



Ministry of Education, National Heritage, Culture & Arts and Youth & Sports

## NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

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## **1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE**

The National Youth Policy aims to provide an enabling environment where youth development is mainstreamed into the various focal areas of national development.

## **2.0 POLICY**

### **2.1 Youth Empowerment and Livelihood Opportunities**

To empower youths to explore and use their abilities and potential that will help create an enabling environment for sustainable livelihoods and success and the further acquisition of knowledge and skills.

### **2.2 Leadership, Good Governance and Human Rights**

To facilitate equal opportunity for participation in leadership and decision-making processes at all levels.

### **2.3 Sports and Recreation**

To encourage youths to actively participate in sports and recreational activities to attain maximum achievements and satisfaction.

### **2.4 Youth Health**

To encourage youths to appreciate and practice high standards of personal health, hygiene and healthy lifestyles.

### **2.5 Life Skills Training**

To promote and enhance life-skills training and experiences.

### **2.6 Vulnerable Youths**

To effectively respond and support the specific needs of vulnerable youths.

### **2.7 Cultural and Religious Value and Virtues**

To promote respect and understanding for cultural, religious and ethnic diversity. Virtues education, spiritual development programmes and positive values inculcation processes must be grounded in young people so that they can develop holistic personalities with positive attitudes. Values will help youths to grow up to be responsible members of society.

## **2.8 Environment Sustainability**

To facilitate the engagement of Youth in environment management and conservation of Fiji's natural resources including mitigating the impacts of climate change

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Policy accepts that our youths are instrumental to Fiji's development and it is imperative to develop their full potential and their active participation in national development. Integrating them into the local-global dynamics is also important, given that this will promote their sustainability.
- 3.2 Young people are faced with many challenges in a rapidly changing world. These challenges are associated to technological, economical, social, cultural and environmental factors. These factors provide opportunities as well as obstacles. The National Youth Policy fully appreciates that in such situations, strong traditional and spiritual values will provide the wisdom for young people to deal with life's various challenges.
- 3.3 The National Youth Policy advocates a framework of networking, partnership, dialogue and multi-sectorial co-operation between the various stakeholders in Public Sectors, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and civil society. This will ensure that the full potential of young people is developed for the betterment of the nation.
- 3.4 This Policy works in tandem with the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development 2009 – 2014, National Employment Centre Decree, National Sports Policy, and relevant policies in other Ministries, including Government reforms and initiatives undertaken for the sustainable development of youth in Fiji.
- 3.5 The policy recognizes the current status of young people and the potentials they possess for the future. This Policy strives to enhance their holistic development to become resourceful and effective members of society. The Policy will be reviewed and updated to address the existing socio economic circumstances and incorporate new trends and developments that confront young people.
- 3.6 The National Youth Policy is presented here as a dynamic and flexible document with provisions to allow for changes and additions wherever appropriate. Youths will be involved in all facets of consultations on this issue and Government is to invite stakeholders to form a National Youth Council to regularly advise the Minister directly on issues of concern to young people.

## **4.0 DEFINITION**

### **4.1 Youth**

Officially the United Nations defines Youth as those between the ages of 15 and 24. However in reality, the Ministry of Youth provides service to individuals younger than 15 and over 35 as social and cultural perceptions dictate the status of youth in Fiji. In many cases young adults up to the age of 35 actively participate in youth programmes. Therefore, **Youths** are defined as those, both Males and Females, between the ages of 15 to 35 years.

### **4.2 Duke of Edinburgh's Award Program**

An International Award Program for Young People founded by HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

### **4.3 Girl Guides**

An organization that is parallel to the Boys Scouts but solely for young girls.

### **4.4 Juvenile delinquency**

Refers to Children and adolescents behaving in abnormal social and illegal behavior and practices.

### **4.5 Life-skills**

A set of skills which is acquired through training or experience and used to enhance the pursuits of life

### **4.6 National Employment Centre**

A referral Centre for employment opportunities under the Department of Labour and Industrial relations.

