THE

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

OF

THE PUNTLAND STATE

OF SOMALIA

December, 2008
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Foreword

(by President)
## Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Community Service Organisation</td>
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<td>FGM</td>
<td>Female Genital Mutilation</td>
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<td>FYDP</td>
<td>Five Year Development Plan</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>ICNYP</td>
<td>International Council on National Youth Policy</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Person</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Office</td>
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<td>KABP</td>
<td>Knowledge, Attitudes, Behaviour and Practice</td>
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<td>MDG’s</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
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<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MOWDAFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Women’s Development &amp; Family Affairs</td>
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<td>MOLYAS</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor, Youth &amp; Sports</td>
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<td>NFE</td>
<td>Non Formal Education</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Government Organisation</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
<td>Puntland Aids Commission</td>
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<td>PEPP</td>
<td>Puntland Education Policy Paper</td>
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<td>PLWHA</td>
<td>People Living With HIV or Aids</td>
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<td>PRG</td>
<td>Puntland Regional Government</td>
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<td>RDP</td>
<td>Reconstruction and Development Plan for Somalia</td>
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<td>STI/STD</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infections / Sexually Transmitted Disease</td>
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<td>TB</td>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical &amp; Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children Fund</td>
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<td>NYEAP</td>
<td>National Youth Employment Action Plan</td>
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<td>YEN</td>
<td>Youth Employment Network</td>
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Executive Summary

The National Youth Policy of the Puntland State of Somalia is a statement of national significance. It aims to provide all stakeholders in youth development, namely government ministries, civil society, private sector, community leaders and above all, young men and women with –

- a long term vision for youth development;
- a statement of guiding principles;
- a summary of youth needs, concerns, aspirations and contributions;
- a holistic cross sectoral framework;
- a set of priority strategy themes and interventions;
- a tool for improving coordination and collaboration between all agencies involved with young people;
- a statement on the important rights and responsibilities of young people; and
- a tool to evaluate and monitor progress in youth development.

The National Youth Policy of the Puntland State of Somalia is the result of two years of collaborative efforts by UNICEF Somalia, Ministry of Labor, Youth and Sports, a range of civil society groups and many young Puntlanders. In addition, extensive information collection and consultation by six youth policy regional taskforces has contributed greatly to this statement of intent and commitment.

The six fold goals of the National Youth Policy are namely –

- To provide an integrated, holistic and coordinated framework regarding the development of young men and women in Puntland.
- To indicate priority areas for policy and program interventions.
- To enhance governance, coordination, mainstreaming and management of strategies that target young people.
- To create greater understanding, recognition, and commitment to the challenges, interests and contributions of young people.
- To foster more active participation and leadership by young people in community and national life.
- To encourage attitudes of responsibility and respect by young people towards Islamic principles, their families, Somali traditions and the Somali Nation.

It has adopted the following guiding principles –

- Islamic faith
- National unity, patriotism and pride
- Respect for young people
- Gender equality
- Integrated and holistic development
- Accessibility
- Cooperation and partnership
- Respect for the environment and the nurturing of sustainable practices
- Peace building
- Accountability and transparency

Central to the National Youth Policy are eleven themes chosen as priority strategy areas, each with specific strategic objectives and priority interventions, namely –

1. Education skills and training
2. Youth participation and leadership development
3. Disarmament, security and peace building
4. Sustainable livelihoods and youth employment
5. Recreation, sports, youth centres, arts and culture
6. Healthy lifestyles
7. Sustainable development and the environment
8. Gender and human rights
9. Civic education
10. Immigration and the Diaspora
11. ICT and Globalization.

The National Youth Policy also enunciates a set of rights and responsibilities for young men and women in Puntland.

The Policy envisages that new thinking and structures will be required to ensure effective implementation of recommended strategies and interventions. It proposes the development of a National Youth Action Plan to elaborate ‘what, who, how and when’ details.

In addition, the Policy proposes the creation of –

- a National Youth Policy Coordinating Taskforce;
- a Puntland Youth Network;
- Youth Focal Points in all government ministries;
- a National Youth Development Fund; and

Finally, the Policy has the following vision –

“A society where Puntland young women & men are valued and respected citizens, able to take an active role in a full range of social, cultural, environmental, educational and employment opportunities. They are able to create a peaceful and prosperous nation and can deal with the challenges and opportunities of their world in a confident and aware manner”.
Chapter 1.
Introduction

The Puntland Five Year Development Plan 2007 – 11 (FYDP) provides a snapshot of the situation of young people in Puntland and states clearly the need for a National Youth Policy – ‘Thousands of youth in Puntland State of Somalia are returnees from refugee camps, IDP’s and / or child soldiers from former clan militias. They suffer from illiteracy, unemployment, drug addiction and psychological trauma from war experiences. Most are poor and uneducated and live in an environment unfavourable to providing their socio-economic development needs. Those problems can only be overcome through promoting basic social and technical skills. Youth are also at risk from epidemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS through lack of awareness and health education facilities. The State should plan for better utilisation of the youth potential through systematic and appropriate policies’.

One proposed FYDP outcome is “the integration of youth into the development process” and a proposed FYDP output is “a National Youth Policy”.

The National Youth Policy of the Puntland State of Somalia is a response to the recommendation of the FYDP. It is the first holistic and integrated national policy that targets the needs, concerns, aspirations and contributions of young women and men in Puntland.

The aforementioned Policy represents a declaration and commitment by the State of Puntland with respect to its intentions regarding the priorities, directions and practical support for youth development over the next five years.

As a statement of intent, it seeks to be –

- a long term national vision;
- a set of guiding principles;
- a holistic cross sectoral framework;
- an identification of key strategy areas and priority interventions;
- a summary of youth needs, issues, hopes and capacities;
- a recognition of the importance of young people in community and national life;
- an identification of youth rights and responsibilities
- a catalyst for improved collaboration and partnership between all stakeholders involved in youth development in Puntland; and
- a tool to benchmark and monitor all youth development progress.

Above all, it is hoped that this National Youth Policy represents a message of hope for young Puntlanders. Despite the fact that those under 30 years of age represent 70% of Puntland’s population, young people are the least represented in political, community and economic life due to socio economic barriers, community attitudes and laws. This Policy seeks to change this position by identifying priority interventions and new ways for stakeholder collaboration.

