2.3 Definition of Youth**

Although there is no universally accepted definition of youth, it is generally viewed as category of persons that law and policy of public perception can define. Social perception of youth in Sri Lanka is often subjective and more varied than public policy definition. Hence the definition of youth is not absolute, but varies from place to place time to time and even from person to person.

The United Nations General Assembly defined “Youth” as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years inclusive. According to the definition of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, those persons between the ages of 16 and 29 years are classified as youth.

In view of the socio-cultural, economic and other factors specific to Sri Lanka, for the purpose of this policy “Youth” is defined as all young women and men between the ages of 15 and 29 years. It is understood that this is a phase of life where most young people go through changes in their life as they attain maturity from childhood to adulthood. It is recognized however, that there may be some who fall outside this age group but may experience similar challenges as experienced by the group identified as youth in this NYP. Thus, this definition indicates the primary target group without excluding those who may share similar circumstances. Whilst this transition period is characterized by youthful energy, ambition, enthusiasm creativity and promise, it can also be faced with uncertainty, fear and alienation. Young women and men face many challenges and threats, which are often unique to them as a social group.

The NYP recognizes the nature of all young women and men. Where some are at school or training institutions, others are not; where some young persons are employed, others are unemployed. There are young women in rural and urban regions, whilst some young women and men live with their parents, some do not. Many young women and men are themselves parents, including those who are single mothers. Some young people are disabled whilst

others have been the victims of abuse or mistreatment. There are also significant inequalities among youth in terms of class, ethnicity, caste and other forms of social and cultural identity.

#### **2.4 Historical and contemporary issues affecting young women and men**

The NYP recognizes the many socio-economic and politico-economic factors that created opportunities in life and changed the environment and experiences of young men and women today. These past and contemporary circumstances can be discussed only briefly in a document such as this. Yet, it is important to recognize the fact that these factors play an important role in defining the needs, opportunities, aspirations and challenges of young women and men.

Major issues concerning the young men and women in Sri Lanka today can be classified under the following areas:

- a) Demographic profiles of young women and men
- b) Imbalanced education and training
- c) Unemployment and under employment
- d) Health and morbidity
- e) Inadequate opportunities for participation in public decision-making
- f) Crime and violence
- g) Inadequate facilities for recreation and creative work
- h) Alcoholism and drug dependence

It is recognized that these do not represent an exhaustive list of areas. However, both the analysis of existing data, discussions and interviews with young men and women, particularly in youth development organizations, have shown the above to be high priority areas that need immediate attention.

#### **2.5 Youth Profile**

According to the census of 2001, youth falling within the age group 15 – 29 years comprise 23.5% of the total population of 19.5 million. Male youth slightly outnumbered the female youth population. They comprise 11.8 males and 11.7 females.

*Table 01 Age, sex and sector distribution of young people*

Age Group	All sectors					
	Both sexes	%	Male	%	Female	%
15-19	1,646,827	36	834,695	36.4	812,132	35.6
20-24	1,591,126	34.7	798,286	34.8	792,837	34.7
25-29	1,340,562	29.3	660,586	28.8	679,976	29.7
Total	4,578,515	100	2,293,569	100	2,284,946	100

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001

*Table 02 Youth by sex and sector*

Age group	Urban Sector			Rural Sector			Estate Sector		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	235,729	120,467	115,262	1,319,005	668,185	650,820	92,093	46,043	46,050
20-24	274,372	143,696	130,676	1,231,751	611,901	619,850	85,003	42,691	42,312
25-29	223,920	115,973	107,947	1,052,963	512,788	540,175	63,679	31,825	31,854
Total	734,021	380,136	353,885	3,603,719	1,792,874	1,810,845	240,775	120,559	120,216

*Table 03 Youth by sectors*

Sectors	Both sexes with in the age group 15 - 29	%
Urban	734,021	3.8
Rural	3,603,719	18.5
Estate	240,775	1.2
Total	4,578,515	23.5

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001

## Unemployment

Table 04 Rate of youth unemployment by age- (both sexes)

Year	Age Group		
	15 – 19 yrs	20 – 24 yrs	25 – 29 yrs
	%	%	%
* 1995	21.1	38.2	20.1
* 1996	24.0	39.3	18.1
* 1997	22.5	41.5	19.0
* 1998	21.9	40.8	17.6
* 1999	23.9	40.5	17.2
* 2000	19.5	44.4	18.4
* 2001	21.2	45.4	17.8
* 2002	19.8	47.1	16.6
** 2003	19.9	45.8	17.2
*** 2004 1 <sup>st</sup> Q	21.6	42.4	16.5
****2004 2 <sup>nd</sup> Q	21.2	44.6	16.1
****2004 3 <sup>rd</sup> Q	16.2	52.5	17.5
****2004 4 <sup>th</sup> Q	19.2	49.5	14.1

\* Excluding Northern and Eastern Provinces

\*\* Including Eastern Province but excluding Northern Province

\*\*\* Excluding Vavunia, Mulathivu, Kilinochchi districts

\*\*\*\* All the districts are included

Source: Employment Trends and Unemployment in Sri Lanka –  
Trends, Issues and Options,  
Department of Census and Statistics

## Labour force

Table 05 Labour force participation rate by age and sex

Age group	2002	2003 *	2004 1 <sup>st</sup> Qr	2004 2 <sup>nd</sup> Qr	2004 3 <sup>rd</sup> Qr
15– 19 Male	30.1	25.0	28.7	30.4	27.5
Female	19.0	22.0	20.5	18.4	18.6
20 – 24 Male	83.9	80.0	83.0	83.8	83.7
Female	51.4	48.0	47.5	45.3	48.1
25 – 29 Male	94.7	97.0	96.0	94.2	95.0
Female	48.2	46.0	38.3	41.1	44.6

\* Included Eastern Province

Source: Bulletin of Labour Force Statistics,  
Department of Census and Statistics

## Youth Health

Table 06 Age and sex distribution of HIV positive cases reported during, 1987 - 2002

Sex	Age group		
	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29
Male	0	12	35
Female	0	14	22

Source: STD/AIDS Control Programme, Public Health Services, Annual Health Bulletin, 2002

## **Crime and violence**

One of the most significant challenges facing today is the increase of crime and violence committed by young men and women. Young people are becoming more involved in crime and violence issues both as perpetrators and as victims. There are two major forms of crime and violence apparent in SL. These are, violence resulting from political influences and that resulting from social or structural violence. The emergence of gangs in cities as a result of marginalisation of youth has added a new sub-culture and dimension to youth violence and crime at present. Other forms of violence that have been found to increase are rape, sexual abuse, vandalism and domestic violence.

### **2.6 Background to the development of youth services**

In the year 1965 an Israel Youth Work Specialist Mr. Arie Levy was requested to survey the youth needs of Ceylon and to propose a programme for Youth Services. He was in Ceylon in October and November 1965. While he was in Ceylon he was asked to look into a proposal outline for the establishment of a National Youth Organization. He submitted his report on youth in Ceylon in two parts. i.e. Part 1 - Analysis of Youth Needs in Ceylon, Part II – The National Youth Organization. – to the Government of Ceylon. This report was published by the Government as Sessional Paper II – 1967 in February 1967.

The National Youth Service Council (NYSC) was established under the Voluntary National Youth Service Act No. 11 of 1967, as amended by the Voluntary National Youth Service (Amendment) Act No. 52 of 1968, based on the report made by Mr. Arie Levy. The NYSC was established to formulate schemes of voluntary national service for youth and to carry out such schemes either by itself or through approved institutions and in general :

- (a) to foster among persons in Ceylon in general and among the youth of Ceylon in particular, a spirit of national consciousness, a sense of discipline, an awareness of social and economic problems and a sense of the dignity of labour;
- (b) to enlist the continuous and active participation of the youth of Ceylon without regard to class or race or religion, in national development schemes by means of all forms of voluntary service;

- (c) to organize and implement on a voluntary basis national service projects of every description and, in particular, projects directed towards social welfare, social rehabilitation and the economic development of Ceylon;
- (d) to assist bodies of persons in carrying out national programmes of public utility, social welfare social rehabilitation and economic development;
- (e) to provide a constant employment opportunity for youth by constructively investing Government funds on a long-term policy basis aimed to strengthen the economic fabric of the State;
- (f) to conduct vocational training of highly efficient and well disciplined laymen and semi-skilled workers for industry, agriculture and other services; and
- (g) to promote goodwill and mutual understanding between Ceylon and other countries by organizing the exchange of youths who volunteer to assist in projects of national service.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Employment was established on 07<sup>th</sup> September 1978, for the first time after the independence as a Cabinet Ministry. The NYSC come under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Employment since then. Now it is under the purview of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs.

In November 1979 the Voluntary National Youth Service Act No. 11 of 1967 was repealed by the National Youth Services Act No. 69 of 1979. The objectives of the National Youth Services Council (NYSC) were broadened and the post of Director General of Youth Services (who will be the Chairman of the NYSC) was introduced. Furthermore, the number of Council members was increased to 24.

When formulating and implementing schemes by the National Youth Services Council as mentioned in para 2 above, priority had been changed time to time. At the inception youth were engaged in National Service Schemes ie. Renovating of tanks, minor irrigation works, reconstruction of village roads, etc. In early 1970's priority had been given to engaging youth in agriculture. A 2000 acre youth farm was established in Angunakolapelessa in Hanbantota District as well as youth farms in Kurunegala and Badulla Districts. National Youth Awards scheme was started in 1976 to motivate youth in literature, drama, aesthetic activities such as dancing, music etc. by organizing district level and national level competitions. Youth exchange programmes were launched during this period originally with

the Canada World Youth Organization and expanded it to other countries ie. United Kingdom, Japan, India, Maldives etc.

Again in 1977 National Services Programmes were reintroduced and expanded throughout the country. District Offices of the National Youth Services Council were established and cadre was increased to serve the youth at grassroots level. An aesthetic study centre was established at Bellwood in Kandy district to provide training to youth in dancing and music. Vocational training centres were established in almost every district in the country to train youth in various vocational skills. Youth clubs were established at village level and Sri Lanka Youth Clubs Federation was established at National Level with the representatives from District Youth Clubs.

National Youth Centre at Maharagama was constructed with the assistance of the Japanese Government to provide better recreational, sports and meeting facilities to youth of the country.

Youth Cooperatives were established at District level and the National Youth Services Corporative comprising elected members from the District Youth Cooperatives was established as the apex body. These cooperatives extend credit facilities to members to start small businesses.

## **2.7 The policy context**

The NYP recognizes the broader policy context in which it is to be formulated and implemented. This context is largely shaped by broader national policy initiatives and is, also reflective of international initiatives in the field. In particular, the following provide wider background to the present endeavour.

### **National Youth Commission Report (1990)**

In addition to setting the mandate for the National Youth Commission and its scope of work, report defines youth as those of 15 – 30 years.

## **The United Nations Charter**

Sri Lanka as a member of the United Nations has agreed to work towards achievement of the Charter of the United Nations. The principles of the Charter include:

- a) Attainment by young women and men “of an educational level commensurate with their aspirations”;
- b) Access to employment opportunities suitable to their abilities;
- c) Food and nutrition adequate for full participation in the life of society
- d) A physical and social environment that promotes good health and protection from disease and free from all types of violence but guarantees human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion or any other forms of discrimination
- e) Participation in decision making processes and places and facilities for cultural recreational and sports activities to improve the living standards of young people in both rural and urban areas.

## **United Nations World Programme of Action for Youth**

The United Nation World Programme of action for Youth is aimed at ensuring well-being of young women and men and their full and active participation in the society in which they live (See Annexure 3).

## **Commonwealth Youth Charter (CYC)**

The NYP recognizes the contribution made by Commonwealth in the support of national youth policies in its member countries and its efforts towards creating societies where young women and men are empowered to develop their creativity, skills and potential as productive and dynamic members of the respective societies. It further encourages and provides opportunities for and the full participation of young women and men at every level of decision-making and development, both individually and collectively. Moreover, integration, sustainability, human rights, empowerment and gender inclusive development are recognized as principles and values that have been recommended in the CYC.

### **3.0 PRINCIPLES AND VALUES**

The NYP is based on a series of essential principles and values, which have influenced its design and direction. These include the values enshrined in the Constitution of Sri Lanka as a cornerstone of NYP.

**a) Youth Participation**

It promotes involvement of young women and men in the national work plan, which is based on varied issues. Youth should also be given responsibilities whenever possible, to implement the action plan.

**b) Gender Sensitivity**

This policy promotes provision of equal opportunities to young women and men. Gender equity should be maintained in assigning responsibilities to youth.

