

A concept note seeking approval from the Cabinet to review the National Youth Policy 2011

1. Context and Background:

The National Youth Policy (NYP) endorsed in 2011 is long overdue for a review. Academic literature and guidelines on policy formulation points out the need to review policies every three years or whenever a critical need for review is felt. In fact, it has been noted in the policy itself, that it would be reviewed every five years with the Department of Youth & Sports taking the lead role. Furthermore, youth being dynamic and cross cutting, policies and strategies that have been formulated since 2011 necessitate alignment.

The importance attached to the well being of youth is common knowledge and understanding. Young people over the past 5-7 years have emerging needs with the changing times that require prioritizing. Further, since 2011, other relevant policies e.g. Child Protection Act, Domestic Violence Act have been developed outside the education sector thereby calling for realignment.

As mentioned above, youth cut across all sectors hence it is imperative that all sectors addressing youth development work in a synchronized manner. This highlights the fact that the implementation of the 12 FYP for youth development should hinge on coordination and collaboration. Infact, the 12th FYP rest on coordination, consolidation and collaboration.

A recent consultation amongst stakeholders involving government/ autonomous agencies and CSOs also pointed out the need for a revision of the National Youth Policy 2011. The National Youth Policy has to be responsive and this can only happen if it is reviewed and revised.

2. Critique of Current Policy Options and Approaches:

A preliminary analysis of the National Youth Policy 2011 shows that the following are some of the areas requiring change:

| | | Probable changes |
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| | Background and introductory write up | Background and introductory write up needs to be extensively revised to accommodate the most recent data & issues on youth. |
| | Alignment to current policy changes | The following acts are relevant to youth development hence the NYP has to be aligned to these acts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care & Protection Act 2011 • Domestic Violence Act 2012 • NDSSPA amendment 2015 • Social Media Policy |
| | Alignment to current needs | Working with young people and with FGDs conducted with young people over the past years, we see that adolescents and youth have new needs and concerns. To cite a few examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender identities among adolescents & youth is an emerging concern requiring understanding and support to those adolescents and youth belonging to this community • Protection of adolescents & youth –many agencies engage adolescents and youth in their programs ; in the absence of guidelines, there are a multitude of safety issues which need to be taken care • Financial entitlements- there is no fixed rate for youth participating in programs/activities which makes it difficult for agencies engaging them to provide the basic needs for travelling to and fro for programs (accommodation, conveyance and meals) • Support to youth groups- there are a number of emerging youth led groups not registered |

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| | | as a CSO. A policy directive on these groups is required. |
| | | <p>The following are included in the NYP 2011 but need more focus as young people are adversely affected and/or suffer from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health- the recent spate of young people committing suicide and attempting suicide points to the fact that the mental health & wellbeing of young people need focused attention • Dysfunctional families- Dysfunctional families seem to be on the rise; and the victims of such families are the progeny belonging to these families. This is a social challenge that needs to be prioritized and addressed. • Use of social media – efforts to educate the young on the use needs to be strengthened. • Youth is being addressed by many sectors; government, autonomous agencies, CSOs, private. The role of these sectors have to be made coherent and the coordination mechanism has to be strengthened. |
| | Re-phrasing | <p>Definition of ‘youth’ To change from the current 13-24 years to 10-24 or 35 years. Experience has shown that by keeping the upper limit as 24 years, those aged between 25-30 years are neglected. The lower limit of 13 years has also been disadvantageous as it is difficult to obtain data from 13 years.</p> |
| | Alignment to regulatory needs | |

Preliminary analysis has also pointed out the need to align the NYP 2011 to other policies and strategic documents that have been endorsed and published both within and outside the education sector. Moreover, since youth cuts across all sectors, it is all the more important to review the NYP 2011. Failure to review and

update the NYP 2011 to these developments and include all the relevant agencies would result in weaknesses in overall policy response as well as failing the youth.

3. Policy Recommendations:

The revision of the policy would ensure that the needs and concerns of the youth are addressed so that the country will have youth with wholesome development and can contribute to nation building. It is also expected that the policy will augment strengthened coordination and collaboration among the relevant agencies that work for youth.

n.b. Comments on this section of the concept note has more or less been addressed by the inclusion of the table in the earlier section.

3.1. Commitments of the New Government:

The revision of the NYP 2011 is part of the pledge of the new government also hence it is expected that the government will support.

4. Integration of GNH and Cross Cutting Issues:

The NYP 2011 was guided by the GNH principles and values and takes care of all the four pillars. The revision will ensure that this is upheld. In particular, the policy will include role of young people in environment conservation, preservation of culture, health promotion, prevention of health risks for young people, use of ICT by young people & gender issues of young people. As mentioned earlier, youth cuts across many sectors, hence the revision will include the participation of relevant sectors.

5. Process and Indicative Timeline:

A local consultant will be hired to draft the revision; he/she will work closely with an official from the Department of Youth & Sports. Consultations with youth, representatives of relevant sectors, including the monastic bodies will be held. A

National Steering committee will be formed comprising of representatives from the relevant agencies, autonomous bodies, NGOs, private and youth. This Steering Committee will provide guidance to the revision.

Work Plan

| Sl. No. | Activity | July | August | September | October | November | December |
|---------|--|------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|
| 1. | Process: administrative approval from the Ministry | | | | | | |
| 1. | Seek approval from the GNHC | | | | | | |
| 2. | Form a National Steering Committee | | | | | | |
| 3. | Conduct consultations | | | | | | |
| 4. | Present the first draft | | | | | | |
| 5. | Incorporate feedback | | | | | | |
| 6. | Submit to GNHC for screening | | | | | | |
| 7. | Submit for approval | | | | | | |

6. Major Impediments or Risks Foreseen in the Development of the Policy:

Since the participation of numerous sectors is integral to a holistic youth policy; the support from the relevant sectors is seen as a grave risk.