The formulation of this National Youth Policy represents a two year process made possible through the cooperative efforts of UNICEF Somalia, the International Council on National Youth
Policy (ICNYP), Ministry of Labor, Youth & Sports, Ministry of Women Development and Family Affairs and a wide range of civil society organisations. Above all, it is a result of the contribution of ideas and thoughts of many tens of thousands of young Puntlanders. In all regions of Puntland, young men and women gathered together in a variety of settings to express their opinions, share their aspirations and creatively brainstorm about the future. An apt example is from the Nugal region, where the following consultation occurred –

- 40 schools visited and 16,000 students addressed;
- 140 young people involved in dialogues dubbed ‘work towards your dreams’ during half time breaks in live soccer broadcast venues;
- 131 young labourers consulted at four construction sites;
- 300 girls involved in discussions at three Burranbur sessions;
- 180 young scholars gathered at 34 tea houses near mosques engaged in conversations;
- 125 young people within IDP’s were involved in discussions;
- 48 young people from minority groups were consulted;
- 510 young people were engaged in 25 khat chewer ‘bushes’;
- 80 milk vendors and delivery boys, and 30 checkpoint guards contributed their opinions; and finally
- 25,000 young people tuned into a range of radio awareness and talkback programmes.

Besides extensive consultation with young people, the formulation process included the following activities –

- review of national and international youth policy and practice development experiences;
- mapping of current youth development agencies and programs;
- a range of conferences and workshops on various aspects of youth policy development; and
- a study tour involving seven Puntlanders to Jordan to examine in depth their national youth policy formulation and implementation experiences.

This National Youth Policy recognizes that the young people of Puntland face immense challenges in every aspect of their lives. Equally this Policy seeks to acknowledge that young people are a significantly underutilised, under recognized and under respected resource that needs to be mobilized for their positive contribution and creativity for community and national development.
Chapter 2.

Policy Background

2.1 HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS
The Puntland State of Somalia was formed as an autonomous regional administration on 5th May, 1998. It remains committed to being an integral part of a united Somalia. Its Transitional Constitution provides for an anticipated Federal State of Somalia. It occupies an area of 212,510 square kilometres. Population is estimated at 3.7 million, of which 70% is below the age of 30.

Puntland represents a country in post-conflict recovery. Civil war from 1989 – 92 had a direct devastating impact on the economy and physical infrastructure of Puntland and affected the lives of all Puntlanders. It has lead to entire populations being uprooted and tens of thousands of Puntlanders fleeing to neighbouring countries or becoming displaced throughout Somalia.

While most of Puntland has remained relatively stable and peaceful (except for border conflict with Somaliland), the continuing civil war in South and Central Somalia has lead to a massive influx of Somalis from these regions which obviously impacts negatively on the State’s fragile socio-economic recovery. In addition, Puntland has been adversely affected by the 2001-2004 drought and the 2004 tsunami.

The relative peace and security of Puntland since 1992 has enabled the establishment of basic political and administrative institutions, basic social and educational services, an active civil society and a growing private sector.

2.2 PUNTLAND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES
The Puntland Five Year Development Plan 2007 – 11 identifies a range of major developmental challenges which hinder the social, political and economical development of the State, including –

- **Weak public and economic governance institutions** – the majority of public institutions struggle with inadequate financial and human resources and outdated administrative and operational mechanisms.
- **A lack of diversity in the economy with an over emphasis on the livestock sector and limited investment sources** – resulting in a massive unemployment and under employment situation.
- **A limited public infrastructure** – due to the destruction of so many facilities during the civil war.
- **A fragile environment** – due to poor environmental management, recurring drought and desertification.
- **Extensive khat addiction** – which is destroying the family structure of the 15 – 20 % of the population addicted, and causing a financial flow out of the country which is exceeding the annual State budget.
- **The uncertainty over the federal system** – due to containing war and instability in the South and Central regions of Somalia.
• **Extent of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP’s)** – currently one person in five in Puntland is either an IDP or a returnee. Such people are living on the margins of society, with limited resources and employment opportunities.

• **Limited access and use of public services** – less than 10% of young people attend secondary school and use of public health facilities is a mere 21%. For the nomadic population, the figures are only 1% and 8% respectively.

• **Gender bias, stereotyping and discrimination** – cultural, social, biological and economic barriers hinder gender equality.

• **Extent of poverty** – the per capita income of citizens ranges between US$150 – 300. General poverty (using a benchmark of US$2 per day) is estimated to be 80% in rural areas and 61% in urban areas.

An understanding of the above developmental issues and possible responses is fundamental to this National Youth Policy. Young Puntland men and women represent the most vulnerable group in terms of these issues.

### 2.3 YOUTH PROFILE

Due to the poor data availability, any accurate picture of young Puntlanders is impossible to construct. However, drawing upon the number of studies, reports and policies, namely the *Puntland Five Year Development Plan 2007 – 11*, *The National Health and Nutritional Policy for the Puntland State of Somalia*, *Puntland Water Policy*, *Joint United National Programme on HIV/AIDS*, and the *Puntland Education Policy Paper* the following profile provides some insights into the world of young men and women, and their levels of disadvantage –

• The population of Puntland is estimated at 3.7 million people with approximately 70% of the population below the age of 30 years.

• 65% of the population experience a nomadic lifestyle, and 30% of the population live in rapidly growing urban centres.

• A total of 2500 secondary students attend the 10 secondary schools of Puntland with girls constituting only 20% of the total secondary enrolment. 10% of 15 – 18 year olds males are in education and only 5% of 15 – 18 year old females. Despite 59% of the population living in nomadic areas, only 1% of the education population involves nomadic children and youth. Only 150 teachers service the secondary schools, and over 90% are males.

• Sexually transmitted disease rates are currently low compared to other Horn of Africa countries, but growing – HIV prevalence of 2% (2.7% for females, 1.5% for males) and syphilis prevalence of 1.9%.

• 95% of girls and young women experience Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

• Infant Mortality Ratio (IMR) and Child Mortality Ratio (CMR) and Maternal Mortality Ratios (MMR) are amongst the highest in the world – IMR is 73 per 1000 live births, CMR is 115 per 1000 live births and MMR is 1,100 per 100,000 live births.

• Access to safe water is a major determinant of health – only 24% of the population have access to safe water throughout the year, and only 2% of the nomadic community obtain water from protected sources.