**c) Access to Services**

National resources should be identified and made available for the benefits of the youth. Such resources should be easily accessible to the youth.

**d) Human Rights**

Upholding human rights being identified by the world community as rights that every one is heir to on being merely a human being. Youth should be made aware to work towards promoting this further. All activities related to youth should conform to United Nations charter on human rights.

**e) Participation in Governance**

Youth should be made a partner in objective evaluations of issues of the state and expressing national opinion.

**f) Culture of Peace**

Promote to inculcate necessary values to maintain the system. Provide opportunities to interact amongst diverse personalities to promote co-existence.

**g) National Harmony**

Create suitable environment that would promote harmonious living in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society. Encourage youth programmes to facilitate and promote values and understanding of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic environment.

**h) Stable and Happy family unit**

It is the desire of young people in general, not only to contribute to the well – being of their family or orientation but also to eventually establish their own independent family unit. All necessary support needs to be extended to them to live up to such expectations.

#### **4.0 Vision**

National Youth Policy of Sri Lanka envision, a society in which young people, irrespective of their gender, sex, class, ethnicity, caste or any other distinctions have equal access to resources and opportunities in order to develop their full potential in material, social and psychological terms, to become fully functioning adults who exercise their minds and bodies to stimulate and sustain health and well-being. The society envisioned is also one that enables youth to derive inspiration from humanistic and equalitarian values and ideas, affords time and opportunities for creative thinking and establishes relationships among themselves and with adults based on mutual respect, cooperation and dialogue.

#### **5.0 Policy Goals and Objectives**

The National Youth Policy will

- a) Facilitate instilling in all youth an awareness of, respect for the principles and values envisioned in the constitution and a sense of broader national identity**
- b) Develop and establish effective, coordinated and holistic response to problems facing young women and men.**

- c) **Enable young men and women to initiate actions that promote their own development and welfare and that of their communities and wider society.**
- d) **Create an enabling environment and communities that are supportive of young men and women, presenting positive role models whilst promoting social justice and national harmony.**
- e) **Afford youth with opportunities to get acquainted with values and standards enshrined in international covenants, charters and protocols, which enabling them to understand their own position in the world in a comparative perspective**

In order to achieve goals of the National Youth Policy, specific objectives need to be pursued as given below

**a) Goal: Facilitate instilling in all youth an awareness of, respect for the principles and values enshrined in the constitution and a sense of broader national identity**

Objectives:

- a.1 To promote awareness of the provisions of the constitution amongst young women and men, along with a knowledge of their rights, responsibilities and accountabilities.
- a.2 To promote awareness and understanding of the historical and cultural heritage of Sri Lanka in all its diversity and complexity.
- a.3 To encourage young men and women to promote national unity by upholding the principles of democracy, gender equality and non-communal attitudes, tolerance and appreciation of diverse opinions.
- a.4 To encourage and promote understanding and inter-cultural communication
- a.5 To promote at least bi-lingualism among young people from an early age to enable them to have access to opportunities and allow them to participate in nation building activities

**b) Goal: Promote participation and recognise contribution of youth in national development and public welfare.**

Objectives:

- b.1 To involve young women and men at the planning, decision making and implementation levels of all youth development programmes
- b.2 To assist young men and women in attaining knowledge, skills and experiences required for participating effectively in national development and public affairs.
- b.3 To mobilize and support young women and men in community, district and national development efforts through programmes that promote leadership, practical skills and opportunities for participation
- b.4 To promote understanding and encourage good practices of reproductive health
- b.5 To address specific social, economic and health problems faced by young people that hinder socio-economic advancement.
- b.6 To address issues related to social, physical and mental stress and trauma
- b.7 To promote dignity of labour as an integral aspect of youth culture and consciousness

**c) Goal: Develop and establish effective, coordinated and holistic response to problems facing young women and men.**

Objectives:

- c.1 To identify and fill the present gaps in the body of knowledge concerning youth through the design of a comprehensive, gender disaggregated strategy for research dealing with the needs and challenges faced by youth
- c.2 To enhance the capacity of youth development organisations and any other institutions, departments involved with youth affairs to design, implement, manage and monitor youth oriented programmes and services.
- c.3 To enhance and develop professional skills, standards, competencies and positive attitudes among youth workers.

- c.4 To strengthen mechanisms for collaboration and cooperation amongst relevant governmental, non-state and community stakeholders.
- c.5 To allocate adequate resources directed towards youth development programmes while ensuring financial accountability and sustainability.
- c.6 To encourage, promote, facilitate and recognise the participation of youth in national disaster and crisis situations
- c.7 To promote the harmonisation of other policies, programmes, research and strategies oriented towards youth
- c.8 To create a reliable and efficient network of information through resources that youth in all parts of the country can have easy access to, so that information beneficial to them or to agencies serving them can be made available.

**d) Goal: Enable young men and women to initiate actions, which promote their own development and welfare, and that of their communities and broader society.**

Objectives:

- d.1 To design and implement programmes and services which promote opportunities for voluntarism amongst young women and men.
- d.2 To foster creativity and innovation amongst young men and women which promotes initiatives and independence instead of dependency and entitlement
- d.3 To facilitate access to resources for development projects and activities by youth development organisations.
- d.4 To promote consultation, communication and exchange of ideas between cross-generations. I.e. in schools, universities, local councils, religious congregations
- d.5 To mobilize youth of all ages to be weaned away from the culture of violence to a culture of peace, dialogue and responsible citizenry through intensive campaigns: value education programme and life skills training.

**e) Goal: Create an enabling environment and communities, which are supportive of young men and women, presenting positive role models whilst promoting social justice and national harmony**

Objectives:

- e.1 To promote and safeguard the rights of young men and women and the responsibilities of the broader communities towards its young people.
- e.2 To promote the principles of citizenship, participation and well being amongst young men and women.
- e.3 To ensure that young people have access to adequate and appropriate programmes and services regardless of their ethnicity, caste, gender, level of disability, geographic location, social, religious and economic circumstances

## **6.0 RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN**

### **6.1 Rights of Youth**

This policy seeks to guarantee the rights of youths as embodied in the constitution of Sri Lanka and affirming values of human dignity, equality and freedom.

Young women and men benefit from these rights along with citizens of all ages. The policy recognizes the importance of youth and the rights of all young men and women to enjoy their youthfulness, irrespective of their socio-economic status, ethnicity and gender. Thus, all young people shall have the right to:

- a) participate in decision making processes
- b) access appropriate information
- c) freedom to form lawful association of their own
- d) protect from harmful drugs, fire arms and all forms of discrimination and abuse (Sexual abuse, Trafficking harassment and Child labour)
- e) gainful employment either in the public or the private sector on completion of education

- g) recognize and acknowledge the youth's contribution to society in general and national development, public welfare in particular.
- h) promote and defend democracy through active participation in the democratic process at all levels.

Whilst enjoying their rights, young men and women need to be mindful of the following responsibilities:

## **6.2 Responsibilities of Youth**

- a) Promote gender equality and respect for the rights and dignity of the disabled, the elders, religious functions, children, girl Childs and women.
- b) Discourage acts of violence, crime, exploitation and oppression of vulnerable groups.
- c) Promote and defend democracy through active participation in democratic process at all levels.
- d) Respect and protect public property.
- e) Promote peace, human security and development.  
(socio-economic and cultural)
- f) Refrain from all forms of violence and substance abuse.
- g) Promote the policy of national reconciliation and ethnic harmony.
- h) Demonstrate accountability
- i) Understand, accept and respect each other's culture

## **6.3 Responsibilities of Parents and Adults**

The freedom and opportunities provided to all citizens of this country to day allow families and parents to re-establish, nurturing and safe environment for their families. Within this context, the rights and opportunities of the broader community combine with important responsibilities towards young women and men, which must be recognized and fulfilled, by all parents and adults. This includes the responsibilities:

- a) to ensure psychological, emotional and physical well-being of young men and women
- b) to act as positive role models

- c) to encourage participation by young women and men in community life and development
- d) to allow young women and men to develop responsibility for themselves
- e) to assist young people in reaching their goals and full potentials
- f) to promote the development and sustenance of family values and mutual understanding among generations
- g) to be sensitive to needs and difficulties of youth
- f) to recognize the contribution (talents, resources, ideas) of youth today, not just in the future.
- g) to encourage youth to express their views in community and international contexts.

#### **6.4 Responsibilities of the State**

It is the responsibility of the state

- a) to provide an enabling environment to facilitate the achievement of the full potentials of youth.
- b) to design, implement, monitor and evaluate all youth related activities / all stakeholders –partners
- c) to ensure that the country’s youth enjoy their constitutional and social right irrespective of their class, ethnicity, gender, caste, religion or any other background.

#### **7.0 PRIORITY TARGET GROUPS**

A detailed analysis of specific target groups led to the identification of the following priority target groups. They can be classified as follows:

##### **7.1 High risk group**

- a) Youngsters on the street
- b) Youth neglected by their parents/relatives
- c) Substance abusers

- d) Young domestic workers
- e) Youth in slums, shanties and estates
- f) Youth in highly commercialized areas

**7.2 Youth exposed to criminal environment and socially stigmatized**

- a) Child soldiers
- b) Military deserters
- c) Youth offenders including prisoners and ex-convicts
- d) Young illegal migrants
- e) Youth in sex trade
- f) Youth used for labour and trafficking

**7.3 Traumatized and stressed**

- a) Youth who have lost parents/orphans
- b) Internally displaced and refugee youth
- c) Physically, mentally and emotionally abused youth

**7.4 Victims of circumstances**

- a) Youth who are forced to be parents / parentified
- b) Young widows
- c) Young people with various disabilities

**7.5 Isolated and marginalized**

- a) Indigenous youth
- b) Youth in the rural and informal sectors
- c) Youth who are in under - class and low caste positions

**7.6 Youth who need prompt attention**

- a) Out of school
- b) Unemployed youth
- c) Unemployed after a period of employment

## **8.0 KEY STRATEGIC AREAS**

The NYP recognises the importance of formulating effective strategies to address the needs, challenges and opportunities facing young men and women. The key strategic areas are as follows;

- a) Education and training
- b) Health
- c) Welfare and community development
- d) Economic participation
- e) Safety, security and justice
- f) Sports and recreation
- g) Environment and tourism and
- h) Arts and culture
- i) Science and Technology

### **8.1 Education and Training**

Education and training is a major priority in the development of young men and women, and it is through education and training that young women and men can be better prepared to face the future challenges of life. The personal development of individual young person, along with the development of local communities and the country as a whole is inextricably linked to the provision of quality, relevant and well-managed education and training.

The NYP recognises that the transformation of the education system, at all levels, requires change in many different fields. Not least of these is that of governance. Students and youth organisations should be provided with opportunities for direct participation in governing bodies. This includes school governing bodies as well as other organisations and fora, which have legal powers for the governance of higher education.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

When addressing the concerns of youth in the education and training sector it is important to avoid a narrow approach which can marginalize youth development issues. The education and training of young women and men must be firmly positioned as a youth development

strategy. The main areas for youth development in the education and training sector which require attention are:

- a) Access to education and training institutions and programmes so that the principle of equal access is ensured, especially through the design and administration of appropriate admission criteria.
- b) Issues associated with students' debt and the need for a new means of financing for basic and further education
- c) Redressing the imbalance and inequities of the past, including the need to address institutional and procedural racism

When addressing the issues of education and training from a youth development perspective, the following objectives for action have been identified:

- a) To ensure the practical social and environmental needs of young people in education and training systems are addressed (including architectural design and structures which affect young people with disabilities) so they are able to make full use of the reforms and transformations.
- b) To respond with urgency and determination to the issues faced by out-of-school youth so as to ensure the group of young men and women are given suitable new opportunities to engage in education and training, and
- c) To enhance and develop skills, standards and behaviours amongst those who design, implement, manage and monitor youth development programmes and those who work directly with young men and women

#### TARGET GROUPS

One of the most critical groups of young people in need in the sector is those who are considered “ out-of-school ”, young men and women who are no longer in the education system, who are without employment, or any significant school qualification. These young women and men are in grave danger of being permanently unemployed or of participating in illegal or risky activities as a result of their alienation from the society. Other target groups of particular concern are:

- a) Young men and women who are disabled

- b) Young people in the rural sector
- c) Young women and
- d) Young men and women who are in correctional facilities

Young women and men who are disabled require access to mainstream education along with all other young people. The provision of appropriate access and a supportive environment is essential to this group.