### **4.7 National Youth Council**

The National Youth body representing Youth Organisations from all sectors of the community.

### **4.8 Non-governmental organizations**

A sector of the economy that operates independently from Government, is non-profitable in nature and financially supported through donor Agencies.

#### **4.9 Private Sector**

The sector of an economy that is owned by Individuals or groups to provide goods and service and are usually profit oriented.

#### **4.10 Public Sector**

The sector of an economy that is owned by Government to provide services to the general public.

#### **4.11 Scouts**

Worldwide youth movement for boys with the stated aim of supporting young people in their physical, mental and spiritual development, so that they may play constructive roles in society.

#### **4.12 Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development 2009 – 2014**

Governments National Strategic Development Plan for the years 2009 to 2014.

#### **4.13 Vulnerable Youths**

Young people who are categorically vulnerable to the social ills of our communities: unemployed, street frequenting young people, drugs and substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancies, school dropouts, incarcerated youths, human trafficking, young people in special homes and young people with special needs.

#### **4.14 Young Women's Christian Association**

A global network of women and girls working for justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment.

### **5.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND AUTHORITIES**

- 5.1 Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development 2009 – 2014
- 5.2 People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress - 2008
- 5.3 National Employment Centre Decree - 2010
- 5.4 Draft National Sports Policy - 2011
- 5.5 Juvenile Act - 1973
- 5.6 Child Welfare Decree - 2010
- 5.7 Family Law Act - 2004

## **6.0 PROCEDURES**

### **6.1 Youth Empowerment and Livelihood Opportunities**

DYS shall

- 6.1.1 encourage and support initiatives that are centered on developing youths in gaining either formal or informal employment, volunteer and work attachments, and the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills.
- 6.1.2 facilitate youth employment through the National Employment Centre Decree
- 6.1.3 act as an advisory and referral agency in adhering to the above.

### **6.2 Leadership, Good Governance and Human Rights**

DYS shall

- 6.2.1 support the role of the National Youth Council and the establishment of District Youth Councils throughout Fiji, to ensure equal representation of young women, young men and marginalized groups of all ethnic groups.
- 6.2.2 promote the enhancement of youth capacity in various aspects of leadership and good governance ably equipping young people for effective engagement at family, community, institutional, national and international levels.
- 6.2.3 support the protection of young people's legal rights. Strategies to support this will include literacy training, legal awareness workshops and awareness programmes on human rights conventions for our target audiences.

### **6.3 Sports and Recreation**

DYS shall

- 6.3.1 support active participation of youths in sports and recreational activities.

### **6.4 Youth Health**

DYS shall

- 6.4.1 support and encourage programs that discourage young people from anti-social behavior such as drug and substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections and HIV-AIDS, juvenile delinquency any other issues identified by young people and youth stakeholders.

- 6.4.2 support adolescent and reproductive health education in schools and out of schools, preventative and community health programs to deal with infectious and non-communicable diseases, and mental health awareness and advocacy programs.

## **6.5 Life Skills Training**

DYS shall

- 6.5.1 support and encourage life skills initiatives that will complement and enhance the abilities and competencies of youths.
- 6.5.2 support National and Regional programs such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Program, Young Women's Christian Association, Girl Guides, Scouts, St Johns, Fiji Police Blue Light and others.
- 6.5.3 support Regional and International exchange programs aimed at promoting Life Skills Training will also be supported

## **6.6 Vulnerable Youths**

DYS shall

- 6.6.1 support initiatives and mandates of key stakeholders and youth development partners that partake in effectively addressing the needs of Vulnerable Youths. These include empowerment training and capacity building, networking, advocacy, advise, referrals and counseling sessions.

## **6.7 Cultural and Religious Value and Virtues**

DYS shall

- 6.7.1 support the continued education of young people about their culture and the cultures of others in Fiji.
- 6.7.2 encourage Cultural and Religious Organisations to actively participate in spiritual and cultural training on values and virtues to maintain within the lives of our Young People the uniqueness of our respective cultural identities and spiritual richness.