• The level of khat addiction is estimated at 15 – 20% of the population.
2.4 YOUTH DEFINITION
This National Youth Policy is directed towards young Puntland women and men who are aged 15 to 30 years old. These years represent a significant stage in life when most young people move from childhood to adulthood, from school to work, from dependence to independence. It is a period which requires special interventions to ensure these transitions are positive and that everyone is able to reach their potential.

This National Youth Policy also acknowledges that the age group 15 – 30 years old are not a homogenous group. Young Puntlanders experience different circumstances and opportunities depending on their socio-economic status, gender, abilities and geographic location. While this Policy seeks to provide a vision, framework and set of critical interventions that targets all 15 – 30 years of age, it is recognised that certain groups of young people deserve special attention, namely nomadic youth, young people with disabilities, unemployed young people, marginalised young people, out of school young people and internally displaced young people.

2.5 POLICY CONTEXT
This National Youth Policy of Puntland is influenced by a number of international and national policies and declarations, firstly, national statements, namely –


- **Transitional Constitution of Puntland Regional Government** – which provides a comprehensive statement about the political and governance structures of the country, as well as the rights of citizenship, including specific mention of both women’s rights and children’s rights.

- **Puntland Five Year Development Plan 2007-2011** – whose main purpose ‘being to prioritise in a concise and methodical way, the short-term, medium-term and long-term needs of the State in all sectors, to establish targets for developmental goals, and set up a strategic plan to overcome barriers to achieve the desired developmental goals.’ Besides identifying major development challenges, national vision, major economic and general ‘windows of opportunity’ and government priorities, it does outline priority youth outcomes in terms of the integration of youth into the development process and healthy and disease free youth power.

- **The National Health and Nutritional Policy for the Puntland State of Somalia (2007)** – the overall goal of the this statement is to provide a framework strategy for Puntland to attain the highest possible health status and well being of the individual, the family, the community and the society as a whole. It seeks to achieve equitable, affordable, sustainable, promotional, preventative, curative and rehabilitative health services. Given the vulnerability of young people in regard to many health challenges e.g. child and maternal mortality, sexual disease, khat and drug addiction and youth health services are a national priority.

- **Puntland Education Policy Paper (PEPP)** – which resulted from a comprehensive analysis and review of the Puntland system of education. It proposes a framework and strategies to guide the development of the education sector for the next 10 years.
• Gender Policy Framework and Gender Budgeting in Puntland Context – developed by the Ministry of Women’s Development and Family Affairs (MOWDAFA) this statement provides an invaluable overview of the roles and challenges of women in Puntland life. It provides recommendations for enhancing their contribution and tackling the legacies of gender inequality and discrimination.

Secondly, this National Youth Policy reflects the direction of a variety of international declarations and documents spanning 45 years that have stressed the importance of, and given directions regarding the development of specific youth policies. Key documents include –

• The World Programme of Action for Youth to Year 2000 and Beyond (1995) – indentified the ten critical areas regarding policy and strategy development for young people, namely education employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure time activities, girls and young women and participation. Later, the UN added five new areas – globalisation, ICT, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and intergenerational issues.
• Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes (1998) – by Ministers of Youth which emphasised the need to formulate comprehensive and cross-sectoral national youth policies.
• African Youth Charter (2006) – a statement by the Assembly of African Union which stated the need for every African country to develop a National Youth Policy, and their essential elements. This statement also outlined the rights and duties of young people.

Finally, this Policy responds to the thrusts of several key international development statements that are relevant to youth development and protection, namely –

• Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – this Convention is the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history. The CRC is a globally agreed upon set of non-negotiable standards and agreements. It spells out the basic human rights for all children – without discrimination. It emphasises that all children have the right to survival; to develop to their fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family culture and social life. Recognition by Puntland and its use as a benchmark is fundamental to this National Youth Policy. The Transitional National Government signed the CRC in May 2002.
• Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s) – In September 2000, world leaders attending a United Nations Millennium Summit, committed themselves to this global development agenda. The MDG agenda focuses on the issues fundamental to this National Youth Policy including combating poverty, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and gender discrimination
Chapter 3.
Vision, Guiding Principles & Goals

3.1 VISION
The vision statement below summarises well the contribution of young Puntlanders and the environment required for them to reach their full potential.

A society where Puntland young women & men are valued and respected citizens, able to take an active role in a full range of social, cultural, environmental, educational and employment opportunities. They are able to create a peaceful and prosperous nation and can deal with the challenges and opportunities of their world in a confident and aware manner.

3.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES
Guiding principles represent the fundamental core values upon which this Policy’s directions and priority interventions are built. Throughout the formulation process, there was consensus about the following guiding principles, namely –

Islam Faith – Adherence to deeply rooted principles embodied in the Islamic faith and the teachings of the Quran.

National Unity, Patriotism and Pride – Belief in loyalty to the unity of Somalia, its cultural traditions and principles outlined in articles of the Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic.

Respect For Young People – Belief that young people are vital stakeholders in the development of Puntland and need to be respected for their unique assets and contributions. This Policy views young women and men as agents for positive change rather than beneficiaries and advocates their active participation in decision making about plans and processes which affect them.

Gender Equality – Recognition of justice and equity between men and women in accordance with Islamic Shari’a. This Policy promotes a gender inclusive approach to youth development and advocates for the elimination of gender discrimination and acts of violence against women.

Integration and Holistic Development – The Policy focuses on an integrated, cross sectoral and interdisciplinary approach to youth development, and the mainstreaming of youth issues within national policies and program initiatives.

Accessibility – Commitment to young Puntlanders being able to access youth programs and services, regardless of gender, physical ability, geographical location, social economic or cultural circumstances. This Policy stresses the need to include minority and marginal groups.

Cooperation and Partnership – Acknowledgement of the need for collaboration between all stakeholders in youth development, including government ministries, civil society organisations, international development organisations, the private sector and young people.
Respect for the Environment and Nurturing Sustainable Practices – Recognition of the fragility of the Puntland’s environment and the need to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Peace Building – Commitment to processes and programs that builds lasting peace and security in Puntland.

Accountability and Transparency – Adherence to the highest standards of accountability and transparency by all agencies and individuals involved in youth development services and programs.