In addition to the specific needs of young women and men in education and training, is the need for human resource development within the youth work sector. Sri Lanka has very few opportunities for workers with young men and women to develop and improve their skills. Thus, the education and training of youth workers are an important issue in youth development.

Finally, the NYP recognises that a sizeable number of young men and women suffer from special needs in the education and training fields which, if not addressed, can severely limit their capacity to benefit from these services. These include, for example, young people with learning difficulties.

## STRATEGIES

### **8.1.1 Student Financing**

The major areas to be addressed when considering the issue of student financing are the need to ensure that a lack of personal finance does not prevent a young person from enrolling in higher education and finding a way to deal with growing student debt. Whilst, addressing these issues, it is important to recognise that further and higher education should accommodate:

- a) Strengthening of the financial programmes for Further and Higher education to ensure access to education for all, incorporating a revolving system of repayments into a national educational finance aid scheme.
- b) Student financial aid be extended to distant education learners
- c) Some form of graduate tax be introduced and possibly linked to National Youth Service (see strategy 8.1.2) and

- d) An investigation should be conducted into qualifying and offsetting student debt through internships and community work

The development of education will undertake the above-mentioned action, in close consultation with the National Youth Commission (to be set up in this policy). Decisions on these matters will involve consultation with youth and student organisations, and other relevant stakeholders.

The NYP recognises the establishment of a National Youth Services Programme in the country and sets a clear direction and rationale for design and implementation of the national youth service.

National Youth Service Programme amalgamates the following four themes:

- a) Development – where the skills and capacities of young women and men can be employed on projects and activities, which promote development.
- b) Skills training - an opportunity for young people to gain new experiences and develop new skills which will benefit them later in life
- c) National unity – where young men and women from all walks of life are given the opportunity to work together with a spirit of reconciliation and national unity
- d) Service – where young people and the country as a whole benefit through volunteering their services for the benefit of the broader community.

National Youth Service Programme (NYSP) accommodates the needs, interests and opportunities of three target groups.

#### (1) OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE

The NYSP will provide new life, work and educational opportunities to those young men and women who are no longer at school and who are unemployed. These people will be re-integrated into society through a structured skills and work experience programme, which is nationally accredited and youth-focused. It is envisaged that the enrolment of this group of young people on the NYSP will be on a voluntary basis, possibly combining incentives.

## (2) GRADUATES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The term “community service” as defined within the framework of the NYSP as it applies to those in higher education. It is a programme which is “linked to higher education that involving participants in activities designed to deliver social benefits to a particular community in ways that teach the participants to work jointly towards achieving the common goal”. The programme targeting graduates likely to use a combination of compulsory activities and incentives.

## (3) DE-MOBILISED YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG RETURNEES

The NYP recognises the special needs and circumstances of young people who have returned from exile and those who have been de-mobilised. The NYSP shall assist these people to be re-integrated into society through accredited and youth focused projects structured to inculcate the skills and work experience.

The creation of an effective NYSP involves a range of different line ministries, departments, including the Ministry of Education, Labour, Defence and Public Affairs. It will also involve provincial administration and local government, the private sector, NGOs, trade unions, professional bodies, along with the range of youth development organisations and other role players.

The NYSP will operate along the following principles;

- a) inclusive of all young people regardless of race, sex, or geographical locations
- b) instil a common sense of nationhood
- c) promote reconstruction and development
- d) link community service and internships to career-oriented studies
- e) be linked to national skills development and economic growth strategy
- f) orient to public and private sector, as well as civil society resources
- g) give special emphasis to rural development projects
- h) be linked financial support for education
- i) combine compulsory and incentive measures to encourage young people into the programme

The National Youth Commission will prepare a detailed Green Paper on a National Youth Service Programme. This paper, which will be developed in close consultation with key stakeholders, such as those identified above, will address the following areas;

- a) purpose and structure of the programme
- b) issues associated with curriculum and connection with the National Qualification Framework
- c) review of international experience
- d) target groups (e.g. out-of-school young people, young graduates)
- e) types of service opportunities provided (community development, environment protection, heritage restoration)
- f) types of project locations (e.g. rural projects) financing options, which will include the mobilisation of private sector finance
- g) organisational and management arrangements and
- h) proposed timeframe, possible pilot projects and sustainability

This detailed concept paper will lay the foundation and direction for the establishment of this programme.

### **8.1.2 Professionalising Youth Work**

The education and training of young people who work with young women and men shall be improved through the creation of an accredited and specialised youth work training programme. This programme should be offered on a part-time offer full-time basis and should include education and training for students in rural and remote areas.

The National Youth Commission NYC (recommended to be set up in this policy) will work with the National Youth Services Council (NYSC), the Ministry of Education and academic organisations to identify education and training needs amongst youth workers, review international training programmes and develop a proposal for a professional youth work training programme identified as National Youth Services Programme. This process should bring about a clear conceptualisation of a model for youth worker training. This model should incorporate structured education and training curricular within the National Qualification Framework (NQF), formal accreditation of practical youth work and community

development skills, recognition of prior learning and a clear understanding of the practical and theoretical skills required for effective youth work in Sri Lanka.

### **8.1.3 Youth representation**

In view of the direct relationship between education and training and the enormous challenges contained within the transformation of this sector, it is essential that youth representation on the decision making structure is assured. Thus, the Ministry of Youth Affairs has to negotiate with the, Ministry of Education along with the other relevant ministries, for such representation, which will be provided through the National Youth Commission.

## **8.2 Health**

Young women and men are like to face variety of problems concerning their health. The youth should be properly informed on issues related to good health and the maintenance of physical and mental well-being. The NYP recognises the need for policies and programmes, which deal specifically with youth health.

Youth health is multi-layered and inter-connected sector. The health of a young person can be affected by her or his access to unclean water, extreme and polluted environmental conditions, the provision of inadequate sanitation, hazards faced at the work places, and the deprivation of basic health education and lack of personal hygiene. Moreover, the reason a young person engages in activities that are detrimental to health, such as through alcohol or drug abuse, may themselves be subjected to poor to personal well-being and a sense of insecurity. Similarly, the impact of violence and significant social change can directly threaten the health of young person, whilst the connection between infant and child health and the health of a young person is also recognised. The ineffective immunisation and lack of facilities for early intervention for communicable and non-communicable diseases can all have repercussions on the health of an individual in later life.

The issue of access to health service is a major task for young people, especially those who are disabled and living in remote areas. When addressing the issue of youth health, it has been particularly important to identify the influence of gender. Patriarchal attitudes, structures and procedure often undermine women, creating power relationship within which young women are often found vulnerable: in many occasions young women have less power

over their own bodies than men, and are often required to be more accountable for their actions than young men (e.g. teenage pregnancies). Violence against women affects all women and young women in particular. Thus, youth health strategies require a special emphasis on the threats to young women.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

The major concerns for the health and well –being of young women and men can be addressed through the single primary objective; namely, To develop an action plan for the promotion and maintenance of youth health which address common threats to the health of young men and women, and provide easy access to health services.

#### TARGET GROUPS

The health and well – being of young women and men can be threatened by a variety of circumstances. Not all young people share these circumstances and therefore, the needs of specific groups must be addressed. These include;

- a) young pregnant women who require a termination of their pregnancy
- b) young women and young single mothers
- c) young men and women engaged in alcohol and substance abuse
- d) young people in sex trade
- e) young people working and living on the streets
- f) young women and men with a disability and
- g) young men and women with HIV/AIDS
- h) young people who are mentally vulnerable and needs moral support for strengthen their self- recognition

## STRATEGIES

The objectives shall be addressed by the following strategies;

### **8.2.1 National Youth Health Action Plan (NYHAP)**

The current effort of the Ministry of Health to formulate a National Youth Health Action Plan is acknowledged and applauded by the National Youth Policy. It is essential that the following issues are directly addressed within the national Youth Health Action Plan;

- a) health promotion strategies appropriate to young men and women which emphasize healthy lifestyle habits and behaviours which promote the concept of total wellness
- b) access to health and rehabilitation services by young women and men, and the provision of “youth friendly” health services and programmes
- c) issues affecting the lives of young single mothers and strategies which can be implemented to help these vulnerable young women maintain their health whilst providing a healthy and safe environment to their children
- d) issues affecting the mental health of young men and women, including a comprehensive understanding of mental health and awareness of the factors which influence mental well – being
- e) the identification of well-defined, gender-dis-aggregated and quantifiable data and research on a wide range of youth health matters, in particular on;
  - youth suicide
  - alcohol and substance abuse by young men and women
  - young sex workers
  - traumatised young people
  - terminally ill young people
  - young people living and working on the streets
  - young men and women with a disability
  - youth subjected to stressful situations
  - young men and women with HIV/AIDS
  - sexual and reproductive health, and
  - the health young women and men

- f) issues associated with youth suicide and high risk activities of young men and women, such as alcohol and substance abuse, violence and “unsafe” sexual behaviour
- g) issues of customary practices (e.g. circumcision of males and females) and the impact or danger to the health of young people in consultation with the communities concerned
- h) the establishment of community support structures for young men and women who require support in dealing with health, including preventative health issues(e.g. through peer support, information and advice provided to alcohol and drug abusers, lonely and depressed young people, etc). and
- i) issues associated with young sex workers

The preparation of this plan, which should be developed in consultation with all relevant government ministries, should involve close liaison with the National Youth Commission and the National Youth Services Council.

### **8.2.2 Young people and HIV and AIDS**

The NYP recognises the importance of the National AIDS Plan as a national framework for containing the spread of HIV and AIDS and treating those who are HIV positive. The high-risk incidence of HIV amongst young women and men, and the vulnerability of this group future infection is an extremely serious concern. It is imperative, therefore, that the issues facing young women and men in this field are directly and comprehensively addressed.

A National Youth HIV and AIDS strategy will be encouraged to be developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the National Youth Commission, National Youth Services Council and other relevant youth and health non- state organisations. This strategy shall address:

- a) Education and awareness raising amongst young men and women in regards to HIV transmission and safe sex
- b) Education and awareness raising regarding safe sex practices and the role of responsible sexuality in the lives of young people

- c) Access to HIV testing and counselling services
- d) The roles and promotion of positive living role models
- e) Community support measures for young HIV positive and AIDS patients
- f) Training for health workers
- g) Issues facing young HIV positive and AIDS patients in the workplace and in the community

The development of this strategy will involve close participation by young men and women who are HIV/AIDS

### **8.2.3 Teenage pregnancy and school attendance**

Teenage pregnancy has limited the access for many young women those who have had education. The expulsion or exclusion of young women from school as a result of pregnancy is an unfair and unjust practice. Not only are such practices sexually discriminatory, they condemn many young women to a life of ignorance and perpetuate the cycle of disadvantage

Young women who become pregnant whilst still at school require support assistance to deal with the responsibilities of motherhood and further their studies. Young fathers, on the other hand, need to be held responsible for their roles and well – being for their partner and off – spring. Such approaches must recognise the complexities of these relationships whilst endeavouring to promote the empowerment, responsibility and education of the young people involved

### **8.2.4 Youth health and the law**

There is a wide range of laws in respect of youth health which need to be carefully reviewed and assessed. These include the ages at which a young woman or man can consent to sexual intercourse, purchase alcohol and tobacco, enter into marriage and enter into a contract of employment. Consultations with many youth health and youth development agencies have identified the need for review and reform in many of these areas. To this end, the National Youth Commission shall liaise with the Law review Team. The terms of reference of this Team is described in **Chapter 9**.

### **8.3 Welfare and community development**

The notion that it takes a whole village to raise a child is based on a spirit of humanity encompassing a principle of people caring for each other's well – being within an attitude of mutual support. The impact of urban migration, industrialisation and socialisation along with the breakdown of family life has dramatically affected village and community life. As a result, many communities contain young men and women who have been abandoned, abused, neglected or threatened. Young people at “risk” are often alienated from community support structures and their families. Thus, the National Youth Policy encourages the development and maintenance of supportive communities, which nurture the growth of its young people.

The welfare of a young person is, therefore, a community responsibility. Whilst government has its role to play, the whole community must find ways to nurture the development of young women and men and to protect vulnerable and most at risk.

#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

The National Youth Policy promotes the development of local communities, which provide practical support measures for the development of young people, and protects and nurtures vulnerable and disadvantaged young women and men. Self-help and community-owned and managed initiatives are specifically encouraged.

The National Youth Policy addresses the following two objectives which are of primary concern when considering the welfare of young men and women and the communities in which they live, work and study:

- a) to encourage the development of community-based youth development programmes and services, and
- b) to promote the design and implementation of services, facilities, encourage and enhance the use of existing facilities which support young women and men who at risk, or in danger of coming into risk.

