



women, youth &
persons with disabilities

Department:
Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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**ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR HLENGIWE MKHIZE,
DEPUTY
MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN YOUTH AND
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
DURING THE OCCASION
OF
NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY (NYP) 2030 LAUNCH
ON
05 MARCH 2021**

Theme “*A decade of accelerating positive youth development outcomes*”

Our youthful Programme Directors, Ms Mabaso and Mr Tleane
Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with
Disabilities, Mme Maite Nkoana-Mashabane;
UNFPA Country Director, Ms Beatrice Mutale;
UNICEF South Africa Representative, Ms Christine Muhigana;
Our Honourable Guests representing the African Union ...
Representatives and Guests from the Southern African
Development Community,
Members of the Commonwealth, represented by the Secretary-
General Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland;
Executive Director at the National Youth Development Agency,
Ms Palesa Notsi;
President of the South African Youth Council, Mr Tumelo Zwane;
The Youth Portfolio Chairperson at the Black Business Council,
Mr Thobela Maponya;
Members of the National Youth Policy Technical Reference Team;
Civil Society Organisations, Private sector and Development
partners representatives in attendance
Young South Africans
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

It should be stated from the onset that, the launch of the
approved National Youth Policy, which targets the largest
segment of the population – young people, is indeed a milestone.
Not only for South Africans, but for the entire world. It is a
milestone, because investment in young people is investment in
the present and tomorrow.

Bearing this in mind, it is of great concern that, our youth continue to face serious challenges, which prevent them from transitioning smoothly into adulthood. As already mentioned, one of the challenges facing our youth is unemployment, which has reached crisis proportions. The recent Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the fourth quarter of 2020, showed unemployment to be 1.7 percentage points more than it was in the previous Quarter. For the youth aged 25-34, it was more than double that of the age group 45-54 (41.2% vs 19.3%).

This picture is gloomier, when we consider the staggering numbers of those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET). We know that unemployment rates are typically higher for young women. Also, youth in rural areas face different challenges from those in urban areas. In most cases they are vulnerable and are exposed to multiple challenges based on age and social status, education and health. The girl-child faces double disadvantages because of gender discrimination at the household and community level. These vulnerabilities are even stronger in rural areas, where poverty, patriarchy, traditions and lack of infrastructure and in accessibility of services is prevalent.

In addition, young people with disabilities continue to face enormous challenges in the labour market as they are more likely to be social excluded and marginalized.

Compounding to this unemployment challenge, we have also noticed that the Covid-19 pandemic, brought with it an added mental health strain for our youth. They have become

disillusioned, because the prospects of searching and finding decent employment have also become very minimal. This is despite the fact that, these youth also have hopes and dreams, which are not realised. They also wish to contribute meaningfully to development of their communities and country, but they cannot – if they are not afforded an opportunity to.

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

We cannot continue to be on the side lines. As much as we have put more effort in developing this policy, we need to equally put even greater effort to ensure its adequate implementation. Like other policies across the continent and the world, effective and successful implementation will happen only if the policy is owned by all relevant stakeholders.

We started with a meticulous exercise of ensuring that this policy goes through all necessary consultations with relevant stakeholders physically and virtually, including two presentations to three government clusters. Accordingly, this policy is being launched, to invite all relevant stakeholders, including young people to implement and or monitor its implementation. There is full commitment from the department and Government in realising the benefits of this new policy for all young people, over its ten year timeframe – 2020 to 2030. Therefore, in implementing the youth policy, greater focus

should be on accelerating actions that would result in “tangible positive outcomes,” so that all young people, their families and communities would benefit.

To give effect to the NYP implementation, the Department is developing the M&E Framework, whereas the National Youth Development Agency is developing an Integrated Youth Development Strategy (IYDS). These two documents have already been drafted and are currently being consulted extensively with key stakeholders. Once the M&E Framework, plan and tools as well as the IYDS are completed and approved, the real work of implementing all that is put on the policy document would begin. The IYDS would ensure integrated service delivery by all role players in the youth development space, whereas the M&E framework will enable collection of reliable and accurate data. All these would allow for review of youth development programmes to inform resource allocation.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am aware that work in crystalizing implementation, monitoring and evaluation has begun. Therefore, we need everybody on board, private sector, civil society and public sector to join hands in implementing the NYP 2030 to ensure positive youth development outcomes.

This policy identifies policy priorities with key interventions aimed at improving the prospects of youth towards positive

holistic youth development. Our monitoring and evaluation should be done in partnership with relevant department to implement the five pillars of this policy which are:

- **Quality education, skills and second chances**
- **Economic transformation, entrepreneurship & job creation**
- **Social cohesion and nation building**
- **Effective and responsive youth development machinery**
- **Physical and mental health promotion**

All of the five pillars of the National Youth Policy 2030 will need to be implemented taking into consideration the period we find ourselves in. As Klaus Schwab, the Founder and Executive Chairman of World Economic Forum, said “we stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another.” As the workplace changes due to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, especially with the rise of automation and artificial intelligence, there is a need to change how young people are equipped with the necessary skills and know-how. If we fail to adequately train the next generation of workers for the digital economy, we are likely to end up with greater income inequalities and increased unemployment especially for young people.

The M&E framework will have high level indicators to track progress in achievement of the policy. These indicators will be aligned to the five policy priorities. In addition to M&E, our role

is to coordinate and ensure reporting. When we report the department should demonstrate progress made in terms of successes and failures to young people as end users of services.

I would like to borrow some of the words from one of the late young gallant fighter of our freedom, Solomon Mahlangu who said: *"Tell my people that I love them and that they must continue the fight, my blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom, Aluta continua."* These words, I hope will propel us not to give up when the going gets tough, because of the love we have for our people and for young people in particular.

Today's event declares our collective responsibility towards investing in our youth. By launching the National Youth Policy 2030 in this event, we reaffirm youth development as one of the top priorities if we are to move South Africa, Africa and the entire globe forward.

The abundance of technology has changed the learning, working and social conditions for young people. Those physical barriers which were once evident, are now blurred and new structures of relationships and modes of interaction have been put in place. Most often it is the younger generation who feel more comfortable using ICT to expand their knowledge. This allows young people an opportunity to take charge of their learning processes in ways that best suit their individual needs and interests. The information society when used responsibly, has a huge potential to provide youth with the tools to explore worlds

otherwise unknown to the youth; for personal, academic and vocational purposes. We are all cognisant of the urgency to choose our priorities carefully, align them with the goals of the NDP vision 2030 and UN Sustainable Development Goals. In our monitoring and evaluation we should all focus on impact.

I Thank You!