3.3 POLICY GOALS
Policy goals are broad and qualitative statements that indicate the outcomes which the National Youth Policy of the Puntland State of Somalia hopes to achieve. Building upon the above vision statement and guiding principles, the following six goals have been adopted, namely;

1. To provide an integrated, holistic and coordinated framework regarding the development of young men and women in Puntland.
2. To indicate priority areas for policy and program interventions.
3. To enhance governance, coordination, mainstreaming and management of strategies that target young people.
4. To create greater understanding, recognition, and commitment to the challenges, interests and contributions of young people.
5. To foster more active participation and leadership by young people in community and national life.
6. To encourage attitudes of responsibility and respect by young people towards Islamic principles, their families, Somali traditions and the Somali Nation.
Chapter 4.
Priority Strategy Areas

The National Youth Policy of the Puntland State of Somalia provides a framework for all agencies and organisations working for youth development. Puntland young men and women face immense challenges and potential opportunities. This Policy identifies eleven key strategy themes, each with a set of priority interventions.

4.1 EDUCATION SKILLS & TRAINING

*The Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic* states clearly in article 24 – “*Education shall be recognised as a basic right for all Somali citizens. All citizens shall have a right to free primary and secondary education. The Government shall give priority to the promotion, expansion and propagation of public education. Education shall be for the interest of the people and shall be extended throughout the whole country...*”.

Quality education and training is a prerequisite for sustainable social and economic development. In the words of the Puntland Education Policy Paper (PEPP 2007:1) – “*An educated population has the potential to contribute to economic development, social cohesion and to the building of a democratic culture based on Islam principles. Moreover, education will enable Puntland to participate in international affairs more effectively*”.

This Youth Policy underlines the centrality that an improved education and training system plays in achieving the potential of young Puntlanders and building society’s wellbeing. However, education and training will only perform this role if the major current educational constraints are addressed.

The **Critical Issues** for this priority strategy area are –

- Limited and unequal access to education
- Low attendance rates
- Significant numbers of children who have missed an education due to the civil war
- Poor quality of education
- Low literacy rates
- A gender insensitive school curriculum
- Lack of schools
- Inadequate management and planning capacity
- Limited financial base
- Lack of national curriculum
- Poor accessibility and retention of young women
- Student hunger
- High school drop out rates
- Lack of teacher training institutions
- Lack of female teachers in schools
- Lack of qualified teachers
- Low remuneration for teachers
- Student exclusion due to high costs
• Low ICT focus
• Pressures of family life prohibiting school attendance
• General low community appreciation of the value of education
• Alcohol and Khat abuse
• Limited vocational training facilities
• Costs of books and educational material
• Lack of educational system in rural areas
• High unemployment levels for graduates from schools and tertiary institutions
• Low enrolment in NFE Programs.

Strategic Objective 1:
Continue the emphasis on building a quality education system.

Priority Interventions:
1. Develop and implement a National Curriculum.
2. Support continuous teacher evaluation and improvements to their remuneration.
3. Strengthen the infrastructure of educational institutions and acquisition of instructional resources.

Strategic Objective 2:
Enhance the educational opportunities for all young Puntlanders to all levels of the educational system which is commensurate with their interests and abilities.

Priority Interventions:
1. Achieve universal free primary schooling system.
2. Raise the attendance participation of secondary students to at least 20%.
3. Expand the number of places within the tertiary education sector targeting 19 – 22 year olds.
4. Focus on increasing the educational access of young traditionally disadvantaged in the educational system – nomadic and fishing communities, learners with special needs and economically disadvantaged.
5. Introduce mobile schools in rural areas.
6. Introduce a school nutritional and feeding program in all schools.

Strategic Objective 3:
Ensure gender equity in educational participation.

Priority Interventions:
1. Develop awareness campaigns targeting parents and community, political and religious leaders about the importance of education for girls and young women.
2. Develop and implement a plan to increase the number of qualified female teachers.
4. Develop non formal education options as an alternative for out of school youth.
5. Raise the status of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and strengthen the trade training opportunities for students.
6. Encourage the spouses of girls married at an early age to allow their wives to continue their education.

Strategic Objective 4:
Review and revise the school curriculum to reflect the values and economic needs and opportunities of Puntland.
Priority Interventions:
1. Strengthen the infrastructure of educational institutions and acquisition of instructional resources.
2. Place greater emphasis on ICT training through new curriculum and equipment.
3. Introduce training in self-employment including school entrepreneurship programs.
4. Introduce career education services.
5. Create stronger educational linkages with the private sector.

4.2 YOUTH PARTICIPATION & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
A recurring theme throughout the regional consultations conducted as part of the youth consultation process was the call by the young people for greater involvement in community and national affairs. All major international declarations relating to youth development and empowerment stress the need for a national environment that enables young people’s active participation and leadership to flourish.

The contribution and active citizenship of young Puntlanders needs to be recognised and fostered. In particular, the PEPP proposes ‘a more prominent role for the education system in instilling a sense of participation and civic responsibility to Somalia in general and Puntland in particular’.

The Critical Issues for this priority strategy theme include –

- Lack of recognition of, and respect for youth contribution
- Recognition of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Community service and volunteerism
- Intergenerational relationships
- Importance of building national patriotism
- Lack of citizenship education in the curriculum
- Fighting, clanism and tribalism
- Youth rights and responsibilities
- Lack of youth involvement in government and parliamentary life
- Cultural restrictions on participation
- Lack of opportunities to participate.
- Absence of a Puntland youth network
- Lack of recognition from Puntland ministries and international/local NGOs
- Poor capacity of youth organizations.

Strategic Objective 1:
Strengthen the awareness of young people and the wider community regarding active and responsible citizenship.

Priority Interventions:
1. Strengthen school curriculum relating to citizenship and Islamic values education
2. Encourage initiatives which engage young people in the practice of mutual respect and tolerance, including gender equality.
3. Provide forums and training opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills.
4. Identify and implement programs and actions that build national patriotism.
Strategic Objective 2:
Provide support for young people to actively participate in community life.

Priority Interventions
1. Encourage and support programs that encourage and offer community service, volunteerism, and youth peer support.
2. Encourage youth representation at all levels of government, non-government and community decision making –
   - use of youth advisory panels;
   - reduction in the age of parliamentary representation; and
   - creation of a youth monitoring and evaluation panel for the National Youth Policy.
3. Instigate an annual National Youth Awards Program that recognises the contribution of young people to community and national life.
4. Extend the Small Grants Scheme of UN agencies to encourage more youth designed and led community projects.
5. Campaign for a lowering of the 25 year age rule for members of parliament.
6. Build and enhance the capacity of youth organisations / groups.
7. Establish a Puntland youth network which actively promotes awareness and empowerment of young people in Puntland.
8. Identify a National Day for young people in Puntland.