## TARGET GROUP

Following target group identifies as those who deserve and needs particular attention.

- a) young men and women in gangs
- b) young returnees
- c) pregnant and teenage mothers and women in dysfunction families
- d) young men and women with disabilities,
- e) young offenders, victims of crime and violence
- f) youth in sex trade
- g) young HIV/AIDS patients
- h) youth involved in substance abuse

The NYP recognises the importance of these young people at risk and the need for programme and services, which are designed to assist these groups.

## STRATEGIES

In order to address these objectives the following strategic framework will be utilized:

- a) promote and support inter-ministerial (at central, provincial and local levels), inter-sectoral collaboration and networking between ministries, the National Youth Commission, non-government organisations and community-based organisations
- b) integrate programmes for young people with special needs with other comprehensive and generic services
- c) facilitate participation and involvement of young men and women in youth service
- d) design and develop innovative programmes which are youth-driven and are inclusive of young people with disabilities

The following strategies are specifically proposed:

### **8.3.1 Youth information access**

Access to information is a key component in addressing the needs of young women and men and their communities. Youth information service should be regionally based and would principally achieve access for young people to information, referrals, advice and assistance on a wide range of issues concerning young people.

A youth –specific information service shall be developed to provide young women and men with access to a wide range of information, support and resource service which can address their particular needs, concerns, problems or opportunities. This information service will be based on a free communication service, where young people in need of assistance can communicate from anywhere in the country.

The youth information service shall offer information on a wide range of issues including crisis helps, health services, career guidance, employment support programmes, unemployment support services, drug and alcohol advices, and emergency services and youth rights.

The development of information services will be preceded by a comprehensive conceptual and feasibility study. This will describe the roles and operational functions of the service along with the management and funding considerations. It is anticipated that private sector sponsorship will be used to supplement government funds in the establishment and operation of the service. The National Youth Commission will take prime responsibility for this task.

### **8.3.2 Community youth facilities**

Many local communities across the country have either meagre or inadequate facilities for youth development programmes; services and activities can be located. Whilst the NYP recognises the danger of promoting new facilities, which can be expensive to build, and could distract limited funds away from support services being provided directly to young women and men, the need for specialised youth facilities in some communities is paramount. In many cases new buildings will not be necessary, since existing ones can be modified and refurbished.

The concept of multi-purpose youth centre has been broadly accepted as an effective means of drawing together youth-specific services in a local community setting. A multi-purpose centre can accommodate a range of youth related activities in a “youth friendly” and accessible location. It is anticipated that these centres would be community and youth owned and managed. They may draw on financial and technical assistance from a range of sources, depending of the activities and programmes undertaken. The role of the local youth development organisations and local government, and the potential for partnerships between these bodies, is particularly important.

The Ministry of Social Welfare and Womens Affairs shall work with the National Youth Commission to develop the concept of multi-purpose youth centre and to establish a pilot programme. In all cases, a multi-purpose youth centre, or any other youth facility, shall be based on identified needs whilst maximizing the use of existing resources (buildings, personnel, agencies) wherever possible. It is anticipated that the Ministry of Social Welfare and Women’s Affairs shall undertake administering a support programme for the development and management of multi-purpose youth centres.

### **8.3.3 Promotion of community initiatives**

Community initiatives which are driven by young women and men and enhance their development is a fundamental development strategy. Community initiatives can be used to focus on youth health issues, employment and unemployment concerns as well as general support and counselling services. They can also promote youth leadership training and peer support services. The creation of young womens’ forum is also a particularly important form of community initiative, which should be encouraged. However, to achieve these types of initiatives, attention must be paid to building the capacity of local communities and civil society- based organisations.

The promotion of community initiatives will involve a dual programme of support. It will firstly require the Ministry of Social Welfare and Women’s Wffairs, in association with the National Youth Commission, to prepare a programme of support, which promotes self-help and community youth development initiatives. This programme will contain information on a wide range of themes including:

- a) community and youth development process
- b) ways to identify community and youth needs
- c) how to plan manage community initiatives
- d) support and training to relevant service providers and care-givers, and
- e) resource agencies. (where to go for helps)

The National Youth Commission shall undertake the second area of promotion, in association with the ministry of social welfare and women's affairs and the National Youth Council. This will involve the provision of information and training to help youth workers and community development practitioners to become better able to plan, implement and manage community youth development initiatives.

#### **8.4 Economic Participation**

The term "economic participation" is used in reference to strategies, which can address the issues of young women and men's involvement in employment and enterprise. As described in Chapter 2 (2.5), young people experience of high levels of unemployment. When reviewing the issues facing young people and employment, it has to be recognised that the country economy and its labour market is required to compete in an international market. Currently, productivity and competitiveness is rather low and measures to increase youth participation in the economy should reflect a broader orientation for increased productivity and global competitiveness.

#### **YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

There is a close and significant connection between a young person's employment prospects and education. Ministry of Education and education institutes need to recognise their responsibilities and roles in providing career counselling and employment guidance to young people. This should be based on sound labour market information dealing with supply and demand process, as well as employment trends. To achieve this, collaboration between organised labour market, business sector and other stakeholders is required.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Young men and women need to be equipped with a wide range of vocational and life skills, if they are to find and maintain employment. Specific appropriate training should be provided to address the multiple needs required by young men and women to obtain a job opportunity.

In addressing the critical concerns for young women and men in the employment sector, the following objectives have been set:

- a) To ensure that students and job-seekers are provided with relevant, update information regarding the labour market, potential job opportunities and pathways for employment, and
- b) To establish a comprehensive training and employment support strategy, which assist young women and men in obtaining and retaining employment.

## STRATEGIES

The National Youth Policy proposes three specific areas of action to enhance young people's participation in the labour market. When implementing these strategies the need for accessibility by young men and women with disabilities will be addressed.

### **8.4.1 School – based career guidance**

There is a need to be able to access information and receive guidance on existing job opportunities. This should be built into educational curriculum so that students are able to make career and study choices based on a clear understanding of the labour market and emerging job opportunities. The Ministry of Labour shall work with the Ministry of Education to find ways through which updated labour market information can be incorporated into school curricula. The Ministry of Education shall improve its career guidance services to students in schools and higher education institutions so that students have relevant and meaningful information on which they can base decisions relating to further education, training and employment.

### **8.4.2 Youth career guidance centres**

For the benefit of those young men and women who are not students and unemployed, specific youth career guidance centres shall be established. These centres should be civil society based organisations supported by the government, the private sector, the relevant

stakeholders and the local community. They should be provided career guidance and information services through collaborative efforts between education and training institutions, as well as business and labour organisations.

The Ministry of Labour, with the support from the National Youth Commission, shall investigate the feasibility of a national strategy for the establishment of Youth Career Guidance Centres. Should this concept be proven feasible, a national Youth Career Centre Programme will be formulated, providing practical support for the establishment and management of local centre network.

At the local level, Youth career guidance centres should involve local governments, non-state and civil society based youth and development organisations. Youth career guidance centres may, where appropriate, be located within multi- purpose youth centres. (see strategy 8.3.2)

#### **8.4.3 National Youth Employment Strategy**

The issue of youth unemployment is recognised as one of the country's greatest priorities. The waste of human resource and the debilitating effects of unemployment require this issue to be urgently addressed. In addressing the needs of young unemployed women and men, a National Youth Employment Strategy will be prepared which addresses, amongst others, the following issues:

- a) Preparation for unemployment programmes should be established for young unemployment women and men. These programmes should cover “soft” (i.e. life skills) and “hard” (i.e. vocational) skills and should acknowledge the wide range of needs young people face and include structured and experiential training (e.g. on-the-job training and work experience)
- b) Structured “learnership”, apprenticeship or traineeship opportunities must be provided to young men and women who are unemployed. These training opportunities should be vocationally oriented. Such programmes should be undertaken by the Ministry of Labour in close consultation and cooperation with employers. Employers should also

be required to contribute financially to cover some of the costs of the programme.

- c) Training contracts or agreements between training institutions and large employers or employer organisations should be established. These compacts shall be agreements for employment of those who have achieved specified skills in nominated vocational fields.
- d) Employer incentives should be developed to encourage private sector employers to train and employ a young unemployed person. Such incentives may include wage subsidies or tax rebates.
- e) Employment internship should be made available within the public and private sectors to provide young women and men with practical employment experience.
- f) Specific programmes should be designed to address the particular employment and recruitment needs of young people and other disadvantaged groups (e.g. young women, young men and women with disabilities, addressing ethnic imbalances)

These elements should be contained in a comprehensive and integrated National Youth Employment and Training Strategy. This strategy shall be prepared through collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and the National Youth Commission.

#### **8.4.4 Youth advocacy and representation on governing agencies**

The representation of young women and men on agencies, which are responsible for the governance of employment and training programmes, is an important prerequisite to the design and implementation of programmes, which benefit young people. The National youth Commission shall consult with the Ministry of Labour, NAITA and other appropriate bodies to find ways where youth interests can be adequately represented.

## YOUTH ENTERPRISE

The promotion of youth enterprise is an important and significant strategy for fostering economic participation. For many young men and women employment opportunities in the existing public and private sector are insufficient to meet demand. Employment must be found in the emerging small, medium and micro enterprise sector. Currently, however, young people as an option of last resort often consider self-employment, when other education, training or employment options have been exhausted.

The National Small business promotion Board shall identify a proper strategy, which provides a national framework for the promotion of small business. Youth self-employment (with a focus on school leavers and unemployed youth) has been identified as an important target group within the national Small Business sector. In addition, a Youth entrepreneurs Network should be established with the aim of bringing together young entrepreneurs and youth enterprise development practitioners, to share information, promote best practice approaches, identify needs and design new programmes

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Self-employment and small business ownership and management should be promoted as a more favourable career choice, rather than an option of last resort. Business skills training is required, specially in the fields of business planning and tendering procedures. Training should be linked to emerging business opportunities and should endeavour to assist young men and women in overcoming the barriers they face to self-employment. Barriers which young people face to enter into small business (e.g. lack of experience, perceived lack of reliability), need to be addressed directly through the provision of information, training and practical guidance. Small business or Youth entrepreneurship programmes should be practical and action oriented. The successes of young women and men in business need to be highlighted (e.g. the promotion of role models). Support services should also be offered to those young men and women who already own and manage small businesses to become more competitive and not just those who are entering small business.

The objectives for the promotion of youth enterprise are:

- a) To establish a comprehensive entrepreneurial support strategy which assist young women and men in starting and managing their own enterprises, and
- b) To promote youth enterprise as a viable career option for young women and men to ensure youth enterprise development programmes address the main barriers and opportunities facing young people.

#### YOUTH ENTERPRISE STRATEGY

The National Youth Policy proposes the following strategies must be designed and implemented to promote youth enterprise. When implementing these strategies the need for accessibility by young women and men with disabilities will be addressed.

#### **8.4.5 National Youth Enterprise Development Initiative**

A national youth enterprise support and information service should be established for the promotion of youth enterprise. This initiative should be developed through the effort of the Ministry of Youth Affairs small-scale enterprise development board and Ministry of Trade and Commerce and should ensure participation of the major institutions engaged in small business promotion. Key youth agencies such as the National Youth Commission and other relevant agencies shall also be engaged as project partners. This initiative shall provide information and support to young women and men and youth and business development organisations in the start-up and expansion of small business. It shall work through existing youth and business development organisations to monitor and review youth enterprise promotion services whilst promoting best practices in youth enterprise development.

As an initial task, a national youth enterprise strategy should develop in association with key national small business promotion agencies and youth organisations. This strategy should address the barriers which young people face to enter into the small business (e.g. lack of experience, perceived lack of reliability) and design practical measure which overcome these. In addition, a youth enterprise budget and audit should be prepared outlining the funds spent on youth enterprise by the major small business promotion agencies and how many young women and men benefit through the activities of these agencies.

#### **8.4.6 Self-employment as a career option**

The school environment can have an important impact upon young women and men and is a significant influence on the life and career aspirations of young people. The opportunities for self-employment as a career option for young men and women should be promoted more widely and effectively. Self-employment should be recognised as a legitimate and meaningful career option and not just as an option of last resort.

The ministry of Youth Affairs and Ministry of Education shall cooperate in the development of career information related to self-employment, the path ways for young women and men who are interested in exploring this option, and the resource agencies which can assist.

Finally “enterprise education has become a significant part of many education and training institutions around the world. It is seen as an important ingredient in preparing young women and men for their movement from school, college or university to the workplace for students to understand and consider self-employment as a career option. There are two general types of enterprise education; learning about business education, administration and management; and developing the skills of enterprise through teaching methods will encourage responsibility, initiative and problem solving. The ministry of education shall investigate ways and means of where the notion of enterprise education can be used more extensively in the school curriculum.