## **6.8 Environment Sustainability**

DYS shall

- 6.8.1 promote sustainable climate change adaptation strategies and good environmental principles and practices on the management and conservation of our natural resources and environment. This will enable youths to be at the forefront of environmentally friendly programmes

## **7.0 GUIDELINES**

### **7.1 Policy Principles**

**The policy shall be guided by the following principles:**

#### **7.1.1 Equality:**

The absence of all kinds of discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, geographic location, physical, spiritual or social economic status.

#### **7.1.2 Sustainability:**

Where-ever applicable, the essence of sustainability will be foremost to promote continuity, perseverance, self-reliance, esteem and cohesion.

#### **7.1.3 Youth participation and inclusivity:**

Young people from all facets of the community irrespective of their status are the mandatory benefactors of the services and programs and encouraged to participate as they deem appropriate.

#### **7.1.4 Transparency and accountability:**

The fundamental principles and concepts that regulate transparency and accountability will take precedence in the implementation of the Policy objectives.

### **7.2 Coordination**

#### **7.2.1 Role of the Department of Youth and Sports**

The Department of Youth and Sports shall be the focal agency responsible for coordinating policy and programme implementation in collaboration with other Government ministries involved in youth service delivery. The Department of Youth and Sports shall also work in partnership with training institutions, churches, other religious organizations, non-governmental organisations and civil society groups responsible for youth service delivery.

In the case where the Department is not solely responsible for the implementation of programs it will render its full support to other Government Ministries, Non-Governmental Organisations, Religious and other organization that fulfill the obligations as stated in the Policy.

The Department of Youth and Sports will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the National Youth Policy critically analyzing and ensuring that the objectives and mandates of the Policy are fulfilled.

The Department will be responsible for informing the Minister of any changes or improvements to the National Youth Policy that will enhance the effective attainment of the policy objectives.

### **7.2.2 Role of Implementation Partners**

An implementation partner refers to Youth Development Stakeholders who are obligated within their own mandates to provide Youth Development and Empowerment Programs and Services for Young People. They will in their own capacities and expertise be supported by the Department of Youth & Sports in successfully implementing their core objectives whether independently, or in alliance with Government, Civil Society Organisations or Corporate Organisations.

### **7.2.3 Networking and Partnership**

The Policy requires multi-sectorial partnerships for development of strategies and implementation for initiatives on youth empowerment, youth employment and livelihood, research and other youth development aspects. Multi-sectorial partnerships should be sought with public, private, non-government and development agencies.

To ensure coordination amongst various stakeholders a multi-sectorial or inter-agency taskforce shall be established to provide guidance on matters of new policy direction and initiatives.

## **7.3 Funding**

As the focal agency in the implementation of the Policy, the Department of Youth and Sports is expected to provide the resource requirements to implement the policy. However, the Policy is mindful of the limited resources for Youth Programmes and advocates the effective coordination of programmes and where possible the pooling of resources between stakeholders.

The Policy recognizes the on-going commitment of the Private Sector, Donors, UN Agencies towards youth programmes and will continue to explore resource opportunities needed for policy implementation.

## **7.4 Youth Database**

The existing data-base of information and statistics on youths, sources of funding, resources available as well as Public Sector, local NGOs, regional youth bodies and UN agencies that service the various needs of young people shall be strengthened.

**8.0 EFFECTIVE DATE.....15/08/11**

**9.0 REVIEW DATE.....15/08/12**

## **10.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS**

Youth, youth empowerment, life skills, youth health, vulnerable youths, networking and partnerships, Department of Youth and Sports (DYS).

## **11.0 APPROVED BY THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, NATIONAL HERITAGE, CULTURE & ARTS AND YOUTH & SPORTS, HONOURABLE FILIPE BOLE**



.....  
**SIGNATURE**

**15/08/11**

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**DATE**