Strategic Objective 3:
Recognise the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the fulfilment of its obligations.

Priority Interventions:
1. Encourage Somalia to become a signatory to the CRC.

4.3 DISARMAMENT, SECURITY & PEACE BUILDING
Young people expressed during the regional consultation process an understanding the fundamental need to achieve disarmament, security and peace building.

The Critical Issues for this priority strategy area –

- Child / youth soldiers and demobilisation
- Piracy and ransom seeking
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Instability and war in the South and Central
- Puntland / Somaliland border conflict
- Internally Displaced Persons (IDP’s)
- Need for alternative employment and training opportunities
- Involvement of young people in the peace building process
- Mugging by unemployed young people
- Clanism and land disputes
- Boredom
- Inflation
- Khat and drug addiction
- Ignorance
Poverty.

**Strategic Objective 1:**
Implement a national disarmament program.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Involve young people in a process of designing and implementing a national disarmament program, peace reconciliation and conflict resolutions.
2. Provide alternative training and employment programs targeting child/youth soldiers.
3. Provide skills building and working opportunities to encourage the disengagement of youth in armed activities.

**Strategic Objective 2:**
Develop a campaign to discourage piracy and ransom.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Plan and implement a campaign to lower the appeal of piracy and ransom taking centred around religious awareness.
2. Implement education, training and job creation alternatives.

**Strategic Objective 3:**
Develop awareness of peace building through campaigns.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Motivate youth organizations to be involved in peace building programs.
2. Add to the national educational curriculum peace building subjects.
3. Initiate an annual youth peace conference.
4. Create a youth organization that is dedicated to, and works for peace.

### 4.4 SUSTAINABLE LIVLIHOODS & YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Throughout the extensive regional consultation process, unemployment and the need for job creation initiatives was highlighted as the issue of greatest concern to young Puntlanders. Youth unemployment levels (including for secondary and tertiary graduates) is extremely high. Achieving decent employment opportunities for young people is a critical factor in poverty alleviation and the country’s economic development.

In responding to the employment challenge for young Puntlanders, this National Youth Policy highlights the importance of –

- recognising that high youth unemployment is a consequence of insufficient job creation and diversity in the economy as a whole,
- acknowledges the connection between factors like peace and security, private sector involvement, relevant education and training experiences and employment generation; and
- creating and implementing a National Youth Employment Action Plan (NYEAP).

The **Critical Issues** for this Policy area include –

- Limited economic activity areas
- Limited job creation initiatives
- Lack of central government assistance
- High youth unemployment rates
- Lack of a National Youth Employment Action Plan
- Lack of employment counselling and support in schools and educational institutions
- Limited skills and training opportunities
- Gender discrimination, bias and stereotyping
- Lack of connection between education and the private sector
- Limited TVET facilities and programs
- Limited mobilisation of Diaspora as an investment resource
- No support for self employment options / sustainable livelihood.
- Insecurity and conflict
- High inflation
- Migration of young people out of country.
- Negative impact of the Tsunami disaster (2004) on fishing communities including loss of boats and equipment
- Youth segregation in job/employment opportunities
- Lack of national youth development advocacy programs
- Lack of youth employment coordination body at national level
- Weak labour department.

**Strategic Objective 1:**
Design and implement a National Youth Employment Action Plan.

**Priority Interventions:**

1. Learn from international best practice in terms of sustainable livelihoods and youth employment
2. Adapt as a framework for the NYEAP the structure as advocated by the Youth Employment Network, a group convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations, Director General of the International Labour Organisation and President Of The World Bank, namely,
   - Employability – investing in education and vocational training for young people and improving the impact of those investments,
   - Equal Opportunities – giving young women the same opportunities as young men;
   - Entrepreneurship – making it easier for young people to start and run businesses; and
   - Employment Creation – placing employment creation at the centre of macroeconomic policy.
3. Promote and support youth self employment as a job option through the creation of education projects, training courses and a youth self employment fund.
4. Initiate projects to explore training opportunities and youth employment in specific sectors – ICT, farming, fisheries, arts and crafts.
5. Explore ways to improve connection between education and training institutions and the labor markets including the introduction of career education and counselling.
6. Target school drop outs through programs that will link them more effectively with the labor market.
7. Identify and promote opportunities for Diaspora giving and investments that specifically targets youth employment opportunities.
8. Establish a youth coordination body to oversee the implementation of the National Youth Employment Action Plan.
9. Develop programs that raise awareness and encourage young people in self reliance, citizenship, nationalism, self employment, and national ownership.
4.5 RECREATION, SPORTS, YOUTH CENTRES, ARTS & CULTURE
The Puntland Youth Policy strongly endorses the need to increase the number and diversity of sports, recreation, arts and cultural development opportunities for young women and men. Such activities contribute to building healthy lifestyles, leadership development and skills enhancement.

The Critical Issues for this priority strategy area –
- Lack of female recreation spaces
- Lack of youth multi-purpose centres
- Limited opportunity for young people with disabilities
- Limited investment in sport and youth centres
- Lack of stadiums / limited recreational facilities
- Lack of public libraries
- Lack of children’s playgrounds / parks & outdoor space
- Limited sports competitions
- Grabbing of land by property developers
- Poor urban planning
- Lack of a national museum to promote the history of Somali among young people
- Limited cultural events.

Strategic Intervention 1:
Design and implement a Multi-Purpose Youth and Sports Centre Program

Priority Interventions:
1. Instigate an Infrastructure Development Project that results in establishment of multi-purpose youth and sports centres throughout Puntland over the five year period.
2. Create linkages between schools and youth and sports centre programs to maximise usage of facilities.
3. Create professional and volunteer youth and sports leadership training programs to ensure centres have trained personnel.
4. Instigate media awareness programs to raise awareness amongst parents and community and religious leaders about the importance of recreational and sporting programs to the personal development of both young women and men.
5. Develop sporting associations and competitions at local, regional and national levels.
6. Design and implement a strategy to increase dramatically the number of female recreation spaces (centres, playgrounds).
7. Establish a network of youth centres throughout Puntland.
8. Allocate public recreational spaces in towns and districts.
9. Promote and encourage the participation of the nomadic youth in sporting activities (especially athletics).