#### **8.5 Safety, security and justice**

The issues of crime and justice directly affect many young men and women. Young women and men are often victims of crime and can be exposed to threatening or unsafe environments. However, some young men and women also participate in crime-oriented activities. Thus, there are safety and security issues for victims of crime, as well as justice and rehabilitation issues for the perpetrators.

Prevailing Social conflict in the country has pronounced political and social dimensions. The role of young women and men in the struggle and legacy of violence continues to affect young people. Many local communities have a high tolerance of crime and violence, which is easily exacerbated by poor socio-economic conditions (e.g. inadequate and over crowded housing, high rates of unemployment and internally dislocated families and people). Amongst those young women and men who are engaged in crime it is common to find a “culture of

violence”, where fighting is common practice, social status is gained by carrying guns and the romanticised portrayals of a “hero’s funerals” are encouraged. However, there is often a great lack of self-esteem and personal confidence amongst these young people; positive young role models are few and negative images, including those portrayed in the media, make crime more attractive. Such high-risk activities are often indicative of poor self-concept. The involvement of young people in drug and alcohol abuse is also closely connected to criminal behaviour.

Young offenders who often encounter with the police and criminal justice system are frequently faced with highly threatening circumstances. In many situations young people have to cope with adult persons who are exposed to, or forced to be in the company of people with most sensitive and serious criminal behaviours, even awaiting trial. The opportunities for correctional and rehabilitative services outside and inside the prison are extremely limited.

The National Youth Policy recognises and proposes to identify and establish national crime prevention strategy as a comprehensive approach to dealing with this issue. The initiative of the Sri Lankan Police Service (SLPS) in creating a women and youth desk is also acknowledged. The Police service is faced with a number of problems when dealing with young men and women in crime. These include the lack of security facilities for young offenders, the need to focus on more preventive forms of policing and better community liaison and the need to incorporate youth issues more clearly during police training. It is essential for police to become more familiar with the needs and circumstances facing young women and men and the manner in which these can affect their participation in criminal activities. Similarly, the rehabilitation and correction of young offenders requires a thorough understanding of the issues, which place young people at risk. Measures, which prevent young people offending, have to be designed and implemented as a priority.

The issue of criminal capacity is an important issue. Children older than seven years, but younger than 14 cannot be convicted of a crime unless the state proves the child can tell the difference between right and wrong and knew the offence was wrong at the time she or he committed. The Law Commission is currently investigating this issue which also be addressed through the Law Review Team, described in Chapter 9.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The national Youth Policy shall address the following objectives in relation to young people and the need for safety, security and justice.

- a) To promote civil society based preventive measures to youth crime; and
- b) To sensitise the police and justice system to the specific concerns of young women and men.

It is understood that in addressing these objectives a range of strategies described in other sectors are relevant. The involvement of young men and women in crime can be symptomatic of broad social and economic circumstances; where out-of-school young people, for example, may be more likely to participate in criminal activities. Thus, youth crime requires a broad holistic understanding of these issues and the response to them.

## TARGET GROUPS

When addressing issue of safety, security and justice the following target groups require particular and focused attention.

- a) Young men and women who are at risk, i.e. those who have a greater potential for undertaking criminal activities as a result of their life circumstances or participation in risk-taking activities (as described in Priority Target Groups, Chapter 7);
- b) Young women and men who are in contact with the law (e.g. arrested, attending court, in prison or correctional facilities); and
- c) Young victims of crime – who may be greatly traumatised as a result and require specific assistance and support.

## STRATEGIES

With this broader context mind, the following strategies have been designed to address the above-mentioned objectives:

### **8.5.1 Strengthen and expand SLPS Women and Youth Desk**

The current women and youth desk, which established is a good first step in addressing the concerns of young women and men in the police system, however, this initiative needs to be strengthened and expanded. Women and youth desk should be established in every police station and, where possible, in every major population centre. The functions of the women and youth desk should be expanded to include:

- a) Data collection on young people who come into contact with the police
- b) The development of strategies which improve the way young men and women are dealt with police
- c) Closer liaison with different sectors of the society, including families and local communities
- d) Greater contribution to the development of strategies which improve the way young men and women are prevented from offending; and
- f) The training of police personnel on youth issues

The SLPS shall undertake actions, which lead to the strengthening and expansion of the women and youth desk, in consultation with the National Youth Commission and the Inter Ministerial Executive Committee on young people at risk.

### **8.5.2 Alternatives to incarceration**

The National Youth Policy recognises the government's desire to find alternatives to incarceration wherever possible. This desire has to be articulated by the Government jointly with the Ministry of Youth Affairs as a matter of urgency, attend to the tragic and complex question of children and juveniles in detention and prison. The basic principle is that we must rescue the children of the nation and utilise the system of criminal justice as the very last resort in the case of juvenile offenders.

There are many possible alternatives to the incarceration of young women and men - especially for first offenders or those who have not committed serious crimes. These include community service orders, community intervention programmes, occupational skills training and rehabilitation programmes. The rehabilitation of young people under the age of 18 years will also require different measures than those who are older.

In addressing this situation, the National Youth Commission shall consult with the Inter-Ministerial Executive Committee on young people at risk and relevant non-state organisations to establish a appropriate mechanism whereby the alternatives to incarceration can be systematically and practically assessed.

## **8.6 Sports and recreation**

Sports and recreation is a significant area of priority for young women and men all over the world. It is no less important in Sri Lanka. The UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sports provides strong support for the need that young people have for sport, leisure and recreational services by indicating that at the “individual level, physical education and sports contribute to the maintenance and improvement of health, provide a wholesome leisure time occupation and enables mankind to overcome the drawbacks of modern living. While at the community level, they enrich social relations and develop fair play, which is essential not only to sport itself but also life in society.” Sports and recreation is a valuable means for personal development for young women and men. It promotes good health, personal discipline, and leadership and teamwork skills. It also contributes to the development of local communities and the integration of society. The National Youth Policy recognises and supports the main themes of the Government’s National Policy on Sports and Recreation. In the country, many civic sporting bodies also played an important role in mainstreaming sport and promoting it as a valued means of youth development. The combination of sport and recreation through the education system makes good sense because it encourages access, promotes a rounded education and builds confidence. The ministry of Youth Affairs and Ministry of Education shall jointly work to achieve this task.

For many young women and men, participation in sport and recreation has been frustrated by the limited financial support provided to facilities and the great variation in the standards of facilities that are available (especially between rural and urban areas.) The National Youth Policy promotes the participation of young men and women in recreation, leisure and sporting activities. To this end, coordination, the development and facilities and access by young people to these facilities, the provision of services (e.g. training, coaching, mentoring and guidance) and the involvement of all sectors (e.g. government, community and private sectors) in these endeavours are essential.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

From the perspective of youth development, the national Youth Policy has two central objectives in regards to sport and recreation.

- a) To broaden the participation of young men and women in a wide range of sporting and recreational pursuits; and
- b) To promote excellence in sports by young people at national and international levels.

## TARGET GROUPS

The above objectives have particular emphasis on those young people who have previously been denied access, or only given limited opportunities, to participate in sport and recreation; all young men and women and young women and men with disabilities. The problems of young people in rural areas also deserve particular attention since many rural communities have inadequate facilities compared to urban settings.

## STRATEGIES

To achieve this objective the following activities should establish.

### **8.6.1 Creating a culture of sports and recreation**

A sports and recreation ethic or culture should be promoted throughout local communities in a way that the principles of fair play and physical well-being are encouraged. This will require parents, civil society leaders, politicians, local government, youth and sports clubs and sporting organisations to promote and encourage participation in a wide variety of sports and recreational activities. Positive role models of young sports-people are required, along with generic entry-level programmes in schools and local communities.

The young women and men in sporting organisations is also essential if these organisations are to effectively respond to the needs and aspirations of young men and women. Thus, youth participation in decision-making structures is desirable and necessary.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs shall take responsibility for working closely with the National Youth Commission and the National Youth Services Council to design

strategies, which promote a positive and active attitude towards sport and recreation by young men and women. It is anticipated that these strategies will utilise the broad network of sporting clubs, youth clubs and youth development organisations that can be found across the country.

In designing these strategies it is essential that the needs of specific target groups are addressed, particularly young women, young men and women with disabilities. It is also imperative that the ethnic imbalance currently found in participation levels for sports and recreation are addressed as a matter of urgency.

Finally it is recognised that many people begin to participate in sporting and recreational activities before they become a youth (e.g. before 14 years of age). Thus, entry into sporting and recreational pursuits is also an important issue for child development. With this in mind, there is a crucial need for a Junior Sports Policy or Programme. The national Youth Commission shall support the efforts of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs and other relevant agencies in the formulation of such a policy.

#### **8.6.2 School-based facilities and programmes**

Effort should be made to promote greater support for sport and recreation through the school system. This means that sport and recreation facilities need to be established in local, rural schools and, where it may not be possible to create these facilities now, space and plans should be created for the establishment of such facilities in the future. Furthermore, the education system should provide generic skills programmes, which promote and encourage sport and recreational activities amongst young women and men.

In proposing this strategy the National Youth Policy supports the National Policy on Sports and the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs in its insistence that “physical education and the provision of basic equipments should form an integral part of the entire school education programme. Physical education and instruction should be compulsory, be offered during the normal school day and (by) suitable qualified teachers.”

In designing these facilities and programmes it is essential that the needs of specific target groups be addressed. Particularly young women, young men and women with disabilities. It

is also imperative that the ethnic imbalance currently found in participation levels for sport and recreation are addressed as a matter of urgency.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs and Ministry of Education, in association with the Schools Sports Association, shall take responsibility for ensuring these facilities and programmes are developed wherever possible.

### **8.6.3 Community sport and recreational facilities**

Sport and recreational facilities in local communities are, on the whole, inadequate or non-existent. There is a need for local communities to maximise the use of existing facilities and, wherever possible, to make use of facilities which were not originally envisaged for such uses. The development, maintenance and use of parks is particularly important for the promotion of sports and recreation within local communities. Thus, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs shall negotiate with the following agencies to facilitate use by local communities. In particular:

- a) The Ministry of Education shall investigate ways in which school facilities can be used by the local community for sport and recreation after school hours, and
- b) The Ministry of Public Affairs, Defence and Municipalities shall investigate the use of state owned facilities, including parks for community sports and recreation purposes.

In addition local governments should actively identify and facilitate opportunities for community sport and recreation facilities. (Chapter 9 provides more details on the roles of local government in this regard).

The process of implementing these strategies outlined above will require a determined commitment to consult with key stakeholder groups. In particular, representative organisations of young people with disabilities and young women should be engaged in all these activities. The National Youth Commission shall facilitate inter ministerial integration and co-operation of the strategies outlined above and shall monitor the role of ministries, departments, national sporting associations, national youth club association and other relevant

groups in their efforts to promote more rounded and participatory sport and recreation programmes and services to all young women and men.

### **8.7 Environment and tourism**

Young women and men can perform a significant role in the environment and tourism sectors. These sectors provide a focus for specific youth concerns, whilst opening new opportunities for employment and enterprise.

#### YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In its broadest sense, the environment contains the conditions or influences under which any individual or thing exists, lives or develops. These include the natural environment (including renewable and non-renewable resources such as air, water, land and all forms of life); the social, political, cultural, economic and working conditions that affect the nature of an individual or community; and natural and constructed special surroundings, including urban and rural landscapes and eco-systems and those qualities which contribute to their value.

When considering young people and the environment there are two broad issues. The first concerns the impact of environmental degradation on young people. Where, for example, pollution and waste management affect quality of life all people experience. Young people, as with people of all ages, have a right “to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations. (**Constitution, section.....**). The second issue concerns environmental management and improvements; where young women and men can take an active role in participating in programmes and activities, which improve the environment. Examples may include recycling, tree planting and reforestation, community “clean ups” and land reclamation.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

The national Youth Policy has adopted one primary objective to deal with the environmental concerns and young people: to increase awareness amongst young women and men of the issues associated with the environment and actions that can be taken to improve local environments.

## TARGET GROUP

In addressing environmental and tourism concerns the needs of rural poor communities should be given special attention.

All young people including young people with disabilities

## STRATEGIES – ENVIRONMENT AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The following strategies have been designed to address the above objective.

### **8.7.1 Environmental awareness in schools**

Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environmental Affairs shall investigate ways through which environmental awareness can be promoted through the school curriculum. This awareness raising shall include, awareness of local environmental issues, archaeological sites and heritage. It shall also include an emphasis on individual and collective efforts – the things that can be done to improve and protect the environment.

### **8.7.2 Community initiatives**

The Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism shall consult with the National Youth Commission, National Youth Services Council and relevant environmental NGOs to prepare a guide outlining the actions young men and women, youth clubs and youth development organisations can take regarding community initiatives to improve or protect the environment.

In addition, the National Youth Commission, when conducting its investigation into a national youth service programme will consult with the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to identify ways in which civil society-based environment projects can be assisted through this programme.

## YOUNG PEOPLE AND TOURISM

Tourism is the largest and fastest growing industrial sector. In the world and Sri Lanka is well placed to develop within this sector as international interest in the country grows. Whilst high rates of crime may deter some visitors, Sri Lanka is becoming a gateway to the

Asia. The opportunities for eco- and cultural tourism are especially significant within this sector.

## OBJECTIVE - TOURISM

When addressing the issue of young people and tourism the National Youth Policy has adopted the following objective;

To promote a conducive environment for economic opportunities for young men and women in the tourism sector.

## STRATEGY – TOURISM

The following strategy has been designed to address this objective;

### **8.7.3 Employment and enterprise opportunities**

Employment within the tourism sector can present particular opportunities for young people. To realise these, however, young women and men require career guidance and access to vocationally oriented training and work experience. The National Youth Employment Strategy (see strategy 8.4.3) should contain specific reference to the ways in which training and employment in the tourism sector can be addressed. Similarly, The national Youth Enterprise Development Initiative (see strategy 8.4.5) should include the identification of opportunities for youth enterprise in the tourism sector.

### **8.8 Arts and culture**

Arts and culture are important sectors for young men and women. Through arts and culture, young men and women are able to express their personal and collective views and society and the world in which they live. Arts and culture promotes creativity and a questioning of the norms, values, directions and make-up of the society. At the same time it can be a powerful means of communication, can create social networks whilst educating, informing and breaking through the barriers to social and cultural diversity. It also contributes to the promotion of reconciliation. Arts and culture is also an important industrial sector. One where new economic and employment opportunities can be generated and where human creativity can directly contribute to the national economy.

There is a need to redress the experiences amongst artists and to promote a new environment, which nurtures artistic expression and recognises the important role of art and culture in society. This should be done whilst linking arts and culture to other developmental strategy areas.

The challenges for many existing arts and culture programmes are to address the needs, interests and opportunities of young women and men in this sector. Whether this is achieved through the design of specific youth programmes or by broadening existing programmes so that they can effectively accommodate young people, it is clear that youth participation in such programmes is essential.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

When promoting youth participation in arts and culture, it is important to encourage artistic freedom and integrity whilst appreciating and maintaining diversity. Young people's participation in arts and culture should cover all mediums. It should expose young people to different forms and recognise the need for gender equality.

When addressing the issue of arts and culture amongst young women and men the following objectives have been formulated:

- a) To promote the participation of young men and women in all forms of arts and culture; and
- b) To ensure young women and men have a understanding of the national culture and the heritage.

### TARGET GROUPS

In addressing above objective and within all strategies for arts and culture described below, it is important to ensure the needs of specific youth target groups are addressed. These include out-of-school young women and men, young women, young men and women with a disability.

## STRATEGIES

The National Youth Policy promotes the following strategies in pursuit these objectives:

### **8.8.1 Arts and cultural education**

The ministry of education' national policy or programme should identify arts and cultural education as one of the important learning areas within the new curriculum framework. This is recognition of the ways in which education in arts and culture develops creativity through the exploration of the diverse cultures as well as the spiritual, intellectual and emotional aspects of life.

The efforts of the Ministry of Education are supported in this regard, although it is clear that further detail on how arts and culture will be taught in the education system will be required. Emphasis should be given to providing a broad introduction to this field of study, exposing students to a wide variety of forms and expression. This will require good teaching skills and preparedness to allow students to explore and experiment.

### **8.8.2 Community mobilisation**

In community settings, arts and culture can provide a significant focus for development efforts. To this end, local communities should be encouraged and supported in undertaking a range of arts and cultural activities. These may include, for example, community projects which:

- a) Preserve local heritage and historical sites
- b) Use drama as a means of communicating a health or development message
- c) Expose local artists to both local and international markets
- d) Provide facilities for local performances

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs and National Heritage and the MYA shall, with the support of the National Youth Commission, and a representative from the NYSC, prepare a guide book for local communities on the in which young women and men can become involved in community-based arts and cultural activities. This will be a practical guide with many examples, ideas and information on how to access resources.

### **8.8.3 Youth representation**

The representation of young men and women in decision making bodies on arts and culture is essential, if participation by young people is to be increased. In particular, young women and men should be represented on the peak national arts and culture bodies, being the National Arts Council and the National Heritage Council. The National Youth Commission in consultation with these Councils shall coordinate this representation.

### **8.9 Science and Technology**

Science and technology are changing the world at unprecedented rates. Scientific understanding and the introduction of new and advanced technologies affect many areas of life; how people live, types of jobs they have, the way they communicate, the way they travel and the way they are entertained. For young women and men, science and technology can offer new opportunities and new challenges. It is however, important for young women and men to be informed of the opportunities in this sector and able to make use of such development.

Prolonged war and the open economy created such a situation in Sri Lanka where only urban students were exposed to new developments in science and technology. Remote rural students were not encouraged and afforded to study or work in these fields. Thus, addressing the legacy of prolonged war and the open economy requires special measures and encouragement to assist those who were previously excluded from this sector. This will require education and training, and the provision of community- based and accessible user-friendly facilities. In addition, remote rural communities have suffered as a result of access to technology. Where urban centres exhibits a thirst for new technologies, many rural environments are vastly under- resourced and unable to make full use of even the most basic facilities.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

The era of information and communication technology (ICT) has opened – up schools, work places and local communities to new and vast sources of information from around the world. It is important that all young women and men in Sri Lanka are able to function in these environments and to make full use of the benefits of these changes. For many, the key to the future lies in access to information and communication technology.

Key objectives of the National Youth Policy in addressing these issues are:

- a) To raise awareness amongst young men and women of the opportunities in science and technology
- b) To bridge the knowledge and information gaps vastly found in Sri lankan society, including the gap between particular ethnic groups, and
- c) To enable young women and men and youth development organisations to use new and appropriate technologies, which enhance their development opportunities.

## STRATEGIES

The following strategies have been designed to address these objectives:

### **8.9.1 Promotion of the networks and role models**

Young women and men need to be aware of the development in science and technology and the way this can improve their life and future opportunities. The science in schools, especially amongst young female students, is very important.

The promotion of science and technology role models and networks will be pursued through the following initiatives:

- a) Youth science awards – the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and National Heritage, Science and Technology to negotiate with the Ministry of Education, ITS and potential private sector sponsors (e.g. Celinco, Keels) on the organisation and the promotion of annual young science award. This award programme should highlight the involvement of young women and men in the sciences.
- b) Encouragement of science and technology clubs – especially within schools. The MYA jointly with MOE, along with provincial ministries of education, shall provide a programme of support for the establishment of science and technology clubs within schools. These

clubs shall promote peer networks and interest groups around science and technology.

### **8.9.2 Information technology and distance education**

Information technology has the potential to enable rural and remote communities to access new sources and supports in the field of education and training. Consistent of the objectives of education and training within the national Youth Policy (see 8.1) and the development of civil society – based youth facilities such as multi-purpose youth centres (see 8.3.2), information technology centres should be established in rural remote areas as support facilities for distance education learners. This could be liaised with the VIDATHA centres that will be established by the ministry of Science and Technology at every Divisional secretariat level.

## **PART II**

### **9.0 INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The NYP seeks to ensure a coordinated and holistic response to address the major issues faced by young men and women. Such a response requires the establishment, coordination and maintenance of institutions engaged in youth activities. The institutions include relevant government organisations at national, provincial and divisional levels as well as non-state organisations.

#### **9.1 Government Institutions**

The NYP provides a framework for partnership with government structures across national, district and local levels.

At national level, the government of Sri Lanka is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the following institutions:

##### **9.1.1 The National Youth Commission**

The National Youth Commission is to be established shall be a fully independent body. It shall be established under an Act of Parliament. The Act shall specify the powers and functions of the Commission. The Commission should be comprised with five members and appointed by the President on the recommendations of the Constitution Council. A proportionate quantum should be allocated from the GDP for the National Youth Commission to execute its activities.

In general, the objectives of the National Youth Commission shall be:

- a) The implementation of NYP
- b) Develop principles and guidelines for the implementation of the NYP
- c) Coordinate, direct and monitor the implementation of such principles and guidelines as matter of priority

- d) Develop an integrated national plan that utilizes available resources and expertise for the development of youth
- e) Promote uniformity to approach by all organs of state, including provincial councils, to matters relating to youth
- f) Maintain close liaison with institutions, cooperations, and authorities that have specific interest in youth development
- g) Disbursement of funds.
- h) Coordinate the activities of the various provincial level institutions activities to NYP and
- i) Develop recommendations relating to any other matter that has a bearing on youth
- j) Necessary authority to intervene and guide the other organizations working on youth.
- k) Appoint a chairman for NYSC

The National Youth Commission should consist of 05 members who would be nominated by the Constitutional Council based on expertise, knowledge and experience on the key areas of NYP and appointed by the President. Five of the members serve in full – time capacity representing youth across the country. Five of the part-time members also represent sectoral interest.

The NYP identifies five key areas of priority for the Commission. These are:

a) MONITORING

The National Youth Commission shall perform a vigilant role in monitoring youth development programs and services. This will include central government ministries as well as provincial and local level bodies. It will also include a monitoring of the non-state and community based youth sector. This monitoring role is important to ensure the needs and interests of youth, and the specific target groups of young people identified in the National Youth Policy, are addressed by these agencies.

#### b) RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The lack of accurate, current research on a wide range of youth development needs has become sorely apparent in the process of formulating the NYP. Thus, the commission will, as a matter of priority, design a strategy to ensure the current gaps on youth research are addressed. This strategy will be formulated in close consultation with research institutions.

The expected outcome of research will be the development and refinement of sector specific youth policies (e.g. health, employment) and target groups (e.g. rural young people, young women and men living and working on the streets)

Research and development should include relations with NYSC and other international organizations (e.g. United Nations, Commonwealth Youth Programmes). This will involve international liaison and participation in international and regional youth networks.

#### c) ADVOCACY

As a consequence of monitoring, research and policy work, the National Youth Commission shall advocate on behalf of young women and men, and specific target groups, for relevant programs, services and facilities. It shall also promote youth participation in decision-making and the governance of a wide range of government, para-state and non-state organizations.

#### d) CAPACITY BUILDING

The limited capacity to effectively plan, establish and manage youth development programs or services is apparent in many development organizations and government structures. The Commission will work with other key stakeholders (e.g. National Youth Services Council and other Non State Organisations) to address this limitation. This will involve the provision of information (including a guide on best practices in youth development), programs, training programs, human resource development and the development of networks. It will also involve the facilitation and mobilization of financial resources for capacity building.

#### e) COOPAERATION AND FACILITATION

Finally, the Commission will promote the coordination of youth development services and, where possible, will facilitate the creation of proper youth development programs, interventions and initiatives.

It is envisaged the coordination and facilitation will, at times, require the Commission to test or pilot particular initiatives or programs. Thus, the National Youth Commission will promote innovative youth development initiatives.

### **9.1.2 Secretariat for the National Youth Commission (SNYC)**

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports shall work as the Secretariat for the National Youth Commission. SNYC is primarily a facilitating and coordinating body of the National Youth Commission (NYC). It is the main instrument of the NYC to support in identifying procedures and programmes under NYC objectives and key areas of priority and involve in decision-making mechanism of the Commission.

SNYC involves in extensive dialogue with all stakeholders engaged in the development of youth including the public and private sectors, civil society, NYSC, line ministries and other relevant organizations on a regular basis.