Strategic Objective 2:
Enhance the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of young people regarding Somali culture, history and the Islamic faith.

Priority Interventions:
1. Foster school and community opportunities for learning and expressing cultural traditions
2. Explore and develop employment projects relating to the field of traditional arts and culture.
3. Foster the creation of local libraries.
4. Create a national museum in Puntland.
5. Instigate and promote annual cultural events e.g. ‘National Cultural Week’.
6. Integrate Islamic education is schools and media.

4.6 HEALTHY LIFESTYLES
Health and healthy lifestyles is a major issue of concern to Puntland young men and women. Overall, health services are totally inadequate. It is estimated that over 90% of the health infrastructure was seriously damaged and most equipment and supplies looted during and after the civil war. This has been compounded with the loss of most health practitioners. The National Health and Nutrition Policy for the Puntland State of Somalia refer to the current provision of health services as ‘donor driven emergency’ health care service delivery. Within such challenging circumstances, it is difficult to provide specific youth health services. Yet children and young people represent the most vulnerable target group in terms of critical health threats – sexual diseases, tuberculosis, khat and drug abuse and sexual violence.

This National Youth Policy of Puntland fully endorses the vision and recommended interventions of the National Health Policy for the Puntland State of Somalia (February, 2007) and seeks to strengthen these strategies that are youth specific.

The key health issue for young people during the consultation phase was khat addiction followed by concerns about HIV/AIDS and malnutrition. Khat addiction is identified by Puntland’s Five Year Development Plan as one of the country’s major challenges. The possible spread of HIV/AIDS in Puntland has the potential to erode the health gains of the last decade. While HIV/AIDS infection is considerably lower than Puntland’s African neighbours, it has the potential to greatly affect the most productive component of the population, namely young men and women.

The Critical Issues for this theme are –
- Overall poor health status of the population
- Khat and drug addiction
- Low productivity of health workers
- A doctor patient ration of 1 to 35,000
- Low investment in health – only 2.8% of national budget
- Low use of public health services
- Gender bias and discrimination
- Growing risk of HIV/AIDS epidemic
- High rates of proven curable diseases – diarrhoea, respiratory infections, tuberculosis
- Limited health promotion, education and prevention programs
- FGM prevalence of 95%
- Stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS
- High malnutrition levels
- Lack of school nutrition
- Violence against young women including sexual violence
- Early marriage
- Limited awareness of preventative health measures
- Inaccessibility of health services
- Lack of current and conclusive data, research and analysis on youth health issues
- Cost of health services
- Negative social and cultural norms
- Limited health services to nomadic people and internally displaced persons
- Untrained, unqualified business operators e.g. public pharmacies
- Lack of waste management system
- Traditional practitioners
- Expired, poor quality drugs
- Inadequate supply of clean water
- Lack of proper primary health care
- Psychological problems.

**Strategic Objective 1:**
Enable all young people to be able to access information, education and counselling services in the areas of youth health priorities.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Create a youth health service that provides preventative health support in the form of information, education and counselling services in such areas as reproductive health, drug abuse, sexual abuse and sexual transmitted diseases.
2. Scale up health and nutrition feeding initiatives within schools.
3. Campaign to eradicate harmful traditional practices, e.g., female genital mutilation (FGM).
4. Generate improved strategic information and data about youth health status and challenges.
5. Improve access of health services to nomadic youth and other disadvantaged youth populations.
6. Promote initiatives that seek to reduce FGM, domestic violence, early marriage, rape and other forms of violence against young women.

**Strategic Objective 2:**
Campaign to reduce khat chewing and smoking dependency.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Use media campaigns and peer education programs to raise awareness of the hazards of khat.
2. Pass legislation and by laws to limit khat chewing and smoking
3. Ban smoking and khat chewing in all educational, youth and sporting institutions.

**Strategic Objective 3:**
Prevent and control the spread of HIV/AIDS and mitigate against their social impacts.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Fully endorse and support the Joint UN Team on AIDS (UNAIDS) work plan, and strengthening the work of the Puntland’s AIDS Commission.
2. Regularly gather, analyse and disseminate information about the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
3. Target the most at risk populations with high quality prevention, treatment and core services.
4. Upgrade training of youth health service providers to work efficiently with the most at risk populations.
5. Campaign against the stigma and discrimination that young people living with HIV/AIDS suffer.
7. Strengthen awareness, capacity and advocacy skills amongst NGO’s, local government, religious, political and community leaders regarding greater HIV prevention and support.
8. Develop school and non formal education curriculum support materials and services.
10. Enhance the distribution of condom strategy.
11. To increase the number of VCT centres and strengthen the capacity of the staff and services.

4.7 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & THE ENVIRONMENT
Sustainable development and the environment is a growing concern of young Puntlanders. The consultation processes strongly endorsed the need for more focus and activities related to climate change, soil degradation, water conservation, charcoal use, deforestation, recycling, plastic bag elimination, heritage protection and other environmental preservation activities. Young people recognise and understand issues like overgrazing and unchecked soil degradation and the resultant reduction in the capacity of the land to support increasing human needs.

The African Youth Charter calls upon African governments in their policies and actions to ‘ensure the use of sustainable methods to improve the lives of young people such that measures instituted do not jeopardise opportunities for future generations’.

The Critical Issues for this priority strategy area include –
- Reality of climate change
- Lack of environmental studies in schools
- Destructive behaviours towards environment
- Environmental degradation
- Destruction of water catchment and marine life
- Plastic bag plague
- The strong interest by young people in the environment
- Charcoal production and tree destruction.

Strategic Objective 1:
Enhance environmental knowledge and awareness among young Puntlanders.

Priority Interventions:
1. Enhance school curriculum in regard to environmental education and project work.
2. Introduce teacher in service training related to environmental education and project work.
3. Develop youth media campaigns to promote environmental awareness and action by young people.
4. Promote and support environment hobbies and pastimes by young people.

Strategic Objective 2:
Encourage the active involvement and leadership by young people in environmental initiatives.