#### **Mandate of the SNYC**

1. Facilitate and coordinate the implementation of decisions of the NYC
2. Liaise closely with NYSC, other related institutions and authorities
3. Provide logistical and technical support to NYC and NYSC
4. Assist in developing National Youth Action Plan (NYAP) with NYC, NYSC and other youth development related stakeholders
5. Act as central Progress Monitoring Unit (PMU) to assess monitoring plan of NYP

### **9.1.3 Inter-Ministerial Executive Committee on Youth Affairs**

An Inter-Ministerial Executive Committee on Youth Affairs shall be established and chaired by the Head of the National Youth Commission to coordinate government programmes, develop a consolidated budget, oversee program implementation and integrate programmes across line ministries. Key responsibilities of this committee are as follows:

- a) Coordinate comprehensive national framework of Government services, research and initiatives affecting young women and men across all relevant ministries
- b) Monitor, review and evaluate government policies, programmes legislation and expenditure related to youth activities and
- c) Facilitate collaborative programme planning, implementation and review across all relevant ministries

In fulfilling its mandate, the Committee shall perform the following functions:

**PLANNING** – the committee shall provide a platform for programme planning across ministerial portfolios, annual plans and shall provide an opportunity for the design of new innovative and successful approaches to programmes aimed at young women and men. This shall include the production of a guide for best practice in youth programme design, implementation and monitoring

**COORDINATION** - The committee shall provide a means for the design, implementation and review of well coordinated, complementary and harmonious ministerial programmes which relevant to young men and women

**REVIEW AND EVALUATION** - the Inter Ministerial Committee on the youth affairs will develop common and agreed upon measures for the quantitative and qualitative review and evaluation of youth –oriented programmes and services.

**FINANCIAL PLANNING AND EXPENDITURE** - the Inter- ministerial committee on the youth affairs shall establish a mechanism for financial planning and expenditure on programmes related to young men and women and shall, wherever possible, maximise the use of existing resources (e.g. by facilitating cost sharing or joint initiatives) whilst reducing duplications. In addition, a National Youth Budget Report shall be compiled each year outlining Government expenditure on youth -oriented programmes across ministerial portfolios.

The Committee will meet at least twice a year, however, it is likely that it shall meet more often when programme planning is undertaken. The NYP provides a basis on which governmental ministries can respond to youth development and on which the Inter-ministerial committee shall structure its activities. Twice a year ministerial representative will be required to report to the committee on current and planned ministerial policies, programmes, services and interventions which affect young women and men. This should include the following details:

- a) Name of the policy, programmes or services
- b) Purpose or rationale for the policy, programme or service
- c) Connection between the policy, programme or service and the NYP
- d) Target specificity
- e) Anticipated outcome of the policy, programme or service
- f) Financial expenditure
- g) Output obtained to-date and
- h) Any issues related to the policy, programme or service  
(e.g. unresolved problems, successes, gender focus)

Membership of the Inter-ministerial Executive Committee on Youth Affairs shall consist of representatives of all relevant Government departments whose activities have a direct impact on young men and women. Each ministry represented on the Committee will be required to create within its own organisational structure, a Youth Focal Point. This will be an officer, appointed by the Secretary of the relevant Ministry, who has sufficient seniority and understanding of the overall functions and activities of the ministry so as to represent it on the Inter-Ministerial Executive Committee on the Youth Affairs. The Youth focal point will report on those activities of the ministry, which relates to the National Youth Policy and will work and incorporate with other Committee members to promote a whole-of –government response to youth development in Sri Lanka.

#### **9.1.4 National Youth Services Council**

The pioneering mission of youth development services at the state level aiming at youth development and welfare in Sri Lanka was started in 1969 by the establishment of the National Youth Services Council.

By the act 69/1979 scope of activities of the National Youth Services Council was further broadened and all activities including the planning and coordination of national level youth development services and policy making etc. were implemented.

So far the National Youth Services Council is operating as the only state institution holding responsibilities concerning all the steps taken, within Sri Lanka, for creating a youth revival through youth development services.

The National Youth Services Council has rendered an excellent service to the younger generation of Sri Lanka from 1967 up to now, making development of energies in economic, psychological, political, social and cultural spheres. Its main objective and also according to other aims and specific objectives, NYSC is in the process of implementing its responsibility of creating a younger generation with full of energies.

Even in the future; these processes are to be implemented in a much broader scale, in consonance with modern development oriented approach.

Key responsibilities of this NYSC are as follows:

- a) Coordinate and facilitate comprehensive national framework of Government services, research and initiatives affecting young women and men across all relevant ministries
- b) Closely monitor, review performances and evaluate government policies, programmes legislation and expenditure related to youth activities and
- c) Facilitate collaborative programme implementation and review across all relevant ministries

#### **9.1.5 Inter-Provincial Committee**

Acknowledging the context in which endeavour to address the issues of youth development, the NYP promotes collaborative efforts, which share a common framework and competencies for national and provincial youth development. Provincial councils shall work in partnership

with the National Youth Commission in achieving the directions and strategies of the NYP. Within a national youth development framework described by the National Youth Policy and taking into an account the views, needs and aspirations of young women and men at the provincial level, provincial councils will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to address the challenges of youth development.

All provincial councils shall be required to fulfil the following functions with regard to the development of young men and women:

- a) To develop provincial youth development policies, which identify the main needs, challenges, aspirations and opportunities facing young women and men and to develop a comprehensive policy response within the framework provided by the NYP.
- b) To establish structures and programmes which respond to the needs, opportunities, aspirations and potential of all young men and women in the province. Such initiatives should complement and support national vision, goals and strategies, whilst recognising provincial variations
- c) To work in partnership with the national, provincial and local youth development agencies to develop and maintain facilities which can be used by young men and women
- d) To establish mechanism for continued consultations and live dialogues with the youth sector within the province as well as nationally

In addition the NYC shall work with state institutions to support the efforts of the provinces in this regard. In particular, this support shall involve the provision of:

- a) INFORMATION on youth related issues, strategies and methodologies, youth research, programme resources, and best practice approaches to youth development

- b) TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING so that workers with young men and women are better able to deliver effective youth programmes and services.
- c) MONITORING AND REVIEW of all provincial youth policies, programmes and services and
- d) ADVOCACY in conjunction with provincial authorities to address issues related to government policies, programmes and resources.

### **9.1.5 Law Review Team**

The National Youth Commission which shall create a specific team of experts and Youth and government representatives to review the wide range of laws affecting young women and men. Specially, this team will be required to review those laws, which ascribe rights to young men and women according to their age. This includes, for example, the age at which young men and women are allowed to marry, consent to sex, vote, enter into contractual agreements, and obtain a driving licence, become employed, purchase alcohol and tobacco, as well as age at which a young person becomes responsible for criminal activities

The Law Review Team shall comprise the following members:

- a) National Youth Commission (which shall convene and chair meetings of the Law Review Team)
- b) Ministry of Defence
- c) Ministry of Justice
- d) Ministry of Internal Affairs
- e) National Youth Services Council
- f) Law Commission
- g) Human Rights Commission and
- h) Any other appropriate experts or organisational representatives

In addition to the permanent members, The National Youth Commission shall invite specific representatives to participate in Law Review Team discussions when the topic is appropriate.

For example, the discussion on the age of sexual consent may involve the Ministry of Health, National Child protection Authority, as well as appropriate non-governmental organisations.

The Law Review Team will address the following tasks:

- a) Survey the legislative environment relating to the ages affecting young women and men and the areas of concern, as defined above
- b) Identify inconsistencies or gaps in the legal framework
- c) Undertake consultations with relevant groups in relation to these issues, and
- d) Prepare and promote a policy and legislative response to the issues through a formal Green paper and White Paper process

It is anticipated the Law Review Team will take one year to complete these tasks after which it will be disbanded.

#### **9.1.6 Local Government**

Local government is the most direct level of government, which has close links with young men and women and the civil society. It provides essential services and along with a mechanism for promoting leadership, policy planning and development efforts. These mechanisms should be designed for the creation of youth services and facilities at the local level and the role, which local government can play in identifying youth needs and opportunities, designing youth development services and working with local youth organisations is extremely important. The NYP recognises the integral role of local government and grass-root leaders should play in rural areas when pursuing objectives of youth development.

Whilst the financial constraints and limited tax base of many local governments is recognised, it is essential that local government identify and make a voice to the issues facing by young women and men. There are many active roles that local government can play in the development of young residents. These include:

- a) To institutionalise youth development in local government settings, for example through the establishment of Standing Committees on Youth Affairs as a mean of informing and sensitising on the needs of youth and to make proposals for local youth programmes and services
- b) Creating mechanism for young people to understand the issues of governance at the local level. Local government must ensure that it develops participatory and inclusive approaches to youth development, ensuring that most disadvantaged young people (young people with disabilities, youth in remote villages) are closely involved in these processes
- c) Engaging local youth organisations in development programmes and campaigns
- d) To identify needs for local facilities requires for youth development (e.g. multi-purpose youth centres) and to form alliances with other levels of government, the private sector, donors and local youth development organisations address these needs through the establishment of appropriate facilities.

As a minimum requirement however, all local governments are required to fulfil the following essential functions with regard to the development of youth:

- a) To nominate an elected Councillor (preferably from the executive authority of council) and a senior staff member who shall take responsibilities for overseeing council's youth development policies and activities.
- b) To undertake an audit of youth programmes services and organisations located in the local area.
- c) To identify priority needs and opportunities facing young women and men and their development
- d) To identify any specific target groups of young women and men those who require particular attention.

- e) To identify the roles Council can play in addressing the needs.
- f) Opportunities and target groups identified above and
- g) To establish permanent mechanisms for participation by young men and women, or their representative organisations, in the planning and decision making of Council

The National Youth Commission in conjunction with ministry of local government shall monitor and assist local governments in their endeavours to promote development among their young residents by: requiring local governments to report to the Commission on the manner in which they are meeting their obligations to youth development preparing a local government resource kit on ways to address the issues of youth development and developing a resource and information kit on the feasibility, establishment, roles and management of multi-purpose youth centres.

#### **9.1.7 Non-State Sector Institutions (NSI)**

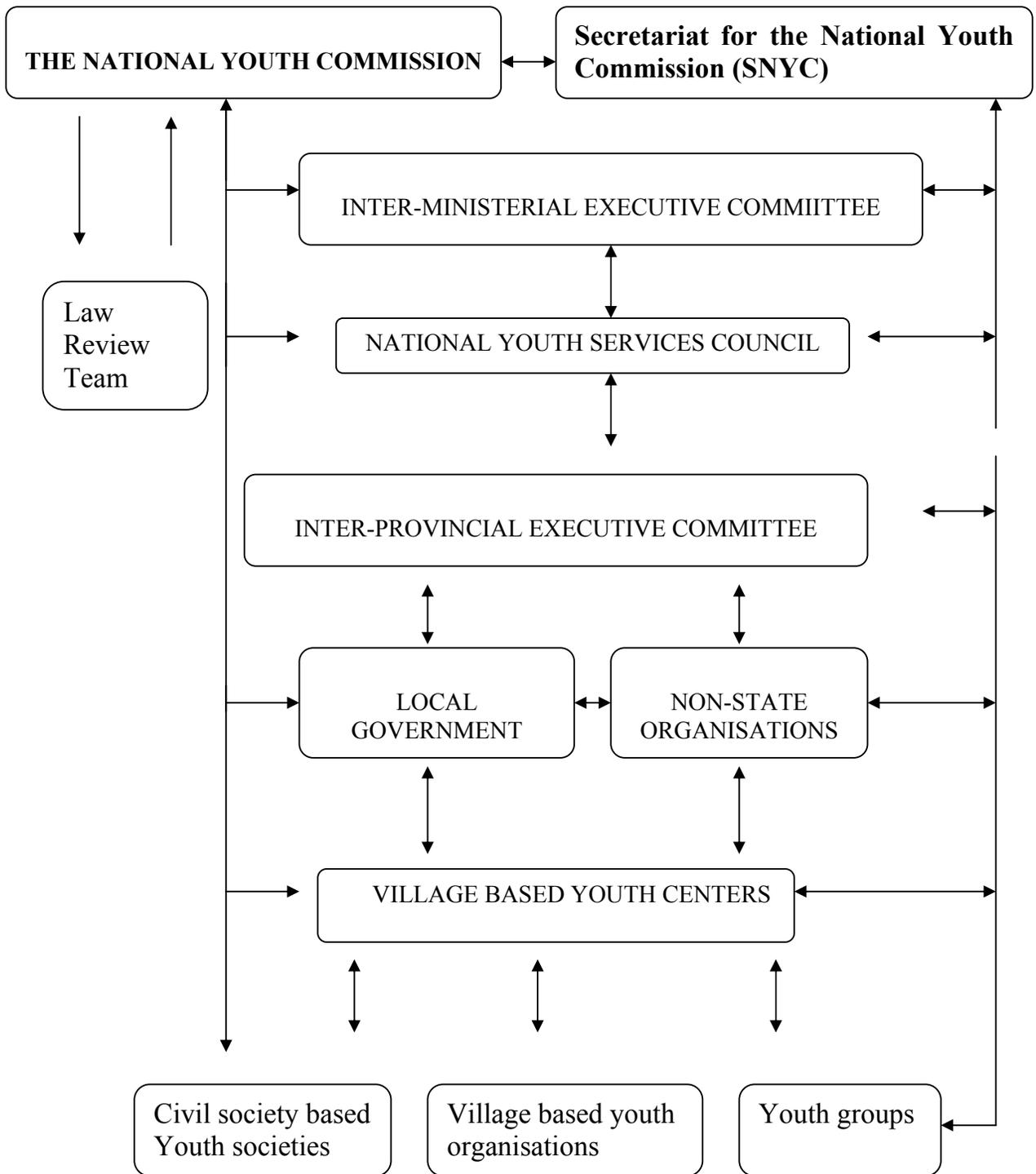
Non-state Sector Institutions refer to those Institutions not funded by the state, however, engaged in youth research, political, cultural, sporting and recreational activities related to youth. By and large, these organizations are represented in the youth sector by the NYSC. The NYP recognizes the role of non-state organizations to play in youth development. Furthermore, the mutual relationship between NSIs working on issues related to or for the welfare of youth and NYSC is recognized.