Priority Interventions:
1. Initiate special days, events and awards that encourage and celebrate youth involvement in sustainable development and environmental projects.
2. Encourage young people in the promotion of community environmental practices.
3. Foster youth community service and volunteer initiatives based on environmental protection and enhancement.
4. Provide opportunities for young Puntlanders to be represented at MENA and international youth environmental events.
5. Organise regular national and regional youth forums on sustainable development and the environment.
6. Foster alternative job creation initiatives within the areas of recycling, plastic bag alternatives, reforestation and heritage conservation.

4.8 GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS

The Transitional Constitution of Puntland Regional Government, explicitly advocates the rights of women in Articles 18 and 23 – “This Constitution ensures the women’s rights of independence, socio-economic and political rights that is not forbidden in the Islamic Shari’a”. A long term development goal for the Puntland Five Year Development (FYDP) is to “provide equal opportunities for women to develop and live in dignity, eliminate all discriminatory practices and empower them to better contribute in nation building and development”.

The Constitution also underlies the importance of human rights for children (Article 19), orphans, handicapped and mentally affected (Article 20), social equality (Article 23), freedom of faith (Article 24), freedom of speech (Article 25), right to vote (Article 26) and rights to personal freedom (Article 32).

This National Youth Policy underlines these human rights as expressed in the Constitution and strongly advocates for young men and women to be accorded these rights. In particular, the lack of ratification and implementation of the Charter on the Rights of the Child is a fundamental action recommended by the National Youth Policy. Secondly, this Policy contains a statement on the rights and responsibilities of young people (see Chapter 7).

The Critical Issues for this priority strategy area include –

- Lack of recognition of the Charter of the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Gender discrimination, bias and stereotyping
- Lack of rights education and awareness
- Discrimination and stigma and HIV/AIDS sufferers
- Discrimination against minority groups and young people with disabilities
- Lack of political rights for young people
- Need for tolerance and mutual respect
- Early marriage
- Lack of female recreation spaces.

Strategic Objective 1:

Identify and focus on specific actions which deny young women enjoying their rights to health, recreational, educational and employment opportunities.

Priority Interventions:

1. Research the gender inclusiveness of policies and practices related to health, recreational, educational and employment opportunities.
2. Instigate specific initiatives to strengthen the participation of young women in –
   - health services;
   - secondary and tertiary education;
   - sport and recreational activities; and
   - employment.
3. Legislate against FGM and early marriage.
Strategic Objective 2:
Support young Puntlanders to become aware of their rights and obligations, and to experience such rights and obligations.

Priority Interventions:
1. As a matter of priority, ratify the Charter on the Rights of the Child.
2. Develop youth friendly materials on human rights and obligations.
3. Include gender and human rights within citizenship school curriculum.
4. Instigate national and regional forums on gender and human rights.
5. Regularly review legislation and laws regarding the protection of children and young people, and update accordingly.
6. Encourage and support initiatives which engage young people in the practice of tolerance and mutual respect.

4.9 CIVIC EDUCATION
Civic education relates to the awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Currently no such curriculum activity exists within Puntland’s education system, and limited civic education activities exist within broader community life. This Policy considers citizenship and its awareness a fundamental process in developing young people to become active participants in the democratic life of Puntland.

It strongly endorses the proposal of the Puntland Education Policy Paper, namely, ‘a more prominent role for the education system in instilling a sense of patriotism and civil responsibilities to Somalia in general and Puntland in particular…’.

The Critical Issues relating to civic education include;
- Lack of citizenship / values education within school curriculum
- Lack of civic education materials.

Strategic Objective 1:
Develop appropriate school and community based civic education curriculum, resource materials and awareness activities.

Priority Interventions:
1. Develop and implement values education/citizenship component of the school curriculum.
2. Create community opportunities for the discussion by young people of civic/citizenship issues.
3. Strengthen the media coverage of themes related to citizenship.
4. Support youth programs that strengthen the principles and practice of active citizenship by young people in community and national life.
5. Build upon the experiences of Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordon and Bahrain and introduce a Youth Parliament program in Puntland.
6. Utilise religious gatherings to promote the principles and priorities of citizenship.

4.10 IMMIGRATION & THE DIASPORA
Puntland continues to experience significant out immigration of population, fleeing poverty, lack of employment and continuing war related stress. Many are illegal immigrants who take extreme risks to reach their dream of a better life. Most are young people, who represent a continuing
‘brain drain’ for the country. It is estimated that 10 – 15 boats daily are attempting the travel to Yemen alone. Many young Somalis perish in their quest for a new life. The root causes of this continuous immigration need confronting, and relate specifically to interventions recommended in 4.3 (‘Disarmament, Security and Peace Building’) and 4.4 (‘Sustainable Livelihoods and Youth Employment’) above.

The Diaspora represents a significant asset resource and opportunity for Puntland’s reconstruction. The Somali Diaspora now exceeds one million persons and many are committed to assisting their home country. Mobilisation of this resource, both in terms of technical skills and financial contribution, needs coordination and a specific strategy. However, with this asset comes the challenge of accommodating possible new values that the Diaspora and their offspring naturally have adopted through their years of life in Western countries.

The Critical Issues relating to immigration and Diaspora include;
- Underlying root causes of illegal immigrants
- ‘Brain drain’
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Diaspora – technical and financial resources, networking opportunities, erosion of culture, improper investment
- Opportunities for better global linkages and networking.

Strategic Objective 1:
Focus on an alternative options for would be illegal migrants.

Priority Interventions:
1. Implement the NYEAP.
2. Develop labor market relevant TVET options.
3. Engage young people in designing alternative futures.

Strategic Objective 2:
Mobilise the resource capacity of the Diaspora.

Priority Interventions:
1. Convene an annual conference of the Diaspora with a focus on youth development initiatives.
2. Encourage young Somali members of the Diaspora to return back to Puntland to utilise their newly acquired skills in short and long term projects.
3. Promote the National Youth Policy Development Fund (see below) to the Diaspora and encourage them to contribute.
4. Create a Puntland youth website that targets young Somali’s both in Puntland and part of the Diaspora.