The NYSC operates as an autonomous, non-partisan representative body of young women and men in civil society. Its mission is to develop and empower all youth, provide a forum for all youth organisations and service providers to contribute to youth policy and monitor its implementation and uphold democratic values as enshrined in the constitution of Sri Lanka and Youth charter.

The role played by the civil society in youth development requires identification, recognition, appreciation and provision of resources. Strongly motivated, committed and well-resourced civil society would provide a facilitatory environment to implement the NYP.

The NYP recognizes the need for financial support and capacity building within the non-state sector. In pursuit of this The National Youth Commission shall liaise with the non-state sector, principally through the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to identify the opportunities and necessary resource.

**ORGANIGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION**



## **10.0 NATIONAL - LOCAL LINKAGES BETWEEN THE POLICY AND PRACTICE**

A framework for action over a specific time frame and mechanisms for policy implementation and review will be established as soon as possible. Such a framework shall identify the strategic functions of line agencies outlined in Chapter 9. In addition, there may be other organisations identified or proposed by the NYP (e.g. research agencies) to ensure successful implementation and review of the policy.

### **10.1 National Youth Action Plan (NYAP)**

To facilitate implementation, a National Youth Action Plan (NYAP) is formulated as a support document as well as a guide to the National Youth Policy. The National Youth Action Plan shall build upon the goals and objectives of the NYP and demonstrate a holistic and synergistic response of all relevant agencies to the needs of young men and women. The Plan shall clearly define the specific actions that will be undertaken; when and by whom they will be implemented. It should also indicate what resources will be required to effectively undertake these actions and expected benefits and the performance indicators through which effectiveness will be assessed.

The National Youth Action Plan (NYAP) will recognise the key groups involved in the youth development, as described in Chapter 9, and ensure they are integrated into its overall structure and scope of work. Thus, there should be three components for the National Youth Action Plan:

#### **10.1.1 Strategic Plan for National Youth Commission**

The NYC will be required to develop a Strategic Plan, which outlines the following:

- a) Purpose, aim and objectives of the National Youth Commission
- b) Guiding principles
- c) Priorities and function of the national Youth commission (as defined by the National Youth Policy)

- d) Strategies – containing a description of the strategy; personnel engaged on strategy; other stakeholders and agencies involved; strategy budget and performance indicators of success
- e) Overall strategic budget, and
- f) Management and review procedure

The Strategic Plan will be based upon the National Youth Commission Act (.....) and the National Youth Policy.

### **10.1.2 Programme Plan for Inter-Ministerial Executive Committee on Youth Affairs**

The Inter – Ministerial Executive Committee on Youth Affairs, described in Chapter 9, will be required to prepare a programme plan. A proposed structure for programme development, which should be closely aligned to the objectives and the directions of the national Youth Policy, are outlined below (see 10.1.4)

### **10.1.3 Programme Plan of the Non-State Sector**

The non – state sector performs an important role in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth programmes and services. The NYSC, as a central and representative non – state youth formation, should be engaged by the National Youth Commission in the preparation of the National Youth Action Plan. Specifically, this should require the preparation of a programme plan. A proposed structure for programme development, which should be closely aligned to the objectives and directions of the National Youth Policy, are outlined below (see 10.1.4)

### **10.1.4 Structure for Programme Planning**

The following structure for programme development by the Inter-Ministerial Executive Committee on Youth Affairs and the Non-State sector is as follows:

Each policy objective in the national Youth Policy should be clearly identified with a specific set of actions (e.g. programmes, projects or strategies) assigned to it. Thus, the policy objectives provide the rationale for each action.

**a) Programmes, Projects and Strategies**

Initiatives may take the form of formal programmes, individual projects or specific strategies. They represent a set of actions which, when implemented, will help to achieve policy goal(s) and objectives. These should be described in detail to demonstrate how they will work to address objectives of the NYP.

**b) MOU and Action Steps**

This involves the detail description of the actual activities and tasks that will be undertaken to implement the programmes, projects or strategies. Action steps represent the “to do” lists ensuring the successful implementation of the strategy along with a Memorandum of Understanding.

**c) Target Group(s)**

Each action will be directed at a specific group. These groups need to be clearly identified. (e.g. young women and men with disabilities, out of school youth, etc..)

**d) Expected Outcomes**

It will be necessary to describe expected outcomes that will be anticipated from these actions i.e. what will the action achieve.

**e) Responsible Agencies**

The agencies responsible for the overall implementation and coordination of the action should be identified. This may be a government or non-state agency.

**f) Supporting partnership agencies**

Whilst one agency holds responsibility for the coordination and the implementation of the activity, there may be a number of other agencies, which can join as supportive, or implementation partners, involved. These should be identified.

**g) Time Frame**

It is necessary to indicate when the action will occur and over what period of time.

**h) Resource Implications**

Each activity will require resources, be they financial, personnel, equipment, support management supervision or buildings. These should be clearly quantified.

**i) Performance Indicators**

Each action should have a set of performance indicators that can be used to monitor and evaluate the degree of success. These indicators need to be measurable with the time period of the activity. (see Annexure I and II)

**10.2 Policy Implementation**

The implementation of NYP will involve the major stakeholders identified in Chapter 9. The commission's main responsibilities are policy formulations, research and advice to the government on Youth Affairs in SL. The role of NYC in respect of NYP implementation shall be to:

- a) Create awareness and promote participation of the public for the implementation of NYP
- b) Ensure the establishment of structures and mechanisms in the government and non-state sectors need for effective policy implementation

- c) Regulate policy adherence through the design of performance indicators and mechanisms for regular reviews and report-back
- d) Establish inter-sectoral networks

Essentially, the Commission's role is one of facilitation, coordination, monitoring and advocacy.

The NYC shall develop the NYAP, recognizing the key stakeholders involved in implementation ensuring that they are integrated into its overall structure and scope of work. Furthermore, the plan will promote practical responses to local and community interests and needs, rather than simply providing a centralized "top-down" perspective.

### **10.3 Policy Review**

The NYC, which is an independent monitoring arm, shall be responsible for the review of the NYP through consultation with key stakeholders and beneficiaries. In general the NYP should be reviewed every five years, although there may be specific policy sectors, which should be, reviewed more frequently (i.e. once a year)

When monitoring and reviewing the NYAP the NYC will be particularly mindful of the manner in which the policy has:

- a) Instilled in all young women and men an awareness of, and respect for, the principles and clear sense of national identity and unity;
- b) Recognized and promoted the participation and contribution of young men and women in the reconstruction, rehabilitation and development of Sri Lanka;
- c) Enabled young women and men to initiate actions which promote their own development and that of their communities and broader society;

- d) Identified the holistic response to major issues facing young men and women respecting the wishes of different ethnic and religious groups; and
- e) Developed families and communities, which are supportive of young women and men, presenting positive role models whilst promoting social justice and national pride.

Beyond the assessment under these broad themes, the review process shall focus on the specific objectives and strategies of the NYP. It will also involve a re-evaluation of the major goals and objectives of the policy along with the identified strategies. The performance indicators of each strategy, which will be outlined in the National Youth Action Plan (NYAP), will be used as a clear and unequivocal instrument of assessment.

Finally, the policy review process should include a self-appraisal of the role and performance of NYC itself in regards to the National Youth Policy.

## **11.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The success of the NYP depends on the commitment of the whole nation, society and each young man and woman. As this policy is the first of its kind for Sri Lanka, it will be a springboard for a holistic, integrated and coordinated approach to youth development. Whilst the target of the NYP is young women and men, the beneficiary is the entire nation.

Whilst the individual strategies of the NYP address specific areas of need or opportunity, the overall goals and objectives of the policy provide a framework for broader development. The overall impact of the policy will be assessed according to the following indicators of effectiveness:

- a) Improvement in qualitative and quantitative indicators related to key priority strategy areas (e.g. unemployment, health, education);
- b) Increase in youth participation in youth development programmes and in society more generally;

- c) Improved coordination and cooperation between the stakeholders of youth development;
- d) Enhance commitment by government, as evidence by greater financial allocations (demonstrated in the youth budget); recognition of the importance of youth issues, the setting of targets, greater awareness and resource allocation by various ministries, and the creation of new institutions and services;
- e) Improved equity and access for youth target groups identified as disadvantaged; and
- f) Increased awareness in society of youth issues as evidenced by increased participation, representation, support and more media focus on young people

The effective implementation of the NYP could only be achieved if all sectors of society recognise the importance of youth development and the vital role they can play. The NYP sets the direction for this work. It is now up to the whole country to work in this direction and to invest in the development of all young women and men.

## 12. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The National Youth Policy makes use of a collection of specific terms, which relate to young women and men and youth affairs. These terms are defined below:

**Arts** refers to, but is not restricted by, all forms and tradition of dance, music, theatre, visual arts, crafts, design, written and oral literature all of which serve as a means for individual; and collective creativity and expression through performance, execution, presentation, exhibition, transmission and study.

**Civil society** refers to all institutions and organisations out side of government, including youth organisations, trade unions, social organisations, non-state organisations, community-based organisations, religious bodies and various community groups.

**Civil society-based organisations (CBO)** refers to organisations or associations which are not –for-private-profit, voluntary bodies, owned and managed by a defined community, usually a locally define community.

**Culture** refers to the dynamic totality of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features which characterise a society or social group. It includes the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions, heritage and beliefs developed over the time and subject to change.

**Disability** is a term which reflects Sri Lanka’s acceptance of the United Nations Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for persons with disabilities.

**Family** a family is defined as individuals who, either by contract or agreement chooses to live together intimately and function as a unit in a social and economic system. The family is the primary social unit which ideally provides care, nurturing and socialisation for its members. It seeks to provide them with physical, economic, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual security. Various forms and structures of a family are acknowledged.

**Governance** refers to the right to participate in and make decisions with regard to local, provincial, national or youth affairs. Politically accountable and participatory governance is critical to the democratisation of the state and society.

**Heritage** is the sum total of wildlife and scenic parks, sites of scientific and historical importance, national monuments, historic buildings, work of art, literature and music, oral tradition and museum collection and their documentation which provides the basis for a shared culture and creativity in the arts.

**Higher Education and Training** is the process which accommodates those students who are engaged in degree, diploma or certificate courses.

**Learnership** it refers to a “mechanism to facilitate the linkage between structured learning and work experience in order to obtain registered qualifications which signifies work readiness”.

**Non-state Institutions (NSI)** refer to not-for-profit bodies which, despite being supported by government and are concerned with the betterment of society and public interest. NSIs are private, self governing, voluntary organisations.

**Young person** refers to males and females aged from 15 – 29 years. Young people in this age group require social, economic and political support to realise their full potentials. Whilst this definition is broad, encompassing a large slice of one’ life, it is understood that this is a time in life when most young people are going through dramatic changes in their life circumstances as they move from childhood to adulthood. Young women and men face many challenges and threats which are unique to them alone.

**Youth development** refers to a process whereby young women and men are able to improve their skills, talents and abilities as well as to extend their intellectual, physical and emotional capacities; it includes the opportunity for young men and women to express themselves and to live full lives in all social, cultural, economic and spiritual spheres. Youth development also refers to engaging young men and women in development activities as participants in the decision making process and as beneficiaries.

**Youth empowerment** refers to the process of increasing personal, inter-personal and political power to enable young men and women or groups of young people to improve their life. It requires the full participation of young men and women in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of decisions determining the function and well-being of the society.