4.11 ICT & GLOBALISATION
This Policy strongly endorses the need for young people to become beneficiaries of the growing ICT industry sector in Puntland. ICT is an integral part of the world of today’s young people, including young Puntlanders. The uptake in the communications industries illustrates the popularity and job creation potential of this sector. Its ability to provide relevant training and employment, and connect young people to the global world needs to be accessed in creative, yet culturally sensitive ways.
The **Critical Issues** for this priority strategy area –

- Lack of ICT Policy
- Lack of ICT focus in school curriculum
- Lack of access to ICT
- Significant job creation potential of ICT
- Internet – Link to wider world, impact on traditional culture.
- Popularity of radio programs and youth broadcasting

**Strategic Objective 1:**
Develop ICT as a key focus in school curriculum reform.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Develop appropriate curriculum for the teaching of ICT at all levels of education.
2. Develop and implement a plan for equipping schools with appropriate technology.

**Strategic Objective 2:**
Focus on ICT as a key youth job creation area.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Undertake in cooperation with ILO a study of the ICT sector regarding job creation development.
2. With private sector support, develop new appropriate TVET training options related to ICT.
3. Encourage youth self employment initiatives related to the ICT sector.
4. Create internet centres within youth centre facilities.

**Strategic Objective 3:**
Strengthen initiatives related to youth and media.

*Priority Interventions:*
1. Expand opportunities for youth broadcasting programs.
2. Support the employment of young journalists in all forms of media.
Chapter 5.
Priority Target Groups

The Puntland Youth Policy represents a vision and framework for the development of all young Puntlanders. However, it is recognised that there are eight groups of young people who require additional focus to ensure their full benefit from planned interventions, namely –

- Nomadic youth;
- Young people with disabilities;
- Young People Living Aids (PLWA);
- Young women and girls;
- Young unemployed;
- Marginalised young people;
- Out of school young people; and
- Internally displaced young People.
Chapter 6.
Policy Implementation & Coordination

This National Youth Policy is built upon a number of foundation beliefs. Firstly, the guiding principle of cooperation and partnership – “acknowledgment of the need for collaboration between all stakeholders in youth development, including government ministries, civil society organisations, international development organisations, the private sector and young people.” Secondly, the guiding principle of integration and holistic development – “focus on an integrated, cross sectoral and interdisciplinary approach to youth development and the mainstreaming of youth issues within national policies and program initiatives”. Thirdly, this Policy recognises the need to achieve efficient utilisation of the scarce resources available.

Based upon these beliefs, this Policy recommends –

1. Upon approval of the National Youth Policy by the Government of Puntland, a National Youth Action Plan be formulated which elaborates the “what, who, how, and when?” details.

2. A National Youth Policy Coordinating Taskforce be constituted to implement the Policy. This Taskforce should comprise representation from all key stake holder groups. The Government of Puntland needs to allocate a staffing and operating budget. The model of the Puntland AIDS Commission (PAC), located in the office of the Vice President maybe a model to emulate. The Taskforce will ensure coordination to avoid overlap of activities and duplication of efforts.

3. A Puntland Youth Network be instigated to enable a national forum/networking organisation of all civil society groups working in youth development. This would ensure that the non government sector is able to speak and function as one voice to fulfil their commitments to youth policy implementation. In addition to acting as a platform for information and experience exchange, the network will also advocate youth rights and raise funds.

4. All ministries appoint a Youth Focal Point – a staff person who can focus on coordinating the response of the ministry to the specific needs and issues of young people.

5. A National Youth Development Fund be created that can attract, manage and allocate funds contributed from government, international aid groups, private sector and the Diaspora. Such a fund should be managed by an independent Board comprising respected Somali citizen. The key function of the Fund would be to respond to initiatives related to the priority intervention of the National Youth Policy. Young people need to be represented on the Board.

6. Establishment of a National Youth Policy Monitoring Task Group. The purpose of this Group would be to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Youth Policy. Young Puntlanders need to be prominent members of this body.

Finally, it is recommended that the life of this Policy is four years, and prior to its termination, the formulation process be reinitiated so the Policy can be updated.
Chapter 7.
Rights & Responsibilities of Young People

All Puntland young people enjoy the citizen rights and obligations as outlined in the Transitional Constitution of Puntland Regional Government and the Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic. Chapter five of the Transitional Federal Charter outlines the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Somalis including human rights and dignity; equality before the law; right to life, personal liberty and security; labor; right to assembly and freedom to strike; education; protection of family; social welfare; economy; and the right to establish social organisations and political parties.

This National Youth Policy further advocates that all young Puntlanders irrespective of their age, gender, ability, socio economic status or geographic location have a right to enjoy –

- their youthfulness free from all forms of violence, war, abuse, exploitation and degradation;
- meaningful education and employment opportunities;
- good health; and
- participation in decision making about issues that affect their lives

Equally, this National Youth Policy calls upon young men and women to exercise responsibility and commitment to building a more peaceful, prosperous, caring and inclusive Puntland. This can be achieved by young people through –

- respecting Islam and the teachings of the Quran;
- honouring the tradition, culture and unity of Somalia;
- acknowledging gender and human rights;
- pursuing self development to the best of their abilities;
- respecting law and order and the property of other citizens;
- seeking healthy lifestyle choices;
- supporting vulnerable and marginalised members of society and opposing discrimination of all forms;
- protecting and preserving the environment; and
- participating actively in positive community and national development.

Finally, this National Youth Policy calls upon all Puntlanders to –

- respect the contribution of young people in community and national development;
- act as positive role models to young people; support the spiritual, intellectual, cultural, emotional and physical wellbeing of young women and men;
- provide equal opportunities to young people irrespective of their gender;
- assist young people to reach their full potential; and
- encourage young people’s active involvement in all spheres of Puntland life.
Chapter 8.

Conclusion

Young people in Puntland live in a changing world. They are a significant and most valuable segment of Puntland society and are most vulnerable in terms of employment, health, war and globalisation. Throughout the formulation stage of this National Youth Policy, these young men and women articulated clearly the barriers they perceived which prevented their full and creative contribution to the rebuilding of Puntland, namely –

- limited provision of youth friendly and relevant services in the critical areas of education, employment, health and recreation;
- lack of respect by adults for their ideas and contributions;
- lack of youth participation in policy development and implementation;
- poor cross-sectoral planning and implementation of youth services;
- non prioritisation of youth issues in key government ministries; and
- no specific youth policies and legislation.

Yet their willingness to contribute not just their insights and ideas to policy development, but their practical involvement is making policy become reality was very inspiring. This commitment needs mobilising.

Formulation of the National Youth Policy has been the easy task. Now begins the real task – implementation.
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